

# Open Field

£1

June 2020



*Jessica Rose with her Farmer Scarecrow  
Laxton, April 2020*

The monthly publication of the  
parish of Laxton & Moorhouse  
[www.openfield.org.uk](http://www.openfield.org.uk)



<b>Priest in Charge</b>	<u>Vacant</u>	
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	KNEESALL	Mr Ian Thom
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	WELLOW	<u>Mrs Jean Crofts</u>
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<b>Parish Council:</b>	<b>Clerk</b>	Catherine Millward 01636 813387
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**Photography by / Photos from** Stuart Rose, Janet Cooke, Heather Storton, Joan Cottee, Dik & Joy Allison



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**Flowers and Brasses Rota - suspended until further notice**

Mrs S Rose & Mrs R Creighton	31 <sup>st</sup> May & 7 <sup>th</sup> June
Mrs L Booth & Ms H Keay	14 <sup>th</sup> & 21 <sup>st</sup> June
Mrs J Cooke & Mrs P Freer	28 <sup>th</sup> June & 5 <sup>th</sup> July

**Coffee Morning Hosting Rota - for reference when they are resumed**

June 11 <sup>th</sup>	Mampa Haste (NB 10.45am)
July 9 <sup>th</sup>	The Dovecote
August 13 <sup>th</sup>	Joyce Stone

**Your contributions are always welcome.  
We can help if you are not sure how to  
write what you want to say.**

**Contributions for the next edition TO BE WITH THE EDITOR BY NOON ON 16th JUNE PLEASE. EARLIER PREFERRED. You can send at any time.**

## **Message From the Churchwarden**

Sadly our church is still closed and as we go to print we have not had any further instructions from the Archbishop as to what is happening in the near future regarding opening our churches for normal services, baptisms, weddings or funerals.

Probably in the next few weeks we shall hear more and be given a date as things seem to be opening up gradually.

If anyone needs any help with anything please do not hesitate to get in touch with me as at the moment as you know we are without a Priest-in-Charge as Rev Zoe moves to take up her new role as Rural Dean of Mansfield.

*Brenda*

## **Message From the Editor**

As you know, in April the news of lockdown came as the magazine was being printed, so we circulated a flyer to make everyone aware that there would be no printed copy of Open Field in May.

We had to do this to avoid any risk to our delivery team from gates, letter boxes etc. and breaking the new rules by going to collect the copies.

We must say a very big thank you to the delivery team as lockdown is eased slightly that everyone has agreed to deliver magazines this month. This means we are able to bring you your printed copy. The full colour digital copy will not be on the web site until about 20th May.

Those who are happy to receive their copy in digital form for the present have been sent a link to read it now.

*Jean*

## **If you Need Help ..**

If you are older or vulnerable and need help, please contact Mike Jackson (details below) with your phone number and email.

Mike continues to co-ordinate a team of volunteers to bring in shopping, collect prescriptions etc.

Many thanks to the volunteers who have helped throughout the period of Covid-19 to date and who continue to do so.

**Mike Jackson**  
**01777 870042, Mobile 07860 676085,**  
**email [jackomgj@gmail.com](mailto:jackomgj@gmail.com)**



## **Sympathy**

We were sorry to hear of the death of Joan Walker in April. We offer sympathy to her family.

## **Laxton Defibrillator**

As many of you will know the Visitor Centre has been closed since the lockdown. However the defibrillator, which is located within the Centre, is still accessible as neither the Visitor Centre door nor the cabinet housing it is locked.

Please do remember however that the Defibrillator must only be used once authorised by a call to 999.

*Michael Manning*





## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

*We would like to congratulate anyone celebrating a birthday, anniversary or other special event during June.*

*We plan to make this a regular feature if there is sufficient interest. Please send us the first names of people you want us to send good wishes to.*

*The birthday roll of honour for June is:*

*Lucy (21), Serena, Jessica, Rebecca, June, Justine, and Oliver. Many happy returns to you all.*

*Happy anniversary wishes go to:  
George & Brenda, Mark & Amanda and Stuart & Sylvia*

*If you know someone we have missed, please tell us.*

## **Village Notices**

Mike Manning maintains a list of email addresses for villagers and other local people who want to receive up to date information.

If you are not already on the list and would like to be kept informed, please contact Mike on **870844**.

