



Top Rank for Watton Air Cadet

Edward Watling (17) of Watton has been recognised as an outstanding Royal Air Force Air Cadet and was promoted to Cadet Warrant Officer, the organisation's most senior cadet position, on Wednesday 21 January.

The rank of Cadet Warrant Officer (CWO) is one that few cadets attain. To achieve this rank requires dedication, self-discipline and commitment. Promotion to this rank is not a guarantee and cadets are required to show excellent leadership and knowledge of their local unit, the RAF Air Cadets (RAFAC) as a whole and the training syllabus that is offered to every member. Candidates are required to sit an interview with a senior RAFAC officer to determine their suitability for the position. Officer Commanding 864 (Watton) Squadron, Flight Lieutenant Alex Stapleton RAFAC, said of the promotion "I am very proud of Edward and am grateful for his dedication to our Squadron. Promotion to

CWO is a fantastic achievement that is only attained by our highest quality cadets. Edward embodies our organisation's core values and I know that he will continue to be an excellent role model for our younger cadets. His promotion to CWO is the first at 864 Squadron for a number of years, and Edward is the youngest cadet in the unit's history to hold this rank."

Edward joined 864 (Watton) Squadron as a cadet in September 2021. During this time he has participated in numerous activities and events including camps, flying and gliding opportunities, parades and shooting. He has represented the unit flawlessly at many national events such as the Royal International Air Tattoo and is especially proud of his achievements in first aid where he is now able to deliver nationally recognised qualifications to his fellow cadets. Edward is keen to continue taking advantage of the many experiences that the organisation can offer, and hopes to attend the Nijmegen International Four Days Marches in July, walking up to 40km for four consecutive days in the Netherlands as part of a cadet team with the British Military Contingent.

Edward's new role will see him moving into a key position at the Squadron and within Norfolk and Suffolk Wing. He will be responsible for mentoring and guiding younger cadets through the organisation and be the key link between the cadet cadre and the staff team at camps and at the unit.



Edward Watling promoted by Officer Commanding Norfolk and Suffolk Wing ATC, Wing Commander Jason Allan RAFAC.

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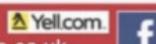
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Watton Post Office and Edwards News Prepare for Their Move

There's a small but significant change coming to Watton's High Street this March, as the Post Office prepares to move from its long-standing home at 50 High Street to new premises just a short stroll away at 1 Chaston Place (formerly Boots). The move follows a public consultation by the Post Office, and although the exact dates are still being finalised, the changeover is expected to take place in early March, with only a few days' gap while everything is transferred.

What many people may not realise is that it's not just the Post Office making the move - the whole of Watton Edwards News will be relocating with it. Store Manager Kalpesh Patel (right top), known simply as Kalpesh to most customers, is overseeing the transition, helping him is Dhairyra (below right) who is usually to be found behind the Post Office Counter.

Watton Edwards News has a long history in the town, especially in newspaper and magazine sales, and it continues to run a busy newspaper delivery service. The



shop is also well known for its cards, gifts, stationery, sweets and everyday groceries. All of this will be moving to the new site, which will operate as a convenience store, carrying the full existing range along with enhanced



groceries and supplies.

The Post Office itself will continue to offer a similar range of services, with a few additions, and the new premises will include a dedicated Post Office area built to full specification. The consultation raised some questions about internal space, but the Post Office has confirmed that the layout will be designed to ensure clear access, room for wheelchair users, and a hearing loop for those who need it. For anyone with questions — whether about the move, services, or what to expect — Kalpesh warmly invites customers to pop into Watton Edwards News for a chat. He's keen to make the transition as smooth as possible and will do his best to help.

Although any change on the High Street can feel like a big moment, this one is very much a case of familiar faces in a new home. With the move happening only a few doors away, and with the same team continuing to serve the community, Watton's Post Office and Edwards News look set to begin their next chapter with confidence and continuity.

Cooking Excellence From Rotary Young Chefs



Pictured above are - from left - Tabitha Chapman (runner up), Zuzanna Szot, Jack Tooke (winner), judge Michael Haythorpe, Kiera Hutton, Gracie O'Farrell and Ava Prior.

There is much talk of ultra-processed foods these days, and of traditional cooking skills being lost. Well, judging by the quality of food cooked by this year's contestants in the Rotary Young Chef competition, the art of cooking superb meals is very much alive among the young people of Watton.

Every year the Rotary Club of Watton holds its Young Chef competition at Wayland Academy, and this year six expert young cooks contested the final, having already progressed through two earlier rounds. Our judges Michael Haythorpe, with Paul and

Christina Weatherill had a very difficult job in selecting a winner and runner up, but after much deliberation they declared the winner to be Jack Tooke, with Tabitha Chapman runner up.

In announcing the awards Michael Haythorpe said the judges' task wasn't as easy as some might think. A good deal of food has to be sampled and given points for various aspects, such as presentation, taste and ingredients used. He mentioned that in an earlier round the judges had to work their way through 14 plates of scones, and place them in order of merit. It was some weeks before

he felt able to face another scene. For the competition final, contestants had to produce a main course meal and a dessert within a given time. Jack's winning entry was Tex Mex Chicken with a dessert of Key Lime Pie. Runner-up Tabitha produced a beef in red wine stew followed by raspberry cheesecakes.

On behalf of the judges, Michael Haythorpe praised all the finalists for the excellence of their cooking, and in particular thanked Gaynor Evans from Wayland Academy, without whose continuing support, our competition could not take place.



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Snowdrops & Winter Garden Treasures

Ashill, Holme Hale & District Garden Club

The garden club's first meeting of 2026 had professional gardener Guy Barker (pictured right by Tom Thurston) give a wonderful presentation on Snowdrops and other Winter Garden Treasures. Guy, who is Norfolk born and bred, manages a number of large private gardens in Norfolk and was formally trained and previously worked at RHS Wisley. Guy could certainly be described as a 'galanthophile' as the owner of 180 different species of Snowdrops (*Galanthus*). Guy explained that his first introduction to snowdrops was when his mother took him to see the garden at Shropham Vicarage, where six acres of the West Harling snowdrops were in flower. He was hooked!!



The first half of Guy's presentation consisted of him going through the 20 or so different species of snowdrop that he had brought from his own collection. In each case he explained how he came to own each particular snowdrop, what its origin was, how expensive the bulb is to buy and how easy it is to grow. Several of the species discussed originated in Norfolk and possess interesting names such as 'Pieces of Eight', 'Godfrey Owen' and 'Chantry Cracker'. He also discussed several of the snowdrop doubles first cultivated by Heyrick 'Tony' Greatorex at snowdrop acre in Norfolk between the two world wars.



