

THE BRIDGE JUNE/JULY 2024

Church and Village magazine for Sweffling

Village website: sweffling@onesuffolk.net

Churchwardens: Geoffrey Abbott 663402; John Tesh 663518



Abstracted from “Every summer has a story” by Sarah Lundgren:

As I look back at past summers I see a trail of beautiful and bittersweet memories. There have been summers that have overflowed with joy and summers that have been filled with deep sadness and pain. The common thread was that every summer was unique and had its own tale to tell. Just as every *earthly* summer has a story, so does every *spiritual* summer.

We will each walk through the spiritual seasons many times. Autumn is a time of change, Winter a time of barrenness and preparation, Spring is a time of rebirth and summer is a time for bearing fruit and embracing the abundant life that surrounds us.

The key to embracing our spiritual summer is the remember to seize the joy of the season. This is the time to feel the heavenly warmth on our face and revel in the beauty that surrounds us. Relax, have fun, celebrate and abide in the gratitude for all of our blessings. Autumn and winter will come, but don't let thoughts of the unknown rob you of the joy of the moment.

Summer is the season known for cultivating and bearing good fruit. There is just nothing like a sun-ripened summer strawberry – it is like a taste of heaven on earth! Our spiritual fruits of love, joy peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness faithfulness, gentleness and self-control must also be cultivated and ripened so that they can be even sweeter than the best summer strawberry. There is one sure way to do this and to remember who our spiritual gardener is, and to remain in Him always:

“I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit: apart from me you can do nothing” (John chapter 15 v. 15)

The seasons may change but our good and loving Father does not. Let's celebrate our summers, both earthly and spiritual, and embrace every story being written, because God's hand is in each one. *Amen*

Up-date on the Inter-regnum: Following the retirement of the Rev. Percival, two formal meetings have been held, which set in motion the search for a new priest for our Benefice. The vacant post has been advertised on the diocesan web-site and at the time of going to press one application has been received. At the beginning of June, the prospective candidate will visit the six parishes and meet with the churchwardens and PCCs, and this will be followed by a formal interview. This approach gives both the candidate and the Benefice the opportunity to assess whether they are right for each other. Hopefully we will know by mid-June whether or not we have a new priest. In the meantime, service will continue as before (see later in The Bridge).

Lent Soup Lunch: Our annual Lent Soup Lunch, held in Sweffling Hut on March 23rd, was very successful. There were ten different varieties of soup, vegetarian, non-vegetarian and gluten free options so everyone was well provided for. It was an excellent opportunity to meet friends and chat whilst enjoying a delicious ready-prepared lunch. The proceeds from the lunch and the raffle amounted to £400 and this has been sent to Tearfund to help with Famine relief. Thanks to everyone who made soup, those who helped on the day and to everyone who supported this event.

Easter Sunday: For the Benefice service on Easter Sunday the scent of lilies filled St. Mary's church, each lily given in memory of a family member or friend. The beautiful Easter gardens reminded us of the first Easter day when Christ rose from the dead. The church was filled to capacity as we welcomed the Rural Dean, the Rev, Chris Davey and the Rev. Deidre West, who jointly conducted the service of Holy Communion. The benefice choir led the singing of familiar Easter hymns and also sang the introit "This joyful Eastertide" and the anthem "God so loved the world" It was a splendid occasion, a fitting celebration of the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. After the service there was the opportunity to enjoy refreshments and Easter eggs!! Thank you to all those who helped to arrange the lilies, to make the Easter Gardens and to everyone who took part in the service and provided refreshments. (See centrefold for photos)

ACC Spring Flower show: *Lynda Newson writes:* We held a very successful flower show this year, although the weather had not been good to us, we had 98 exhibits. Not many daffodils but a lovely selection of shrubs and arrangements. Cups were won by Sheila Tesh, Glynis Holman and Richard Shattock for his superb exhibit of hellebores. The children's section was well supported again this year, with cups won by Esme Parsons- Mann, Teddy Parsons-Mann, and Boe Strachan. Well done to everyone. (See centrefold for photos)

Sweffling St Mary's Church, Annual Church Meeting: The Annual Church meeting was held on Tuesday 6th May at 6.00 p.m. in Church. Mr. Geoffrey Abbott and Professor John Tesh were re-elected as church wardens. Each churchwarden gave a short report on the work of the church during the year. Church life in Sweffling continues to be very active both within the village and much further afield. A minimum of two services are held each month, with special services at intervals. Dr. Anne Fitzgerald holds Sunday School in conjunction with each service when there are children in the congregation. Fund raising events for the church included a very enjoyable concert by "5 in a bar", the annual "Christmas Brass" Concert by the Leiston Royal British Legion Brass Band and the Christmas Brunch and Market. The "out-reach" programme continues strongly with charity fund-raising events including the Lent Soup Lunch and the Harvest Lunch. A total of £1400 was sent to Tear Fund for disaster and famine relief. We also continue to support the hospital in The Gambia.