# Temporary Road Closure – Kirton and Laxton

<b>Road No. &amp; Location</b>	<p>Cocking Hill, Kirton – between its junctions with A6075 Station Road, Kirton and Acre Edge Road, Laxton.</p> <p>Acre Edge Road, Laxton – between its junctions with Cocking Hill, Kirton and Toad Lane, Laxton.</p> <p>Toad Lane, Laxton – between its junctions with Acre Edge Road, Laxton and High Street, Laxton.</p>
<b>Dates/Times:</b>	<p><b>From Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020 until Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020</b></p> <p><b>Daily from 08:30 – 17:30 hours</b></p> <p><b>No weekend working</b></p>
<b>Carried Out By:</b>	A Plant Lux on behalf of BT Openreach
<b>Nature of Restriction</b>	Temporary Prohibition of Driving
<b>Nature of Works</b>	Access required to underground network works
<b>Alternative Route</b>	<p>Tuxford Road, Ollerton – A6075 Forest Road, Ollerton – Back Lane, Ollerton – A616 – Ossington Road, Kneesall – Laxton Road, Kneesall – Main Street, Laxton – High Street, Laxton and vice versa</p>
<b>Enquires/ Emergency Contact:</b>	<p><b>Sophia Simpson – A Plant Lux</b></p> <p><b>03700500792 (24 hours)</b></p>

## Take Away Meals From The Dovecote

The Dovecote has advised us of the options available until they are able to reopen.

**Friday Nights - Fish & Chips** with  
Homemade Tartare Sauce & Mushy Peas  
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**Saturday Nights - Special.** This will change most weeks. You should ring the pub for the special on the week you want to order.

**Sundays - Sunday Roast** (Delivery is available FREE within reasonable distance for this option)  
£12.50pp for Roast Beef, Slow Braised Minted Lamb or Pork Dinner. A vegetarian option is available for £10pp.

All served with all the trimmings, Yorkshire pudding, roast and mash potatoes, seasonal veg, stock Gravy, glazed Carrot.

Please call The Dovecote on **01777 871586** for details

## A Sad Double Loss



We were very sad to receive the news from Lynda and Steve that their lovely greyhounds, Bex and Demi ,sadly passed away on Tuesday 19th May.

Both had been unwell for some time and they had been loved and cared for until the end. They both went together which was incredibly heart breaking for Lynda and Steve but

the kindest thing for them.

Everyone will have seen them walking Bex and Demi through the village for the last 10 years and they have been fussed by many people.

Lynda and Steve send a big thank you for all the lovely cards and messages they have received and which have taken them quite unprepared.



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## Coffee Mornings

*There will be no more Coffee Mornings for the time being.*

*We will let you know when we can start again.*

*The rota will remind hostesses so that we can start as soon as it seems right to do so.*



## Brown Bin Collections

Garden recycling collections will resume in Newark and Sherwood from Monday 1 June.

The service was temporarily suspended so the vehicles could be used to maintain the vital household waste and recycling collections to allow for the waste crews to keep safe social distancing. The Council has now been able to source additional vehicles so that the garden waste service can resume.

Please leave your brown garden waste bin out by 6am on its usual collection day from Monday 1 June - see Council Website for date if you're not sure.

Customers who renewed or signed up to the service while it was temporarily suspended will be entitled to a reduced subscription for the following year 2021/22.

## Bartle Family Enquiry

We have received a message from Dale Burke in Melbourne, Australia, seeking help with learning more about his Bartle family from Laxton.

The message received says 'I am a descendant of the Bartle family, who once occupied Knapeney Farm. I am currently researching my family tree and I am hoping to uncover not only information on the family itself, but also the properties and towns they lived in, and what the times were like socially and economically during their existence.

My great-great grandfather was George Bartle who was the son of Jonathan Bartle and Elizabeth Moody. George had moved to Australia and then returned and had remarried (Lucy Louisa Todd) and farmed Knapeney Farm for some time.

If anyone could help me it would be much appreciated.

It is recorded in the Laxton History Booklet 'Village Folk' that Sydney Johnson took over from 'Mr Bartle of Laxton' when he moved to Knapeney on Lady Day 1917.

If you can add any further information, please contact Dale direct on:

**[dally247@gmail.com](mailto:dally247@gmail.com)**



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## Village Hall Path

Obviously during lockdown we have been unable to use our village hall, but it has been an excellent opportunity to get various repair jobs completed.

Trio Builders have worked on the roof and the chimneys, ensuring we are totally waterproof.

They have also put down a new slab path to the main entrance of the hall, which looks much smarter than the previous concrete path.

Unfortunately the muddy patch at the end of the path is on the pavement, and therefore the builders are unable to repair that, as it is the District Council's responsibility. It has been mentioned to members of our Parish Council who will no doubt bring it up with the District Council.

So, lockdown isn't entirely bad news for the on-going village hall renovation, it has given us an opportunity whilst no one is using the hall to get necessary repairs done.

Let's all look forward to the time when we can recommence our activities in the hall, hopefully not too far in the future.

Keep positive and keep safe,

*Joan Cottee.*



## Did you Know?

Cranes became extinct in Britain 400 years ago but conservation efforts have paid off and it is estimated there is a population of 200 birds in England now. They are mostly present on the eastern side of the country. Has anyone witnessed them anywhere?