Guy also bought with him cuttings from a number of shrubs that excel in the garden at winter, to give both colour and scent when most of the garden is dormant. These included the lovely *Viburnum Bodnantense* 'Charles Lamont', a plant that dares to flower when most everything else in the garden is sleeping. It produces bright pink flowers on bare wood from late autumn to early spring. Another winter garden treasure is *Hamamelis Mollis* (Chinese witch hazel) which produces lovely yellow flowers in winter with a strong fragrance. Other winter garden 'must haves' included *Pittosporum* 'warnham gold' a compact evergreen shrub with golden-yellow leaves that are brightest in winter and give colour to a winter garden.

Guy completed his presentation with slides of several other species of snowdrops and gardens in winter bloom. A lively Q&A completed a thoroughly enjoyable winter afternoon.

Upcoming Events

Our February meeting (26th) will have seed expert Jason Breed giving a presentation entitled 'Sow to Grow'. Our March 2026 meeting (26th) has Gwenda Kidd presenting a fascinating talk about 'Chemical Warfare (and co-operation) in the Garden'. All meetings are held at Holme Hale Pavilion and start at 2.30pm. New members from anywhere in the district are always welcome, so come along and improve your gardening knowledge, while enjoying a welcoming environment with like minded colleagues.

Website: ashillgardeningclub.wordpress.com/
Email: ashillholmelegardenclub@gmail.com

A Reminder!!

Have you remembered that there is going to be an Easter Bunny Hunt on Saturday 28th March 2025 in Griston?

Please come and join us to find out how many Easter Bunnies are watching out for you in Griston.

Hunt for the Bunnies bring your completed form back to the Church, (there will be prizes for everyone) and then how about a jacket potato for lunch, there will be various fillings hot and cold with a drink for £6.

There may also be a micro market with things for sale, if you would like a stall, please contact Jean on 01953 884082.

Any offers of help on the day will be gratefully received.

If you are happy to put an Easter Bunny card in your window, please let Jean know.



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In Your Garden With Lotta Potts

So off we plod into March. In like a lion, out like a lamb? Not very often but it's more cheering than 'has it stopped yet? No it's not' of Flanders & Swan fame. As I write to the deadline it isn't actually raining (February fill-dyke has never seemed so apt) and we are told that somewhere in this country it's rained every day of this year. Spring? Maybe, we can hope but at least the days are getting noticeably longer. On the subject of days:

1st Start of Meteorological Spring and St David's Day. Wear a daffodil or a leek.

15th Mothering Sunday

17th St Patrick's Day Wear a shamrock and you will no doubt see news of New York going completely barmy with green, and somewhere they dye a river.

20th Spring Equinox equal length days and nights. Seems a bit early as I always think June is for this

21st First day of Spring to many

28/29th We have to change the clocks. Forward?

The grass will be growing so this is the time to start mowing. Set the blades of the mower at the highest level and collect the cuttings so that air and rain can get to the roots. This is the time to repair damaged lawn edges by cutting a square out around the damaged edge, turning it round and repair the damaged bit inside the lawn with compost and seed. Do not do any of this if the lawn is soggy.

This month is about the latest to plant bare-root shrubs and trees and to move any evergreen shrubs. In both cases it's because you don't want leaves forming, showing new growth is beginning so the plant is taking moisture from the soil. Therefore chances are that the plant will take longer to establish as the leaves will begin to lose the water. If you should get stuck with this situation keep watering to help recovery.

If you are planting roses or have roses already now is the time to prune shrub and bush roses. This is because the flowers appear on the ends of the stems. Leave them and the only place to see the flowers is from an upstairs window. If you don't have upstairs windows you'll have to cross the road to admire them. Don't be frightened of pruning. Pruning is very unlikely to kill roses. The most likely death would be if you prune and frost gets in the wounds but it needs to be a really hard frost. I remember pruning roses on Christmas Day years ago and they thrived.

The rule of thumb basically is to aim for an open 'vase' shape. This will allow air circulation to deter disease. If you are unfamiliar with the procedure stand back and look at the plant. Remove any dead, diseased or very weak shoots. Now take out any that are crossing in the middle of the bush as if they rub the bark off one or both stems disease will get in. You can now see how it's shaping up. If it's lopsided prune the lower side harder (growth follows the knife) to balance it up once it's really in growth. Otherwise just prune the stems about knee-high at an outward facing bud. These are tiny red or green spots. Once you identify them you'll never miss them. If you can't find any cut the stem back and hope for the best. You can rectify any that have gone astray later. Always cut on the slant about half an inch above the

bud with the slope to take water away from the bud. Sometimes you get an illustration on a rose bush label. Don't get disheartened. A few years ago a rose grower pruned all the shrub roses in their beds with a hedge-trimmer. It worked just fine but they had to go back to doing it properly after about three years. The roses survived.

If you haven't been able to get outside in the winter now's the time for a real spring clean. Fork over the soil in beds and borders, weeding as you go and dig up and divide over-crowded perennials. If you have snowdrops in large clumps dig them up and divide, replanting the divisions. This method of planting 'in the green' works much better than buying dry bulbs in September. If you buy a gardening magazine from February to the end of March you are bound to find nurseries' ads for snowdrops 'in the green' and they are usually well-priced. Whilst you're at it mulch. If you don't have much material it's better to do one bit properly with two or three inches then follow on when you have more compost or whatever you use. While spring cleaning now really is the time for housework outdoors – clean up the paths and patios. A pressure washer and stiff yard brush are the ideal tools. It's a very messy business but once the moss and weeds have gone and the paving is clean it's worth it. Dare I suggest that if you didn't do it in autumn extend the housework to cleaning the greenhouse as well? Better than waiting until you are ready for the tomato plants.

It's possible to sow hardy annuals and wildflowers outside but I would wait until the end of the month. It's the same with veg: I just read a recommendation to sow lettuce, rocket, radishes, spring onions, leeks, onions, broad beans, parsnips, spinach, turnips early carrots and peas! Really?

Again, I think maybe a bit early, we should start stored tubers like begonias, cannas and dahlias to name but a few, by potting them and keeping in a frost-free greenhouse. Other not-so hardy plants such as fuchsias, cacti and succulents should be started off by a little light watering. It doesn't say what to do with them afterward so I assume potting them up at some point. Something I have tried with no success is to plant early crops in pots. For example extra early new potatoes (they rotted), summer cauliflowers and cabbages. I assumed these latter would be seeds. If so they disappeared. If seedlings I didn't try yet. Maybe this year if I have a go at the lettuces etc.

