

THE BRIDGE

December 2017

Until a new Rector is appointed, please contact The Rev. Martin Percival for pastoral matters. 01728 668537 or 07789 417050 or email: revmepercival@gmail.com

From the Reverend Martin Percival

From earliest days...

members of professions and trades have chosen a saint (and sometimes more than one) to watch over their various activities and to put in a good word for them with the Almighty in times of stress and hardship. There are other saints who traditionally many Christians believe that they can call upon in a similar or supportive role. Probably the best known is Saint Christopher before we set off on a long journey or Saint Anthony of Padua when that which was lost has not been found. Then there is Saint Teresa of Avila, if we are constantly troubled by headaches. One of the saints

whose feast day occurs this month is Saint Lucy. Her concern is for people with eye problems. The justification for this, as so often

seems to be the case with early saints is apocryphal. Under torture for her Christian beliefs, Lucy's eyes were gouged out and then miraculously restored. Only two things for certain are known about her: she was martyred at Syracuse in Sicily and canonised in about 304AD.

One legend about her is particularly attractive. She is said to have brought food each night to fellow Christians hiding from persecution in the underground caves. To leave both her hands free she placed candles in her hair and this crown of light must have shone like a halo. Whatever the foundation of this story, the tradition is maintained in Sweden to this day. On December 13th girls dress themselves in white robes with a red sash and put on a headdress of seven lighted candles. After a procession through the streets they visit hospitals, orphanages and old peoples' homes, spreading a message of light and joy. Can it be coincidence that the name Lucy is derived from the Latin word meaning 'light'





Saint Lucy's visit to the caves can be seen as symbolic of bringing light not only into the dark places of the world but also into the dark places of the souls, where sorrow and sickness, depression and despair, can lurk. Light, of course, is a recurrent theme of the Bible, starting in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis with God's command: 'Let there be light'. Saint Paul urges us 'to walk as children of light' and 'to put on the armour of light'. Our Lord himself declared that he was 'the light of the world'. One of the most important pieces of symbolism associated with Advent is the gradual coming of the light as we light the Advent Candles each Sunday. Today there seems to be as much darkness in the world as there was in biblical times. I do not refer to the darkness of night or deep forests or unlit alleys, but the darkness which covers all that is cruel, corrupt and contemptible. Much candle-power is needed to disperse it and every Christian is committed to the task. We need light not just to see what we are doing and where we are going but also to recognise in the faces of those around us where help or comfort or encouragement would be welcome. We need the light of discernment to distinguish between good and evil, between loving-kindness and self-interest. Above all, we need the light

which, like a lighthouse, enables us to check our course through the seas of life and warns us of the rocks and hazards: the light of Christ and his Gospel. The light of Jesus will never be extinguished, however much it be ignored.

Christingle Service

December 3rd at 4pm in St Mary's Sweffling. We will be joined by the Brownies and families for that service, but it is not just for children. Everyone is invited to come along, make a Christingle and say "thank you" to God for all the good things He gives us, and for Christ coming as the light of the world. The Christingle collection will be sent to the Children's Society.



Christmas Brass

The "Christmas Brass" concert with the Leiston





Royal British Legion
Brass Band in St.
Mary's Church,
Sweffling - Friday
December 8th @
7.30pm Tickets: £7

adults £3.50 children to include
interval refreshments. Proceeds
to St. Mary's, Sweffling.

This is how much...

...God loved the world:
He gave his Son, his one
and only Son. And this is why: so
that no one need be destroyed;
by believing in him, anyone can
have a whole and lasting life.

John 3:16. The Message version of the Bible

Christmas Services:



Carols for All by Candlelight

Sweffling St. Mary's -
Sunday December 17th at 5pm A
service of favourite Christmas
carols and readings telling the
story of the Nativity, followed by
coffee and mince pies. The
church will be warm, as will be
the welcome. Bring a torch.