Recently it was Hedgehog Awareness Week. I haven't knowingly had any hedgehogs come in to my garden this week. Do any of you have hedgehogs in your gardens? If you are interested in hedgehogs, visit this website – [www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk](http://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk) There is a lot of information about these gentle creatures on the website. Of course, hedgehogs have declined in numbers and they need all the help they can get.

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# Young Farmers' Charity Scarecrow Challenge

Nobody who has passed through Laxton in the last month could have failed to see the numerous Key Worker scarecrows lining the streets.

They are the brainchild of Jessica Rose. Having been appointed joint Charity Chairwoman of Nottinghamshire Young Farmers with her colleague Katie Annabel from Papplewick, Jessica was faced with a difficult job. The Young Farmers define sociable. They get together, they

have fun, they arrange and enjoy endless activities together and year on year raise money for charity. They raised over £1000 in support of Forget-Me-Nots dementia support group in Tuxford recently and finding a way of getting close to that during a period of lockdown and social distancing seemed a forlorn hope.



The agricultural events such as the County Show have been cancelled as have club

meetings, so what could they do? Jessica recently did a 5km run with the idea that you did it, donated and challenged 5 other people to do it. Suddenly the answer came to her, which brought an element of positivity to a dark situation: Scarecrows of key workers to make them smile as they travelled to and from work combined with the 'do, donate, challenge' concept.

We all know what happened next. Laxton and Moorhouse blossomed with scarecrows. 30 were spotted in all and most have stood the test of the wind if not rain in the last few weeks. The amazing outcome is that not only did they reach their £1,000 target, but exceeded it significantly with donations at the time of writing being £1,235. Some donations also come with Gift Aid, so the actual total will be quite a bit higher.

Thank you to every one who made a scarecrow, thank you to everyone who donated and most of all thank you to the key workers who inspired the idea. All proceeds from the Challenge will go to NHS Charities Together to support the NHS.





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# Pat's Plant Stall

Pat Naylor has taken the plunge, despite concerns about lack of footfall and passing trade, and opened her very successful plant stall once again.

She says this year's offering will include tomatoes, beans, mangetout, limited bedding and

courgettes. There may also be some pots and hanging baskets.

There is already a good selection of plants on display and Pat is very grateful to receive any spares you may have when thinning out or tidying your garden. All plants that come her way will find their way onto the stall.

This year the proceeds will support the NHS charities and, interestingly the Medical Detection Dogs, a charity which the stall supported very recently.

Medical Detection Dogs has been allocated government support to investigate whether dogs can detect Covid-19. MDD has already started training a number of hand-picked dogs which have completed their basic training and will be ready to work with samples as soon as they arrive at their training centre.

They hope to have initial results confirming the presence of an odour which the dogs can detect within 6-8 weeks after samples arrive.

The dogs searching for Covid-19 will be trained in the same way as those already trained to detect cancer, Parkinson's and bacterial infections – by sniffing samples and indicating when they have found it.

They are also able to detect subtle changes in temperature of the skin, so could potentially tell if someone has a fever. Once trained, dogs could also be used to assist with the rapid screening at key points of entry to identify travellers entering the country infected with the virus or be deployed in other public spaces, which could have a transformational impact on the response to the epidemic.

Please support this very worthwhile cause. Thanks to those who have already bought and donated plants, pots etc.



# VE-Day 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



A mere pandemic was not going to stop people in Laxton from celebrating this important milestone, and doing so together as far as was possible within the social distancing

requirements.

In the late afternoon of Friday 8th May, the specially designated Bank



Holiday, the streets of Laxton were lined with groups of households suitably spaced enjoying their choice of refreshments. Some settled for tea and cakes, some had something stronger

and some made the most of it



being 'Fish 'n' Chip Friday' at the Dovey and went to purchase their celebratory supper from Laxton's pop up take away.

Least anyone should be worried





that social distance was not being maintained, Mike Manning had come prepared with an extendable tape measure.

On Moorhouse Road there was a fine array of furniture on the wide verge showing they were taking their festivities seriously.

Up and down the



village forties music was playing and everyone was in the festive spirit. Of course the fact that the weather played its part and the sunny afternoon enhanced the happy atmosphere. The additional scarecrow participants were a cheery presence as well!



# Jack's Tale

Recently, we have all been surrounded by a sea of red, white and blue flags. Apart from a brief surge of patriotism, we normally don't give the flag a second thought, but it has an interesting story.

The Union Flag was first produced by James I (or VI for our Scottish readers) to combine the English and Scottish flags. Later on, the red diagonal stripes of the northern Ireland flag were added to give the flag we know now. The flag was designed long after Wales became administered by England, so there is no Welsh representation on the flag. Technically, the Union Jack is not the official flag of the UK, although various official pronouncements mean that it is effectively our national flag.