Pests will be out and about and need to be controlled. Slugs and snails will merrily over-winter in stacks of pots even in the coldest weather. Dispose of by your favourite method. Greenfly will also appear but don't be too hasty with sprays as any birds you have been feeding will get rid of them for you, specially when the young are hatched and hungry. As creatures of habit birds will continue to get rid of greenfly for the season and later will enjoy caterpillars.

If you have any time and energy left finish off the jobs that should have already been done, most of which will be wet and involve washing pots. Hope for a fine day on that one! On the other hand just carry on and keep weeding. One final thing: don't lose heart. Spring will come. Honest.

Become A Friend And Change A Life

Unpaid carers can feel isolated, lonely or overwhelmed by the demands of looking after a family member or friend with disability or long-term illness.

While they do an amazing job every day caring for someone who could not manage without their help, they may feel like they are alone in what they do and how they feel.

Caring Together Charity's Norfolk befriending service aims to make a difference to carers who have such emotions and we are looking for volunteers to get involved in the Watton area.

Our volunteer befrienders are on hand for a regular catch-up over a cuppa, or maybe a walk or shopping trip, so you can have a chat, share a laugh and know you are not on your own.

One carer explained how important our

befriending service was to them. "The befriending service has given me support and someone to listen to me. It's allowed me to discuss my anxiety and worries over caring for my husband."

For volunteers, our Norfolk befriending service is also a fulfilling way of giving something back.

One of our befrienders said: "I know my visits are really appreciated. This gives me a sense of wellbeing and achievement."

Another commented: "I wanted to volunteer because I was going through a tough time myself and I felt that helping someone else would help me."

Could you spare an hour or two each week to become a friendly face for someone in your local community who needs a lift? We will support you all the way.

A regular visit could transform a carer's life - and yours too!

Interested in befriending? We would love to hear from you!

Email volunteers@caringtogether.org or call 0345 241 0954.

Watton & Saham Flood Action Group

Our MP George Freeman is putting together a private members bill about inland surface water flood risk and key matters that need to be addressed by the water industry and by the government in relation to their plans to build one and a half million homes over the life of this parliament. He spoke about it for 10 minutes in parliament on 28th January. The title of the Bill is Inland Flood Prevention (Responsibilities, Funding, Planning and Liabilities). The Bill has received wide cross-party support sponsoring the Bill from 5 MPs from Norfolk and 9 from elsewhere in England. He thinks about 50 MPs consider this to be

one of their major constituency issues. The Bill is in the process of being drafted, and he expects to have a first draft probably about the time this issue of the paper is published.

It includes making the water companies statutory consultees so that they can refuse to connect up new developments to the sewer network along with making developers responsible for any flooding in their neighbourhood after they are completed. He paid tribute to those in Norfolk communities who have helped him to understand the issues including WASFAG. The second reading will not be until July but, as it has no opposition, it is likely that at some point it will become law. We hope that that will be in time for the many new developments that are planned in Watton. I will keep you updated on this.

Liz Whitcher, Chairman,
liz.whitcher@yahoo.co.uk

Memory Corner: Looking back on The Queens Hall in the '50s & '60s

By Ann King

Remembering back to when I was 16 there was mention of a new hall to be built and we had to hold fundraising events to finance it. One of which included a torch light procession on November 5th. The people who organised this were Mr Dick Durrant and Mr Geoff Kittle along with other people who got together to make the Queens Hall happen. It was opened in 1957.

We were told it used to be a RAF Hanger and was made into the hall we know today. Before the Queens Hall dances and social events were in the sale room on the Norwich Road and it was nicknamed "The Sweat Box"

I remember at 17 going to the new hall and how happy we were to be there. The girls dressed in clothes with full skirts and net petticoats underneath. We danced to different bands including Steve Stephenson with a drummer who had a five minute session at the end of the dance which we loved to watch, also a singer called Irene

Jolly who sang "When The Saints Go Marching On". Unfortunately she got killed along with her husband in a car crash just after her honeymoon aged only 22. I would like to pay tribute to Irene for her musical talent.

Most young people looked forward to Saturday night dances, the girls to meet the boys and quite a few national servicemen who were in the forces. The Queens Hall bar used to be behind the stage and was packed with people most of them smoking too. Mrs Nunn and other ladies used to serve the refreshments and Mrs Thompson looked after the cloakroom. There was a man called "Soldier Brown" who danced on his own for our entertainment, a real character.

There was rarely any trouble at the dances and if there was the ushers would sort it out very quickly.

Ed: In a piece he sent me, the late Ralph Swift remembered his first meeting with Soldier Brown. Sadly I have never seen an image of him or know any more about him: *As I drove eastward, a hunched figure came into view.*

It was clad in an calf length khaki army greatcoat with a piece of rope tied around the middle. Below the greatcoat the ankles were encased in army gaiters topping a pair of muddy black boots. This was my very first meeting with "Soldier Brown" a local character; who, as fate would have it, was to weave his way through the fabric of my life for many years to come.

The Crier Without a Name

A short Story by Mike Wabe MAHGTC
Watton Town Crier and recipient of the High Sheriff of Norfolk's Award for Services to the Community

The market town of Merebridge had changed. The old cobbles were still there, the Georgian fronts still bowed slightly from age, and the square still filled with stalls every Saturday. But the soul of the place had softened, like a once-stiff flag now limp in the still air of the twenty-first century.

No one remembered when they'd last heard a town crier. The bell and the voice had long since been replaced by Facebook pages and laminated notices. Yet in summer, when the town held its annual Heritage Festival, there was a sense of nostalgia for the past — Morris dancers, mock jousts, the smell of hog roast and, each year, a volunteer chosen to play the part of the Town Crier of Old.

This year, that volunteer was Jamie Prowse, twenty-four, a drama student home from Norwich.

Jamie was tall, cheerful, and theatrical - everything the festival committee could want. He spent the first week of July rehearsing lines from old proclamations that the organiser, Mrs. Eileen Carrick, had found in the town archives.

"You'll love this," she said one morning, rummaging through a box of props in the community hall. "We've got a real bell for you this year - an antique, apparently from the original crier's collection. Donated by some collector in Brackenford."

She pulled it out carefully - a brass handbell, dark with age, its handle worn smooth. Jamie whistled softly.

"It's beautiful," he said.

Eileen smiled. "You'll have to give it a polish before the big day. I'm sure the old crier would have kept it gleaming."

Jamie turned it over, running his thumb along the base of the handle. There were faint scratches in the brass - as though something had once been engraved there but had worn away.

He gave it a light shake. The tone that rang out was low, deep and strangely human. The sound seemed to roll through the hall and linger just a moment too long.