Christmas Eve, Midnight Holy Communion

at Sweffling for the whole
Benefice. The service commences
at 11.30pm, so that the
Communion will be administered
just after midnight, on Christmas
Day. This year the service will be

Next concert: Saturday
16th December 2017, 7.30pm
Framlingham College Chapel

Phoenix Singers

G F Handel's masterpiece

MESSIAH

Tickets: £12 and £10 (£6
and £5 for under 18s)
available from Hall Farm
Butchers, 25, Market Hill,
Framlingham, William
Glasse
william@glasse.org.uk,
07802 597071, choir
members, and at the door.
charity no. 1076549



taken by the Rev. Martin Roberts
from Woodbridge.

Church Services December/January

Please see the listing on
the Bridge's back page.

Epiphany Carol Service

... in St. Johns College
Chapel, Cambridge, on Saturday
January 20th and Sunday January
21st at 6pm. Entry is free but by
ticket only. Applications for
tickets via the web site
(sjchoir.co.uk) by January 8th. St.
John's choir are magnificent and
the candlelit service in the
historic chapel is a very special
occasion.



Stir-Up Sunday

Stir-up Sunday in the church's year is the Sunday before

Advent Sunday, and is so-called because the prayer set for the day begins "Stir up, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people.....", in preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas. It is the day, traditionally, that Christmas puddings were made and stirred by the whole family. We did just that in Sweffling Church., one week early as we did not have a service on the actual Sunday. Anne Fitzgerald-Robbins led the family service and gave the congregation containers with the ingredients to make a Christmas pudding, but they were labelled with attributes that, when added together, form the recipe for a good life, such as love, forgiveness, tolerance, hope prayer, etc. These were all mixed together, and stirred by everyone. The pudding was then cooked in a microwave and at the end of the service it was shared out and enjoyed, together with a cup of coffee.

TEAR Fund

The PCC have had a letter and a telephone call from TEAR fund, thanking the village for the donation of the Harvest Lunch proceeds and informing us that the money will be used for

their work of famine relief in East Africa. It is TEAR fund's 50th Jubilee year next year and they have offered to send a speaker to explain how the money that we send is used. The PCC plan to accept their offer, and more information will be posted in The Bridge when a date has been arranged.

The Christmas Brunch and Market

...in Sweffling Hut on Saturday December 9th - 10am – 12 noon. Market Bacon (and egg) rolls, tea/coffee etc. Proceeds to St. Mary's, Sweffling.

Broadband Update

Henri Gooch writes that 'Better Broadband for Suffolk' have said:- "The latest information I have is that a further upgrade is planned, though not in the immediate future. Your property's connection is currently scheduled to be upgraded during Q4 18/19 (January 2019 – March 2019) - this will be a Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) solution, which can deliver much faster speeds



than standard FTTC (Fibre to the Cabinet) connections.”
Thanks, Henri.

Bye-Bye 2017

The next Bridge will be the February 2018 edition. Please note that this issue will need to be printed by January 26th, so the cut-off date for items to be included is close-of-play on Wednesday, 24th January. Can I also say “Thank You and Well Done” to everyone who has contributed to The Bridge during 2017. More, please, for 2018 ☺ Ed.

Christmas Greetings

Kirstin & John Stanley write:- “We wish all our Sweffling friends a happy and peaceful Christmas, though we won’t be sending cards this year but will make a donation to the village hut fund instead. x”

Community Suppers

The next two community suppers - ‘First Thursdays’ are on December 7th and January 4th at the Sweffling White Horse. If you would like to book a place at either of the next two suppers, please let Jill Abbott know - Jillabbott402@hotmail.com The theme for December is “Mediterranean”. If you would like to contribute a dish please say. Bookings are also being

taken for January (menu theme to be arranged).



Juniper Barn

Christmas is approaching and indeed will be over by the time this edition is out of date! However, Juniper Barn is now full of lovely Christmas treats, presents and stocking fillers as well as all sorts of locally produced food to tickle the taste buds of your friends and family, so do pop in and see what we’ve got. We’re serving delicious winter hot soups and game and curry pies for lunch too.



