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THE BRIDGE

Church and Village magazine for Sweffling

June/July 2021

On line at: <https://sweffling.life>



Summer in a Suffolk garden

With the start of the easing of the second Covid lockdown hopefully we can look forward to village activities recommencing, albeit maybe in a different form from pre-pandemic. Whilst cases of Covid are currently low in East Suffolk, we all still need to take precautions and act sensibly if we are to eventually return to some form of normality. Jill (Abbott) has written regarding the possibility of a church village fete and there are advance dates for proposed Christmas activities, including the Christmas Market, Christmas Brunch and Christmas Brass Band Concert.

There is also information about Church services in Sweffling, which from July it is hoped will return to the previous two services per month, on the first and third Sundays.

However, we are not there yet, and if you need help of any kind the village group continues to provide help and support to anyone who needs it - shopping, collecting medicines, dog-walking and chatting on the phone. Thank you again to everyone who has volunteered to provide this special service to keep our community safe and supported. If you need help, please phone Marie on 07849 119259 or 664178 and she will be happy to arrange it.

From the Reverend Martin Percival

After nearly three thousand rejections in thirteen years of job hunting, Graham Hoskins finally succeeded in starting work as a valet with a car and van hire company. The fifty-year-old bachelor had attended hundreds of interviews in his quest to get off the dole, but they only resulted in a growing pile of rejection letters.

'I never gave up hope, and now I can't believe I'm finally going back to work,' said a delighted Mr Hoskins before his first day at work. Living in a South Wales unemployment black spot, he struggled to make ends meet and maintain his sense of

dignity. Now he is happily cleaning vans and has doubled his income, thanks to his new job.

Mr Hoskins was made redundant from his last job at a factory and subsequently joined a jobseekers' club. He was on its books longer than anyone else. Over the years he kept files on all the jobs for which he applied, but after reaching his fiftieth birthday, he feared he would never work again.

'I just kept getting rejections; it was really disheartening,' he recalled. Now I feel I can look forward to the year ahead.'

What makes some people so determined, when others would give up more quickly?

If we can reflect for a moment on our spiritual lives we can see how important

persistence is for our growth and development as Christians.

First of all, persistence reveals genuine commitment. In the Old Testament, when the Hebrew people, had returned from their long exile away from their homeland, they set about rebuilding the city of Jerusalem and its Temple. The Book of Nehemiah records:

At last the wall was completed to half its original height around the entire city – for the workers worked hard. [Nehemiah 4:6]

The work of rebuilding the wall progressed well because the people had set their hearts and minds on accomplishing the task. They did not lose heart or give up, but persevered in the work. This has great implications for our Christian witness, prayer and worship.

Do not be tempted to give up especially when there is opposition, discouragement or when there seems to be no answer.

Secondly, perseverance reveals genuine believers. Our Lord said to his disciples:

All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. [St Mark 13:13]

To believe and to stand firm will take perseverance, because our faith will be challenged and opposed. Sometimes the opposition will come from other people and sometimes by the challenges of illness, worry and the ordinary events of daily life.

Finally, perseverance reveals genuine faith. The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews observes:

But Christ, God's faithful Son, is in complete charge of God's house. And we Christians are God's house – he lives in us – if we keep up our courage firm to the end, and our joy and our trust in the Lord. [Hebrews 3:6].

Since Christ lives in us, we can remain courageous and hopeful to the end. Our courage and hope reveal that our faith is real. Without this enduring faithfulness, we could easily be blown away by the winds of temptation, false teaching, or opposition and discouragement.

Martin

Church Opening times

Sweffling Church will continue to be open for private prayer on Wednesdays and Sundays, between 10.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. Please feel welcome to visit the church on the open days. There is hand sanitizer in church, please use it to keep everyone safe.