"Goodness," said Eileen, rubbing her arms. "It gives me goosebumps. Just as well you're the one ringing it, eh?"

Jamie laughed, though the hairs on his own arms had lifted.

He kept the bell in his room that night, on the desk beside his laptop and scripts. When he turned out the light, the room felt oddly full - as though something else were awake.

He dreamed vividly - a square bathed in lamplight, a man in red and gold standing before a silent crowd. The man raised the bell and called out, "Oyez!" The voice was Jamie's - and yet not. When he woke, he could still hear the echo in his ears.

Over breakfast, his mother mentioned the festival. "Your grandfather used to know our old crier," she said. "What was his name - Edward something?"

"Calthorpe," Jamie said automatically, then frowned. "How did I know that?"

His mother looked puzzled. "You must

have read it somewhere."

He hadn't.

At rehearsal that afternoon, Jamie arrived before anyone else. The square was empty except for the bunting fluttering in the wind. He felt a sudden urge to try the bell again.

He raised it and gave it a strong shake.

The sound that burst forth was richer now, almost musical, and the air seemed to tremble. For a moment, the square blurred - the modern shopfronts wavered, replaced by older facades.

Then it was gone.

When Eileen and the others arrived, Jamie said nothing. But he noticed how easily his voice carried now, how natural the old words felt on his tongue. When he shouted, "God save the King!" the phrase rang with conviction, as if centuries of tradition stood behind him.

That evening, he found himself polishing the bell long after he meant to stop. The more he rubbed, the brighter it grew, until he could see his own reflection warped in its surface. He thought he saw, just for an instant, another face behind his - older, moustachioed, hollow eyed.

He blinked, and it was gone.

Over the next few days, Jamie changed. His friends joked that he was "method acting." He spoke more formally, used words like "herewith" and "henceforth", and spent hours rewriting his proclamations in archaic style.

He began carrying the bell everywhere - to the pub, to the rehearsal tent, even to bed. He said it helped him "get into character." Eileen noticed the difference first. "You look tired, dear," she said gently one afternoon. "Don't overdo it."

Jamie smiled, but the smile was strained. "Can't sleep much," he admitted. "The bell keeps... I don't know. I hear it sometimes, even when I'm not ringing it." Eileen laughed nervously. "You artists do have wild imaginations."

But that night, as she walked home past the square, she thought she heard a single, soft ring in the dark - and saw, for an instant, a tall figure standing beneath the streetlamp.

By the week before the festival, people began to whisper. Jamie had grown pale, distracted, and forgetful.

He missed a rehearsal and couldn't remember being told about it. He called Eileen "Madam Clerk" without realising why. Once, when a friend asked how university was going, he frowned and said, "University?"

He stopped answering his phone.

And still he polished the bell. The faint scratches on the brass were almost gone now, smoothed away.

One night, his mother found him standing in the garden, barefoot, ringing the bell slowly. Each tone hung in the air like mist. "Jamie?" she said, frightened.

He turned to her with a distant, unfocused gaze. "It must be heard," he murmured. "They must come when called."

Then he smiled, and for a heartbeat, she saw someone else in his face - a weary man in crimson livery, eyes hollow and coloured gold.

The day of the festival dawned bright and windless. The square was filled with stalls and bunting, the scent of frying onions thick in the air. At noon, Jamie was to make his grand proclamation from the market cross.

He had not been seen since the previous evening.

Eileen, flustered and busy, assumed he'd

appear at the last moment as usual. But when the church clock struck twelve, the crowd stirred uneasily - no sign of Jamie. At half past twelve, she decided to start without him. She stepped to the microphone, clearing her throat.

"Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to -"

The sound of a bell cut through the air.

It was deep and resonant, carrying above the chatter, the music, the wind itself. The crowd turned as one toward the end of the square.

A figure was walking slowly between the stalls. The sunlight seemed to dim as he passed.

It was Jamie - or what had been Jamie. He wore the crier's red and gold coat, but it looked older, the fabric thick and faded as if from another century. His face was pale, eyes fixed ahead. In his hand, the bell gleamed brighter than the sun.

He raised it high. "Oyez, Oyez, Oyez!"

The cry rolled like thunder. Windows rattled. Birds scattered from the rooftops.

"Let all folk of Merebridge attend this proclamation!" he bellowed. "For the hour has come when voice and metal shall be one!"

People backed away. Someone laughed nervously, thinking it was part of the act - until the air itself seemed to vibrate with the bell's sound.

Jamie's eyes burned with reflected light. He looked straight at Eileen. "Do you hear it, Madam Clerk?"

"Jamie," she whispered. "Stop. Please."

But he did not stop.

He lifted the bell and rang it again.

The sound that followed was unbearable - a roar and a hum, ancient and immense. The air rippled, the colours of the world bleaching to brass. For a heartbeat, everyone saw - or thought they saw - an older figure standing where Jamie stood - a tall man with a heavy moustache and eyes like molten metal, his hand around the bell's handle.

Then the sound collapsed into silence.

When people could hear again, Jamie was gone. The square was empty save for the fallen bell, lying in the dust beside the market cross.

Eileen approached it slowly. The brass was dull now, as if the light had been drained away. She picked it up, half-expecting it to burn her, but it was cold.

She turned it over - and saw new words faintly etched where the metal had been blank:

EDWARD CALTHORPE.

Her breath caught.

The following day, police searched the town and surrounding fields. No trace of Jamie was found. His clothes, his phone and his keys lay neatly folded on his bed.

The bell was taken for safekeeping to the town museum, but the curator complained that the room where it was stored never stayed warm. Visitors said they sometimes heard a faint ringing when they passed its case - not loud, but deep, as though calling from far away.

A year later, the festival returned. The committee debated whether to keep the crier's role, but in the end, tradition won.

A new volunteer, a cheerful postman named Colin, was chosen.

On the morning of the festival, he was shown the costume and handed the same bell. He turned it over, admiring its weight. "Proper old thing, isn't it?" he said.

Eileen, now pale and thin, nodded faintly. "Just... be careful with it. Don't polish too much."

He smiled, thinking she was joking. "I'll

give it a ring, then."

The bell sang, its tone deep and mellow. Across the square, somewhere between the old cobblestones and the wind that moved through the bunting, a whisper seemed to rise - faint but distinct, the echo of a man's voice:

Oyez.

Eileen looked up sharply.

For a moment, she thought she saw two figures standing by the market cross - one in the modern red coat, one in faded crimson beside him, both holding the same gleaming bell.

Then the breeze shifted, and there was only Colin, smiling nervously, as the sound of the bell rolled out over Merebridge once more.