No plans for Christmas Day? Come and join us in Juniper Barn for a festive community traditional Christmas lunch from 12.30pm. Lifts can be arranged. You are welcome to give a towards costs or make an edible contribution. For more details, pop in and see us, tel 01728 663773 or email

enquiry@juniperbarnsuffolk.co.uk

Geoffrey & Katie Boulton

Mature Notes

On several days during November a Barn Owl has been out hunting over the hayfield in broad daylight – as early as 1pm. Although this is known from time to time, it is much more usual to see them hunting later in the afternoon (much later in the summer), say an hour before dusk. I have tried to get photographs, but although daytime the light has still not been good, so the pictures are not brilliant. There will be disadvantages in daylight hunting. For instance, I have watched Owls being mobbed at



this time by another predatory bird, the Kestrel, so that their hunting is interfered with. It is suggested that daytime hunting may indicate that the owls are finding food harder to find.

The main prey in the hayfield is the Short-tailed Vole, or Field Vole, a creature that always lives in Grassland. In the food remains of Barn Owls in

Sweffling and Rendham three years ago I also found very large numbers of shrews, both Common and Pygmy Shrews. This was echoed in the number of shrews brought in by our cats (but never eaten by them. Although predatory birds readily eat shrews, they seem to be distasteful to cats). However, for many months the cats have not brought in a single shrew. I hope to get some more owl pellets locally to see whether the shrews have become scarcer – perfectly possible as small mammals do go through quite large natural cycles in their numbers over the years.



Bullfinches are again very regular in the garden. Despite the male's bright colours, they can be quite reclusive and hard to see. They do however have a very distinctive call, a soft, low-pitched single note, which although quiet does tell you that they are there. They have been busy eating the seeds of an ornamental Maple, little





'helicopters' just like small Sycamore seeds. Studies of Bullfinches have shown that in winter

they rely heavily for food on the seeds found in the keys of Ash, which are rather similar. It is when seeds like these are scarce that they turn to the flower buds of fruit trees, where they can do so much damage. I presume that the great reduction in Ash trees as a result of the rapid spread of Ash die-back disease will affect the Bullfinch population. Bullfinches will also often eat the seeds of blackberries, after these have been neglected by other birds, and dried and shrivelled.

Flocks of Rooks flying to their winter roost in the woods towards Benhall are a feature of the winter evenings. These winter gatherings can be enormous. I have estimated well over a thousand gathering together. They must include birds from several rookeries and from quite a large area. They gather in mid-winter in tree tops, arriving in late afternoon. By late



winter, however, they have taken to gathering, in smaller numbers, in the trees in which they will have their breeding rookeries. They share this winter roost with an equal number of Jackdaws, alongside which they can be seen feeding in the fields (although their nesting is quite separate – the rooks nesting in high trees and the Jackdaws in chimneys, old buildings and holes in trees.) With the rooks making their loud 'caw' and the Jackdaws 'chacking' (hence 'Jack') the noise from such a big roost can be quite impressive.

Geoffrey Abbott



Swefling Parish Council

John Stanley writes:-

"There is no meeting scheduled for December so our next meeting will be 9th January 2018 in The Village Hut at 7.30pm.

All are welcome.

At the moment we do not have a clerk so please send any correspondence to the Chairman... which is me!

I can be contacted at Fairways, on 664073 or by e-mail to arthurjohnstanley@gmail.com"



Spring Flower Show

... next year will be on April 8th, in Sweffling Hut. Get planting those bulbs!



The Children's Society

Lorraine Lloyd writes:-
"Our coffee morning held last Saturday 11th November 2017 was again most successful. After costs, the amount we raised on the day was £1,429.29p and that figure doesn't include the income from the sale of Christmas cards and any further donations which is on-going. The greatest thanks must go to our stoic committee who never stop planning, making, baking and giving; our friends, family and neighbours who are always digging deep into their pockets; our supporters who always come along and, most importantly, Parish magazines, newspapers and websites who always seem to find a space for our notices. We are grateful - as are the children and young people we strive to help.
Many thanks"

The Hut

Diana Smith is stepping down from her role as caretaker of the Village Hut, but is being replaced by Mrs Ann Gladwell. So, for future bookings

please contact Ann on 01728 663710 or email her a.gldwell@me.com or pop a note through her door No.2, Bridge Farm Cottages. ... and Diana – thank you so much for all your hard work!!