Reports of Annual Village meetings

1. The Annual Parish Church Meeting was held in Sweffling Church on May 12th 2021 at 6.00 p.m. and was chaired by the Rev. Percival. The main purpose of the meeting was to elect the Churchwardens and the members of the Parochial Church Council, together with receiving annual reports from the Churchwardens and Treasurer.

Mr. Geoffrey Abbott and Professor John Tesh were re-elected unanimously as Churchwardens. PPC members are Miss Coleman, Mrs Fagan, Dr. Fitzgerald-Robbins, Mrs. Loveridge, Mr. Morford, Mrs Smith, and Mrs. Tesh. Professor Tesh was re-elected as Treasurer and Mrs Tesh as Secretary.

Professor Tesh reported that because of the Covid-19 pandemic the church had been closed for public worship for possibly the first time in its almost 1000 year history, although it had been open twice each week for private prayer. He thanked the Rev. Martin Percival, who had worked very hard to maintain a degree of continuity, with weekly prayer and reflection sheets, on-line Morning Prayer from his home and on-line Holy Communion services, recorded in rotation from the six churches in the Benefice. He also thanked everyone who had helped to maintain the church and churchyard. During the relaxation of lockdown during the summer and early Autumn, one of the highlights had been the Harvest Thanksgiving Service on the first Sunday in October, when tinned and packaged goods rather than fresh produce were requested, so that these could be sent to the Waveney food bank. The response from the village was amazing and the donations received filled the back of a large 4 x 4 with the seats folded down. Obviously during the lockdowns church income had been reduced and, with the exception of the "Pancakes and Coffee Morning" organised by Eleanore Fitzgerald in February before lockdown in aid of The British Heart Foundation, all other fund-raising events were cancelled. Nevertheless, the PCC decided to donate money from Church Funds to two of the organisations we support - the Hospital in the Gambia, and to TEAR fund for famine and disaster relief.

Sadly, in August, the funeral took place of Leslie Holden, one of Sweffling's best-known and much respected residents, Leslie, was a great supporter of all things Sweffling. Although the congregation in church was limited to approximately 30 people, the service was relayed into the churchyard, where many friends and colleagues gathered to remember Leslie and to support Veronica and family, or lined the Street as the cortege made its way to church.

The Church continued to sponsor "The Bridge" which has been produced bi-monthly, either on-line or in print version, It has been circulated free of charge to every house in the village, and thanks are due to those who delivered it.

2. The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council was held in Sweffling Hut on May 18th at 6.30 p.m. and was open to all village residents. The meeting was chaired by Mr John Stanley, as chairman of the Parish Council, and he introduced the other members of the Parish Council, including the recently-elected councillor, Miss Erica Spall, to the members of the public who were in attendance. The aim of the meeting was to inform the village of the work of the county and district councils and of the various village activities during the past year. Précis of the reports of the county and district councillors were presented by the Parish Clerk, Mr. Mike Smithson. Reports of village activities were given either in person by representatives from the activities or were read by the parish Clerk. Copies of these reports will be posted on the Parish Council website, www.sweffling.com

At the conclusion of this meeting, the Parish Council met briefly to elect officers and members of sub-committees but any further business was referred to the next meeting of the Parish Council, which will be held on June 8th 2021 in Sweffling Hut. Please refer to the Parish Council notice board and the web-site for the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting and for the agenda of the June meeting.

'Labour of Love' renovating our historical village signpost.

Sweffling has unique grassy islands at many of its junctions and the most southerly one, outside Alde House, has a century old fingerboard road sign in need of repair. Because

the Highways department would replace it with a modern sign, Kim Hayes has taken on the job of repairing it and as he took down the sign Anna Gibbons captured the moment.



Kim reports that it will take several weeks to get it back to its original condition. The wood is totally rotten and many of the letters broken. He will make the boards out of hardwood and copy the letters onto sheet aluminium and cut them out to screw them back on. With the place names on both sides and

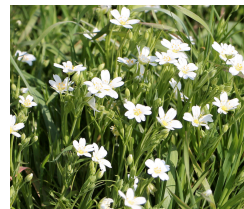


six long names this is indeed a labour of love. Kim says 'G' is the most difficult letter to cut and there are ten of them!