We normally call the flag the Union Jack, although its proper name is the Union Flag. A 'jack' is a flag that is flown from the 'jack staff' of a naval vessel. These days, the two names are interchangeable. Today, the Union Jack is only flown from naval vessels when the Queen or an Admiral of the Fleet is on board, or a court martial is in progress. Naval ships normally fly the white ensign and merchant vessels the red ensign - both with the Union Jack in the top left quarter (called the 'canton'). Charles I declared that Merchant ships must not fly the Union Jack "upon pain of Our high displeasure".

The flag is not symmetrical, so there is a right and a wrong way up (look at the thick and thin white stripes at the top left):



Right Way Up



Wrong Way Up

To deliberately fly the flag upside down is a signal indicating distress. Have a look around. We have a distressed situation quite close at hand. See if you can find it. Once you start looking you will find examples in many places. Television and newspapers can often get caught out.

It is also "lese majest  ". Lese-majest   is a French term meaning "to do wrong to majesty", is an offence against the dignity of a reigning sovereign or against a state. This behaviour was first classified as a

criminal offence against the dignity of the Roman Republic of ancient Rome, and is theoretically still a crime in the UK and the commonwealth.

Despite their cherished independence, the USA has Union Jacks contained in several of its flags including those of Hawaii, Baton Rouge (Louisiana), Mobile (Alabama) and Taunton (Mass.).

By the way, when you've finished with your Union Jack, Royal Navy Stores Duties Instructions, article 447, specifies that flags condemned from further service use are to be torn up into small pieces and disposed of as rags.

*Deeay & Peejay*

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## Sky Gazing

Following the comments in the May edition about the absence of aircraft in the sky I thought this might be interesting to some readers.

I'm sure there will be some who are aware of this and have also witnessed it but I hadn't until 19 April. We had had some beautiful clear day and night skies and that night was no exception. My son Gary called me outside around 9.30pm to look at "something weird" in the sky. It was a long line of moving lights all travelling from SW to E and for the most part uniformly spaced. I mentioned satellites and we also considered military craft, but there were so many of them and they kept coming.

A quick delve on the internet soon found the answer. They were indeed satellites, around 60 of them and used by the SpaceXStarlink. They have so far launched 300 satellites and are aiming to send up thousands more with the aim of providing better and more widely accessible internet across the globe.

If you haven't already seen this and would like to take a look you can get information on dates, times and where to look on [findstarlink.com](https://findstarlink.com)

*Steph Tunnard*

## A Little Light Relief - Moments of Clarity 2

The best cure for sea sickness, is to sit under a tree. *Spike Milligan*

Lawyers believe a man is innocent until proven broke. *Robin Hall*

Kill one man and you're a murderer, kill a million and you're a conqueror. *Jean Rostand*

Having more money doesn't make you happier. I have 50 million dollars, but I'm just as happy as when I had 48 million.

*Arnold Schwarzenegger*

We are here on earth to do good unto others. What the others are here for, I have no idea. *W. H. Auden*

I don't believe in astrology. I am a Sagittarius and we're very skeptical.

*Arthur C Clarke*

Hollywood must be the only place on earth where you can be fired by a man wearing a Hawaiian shirt and a baseball cap. *Steve Martin*



# ***DATES FOR YOUR DIARY***

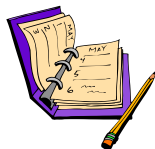
**2020**

***Thursdays, 8pm Clap for Carers - outside your house.  
Make some noise for those caring for us all***

## **Forward Planning**

**Sept 26<sup>th</sup> .** Southwell Ploughing Match

**Dec 4<sup>th</sup>** ***Quiz Night***



## **Regular Events:**

**Parish Council** 4th Tuesday of January, March, May, July,  
September and November

**Quiz Nights** 1st Friday of December & March

### **Copy Date for June: 16th June, mid day.**

Please let us have your contributions in good time. We do what we can to include last minute items, but it is not always possible. We are unlikely to be able to publish anything received late.

Thank you to everyone who took the trouble to send in contributions this month. We hope you find what might have been a very slim volume an interesting read.

Thank you.

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## Laxton WI - A message from Brenda



Hi everyone. I hope you're all keeping well and staying safely at home.

We are all wishing we could be out in the lovely sunshine as we've missed Easter and Mayday holidays when we would probably have gone out for the day, but I'm sure you are finding plenty to do especially in the garden.

It seems a long time since we were all together in the village hall listening to our speaker telling us all about crocheting. In April our speaker was coming from the Flower Pod at Southwell, which is a horticultural place of work for people with learning difficulties. The spring council meeting in April at the Nottingham Playhouse also had to be postponed. In May we should have been discussing the resolutions for the AGM, which was to be held in London at the Royal Albert Hall in June with the guest speakers being Dame Cressida Dick Commissioner of the Royal Metropolitan Police and her Royal Highness the Countess of Wessex, after which we would have had a supper.