The programme of church and churchyard maintenance continues. A big thank you to all the willing, and usually unseen, volunteers who look after our church so well, inside and outside. The church share of £1500 from the Village Fete last year went towards payment of a bill of £6100 for repairs to the tower both inside and out – louvres, stonework and pointing, and to rebuilding the southwest buttress of the porch.

The following members were elected to the PCC: Miss Coleman, Mrs. Daniel, Mrs Fagan, Dr. Fitzgerald, Mrs. Loveridge, Mr. Morford, Mrs Smith, Mrs. Tesh (Secretary). Professor Tesh will continue as treasurer and Deanery Synod representative.

Sweffling Parish Council: The Annual Village Meeting (AVM) and AGM was held on Tuesday, 14th May in Sweffling Hut. At the AVM the chairman, Councillor Tesh, welcomed Peter Grogan as the new Parish Clerk and thanked councillors Daniel and Abbott for their sterling efforts during the past year both in preparing for a very successful audit by SALC and in carrying the workload of the PC during the periods when there was no clerk. Stephen Burroughes, Suffolk County Councillor, gave a brief over view of the work of the County Council during the last year. – his comprehensive report is available on the village website. Councillor Daniel, as acting RFO, summarised the financial situation of the PC. Short reports were then received from a number of the village organisations. The AVM was followed by the Parish Council AGM. Copies of the short reports and the minutes of both meetings can be found on the village website and/or on the Parish Council notice board.

The next meeting of the PC will be held at 7.30 p.m. on June 11th in Sweffling Hut. All members of the village are welcome to attend.

Sweffling Fete and Fun Dog Show 2024 - Update on planning:



Planning for this year's fete on **Saturday, 10th August** is well under way and we'd like to thank all the people who have already committed their time to help. As the event draws closer we will inevitably need a number of people to offer their time on the day to help set things out, man the car park, assist on stalls etc. If you are available, can you please let Steve Ashurst know, either contacting on 663232 or drop an

email to ashurst.stephen@talk21.com. Steve and Sue Ashurst have picked up running the event for this year after Jill stepped down.

Over the coming weeks the stall holders will be reaching out asking for donations to fill up their stalls, so please be ready to donate those jars of jam, bottles of booze and other goodies. Maybe even a weekend in your rental property as a prize for the raffle!

Based on feedback received, we are changing some things for this year's event including having a greater variety of drinks on the bar, and more vegetarian offerings on the BBQ. One new stall this year will be dedicated to showcasing how the money raised by the fete is spent by the beneficiary groups and projects. Some things just don't need changing and we are looking forward to seeing an even greater number of dogs participating in the dog show.

The weather forecast for August is looking great and we look forward to another great event with new friendships made, old friendships renewed, as people join in what has become a great focus for pulling the village together.

Village children aged 0-18

We would like to organise activities for the young people living in the ACC villages.

Around 89 families with dependent children are in the three villages of Sweffling, Bruisyard, and Rendham (31 children are in Sweffling). The hope is to seek grant funding so that the activities are very low-cost/free for participating children.

Determining what our young people would like to do would be helpful. Please complete the form temporarily placed on the front page of the Sweffling Website to help guide us to the right activities <https://sweffling.onesuffolk.net/> or call Laura on 664084.

Photos from Memorial Lilies and Easter Gardens and ACC Flower show



Sweffling Bygones Open Day: Sunday, May 12th was a lovely sunny day and the crowds turned out to enjoy the excellent (as always!) display of cars, tractors, standing engines, household items, clothes, country crafts etc, and to enjoy the music and chat. The pizza, sausage rolls, cakes and ice creams were delicious. After a very successful day the amount raised was £1800.00. Many thanks to everyone who helped and contributed food. It is always appreciated. *(Ed. – a huge thankyou also to Julian and Sandy for their hard work!)*



Bridge Nature Notes: June/July 2024

To start with, an apology. This time of year brings a glut of things to look out for in nature. There are all the summer flowers, butterflies and other insects, and all the migrant birds (listen out for the Cuckoo!). But this month I am not going to talk about any of these. You will just have to look them up in some back numbers. Sorry.

Instead, I am going to talk, rather self-indulgently, about just one bird. My favourite bird:

The Raven.