Hopefully in the next copy of 'The Bridge' we can show you the finished product. Thank you Kim for all your hard work. Watch this space!

Nature Notes – June/July

May is the time when the wildflowers of grassland areas, like Sweffing churchyard, come into their own. Sweffling does not have a display of spectacular flowers such as the show of Orchids at Cransford churchyard, but what it does have is an assembly of plants typical of relic areas of acid grassland, which although unspectacular are found nowhere else in our village. From now into early Summer the sequence of flowers are mostly white or yellow. This year there is a good display of a small member of the Cow Parsley family, with flat heads of tiny white flowers and finely divided leaves which look like Fennel or Dill. The plant is known as Pignut, or Earth Nut, after the underground tubers which it produces. I have happy memories as a boy of digging these up with a penknife with friends and eating them either raw or roasted in a fire. They tasted rather reminiscent of Chestnuts. Elsewhere in the village, abundant along the roadsides is the more familiar, and much larger Cow Parsley. This is the forerunner of several other species, including Chervil and Hogweed, as the summer progresses. Also, showing a really good display this spring and early summer, are the white flowers of Stitchwort, apparently named from their thin, thread-like flower stalks.

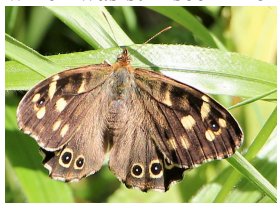


Among the many yellow flowers in the short churchyard turf are several different composites, resembling Dandelions, but smaller and with tougher stems. They are quite hard to identify, and have confusing names like Cat's Ear, Hawkweed and Hawkbit. So here is



an easy one to start with. You will notice that one of them is a much paler yellow than the others, which are mainly Dandelion coloured. This is probably the Mouse-ear Hawkweed. It has a low rosette of rather spoon shaped leaves, the undersides of which are distinctly white and quite hairy. The growth habit of sending out runners means that the plant sometimes forms a wide clump in the short turf.

As you know, I always worry about whether Cuckoos will come back to the valley, as their numbers have seriously declined. This year the first one I heard locally was on May 9th. This is late for a first Cuckoo, although others may have heard them before that. You will remember that, despite the sunshine, we had a considerable spell of cold weather, with Northerly winds that must have impeded migrating birds on their way north. The British Trust for Ornithology have for several years now caught and fitted a number of Cuckoos from Norfolk with satellite tags, and have been able to track them around their wintering grounds in central Africa. You can find these on their website – it really is very interesting. Swallows and House Martins too seemed to arrive rather late, and in disappointing numbers. Swifts, however, arrived in the first week of May, which is very much the same as usual. Among the latest migrants to arrive are the Turtle Dove, whose soft, purring call has all but disappeared, and the Spotted Flycatcher, also decreasing but which was still seen in one or two Sweffling gardens last year.



Bright sunshine this spring brought out many of the early butterflies; Peacocks, Red Admirals, Brimstones and Orange Tips. Now it is also time for the first of the brown species, the Speckled Wood with its handsome cream spots. Speckled Woods live in sunny woodland clearings and so can often be seen in gardens. Look out also in the garden for the first of the blues, the Holly Blue. *Geoffrey Abbott*

Will there be a Fete in Sweffling this year?

The date saved is Saturday 14th August.

It is really difficult to predict how we shall all be feeling in the middle of August!

- Will we want to be inviting outsiders into our village?
- Will we be happy to handle money?
- Are we prepared to add all the safety measures to our stalls and games?
- What about handling food?
- Will enough people come?

What will we be allowed to do?