Also, Barbara Tatum says:
- "Thank you to everyone for coming and supporting the recent 'Come Dine With Me' fundraiser – the total profit banked was £590! We have received lots of thank you cards and phone calls; it's really nice to know that everyone enjoyed themselves. Also, a big thank you to the Townland trust for their donation of £400 towards the upcoming tree bill we are going to have. All in all, a great start to the new financial year of the village hut. Once again, a huge thank you to all that support the hut. What a fantastic village we live in!"

What's next? Well...

Chilli Evening

Following the success of the 'Come Dine With Me' evening, Sweffling Village Hut will be organising a Chilli/Lasagne evening on Saturday 10th February. Book your place with Kirstin Stanley [664073]. Tickets will be £10 and all proceeds will



go to The Hut. The 'Come Dine With Me' evening was a wonderful time enjoyed by all. So why not come out again on a chilly night in February and enjoy some chilli (or lasagne) in the good company of your friends and neighbours?

Unrest

Wednesday 6th
December at 3pm

A life changing documentary that has had sell out showings across the world and has been shown in parliament, at the British Film Institute and in many cities throughout the world gets its only local showing in Leiston. The film, which picked up an award for editing at the prestigious Sundance Festival, started when an ill student picked up a camera now brings true hope to many ME sufferers all over the world, including hundreds living in the Suffolk Coastal area. Unrest, directed by Jennifer Brea provides an uncompromising glimpse at the invisible world of millions of people who are house or bed bound by this illness.

Leiston Film Theatre is showing Unrest, exclusively in the Suffolk Coastal area, where an estimated five hundred people have ME and many more



Wednesday

13th December 2017

6-9pm

Tickets **£5**
(Under 16s FREE)

at the
SECKFORD THEATRE
Woodbridge School

TOM ELLIOTT

CHRISTIAN COMMUNICATOR | COMEDIAN | MAGICIAN

Festive Food in the Foyer (6-6.30pm)

Family Fun on Stage

Carol Singing

Suffolk Coastal Filling Station

Tickets available from: Daphne Rose

01728 748199 robdaphnerose@btinternet.com 07834 948670



family members and carers are directly impacted by the disease. Manager Wayne Burns explains, "When we found out about Unrest, we quickly realised that this is exactly the kind of film that we should be showing to the local community. It tells a compelling story of strength in the face of adversity while lifting the lid on the invisible suffering of many."

Jennifer Brea suffered a series of viral infections that left her incapacitated. Despite being bed bound she was determined to find out what was wrong. Disbelieved by doctors and dismissed by many specialists she

started a video diary to document what was wrong. Soon she found out that many others throughout the world had similar experiences and she connected with them via social media and Skype. These connections and the resulting footage led to the making of Unrest.

Jennifer says, "I couldn't countenance the prospect of spending the rest of my life in bed. But more than that, I couldn't countenance living in a world where we allowed this to happen. What I saw angered me, and I knew this was a compelling story.

"In making the film I began to uncover the layers of misogyny and assumptions that medicine and society have about female patients being unreliable narrators of their own stories."

As a community cinema and the oldest independent picture house in Suffolk, Leiston Film Theatre can bring special interest films like Unrest to local audiences, alongside the latest blockbuster movies and family features. It's a recipe that has kept it successfully running for 103 years.

Watch Out!

On the night of 19/20th November there was an attempted burglary at one of the houses in our village. Thankfully due to the

alertness of the family dog, the perpetrator was spotted & ran off.

Whilst this is generally a quiet village, there has been a recent spate of burglaries in Saxmundham & surrounding villages. Local police are aware of these & are reminding everyone to be alert & lock cars & doors when out or at night, including sheds, garages & outhouses.



Winter Solstice - The Mummers Return

Beneath the 'Sacred Oak' on Rendham Knoll, Thursday 21st December.