Things were well on with the competition for the Notts show in May with the theme this year being the roaring twenties. We had places booked for workshops in Bobbin Lace, Indian Block Printing and Play Reading which were all postponed which makes it very difficult for these people organising these events like our national AGM when they would have been probably five thousand to six thousand people there, all with transport and accommodation booked.

We also missed out on Weston and East Markham parties and also our own which should have been on May the sixth. In June we shall miss our annual outing and Croquet at Southwell which we are getting very good at and also the County Quiz and the County Lunch at Scrooby to celebrate

400 years of the voyage of the Mayflower.

We have a speaker booked for July whose subject is the "Houses of the Dukeries" and in August we usually have a faith supper and in September we were looking forward to having a go at playing the steel drums.

As I write this for the open field, which goes to print on the 16th of May, we'll just have to see how things go. It will be nice to get back together again and have a good old matter and catch up on everything.

I hope to see you soon.

*Brenda.*

# The Butter Market, Newark. 70 years of Social History in Photos. The Moorhouse Connection.

Every Wednesday these women all sold butter, eggs and other products in Newark Butter Market. This was a day out, having had to work very hard to produce it in the first place. This was the cash crop. We hear a lot about hard working farmers. The wives worked just as hard, if not harder, having to work outside in busy times as well as bringing up the family, often taking the young children with them into the fields. And no machines for them!

Hannah Hallam nee Price. (right)  
1838 – 1906.

Having lived in Moorhouse, Hannah moved to North Park Farm Ossington, taking over the selling in 1869, from her mother in law, Mary, at Ship Inn, and then later from Firs Farm, Elston.



Mathilda Saxelby nee Beckitt, (left)  
1862 – 1937

From Hill Harm, Egmonton, beginning in 1886.

They lived in Moorhouse for a year or so, whilst building a house, Hillside, just below their old farm on the hill.

Elizabeth Hallam nee Moody,  
(right)  
1876 – 1959.

From Firs Farm Elston, taking over from mother in law in 1897 and then continuing after they moved to Cotham Grange. Elizabeth's husband, Thomas, was born in Moorhouse.



Violet Saxelby nee Hallam  
(left)  
1903 – 1984.

Came to Moorhouse in 1925 and began selling her own butter and eggs in the Market straight away, having previously filled in for her mother on many occasions. She carried on till rationing in 1940.

MWS

## County Council Facilities Reopening

Notts County Council announced that some **car parks and green spaces** will reopen from 16 May including Rufford Abbey Country Park. The car park at Sherwood Forest currently remains closed. People going to the country parks are asked keep a safe two metre distance from others not from their household.

If you, or someone you know, needs a hand with collecting shopping or prescriptions, or just wants someone to talk to, **NHS Volunteer Responders are here to help.**

Thousands throughout England are already receiving support – even if it's just a friendly chat.

**Call 0808 196 3646 or visit [nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk](https://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk)**

Help is available if you have a medical condition which makes you vulnerable to COVID-19, especially if you are over 70. You also qualify if you are pregnant or have a disability.

## Recent Bonus Ball Winners

Date	No	Name
18/4/20	26	ROLLOVER
25/4/20	36	Dave and Joyce
2/5/20	47	Jeanette and David
9/5/20	59	ROLLOVER
16/5/20	34	ROLLOVER

We have various numbers available. Here is the up to date list of the 14 spare numbers: **1, 2, 7, 11, 20, 23, 26, 28, 34, 46, 51, 52, 56, 57, 59**. Please contact Ken Shep on 870605 / Mike Manning 870844. Thank you.

*Michael Manning*

## Road Works at Egmonton - Latest

The person responsible for the project has just sent the Parish Clerk the following note:

The resurfacing is still on, and it's still likely to be sooner rather than later but won't be in May now. We have the resources and we have the funding, it's a bit slow making sure we tick all the Health & Safety boxes in terms of COVID protection for our frontline teams.

If we hear anything it will be added to the Covid Notices on the 'Open Field' web site, so you can check there.

### SOME RECYCLING CENTRES TO REOPEN 18 MAY



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# Laxton History Group



*With thanks to our Honorary President, John Beckett who has contributed the article below to provide something for us to think about this month.*

## **Laxton: the Black Death**

I suppose that because I am a professional historian, people often ask me to compare events in history. Pandemics do not come along very often thank goodness, but I have had several people ask me how Laxton might have fared in the Black Death of 1348-9? Most of us probably know little about the Black Death but have been prompted to ask questions by the present pandemic. In what follows you might even see some interesting parallels!