These and other questions will be discussed at a Fete Meeting to be held at Sweffling Hut on **Thursday 24th June 2021 at 7.30pm. All welcome.** This date is provisional and details will be confirmed to you by email as soon as the government guidelines are published.

Several of you have already emailed me with your thoughts and it would be very helpful if more folk could do this, to gauge the feeling in the village. Whatever happens it will not be possible to run a Dog Show this year - for various reasons. The feeling of the management committee is that we should definitely find a way to have some kind of village event, even if it is only for social reasons. We need to get together!

For newcomers to the village, or anyone who does not already get fete notifications, the email address is <swefflingfete@gmail.com> Please message this address with ideas and any thoughts - I look forward to receiving them and hope to see you at the Fete meeting.

Many thanks - *Jill Abbott* *Chairman of SFO and Fete Co-ordinator*

'Chitchat and Craft' at the Hut A New Venture

Dates for your diary! Every Monday in July, 10 a.m. – 12 noon

(If successful it could continue)

Bring your knitting/crochet/sewing etc. - any small portable hobby or craft that you enjoy but this is not compulsory.



A chance to catch up after all the lockdowns.

Enjoy a hot drink together. Put the world to rights!

Meet new friends and neighbours. Enjoy a new social life!

Everyone welcome - any age, and not just ladies!

For information please ring Jill on 663402

At the first meeting we will decide on cost and a rota for 'coffee duty.'

Hope to see you there!

Sweffling Townland Trust

Anyone who has recently moved into the village might not be aware of the Sweffling Village Charity, the Townland Trust.

The present Townland Trust has grown from 2 old charities:

1. Leggett's Gift – On 20th April 1568, Henry Leggett charged that the income from a piece of land, 40 shillings at that time, should be distributed amongst the poor of the village, together with other money subscribed by other inhabitants of Sweffling. It was originally used to buy coal for the winter and bread.

2. Feoffes Estate - In 1699, Ezra Crisp conveyed to the Rector, as trustee, and his successors, and other trustees, two houses and 6 acres of land in Sweffling, for the purpose of keeping in repair and good order the church and churchyard, and for payment of other charges on the inhabitants of the parish of Sweffling.

Over the years the charities have been amalgamated and evolved into what is now known as the Townland Trust. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commissioners.

The Trust now holds assets as investments, accrued from the sale of land and property over the years. It still holds one cottage, currently known as Rodwell's Cottage and the Townland Meadow and pavilion.

Income comes from rent from the property, interest on investments, a small amount of rent and fees from the meadow and donations from the fete. The first calls on the income of the Trust are to maintain its assets and to pay any costs of the charity (insurance etc.).

After these have been discharged some or all of the remainder of the income can be divided between the church and the needs of the village. The income is divided on a 50:50 basis.

The Townland Trust is independent of the church and any other village organisation.

According to the Charity Charter, the Rector is the chairman of the trustees but this post can be delegated by agreement of the other trustees. There are normally 4 other trustees.

There is no time limit to the service of a trustee. Under the conditions of the Trust, trustees and their families are not permitted to benefit from the Trust.

Money from the Trust can only be used for the benefit of Sweffling Church or Sweffling residents. Anyone from the village in any form of need can apply to the Trust for assistance. The amount of grant given is at the discretion of the trustees and is confidential. Grants do not have to be repaid if the applicant's circumstances change at a later date. As people do not always like to approach the Trust themselves, if you are

aware of anyone who might benefit by help from the Trust, please have a quiet word with one of the trustees.

Currently the trustees are: The Rev. Martin Percival, Andy Franklin (663600), Sandy Rowe (663753), Veronica Southey (663509) and Sheila Tesh (663518)

Sweffling White Horse Bowls Club

We are a small friendly Bowls Club of just over 30 members and we play on the green at Poplar Farm, adjacent to Sweffling Hut. We have teams in three local leagues, Saxmundham, Woodbridge and the Fynn league. This year our season runs from May through to early September and we usually play on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. We are always interested in recruiting new players, young and old, and you are very welcome to join us, whether experienced or a novice. If you would like more information, please contact John Stanley on 663073.