SAHAM WOMEN'S INSTITUTE TABLE TOP SALE

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TOMBOLA ~REFRESHMENTS

21st MARCH
09.30 – 12.30

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March - What's On at The Queens Hall, Norwich Road, Watton

Carboot Sale - 1st, 9:00 - 14:00
Ballroom Dancing - 7th, 19:30 - 22:30
Rotary Club's Dixie Mix Jazz Night - 14th
Tickets available from Adcocks
NHS Blood Donors - 17th
Creative Arts East - 13:00- 16:00
Medium - 27th, 19.00

Regular Weekly Events:

Bingo: Monday 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd & 30th
CLM Fitness: Tuesdays 3rd, 10th, 24th and 31st 18:45 - 19:45
Carpet Bowls - Wednesdays 4th, 11th and 18th at 13:30
Line Dancing: Wednesdays 4th, 11th & 18th 19:00 - 21:00
Pilates: Thursdays 5th, 19th & 26th 18:15 - 19:30
Ju-Jitsu: Fridays 6th, 13th & 22nd 17:30

For further information check out the Queens Hall website

From Laptops to Cathedrals to Shanties – The Mens Shed That Does It All



Wow! It is hard to believe that we now have 102 members of Wayland Men's Shed. We must be doing something right. In a way we are victims of our own success in that our social gathering space and workshop space are fast becoming inadequate and we will struggle to accommodate the growing numbers. However, the sports centre has been a saviour for us after having moved 5 years ago from the Old School House in Lime Tree Walk, where it all began. We are very grateful to the trustees, management and staff of the centre who are very helpful and supportive.

This month I want to highlight the benefits to members of the computer workshop. There is a regular team of members who do a fantastic job of repairing donated lap top computers or printers. The more knowledgeable members guide and train those who have not got the same level of competence. The consequence is that those machines that are repairable are made useable and offered for sale at minimal cost or are donated to local worthy causes. Any that cannot be repaired are stripped down for the value of scrap components. This process is quite therapeutic and well suited to those less able to navigate the more difficult aspects of computer or printer repair. The team regularly have a

table at the indoor table top sale held at the Queen's Hall, so if you are looking for an affordable refurbished computer or printer why not drop by and see what is on offer. Any monies received from sales or scrap are used in the cost of components for the repairs or for the running costs of Wayland Men's Shed.

The Shanty group (Wayland Shanty Men) performed to a large audience for the Women's Institute at Thompson village Hall on Saturday 24th January. The photo group the "Shutterists", visited Norwich Cathedral on 27th January taking some atmospheric pictures such as Symmetry Heaven, taken by Stewart Haile (above), and learning some of the history of the building. This month the music appreciation group were playing music with the theme of music in TV themes. Each in turn are instrumental in promoting the well-being of members and some members belong to more than one sub-group.

We held our 24th Quiz night on 6th February with 76 members and guests enjoying an entertaining evening. A team of 6 from the Wayland Players were victorious at this event, earning themselves the title of "The Smarties". Over £500 was raised for club funds. We have a trip to Strikes Bowling Alley planned this month, a trip on the

Mississippi paddle steamer on the Broads in June and a trip to the Cromer Pier Show in July.

That is all for this edition but I hope to report further in the next one.

If you want any further information on Wayland Men's Shed please visit our Website www.waylandmensshed.co.uk or contact : Malcolm Trayhorn, Chairman & Social Secretary Tel: 07729 993 163 Charity No.1213606

Saham WI Table Top Sale

Saham Women's Institute are holding their first fundraising event of the year on Saturday 21st March 2026 in the large hall at the Wells Cole Community Centre, Bell Lane, Saham Toney IP25 7HD from 09.30 am to 12.30 pm

This will take the form of a table top sale with bargains to be had, refreshments to enjoy and try your luck on the tombola and card game. Tables for hire at £7.00 each to sell your crafts or general items. Sellers from 08.30 am. To book a table please call 01953 885978

We look forward to welcoming you to this event. Norfolk Federation of WI's Charity No.1201046

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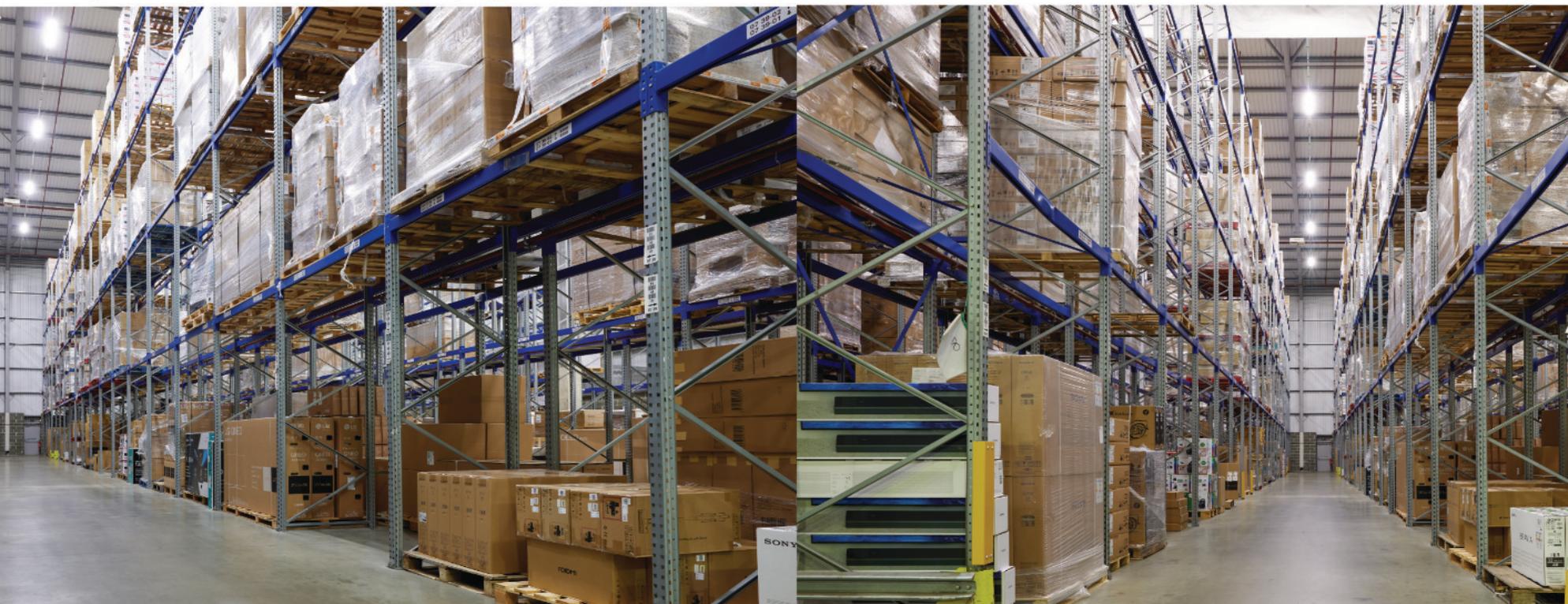
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The Inner Wheel