To me, as a child, the Raven was just one more bird in my bird book which I hoped one day to see. I did know that they lived in wild, mountain areas, so when we started walking in the Yorkshire Dales, I looked and listened out for them, but with no success. Only when we started Youth Hostelling in the Lake District did I finally find them. I was sure they would be there. I had borrowed my Mother's book of Wordsworth's poems, which I



devoured, and he wrote about Ravens on Helvellyn ("The crags repeat the Raven's croak, in symphony austere"). Sure enough they were there, and my fascination with them began. Even without binoculars I could appreciate their great size, jet black with a great shiny black bill, and the deep loud croak which echoed around the mountains.

Later, in other mountain areas such as Snowdonia, I got to know them better. They have tremendous character and intelligence, and, I would maintain, a huge sense of fun. For instance, on several occasions, I took a course of birdwatchers up onto Snowdon, where a highcombe (Cwm-y- Llan) opens onto the upper slopes of the Gwynant Valley. Here, two or four Ravens would regularly fly down the updraft from the Cwm into the valley, croaking loudly, flipping over onto their backs and tobogganing, upside-down, all the way down. They would then fly back up and do the same thing again! Why would a bird do that, except for fun?



So, I think my fascination with Ravens is a combination of admiration for what they can do, and the way that they and their calls can deeply evoke the wild places where I got to know them. But there were times when they were not confined to these places. Like the Buzzard, Ravens were once found all over the country. The naturalist Gilbert White writes, in the 18th century, of them nesting regularly for many years in the same tree in Selbourne, Hampshire. Our forebears knew them well, and they were familiar in myth and poetry, often with a dark side. To the Anglo-Saxons they were birds of battle, feasting upon the slain (from the poem The Battle of Brunanburgh which King Athelstan fought in 938 we hear about "the dark Raven with horny bill"). Viking myths, which would have been current in Danish East Anglia, tell that their chief god, Odin, had two Ravens called Huginn and Muninn (Thought and Memory) which travelled around the world to bring back news to him. I like to think that his Anglo-Saxon equivalent, Woden, also had Ravens, but the early Christian scribes deleted all references to paganism, except for some place names and the days of the week, so we may never know. Some Viking warlords carried a Raven banner, and the Viking king Anlaf of York minted silver pennies showing a flying Raven. It is said that, in

Yorkshire, naughty children were told that 'the black Raven will get you! but I don't remember that actually remember that particular threat. Since then, also like the Buzzard, Ravens were heavily persecuted by gamekeepers and sheep farmers, and so were confined to the hills and sea cliffs of the North and West. However, in the last few decades, and again like the Buzzard (most people will have seen how completely Buzzards have returned, without any artificial re-introductions), Ravens have started a comeback. They have already spread south and east into many lowland counties – they started breeding in Bedfordshire soon after we left, twenty years ago. Now, bird reports even tell of gradually increasing sightings in East Suffolk. So, for the last few years I have been looking and listening out, in hopes that one day they may arrive in the Alde Valley. Sure enough, as I was walking along the Glemham Road on 12th April, there was the thrill of that deep, echoing croak, and the distinctive black shape of a Raven flying high overhead, accompanied by a couple of Carrion Crows. I say distinctive shape. The Raven, as well as being very large, has long wings, a prominent head due to its heavy bill and thick neck, and a long tail, conspicuously tapered at the end. The whole effect can be rather cross-shaped. There it was, unmistakeable. Odin's bird is coming back!

Geoffrey Abbott

Coffee, Cake, Chat and Craft in Sweffling Hut: On the first Monday of each month, between 10.00 and 12.00 noon, why not come to the Village Hall and enjoy a cup of coffee, some delicious home-made cake and the opportunity to meet with or make new friends? No invitation necessary, just come along and if you feel like bringing knitting, sewing or any other sort of craft to do as you chat that is fine. There is no charge, just a donation towards the coffee. Liz Eaton is the person to contact for further details (663613)

Jubilee Field: The maintenance programme for 2024 is well in hand. Regular mowing of the central play areas and fitness areas is undertaken by our contractor. The wild flower areas are looking spectacular and provide many different types of flowers and grasses for bees and other pollinating insects. The Parish Council are always happy to receive positive comments via Councillor Steve Ashurst.

Sweffling Tennis Club: Sweffling Tennis Club is a thriving community of tennis players from Sweffling and surrounding villages. It is good to see the court so well used. We welcome new members, and as the summer holidays approach, we hope there will be many opportunities to arrange tennis matches, coaching and socials. For further information please check the village website, or contact Sue Rusack, club secretary: SueRyderR@rusack.myzen.co.uk

Empowering Our Community: First Aid Training for all ACC Village Residents

In a recent milestone for our village, Sweffling hosted the first of a series of first aid courses with retired local emergency medicine practitioner Dr. Paul Davis. Dr Davis guided a group of 12 participants through comprehensive emergency first-aid training (EFAW Certificate). We were pleased to receive our Emergency First Aid certificates, but even more delighted to leave with confidence and awareness of marking a significant step in our community's preparedness for medical emergencies. During this course, we uncovered critical insights into the urgency of first aid response, particularly in cases of cardiac arrest. Did you know that the chances of survival from a cardiac arrest decrease by 10% for every minute without defibrillation? It's eye-opening to realize that only 8% of UK patients survive cardiac arrest, underscoring the vital importance of rapid response.