The Black Death, or great pestilence, or great plague, as contemporaries identified it, came from the east, probably along the Silk Road from China to reach Europe in 1347 and to arrive at Melcombe Regis near Weymouth in 1348.

Victims would notice tumours in the groin or armpits, and these would spread while black spots (hence the 'Black' Death) appeared on the body. This was followed by acute fever and vomiting of blood. How did any individual feel when they first spotted the tell-tale swellings and pustules which threatened a short, agonising illness and probable (or so they would have assumed) death, usually within two to seven days after infection took hold?

Most people must have assumed the worst when they first exhibited the tell-tale signs, although surprisingly the plague was not necessarily fatal: around half of those who caught the plague recovered.

How did you stop it spreading? Readers will not be surprised that the key was isolation. At Kibworth, Leicestershire, Michael Wood showed how bars were placed on the roads which passed through the village, but the movement of people simply could not be stopped, particularly during the daytime, and mortality was as great as in surrounding communities. Fourteen tenants died in Kibworth Beauchamp during April 1349, and many more in adjoining Kibworth Harcourt. People simply did not want to have their movements curtailed but without isolation, or social distancing, there was no way of stopping the pandemic from spreading.

Perhaps one-third to two-thirds of manorial tenants across the country died. There was no National Health Service of course, and no



hospitals, let alone care homes. You just had to make do within your family unit.

Manor courts met regularly to oversee the transfer of land as estate tenants died, and we can assume this happened in Laxton although the court rolls have not survived for the Black Death period. The villagers had somehow to keep going in the hope that one day normal life would be restored. Then, as now, no one was any longer sure of what normal was.

There was barely time to bury the dead, and survivors had no space to mourn because they did not want to be overtaken by famine. Between funerals they had to press on with the day to day business of ploughing, sowing and reaping, quite apart from looking after the animals.

The aftermath was also painful: such huge population losses inevitably affected a whole way of life. It took something like 200 years to recover, and in that process numerous villages were deserted, many others shrunk, and the old manorial structure was brought to its knees. It never recovered.

What do we know about the Black Death in Laxton? The most reliable interpretations use turnover of clergy, since we usually have a list of clergy persons which includes this information. At Laxton Adam de Whileheved was instituted in December 1348, but quickly followed by Roger de Middleton in August 1349. If you see a new clergyman in 1348 and another in 1349 or similar it looks like plague. Since clergy were expected to tend their flock they were inevitably in the front line when it came to comforting the sick.

Other historians look at the contraction of fields, as at Laxton. Where it looks as if there has been contraction of the open/common fields, it implies population decline, almost certainly from 1348-9.

It is hard now to imagine, given the passing of time and our quite different views of God, the devil, and medical men, just what it was like to live through the Black Death. The bland record of tenancy changes immures us to the sickness, the funerals and the mental torture through which whole communities passed. How did a community which believed in God's punishment being delivered through illness and death reconcile the events of 1348-9 with the state of their immortal souls?

Just how many people died? Probably 2.5 – 3 million nationally, but no one was counting carefully. This would represent a figure of c.50 per cent mortality. The decline in the economy indicates that it was severe – just as many are predicting a decline in the economy after Coronavirus.

There were other parallels with today, including the idea of isolation as a way of stopping the virus spreading. The Black Death generation very

quickly established the importance of isolation, which was used for similar epidemics, as at Eyam in Derbyshire when the Black Death arrived in 1665. The people of Eyam stayed and cared for their own, shutting themselves off from the outside world. Eyam became a plague quarantine to stop the spread of the disease. Local people chose to die to save others from the same fate.

The personal tragedies which lay behind the appalling figures for 1348-9 are largely lost to us. For a few months village life must have been disrupted, if only because people kept clear of each other – social isolation – in a vain attempt to avoid the contagion, but the scale of the disaster was such that communities were torn apart. Rents went unpaid, and cottages and land were surrendered to the lord.

Burying the dead was a problem. The clergy must have done their best to administer the last sacrament in this Roman Catholic community, but they were vulnerable. Both the vicar of Kibworth Harcourt (and his sister) succumbed to the plague so there was no one to take the funerals.

Nor was time available to dig individual graves in the churchyard. At Kibworth, the new vicar simply bought a field, hastily requested the bishop to licence it as a cemetery, and then arranged for victims to be laid in open pits to save time. Someone in the community would be persuaded to dig a plague pit, line it with lime, and throw the bodies in. It was not seemly, but there were no alternatives.

The stench, the pain, the turmoil of these months can only be guessed at as community after community, buried so many of its members, adults and children alike. Did they close the churches or stop taking funerals? No, not like today, although probably churches closed by default since no one wanted to take a plague-ridden body into the church for a funeral.

I wonder whether the burial teams wore masks?