Our January meeting saw our District Chairman, Angela Leggett-Bond, visiting our club to tell us a bit more about her life both privately and within Inner Wheel. She told us about being brought up on a farm on the Norfolk/Suffolk border, working for the Ambulance service, and she now runs a shop in Bungay with her husband, so she hasn't strayed far from her roots. She has an incredible collection of earrings and seems to have some for every occasion. We will be hosting the weekly coffee morning in the Methodist Centre on 11th March. Different groups volunteer to run the coffee mornings, together with the Methodist Church, and there is always a selection of homemade cakes available at only £1.20 and hot drinks are only £1. On 10th April, Brenda Tubb will be creating wonderful floral displays at the Queens Hall and making us all laugh at her anecdotes about 'him indoors' and others. Tickets will be available from Adcocks at £10 to include afternoon tea. We hope to see you there. Jenny Simons.

About Treatments by Anna

From my peaceful countryside treatment room in Ashill, set within my garden, I offer a range of beauty treatments with a strong specialism in skin health. I studied Beauty Therapy at Great Yarmouth College over 30 years ago. Since qualifying, my career has taken me from working locally to Australia, as well as an exciting role as an In-Flight Beauty Therapist for Virgin Atlantic. After returning to Norfolk to raise our children, I opened my first business as a mobile therapist before going on to run a treatment room at Broom Hall, which was a wonderful time. However, throughout my career I struggled to find a skincare range that genuinely worked and achieved results. That search led me to discover Corneotherapy — a completely different and science-based approach to skin treatment — and the skincare brand Dermaviduals, which aligns perfectly with these principles. I began using the products on myself and then on my clients, achieving excellent results and feedback. I finally knew I had found what I'd been searching for all those years. When Covid arrived, I took the opportunity

to relocate my treatment room to my home, allowing me more space and time to deepen my learning. This period enabled me to fully train in Corneotherapy and advanced skin health. Five years on, I am still learning, evolving, and expanding my knowledge.

What Is Corneotherapy?

Corneotherapy is a way of treating the skin without damaging it, allowing it to function and heal as it naturally should.

I often compare the skin barrier to the roof of a house. If the roof tiles are intact, everything underneath remains protected. If tiles are removed or damaged, moisture and unwanted elements get in and cause problems. The same applies to your skin.

This is why you will never find me performing dermaplaning, chemical peels, microdermabrasion or any other skin treatment that effects the skins roof.

The skin is the largest organ of the body, and it knows exactly what it's doing. There are no quick fixes despite what social media may suggest.

Your skin has its own microbiome, a vital ecosystem that protects and regulates it. Unfortunately, most skincare products contain preservatives, perfumes, emulsifiers, and other ingredients that disrupt this delicate balance. Over time, the skin can no longer cope, which is why products you've used for years can suddenly start causing problems.

Dance Away supports NNUH

Dance Away is a local group who organise monthly social dances at The Queens Hall in Watton.

As a charity, we support local groups by donating any profit we have made throughout the year. Since starting the group in 2013 we have been able to support over 10 local groups and this year we are sending a donation to the NNUH for its Coronary Care unit. A few of our regular dancers have been treated in the unit, so it seemed a suitable recipient. The majority of our regular dancers are in the later stages of life and sadly, we have lost some over the past 18 months. We would

love to welcome more people of all ages to our dances, which is always a lovely evening, as the Queens Hall has a fabulous sprung dance floor that has recently been renovated. People who have danced all their lives, beginners and those in between all enjoy our Saturday evening dances and comment on the friendly atmosphere and the lovely spacious dance floor.

Wendy and Rod provide the music for us which is always varied and they ensure it fits the dance style whether a waltz, quickstep, cha cha cha or rumba.

To add variety to our programme, we are pleased to welcome ANNIE, to provide the music for our dance on March 7th. Annie is a skilled keyboard player and vocalist and has recently provided music for groups such as ours who offer ballroom, Latin and sequence dances. If you have considered coming to our

West Norfolk Aviation Society

Welcome to the first report from WNAS and Happy New Year for 2026 as the January meeting was cancelled due to adverse weather. Firstly and most importantly the answer to my question from December. sic "In western Europe the F104 Starfighter was a very popular combat aircraft in the 70's and 80's, by popular myth what was the easiest way to obtain an example?" Answer: "Buy a field and wait" To those younger readers this references the truly appalling crash statistics of the F104 which was designed as a high altitude interceptor and wasn't really suited to low level ground attack role it found itself in for the majority of its service. Between 1961 and 1989 the West German Air Force lost 292 out of 916 F104 aircraft delivered (nearly 33% of the fleet).

Enough of this gloom this weeks offering was a DVD on Concorde which was to say the least, diverse, in that there were large sections referencing the B747, Nimrod and bizarrely a long portion on the joys of

Hormones, medication, illness, environment, and lifestyle all play a role in skin health, which is why a one-size-fits-all approach simply doesn't work.

Why Dermaviduals?

Dermaviduals, developed by Dr Hans Lautenschläger, contains only skin-identical, barrier-friendly ingredients. No unnecessary or harmful ingredients. Just ingredients that work in harmony with your skin.

This approach allows successful treatment of many skin concerns including ageing skin, rosacea, acne and congestion and sensitive skin.

Your Treatment Experience

Every skincare treatment begins with a thorough consultation and skin assessment.

This allows me to understand why your skin is behaving the way it is, not just treat the symptoms.

Your treatment is completely bespoke, tailored to your skin's needs on that day. Each time you visit, your skin is reassessed and treatments are adjusted accordingly — because your skin is constantly changing.

My aim is simple, repair, replenish and regenerate your skin.

Anna Yeomans, Treatments by Anna. 07824 882 049

Email: anna@treatmentsbyanna.co.uk

dances in the past, why not give it a try. You will be warmly welcomed and be able to enjoy a lovely evening of music and dance.

Our dances are held on the 1st Saturday of each month and admission is £5. There is a bar and we have a raffle too.