"Dust your lamps! Prime your wicks! Make ready your tankards! The Long Night draws near!

Now is the time for mists, magic, merriment, mayhem and Mummers!" cries The Speaker.



For ONE NIGHT ONLY, the Rendham Mummers (“still never knowingly over rehearsed!”) perform their latest play and seasonal offering, “A Mummer’s Christmas Carol”, at 7.30pm. An experience not to be missed!!!! See their Facebook page.

It is suggested that, as Victorians sought to adopt new customs at Christmas, the writer Charles Dickens took inspiration from some of the old Pagan beliefs, particularly relating to Winter Solstice – the Night of Spirits and Ghosts – for his well-known book “A Christmas Carol”; possibly the best and most loved of Christmas tales. But was Dickens really in Rendham, and the scriptwriter for this recently discovered ancient Mummers’ play? And, which tale came first? However, if you believe this, you are as likely to believe the claim that the Spirits will walk this night of magic!

Why not come and join the Mummers in their celebration of the rebirth of the sun? Seasonal refreshments, including winter punch and warm pulled pork rolls, are available from 6.30pm.

The traditional Hat Collection, taken at the end of the performance, will be donated to IPSWICH OUTREACH BUS, which seeks to make a difference to the



lives of the homeless and those in need.

A torchlight procession follows, as the Straw Cart and rider/s are pulled down to the Rendham White Horse. So please bring lanterns and torches. Parking is available in the recreation field in Bruisyard Road (opposite the pub).

To date, the Rendham Mummers have performed fourteen plays, raising thousands of pounds for local charities thanks to the generosity of their supporters.

Maybe we will see you there.

The Speaker



Dates in Dec-Jan+

| | |
|------------|--|
| Sat 02 Dec | Christmas Market 9:30am–12noon URC Hall, Framlingham |
| Sun 03 Dec | 9:30am Sweffling Holy Communion 4pm Sweffling Christingle Service |
| Thu 07 Dec | Community Supper 7:30pm Sweffling White Horse |
| Fri 08 Dec | Christmas Brass Concert 7:30pm St. Mary's Church, Sweffling |
| Sat 09 Dec | Christmas Brunch 10am–12noon Sweffling Hut |
| Sun 10 Dec | 9:30am Rendham Morning Prayer |
| Sat 16 Dec | Phoenix Singers - Messiah - 7:30pm Framlingham College Chapel |
| Sun 17 Dec | 5pm St. Mary's Sweffling "Carols for All by Candlelight" |
| Sun 24 Dec | 11.30pm St. Mary's Sweffling Midnight Holy Communion |
| Mon 25 Dec | 11am Christmas Day Service @ St.Michael's Rendham |
| Sun 31 Dec | 10am Badingham Benefice Holy Communion |
| Thu 04 Jan | Community Supper 7:30pm Sweffling White Horse |
| Sun 07 Jan | 9:30am Sweffling Holy Communion |
| Sun 14 Jan | 9:30am Rendham Morning Prayer |
| Sun 21 Jan | 9:30am Sweffling Epiphany Carol Service |
| Sun 28 Jan | 9:30am Rendham Holy Communion |
| Sat 10 Feb | Chilli Evening @ The Hut |

A man was walking along the sea shore when he saw a bottle lying in the sand. He opened it and out popped a Genie. The Genie said to him, "I've been in there for a hundred years. I'll give you three wishes to say 'thank-you' for letting me out of the bottle." So the man said "Oh, I'd like to have a million pounds", and—whoosh— a banker's draft for a million pounds appeared in his hand. The Genie said "What is your second wish?" and the man said "I'd like the smartest, poshest Rolls Royce in the world". There, on the beach behind him, appeared a wonderful Rolls Royce. "Now", the Genie said "What is your last wish?" The man said, "Well, I'd like to be irresistible to women" so the Genie turned him into a box of chocolates.



Items can be placed in **THE BRIDGE** and on the Village Website by sending an email to sweffling@outlook.com

Cut-off date for the next **THE BRIDGE** is 24th January.