Many of the methods, such as quarantine, which have been used today for coronavirus have a long history, and of course there was the problem that no one knew what caused the Black Death or how to deal with it, so social isolation was all they had. Here we are, several weeks into lockdown, and I have a feeling that is more of less where we are today – social isolation. But, and this is the good news. We have hospitals and medical scientists, and we already know about the virus. If we can find a vaccine, we can bring this problematic interlude to an end.

The current pandemic is frightening, but not as much as the Black Death.

*John Beckett*

Honorary President, Laxton History Group

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# Another Time, Another Pandemic

Pandemic, economic collapse, rich people escaping to second homes in the countryside, doctors in full PPE, stock piling, lockdown, conspiracy theories, quack remedies, suspicion of strangers, attacks on foreigners, but also acts of great charity and empathy.

Does any of this sound familiar? Well, nothing new here, this is Daniel Defoe's 'A Journal of the Plague Year', published in 1722, using records and eye witness accounts from the Great Plague of 1665.

Surprisingly, perhaps, it's an easy, albeit uncomfortable, read despite the desperate situations it depicts. I first read it around 50 years ago never thinking then that we might have to endure something similar in our lifetime, but it just proves that there's nothing new under the sun and human nature is little changed despite the advances in science, medical knowledge and technology over the past 355 years.

Essentially though what the book records is that common humanity that we all share. Here, for example, is an incident that we might find apposite today: A purse is found lying in the road. For some time nobody will touch it lest they get infected. Finally a man approaches it, covers it in gunpowder, ignites the powder, then picks up the smoking red hot remnants with tongs, dunks it in a pail of water and shakes out the coins within.

Well, does that sound familiar? Think what do we do now when the post arrives, or a box is delivered from Amazon? Do we rush to open it or leave it until we're sure it's safe to open?

Maybe we'd skip the gunpowder.

*With thanks to Southwell U3A.*

## Bonus Ball Numbers

There are currently 16 vacant numbers for the Bonus Ball draw, which supports the Laxton Sports & Recreation Field. They are:

**1, 2, 7, 11, 20, 23, 26, 28, 34, 46, 51, 52, 56, 57, and 59.**

Please contact Mike Manning 870844 if you would like one of them. Meanwhile existing holders have a greater chance of winning a ROLLOVER!

Thank you.

*Michael Manning*

# Art Works Challenge

Have you heard of the Getty Museum Challenge to re-create works of art with whatever you have within the house? It's one of several artwork challenges that have taken off round the globe.

Getty

We challenge you to recreate a work of art with objects (and people) in your home.

- ☆ Choose your favourite artwork
- ☆ Find three things lying around your house
- ☆ Recreate the artwork with those items

and you can see examples of the very creative responses they have received on <https://blogs.getty.edu/iris/getty-artworks-recreated-with-household-items-by-creative-geniuses-the-world-over/>.

If you want to have a go, look online or in an art book, find a work of art and do your own re-creation. Hopefully one or two will make it into Open Field next month.



Here is an example to get you thinking:

Lot and His Daughters, about 1622, Orazio Gentileschi. Oil on canvas, 59 3/4 × 74 1/2 in. The J. Paul Getty Museum, 98.PA.10. Recreation on Twitter by Qie Zhang,



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# Rotary Photo Competition



## Rotary Young People's "Life In Lockdown" Photo Competition

The Sherwood Forest Rotary Club are delighted to announce the launch of their "Life In Lockdown" photo competition for all young people in the Sherwood Forest area (Edwinstowe, Ollerton, Boughton and surrounding villages).

### Rotary "Living in Lockdown" photo competition

**Aim** – to engage with the young people in the Sherwood Forest Community to show what they have been doing in the Covid 19 Lockdown

Entries could be pictures of artwork, baking, school work, kids at formal learning activities, keeping active, out in the garden, helping at home, etc.

Mobile phone pictures are expected to be the medium of image transfer.

### 2 age groups

1 up to 11

2 12-15

### Suggested Themes: Pets, Wildlife/Nature, Learning at Home

Please encourage all children to take part, get someone to take an image relating to one of the themes and e-mail it to us.

### Rules

By entering this competition you give authority for your entries to be posted on the Rotary Club Sherwood Forest Facebook & Twitter site and the Rotary District Social Media platforms.

Please send them to [sherwoodforestrotary@yahoo.com](mailto:sherwoodforestrotary@yahoo.com),

or via our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Rotary-Club-of-Sherwood-Forest-273940476077102/>, or on Twitter @forest-Rotary , or Instagram sherwoodforestrotary

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## **Do You Need a Mole Catcher?**

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Email: **[thelaxtonmolecatcher@gmail.com](mailto:thelaxtonmolecatcher@gmail.com)**

Please give forenames only, ages, and an e mail address for all entrants.