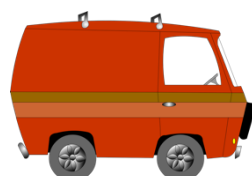
A second course was held in Rendham on May 25th, with plans for a final session in Bruisyard. To further engage our community, we will host 'Have a Go' coffee mornings, where individuals can familiarize themselves with CPR techniques, defibrillators, and emergency response tools like Epi-Pens. The more knowledgeable individuals we have, the safer our community becomes. Whether you're involved in planning events or activities or simply want to contribute to your friends and family's well-being and safety, acquiring first aid skills is invaluable. Together, let's build a more resilient and prepared village.

Anonymous feedback given on the Sweffling First Aid Course:

"It is apparent that Paul Davis has an excellent pedigree to lead such a course as this.

Top marks. The venue provided everything needed".

"Excellent training, very knowledgeable and excellent at sharing his knowledge. The best training I have had on any course". "Very enjoyable day"



Mobile Shop: A reminder that Dales's Mobile Shop visits the village each Thursday between 1.30 p.m. and 2.00 p.m. It is parked in the layby at the front of the church. He has a wide range of household items and fruit and vegetables and comes highly recommended by those village residents who have shopped with him. Please support the shop if you can, so that

Sweffling does not lose this very useful facility.

SWEFFLING CHURCH SERVICES DURING INTERREGNUM JUNE - SEPTEMBER 2024, FIRST AND THIRD SUNDAYS

Date	Time	Service	Conducted by
June 2nd	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	Bishop Mike
June 16th	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer	Prof. John Tesh
June 30th	10.00 a.m.	Benefice Holy Communion Badingham	The Rev. Deidre West
July 7th	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	The Rev. Deidre West
July 21st	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer	Prof. John Tesh
August 4th	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	The Archdeacon of Suffolk
August 18 th	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer	To be confirmed
September 1st	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	The Rev. Deidre West
September 15th	9.30 a.m.	Morning Prayer	To be confirmed

St.Michael's Church, Rendham, have Morning Prayer on the second Sunday in each month and Holy Communion on the fourth Sunday of each month, all at 9.30 a.m.

Taize Service in Sweffling: Four members of Sweffling congregation visited the Cathedral in Bury St. Edmunds for a workshop about organising Taize services. The Taizé community is an ecumenical monastic order which was founded in France during the 1940s with a strong devotion to peace and justice through prayer and meditation. A Taizé worship service involves sung and chanted prayers, meditation, a period of silence and liturgical readings. There is no preaching. The style of prayer practiced at Taizé has attracted many worshipers from around the globe and from many different denominations.

It is a very peaceful, reflective form of service. Two members of our congregation are looking into the possibility of organising a Taize service in Sweffling in the Autumn, possible on one Sunday evening. Further details will be announced as they become available.

Remember the Rural Coffee caravan comes to Sweffling Hut on the 4th Wednesday of the month. 10am - 12noon. The next dates are June 26th and July 24th.

The Coffee Caravan's aim is to help rurally isolated communities in Suffolk access services and information to improve their lives, health and well-being and to unite people, empowering and strengthening rural communities. They have access to a raft of information on local and national agencies, organisations, activities and support services.

If there are questions about what's available locally, they will help find the answers.

They provide free tea and coffee from 10 am- 12 noon

Everyone welcome – If we don't use it, we will lose it!!

Welcome to Sweffling's Knit and Natter - Fourth Monday of the month, 7-9 p.m. at Sweffling White Horse.

Our contemporary knitting circle offers a cosy and welcoming space to knitters of all skill levels to gather together, practise their craft and engage in friendly conversation. For more information visit the village website or contact Laura Parsons-Mann on 664084

N.B. The Sweffling White Horse offers complimentary tea and coffee, as well as selling drinks and snacks from the bar.

Future dates for your diary	
Saturday August 10th	Sweffling Fete. 1.00 p.m. – 4.00 p.m. Townland Meadow
Sunday October 6 th	Harvest Festival Thanksgiving Service 9.30 a.m. St Mary' Church
Followed by	Harvest Lunch in Sweffling Hut 1.00 p.m. Proceeds to Tear Fund for famine relief
Saturday November 30 th	Christmas Brunch and Market. 10.00 a.m-12 noon Sweffling Hut
Friday December 6 th	Christmas Brass Concert 7.30 p.m. St. Mary's Church

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 is delivered free to all houses in the Village.**