Plant Stall in aid of St. Elizabeth Hospice

Currently, each Sunday, outside the Sweffling White Horse, there is a stall selling a variety of plants, with proceeds from the sale going to the St. Elizabeth Hospice. If you are in need of some plants to fill an odd corner in the garden, or would like some vegetable plants to grow on, why not visit the White Horse, buy your plants and help support the Hospice at the same time? Donations of spare plants are gratefully appreciated.

Church Services in the Benefice June/July 2021

Provided that the roadmap out of lockdown is not disrupted, it is planned to hold the following services in the Benefice during June and in Sweffling and Rendham during July.

Date	Venue	Time	Service
June 6th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
	Badingham	11.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
June 13th	Cransford	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
	Dennington	11.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
June 20th	Bruisyard	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
	Rendham	11.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
June 27th	Benefice Service Dennington	10.00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
July 4th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
July 11th	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
July 18th	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer
July 25th	Rendham	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
August 1st	Sweffling	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion

Covid Rapid Lateral Flow Tests

The UK Government has recommended that everyone, regardless of age or vaccination status, has regular rapid lateral flow tests to check whether or not they are Covid-19 positive. Local testing centres will soon be closing, for example at the Fire Station in Framlingham, but home testing kits can be collected from Saxmundham Library or local pharmacies. The test kits are free and are simple to use. Everything required to perform

the test and full instructions are included in each kit. Each box contains 7 tests and it is recommended that you test twice weekly. You can pick them up for yourself, neighbours, work colleagues, family & friends.

Saxmundham Library is open Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday 10 a.m. - 4.30 p.m., Thursday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. - 1 p.m..

With more venues unlocking, more contact with other people and the rapidly spreading Indian variant of Covid -19, it is sensible to take advantage of home testing to keep our community safe.

Summer Flower Show - Saturday July 31st



Provided all COVID restrictions are lifted in June, the Alde Community Council is hoping to hold a Summer Flower Show in Sweffling Hut on 1st July.

Entry forms will be in Village Halls and on Village websites and these will specify the classes for both individual flowers and floral arrangements.

Bring your exhibits to the Hut between 9.00 and 10.00am. Judging will be at 10.00am. The show opens to all for viewing at 2.00pm. Entry £1.00 (under 12s free) includes tea/coffee

Presentation of cups will be at 3.30pm followed by drawing of the Raffle.

For enquiries ring Lynda on 663325

The traditional Spring Flower show had to be cancelled in 2020 and 2021 and the Summer Flower Show is a new venture, so **please give us your support.**

You do not have to be a professional gardener to enter, but judging by the beautiful gardens in our villages, there should be some excellent entries.

Advance Dates for your Diaries (Covid Permitting)

Sunday October 3rd. Harvest Festival Thanksgiving Service in St. Mary's Church at 9.30 a.m. followed by **Harvest Lunch** in Sweffling Hut at 1.00 p.m.. Proceeds from the lunch to be donated to TEAR Fund for famine/disaster relief

Saturday November 27th Sweffling Church Christmas Market in Framlingham, United free Church Hall

Saturday December 4th Christmas Brunch and Market in Sweffling Hut

Friday December 10th Christmas Brass Band Concert in St.Mary's Church

BOOK THE DATES. More information near the times.

Please e-mail any news items, events or short literary items for consideration for inclusion in the August/September edition to john.tesh@talk21.com before **July 15th**. The editors welcome contributions for The Bridge but reserve the right to edit. Accuracy of the content is the responsibility of the submitter. We are limited to 8 pages and so may not be able to publish everything we receive. Dated items of village interest will be given priority. Please include your name and contact details in case we need to get in touch.

The Bridge is sponsored by St. Mary's Church and circulated free to all houses in the Village.