GDPR will be observed and all contact details will be deleted after the competition is concluded

**NO children's faces, or vehicle registration numbers, house numbers or other identifying features to be shown,**

The image must be of work or an activity completed or suggested by the young person. Adults may assist with hazardous activities and accompany/assist on cycle rides, baking etc.

The judges will be Rotary Club Sherwood Forest nominated Rotarians whose decision is final.

Prizes will be Amazon vouchers (£5 per theme per age group) that will be e mailed to the winners with a certificate of recognition and an overall winner's prize of £20

**Closing date for entries June 22nd 20** Parents MUST give permission for their children to enter this competition, again by entering this competition, permission is as taken.

PLEASE let us know if you DON'T want your entry featuring in any local media or publications that Rotary Club Sherwood Forest may instigate to showcase the young peoples' work. A forename only will be used – e.g. Maisie from Boughton.

## VE-Day 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in Kirton

A lovely warm day made the Kirton VE Day Tribute and Celebrations a very pleasant social event despite social distancing. Two events were planned - one at the Soldier and one at Pasture Farm starting at 3.00 p.m. There was a good turn out of the village at the Soldier (where originally the Parish Council had planned for a piper to play) but in the event The Last Post and Battle O'er were still played and it felt very poignant. Drinks were on offer and, where possible, people had their party tables outside their front gardens in some parts of the village which almost gave it a party like atmosphere.

*Heather Storton*



# Egmanton Village Hall

[www.egmantonvillagehall.org.uk](http://www.egmantonvillagehall.org.uk) / 01777 871171

Please check the EVH web site or call for latest details.

- ◆ **Yoga with Greg** – Suspended. Watch for details of restart.
- ◆ **Egmanton WI** - Cancelled
- ◆ **Zumba Class** - Cancelled for now **Call 07817 311627**
- ◆ **Children's Dance Classes** - Cancelled for now Call Jil, **07790 601877**
- ◆ **Computer Problems?** - Call **01777 871171** for phone advice  
If your computer is misbehaving or you need help setting up a new one, please call. Donations to Egmanton Village Hall in lieu of fee.

## Sherwood Arrow Bus Service

A revised timetable has been received for this service. It will now call at Laxton on the way between Ollerton and Retford.

The stops are:

**Retford** - Hallcroft Avenue, West Furlong (5 minute pause here),

Retford Hospital, Bus Station (Bay D), Railway Station

**Ordsall**, West Hill Road,

**Elkesley**, Headland Avenue

**Tuxford**, Sun Inn,

**Egmanton**, Main Street

**Laxton, Timothy Road**

**Ollerton**, Briar Road

The Retford to Ollerton bus is due at Laxton weekdays and Saturdays which are not Bank Holidays at:

07.46, 09.46, 13.46, 15.46, 17.46

The Ollerton to Retford bus is due at Laxton weekdays and Saturdays which are not Bank Holidays at:

08.14, 10.14, 14.24, 16.14



## Useful Contact Details

### Defibrillator Contacts:

Neil Randall 01777 871229 & 07710 398745, evenings and weekends  
Pat Naylor 01777 870601, evenings  
Jeff Naylor 01777 870601, as required  
Mark Hennell 07812 908316, evenings  
Stuart Rose 07939 228353, as required  
Jeanette Geldard 07956 959135, daytime in Kneesall,  
evenings / weekends  
Anne-Marie & Geoff Rose 07961 933290 / 07957 991002, as required

### Police

PC Gary Sipson 07525 226575 or 101 x 800 7673  
Email : [gary.sipson@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:gary.sipson@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk)

PCSO 4741 Keith Crowhurst 07889 702823 or 101 x 8007671  
Email : [keith.crowhurst4741@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:keith.crowhurst4741@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk)

Web, showing other contacts: [www.nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk](http://www.nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk)

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Otherwise police switchboard	101
Crimestoppers (anonymous crime reports)	0800 555111

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Ollerton Surgery - Middleton Lodge Practice	01623 703266
Newark Hospital	01636 681681
Bassetlaw Hospital	01909 500990
King's Mill Hospital	01623 622515

Fire Safety Advice (Tuxford Fire Station)	01777 870381
MP Mr Robert Jenrick: <a href="mailto:robert.jenrick.mp@parliament.uk">robert.jenrick.mp@parliament.uk</a>	01636 612 837
County Councillor: <a href="mailto:cllr.mike.pringle@nottsc.gov.uk">cllr.mike.pringle@nottsc.gov.uk</a>	0115 977 5661

Parish Council website: [www.laxtonandmoorhouseparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.laxtonandmoorhouseparishcouncil.co.uk)

# VE Day – 75 Photo Round Up



Roy Haynes' tribute to the Key Workers one Thursday evening during the 8pm clap.

The brilliant tank tribute for VE Day-75