Look out for our posters and you can also find the details on the Queens Hall website. If you would like to know more my contact details are: Valerie Simpson 01953882790

Las Vegas and how it can be a very cheap holiday IF you can resist the other offerings at the casino's! After the usual delicious sandwiches and cake a short discussion ensued re the relative merits of Concorde. Most interesting from my point of view was the reasoning behind the extra 'e' at the end of Concorde thus spelling it the 'French' way. As it was an Anglo French endeavour I always assumed it was a sop to the French but apparently if you leave the 'e' out the meaning in French is Con Conk (poor translation I'm sure), which bearing in mind the droop snoot on the machine seems vaguely appropriate! The next meeting is Tue 03 March when the guest speaker will be Charles Howard-Vyse an ex Tornado aircrew and he will be talking about his time at NATO. Please check out our new website on www.westnorfolkaviationsociety.com

An Illustrated Talk
by
Julian Horn

Discover the remarkable story of a critically injured young RAF Sergeant rescued from this wreckage, only to be taken prisoner. Follow his daring escape from a POW camp and his epic journey through occupied France to reach safety — an achievement that earned him a Military Medal from the King.

Watton Methodist Centre, High Street, Watton
Thursday March 5th
6.30 for 7pm

£7

To buy a ticket contact:
email: office@waylandpartnership@gmail.com
Phone: 01953 880204

Funds to support the Wayland Partnership

Do you fancy a New Challenge

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Training every Tuesday & Thursday 7-9pm
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Red & Black Army

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Search and Rescue through the ages 27 Feb 2026

And everything in between

From To

Speaker: Squadron Leader Keith Thomas — RAF Search & Rescue pilot (rtd)

St Mary's Church, Watton. IP25 6DQ. 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm. Tickets £10 from Adcocks Store, High St, Watton, on the door or Ticket Source

Supporting RNLI, East Anglia Air Ambulance & Rotary charities 1046649

Watton Town Council Updates, News, and Events



WATTON TOWN COUNCIL
SPRING FAIR MARKET
 FOOD & DRINK | CRAFTS | MUSIC
24 MAY 2026 | 13:00 ~ 18:00

WATTON HIGHSTREET
 WINNER OF THE HARE TRAIL TO BE ANNOUNCED!

Watton Spring Fair Market

Watton Town Council is introducing a NEW high street event in 2026, the Spring Fair Market will follow the same format as the Festive Market, with the high street being lined with all manner of stalls, from food and drink, to crafts, tombolas and seasonal gifts! If you're interested in having a stall please email events@wattontowncouncil.gov.uk or pop into the office for a stall holder form!

WATTON FOOD HUB CALENDAR MARCH 2026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

TUESDAYS - Food Hub Open 12:30-14:30
THURSDAYS - Food Hub Open 09:30-12:00
4 MARCH - Food Hub Open 16:30-18:30
18 MARCH - Food Hub Open 16:30-18:30

Life-saving Defibrillators

Did you know that there are numerous life-saving defibrillators in the vicinity of Watton? Many of us will witness a cardiac arrest in our lifetime - be ready for that day. Below are the locations of some of the local defibrillators within Watton:

- Richmond Park Golf Club (IP25 6EA) - What3Words: ///tweed.stocked.rush
- Cranswick Country Foods (IP25 6LW) - What3Words: ///cycles.costs.paler
- Watton Community Centre (IP25 6EB) - What3Words: ///grows.aunts.saving
- Watton First School (IP25 6AU) - What3Words: ///solutions.optically.nuptials
- Outside Adcocks/Clock Tower (IP25 6AE) - What3Words: ///volunteered.winemaker.evaporate
- Watton Tesco (IP25 6BQ) - What3Words: ///hardens.galloping.rises
- Watton Fire Station (IP25 6BT) - What3Words: ///javelin.clip.chuckling
- Lovell Garden Play Area (IP25 6TZ) - What3Words: ///teachers.nesting.shelving
- Buckingham Lodge Care Home (IP25 6WL) - What3Words: ///stumble.decompose.affords

The defibrillators at Richmond Park Golf Club, Cranswick, Watton Community Centre, Watton Fire Station, and Lovell Gardens Play Area are all available 24/7, the others have restricted access due to opening times of the locations. For basic lifesaving CPR training you can visit blf.org.uk/revivr for a 15 minute course!



WATTON EVENTS 2026

TUES 17TH FEB	COMMUNITY FUN DAY @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
TUES 31ST MARCH & 7TH APRIL	COMMUNITY FUN DAY @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
SUN 24TH MAY	SPRING FAIR MARKET
TUES 26TH MAY	COMMUNITY FUN DAY @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
SAT 30TH MAY	TOWN CRIERS COMPETITION
SAT 27TH & SUN 28TH JUNE	WATTON OPEN GARDENS & YARD SALES WEEKEND
TUES 28TH JULY & TUES 4TH AUG	SUMMER FUN DAYS @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
TUES 11TH AUG & TUES 18TH AUG	SUMMER FUN DAYS @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
TUES 25TH AUG	SUMMER FUN DAYS @ WATTON COMMUNITY CENTRE
SAT 29TH & SUN 30TH AUG	WATTON BIKE WEEKEND
SAT 31ST OCT	WATTON FOOD FESTIVAL & FIREWORKS
SUN 8TH NOV	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY
SUN 29TH NOV	WATTON FESTIVE MARKET

THERE ARE SOME FANTASTIC EVENTS BEING PLANNED IN WATTON THIS YEAR - SAVE THE DATES!

WATTON TOWN COUNCIL
www.wattontowncouncil.gov.uk 01953 881007

Town Council Updates

The events and marketing officer has been investigating alternative safety surfacing for the Sports Centre Play Area to make the site more accessible for all. Play equipment providers have been approached for quotes for both the Sports Centre and for installing a path at Bridle Road play area.

A request has been made to include maintenance of two planters at Watton Library to the Town Council gardening contract. Costs are being sought and this matter will be brought back to Full Council or the Finance Committee.

The Reclaim the Rain project Manager is suggesting a meeting to update the Council on the plans for sustainable drainage in Watton High Street. A request will be made for the Town Council to undertake day to day general maintenance of the assets which will be in public areas. It is likely that Norfolk Highways will assume ownership providing Watton TC accepts overground maintenance.

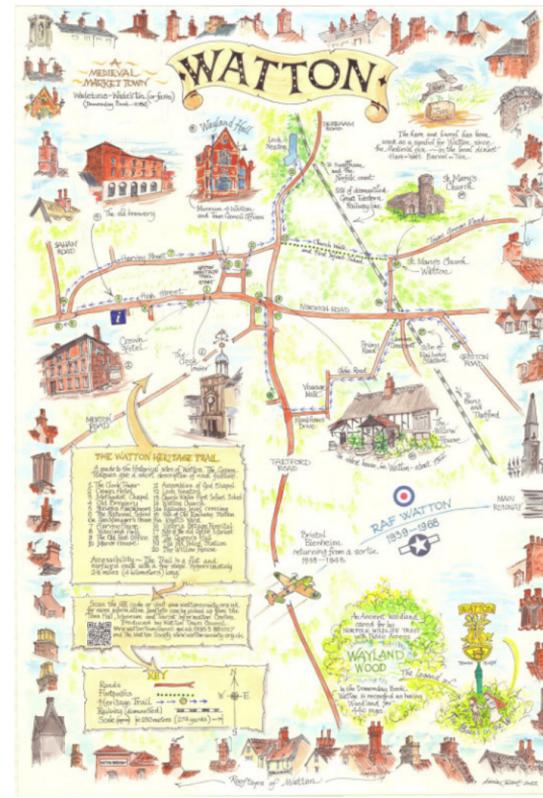
CLr Saunders reported that he has spoken with the Principal of Wayland Academy about the Town Council providing places for Duke of Edinburgh students to undertake some voluntary work and also the possibility of the Town Council employing an apprentice.

Discussion took place regarding what gift the Town Council could give to Weeze in celebration of its 800th anniversary. After some discussion it was decided that a framed copy of the Watton Heritage Map will be gifted. Also noted that a party from Weeze will be visiting Watton in 2027 when the 40th anniversary of the formation of the Watton Twinning Association will be celebrated. As part of this, it was resolved that the Council will further research the purchase of a wooden sculpture to present to Weeze to recognise the date.

The Deputy Clerk and Events & Marketing Officer have attended another Community Matters meeting at HMP Wayland. As part of the Hare Trail, one of the two large fibreglass hares will be painted by the peer-led art class in the prison. It is also hoped that the carpentry department in the prison will make some wooden hares to include in the Town Hare Trail.

It was confirmed that, as previously resolved, the Town Council will accept all open space land which has been recently offered by Breckland Council.

It was resolved to accept the quotes as received from the preferred contractor for works to extend the ashes area at Watton Cemetery and to remove excess soil from the Cemetery compound.



101 Activities

Are you struggling to keep your children entertained on weekends and during school holidays? Scan the QR code below for 101 things to do that won't cost the earth!

101
 ACTIVITIES TO DO WITH YOUR CHILDREN THAT WON'T COST THE EARTH
 SCAN ME!

A word from the Mayor

2026 sees the 100th birthday of Watton Junior School and I was pleased to be invited to attend the first of the events they have planned.

Although I didn't go to the school it was interesting to see around the school, meet past students and see old papers and photographs.

There was a beautiful cake that looked too good to cut (but was) and refreshments leading up to a gathering of students, staff and visitors in the playground where the Town Crier gave a special celebratory cry finishing with a rousing three cheers by all.

The changes that the past 100 years have brought are quite astounding when you consider what the world was like in 1926, I wonder what people who lived then would think of the world now and what children of today would make of how families lived then.

I was honoured to be invited to RAF Cadet 864 (Watton) Air Training Corps Squadron to be the Reviewing Officer for the celebration of the 85th Anniversary of the formation of the Air Cadets.

It is always a pleasure to be involved in these events, the cadets really do benefit from the time they spend with the organisation. While speaking with them I have seen how much confidence they gain, new recruits have often been quiet and unsure of themselves when we have first met however after a few months, I have seen them grow in confidence and self-esteem.

The career paths that the cadets spoke to me about are extremely varied and I was given a demonstration of the flight simulator the cadets use before going onto the real thing, although not all the careers open to them involve flying which is just as well if you don't have a head for heights!

I am especially impressed by and grateful to those cadets who also give their valuable time to attend voluntary events in and around the town.

Councillor Gillian Tarrant
 Watton Town Mayor



The Breckland Birder

A summary of bird sightings in January

For the 1st day of the new year I spent some time at the Thompson Water and the nearby Peddars Way, I chose these sites as they are usually productive and a good way to get the new years birding underway.

My first bird of the new year was Tawny Owl with 3 calling ♂♂ in woodland around the water closely followed as always by the ticking call of Robin. A Song Thrush was singing with another bird in woodland carr habitat giving an alarm call.

A very good visit to Thompson Water (partially frozen) with a good count of common wildfowl species. Mallard (209+) was the most numerous duck with smaller numbers of Gadwall.

Two Marsh Harriers (♂♀) over the reedbeds, the presence of these birds often unsettled the wildfowl on the water. Cetti's Warblers were heard in song and calling Crossbills passed overhead.

The Peddars Way alongside Flag Heath and Black Rabbit Warren was particularly productive beginning with two Crossbills (♂♀) in Hawthorn on the path at Flag Heath. The ♀ Crossbill was best seen briefly in the Hawthorn where calling, both birds flew off directly overhead.

The woodland between Flag Heath and Black Rabbit Warren held Great Spotted Woodpecker and nearby two Mistle Thrushes and Fieldfare were present.

The highlight of the day occurred on the Peddars Way at Black Rabbit Warren when a pair of Ravens (example right) passed directly overhead, quite low, and headed off into the training area.



Some throaty calls were heard. The return walk was particularly productive for common species on the Peddars Way and in thickets and carr at Thompson Water. Blue Tits seen with one feeding from a windfall crab apple, also here was Great Tit, a Goldcrest foraging amongst hanging dead leaves, Coal Tit, and a pair of Marsh Tits.

A visit to the Watton Brook valley at Bodney on the 4th produced Stonechats at a couple of localities, whilst in the dense cover of reeds in the brook a Water Rail was heard calling its pig-like squeal. Of interest at the sewage treatment works at Bodney at dusk several Blackbirds were seen flying into tall conifers to roost.

On the 5th at Threxton a flock of 80+ Lapwings were seen, also, 28 Stock Doves flew around the sewage treatment works, and a single Great White Egret flew west along Watton Brook.

The morning of the 6th saw my first Goshawk of the year near the Clermont estate, its presence was betrayed by the disorganised and rapid departure of Wood Pigeons. The highlight of the 6th came in fading light at the end of the day when an impressive flock of 23 Cranes passed directly over the Wick Farm estate.

I had a short but productive visit to Seamer Marsh towards the end of daylight hours on the 12th.. A check of distant trees beyond the marsh saw many Wood Pigeons sitting quietly, after a while, the Pigeons dispersed erratically with behaviour indicating the presence of a raptor, a short while later I picked up a large raptor approaching from the NE in a glide, I suspected Goshawk, and indeed it was, a juvenile ♀ bird which continued in a level flight over the marsh and then off over

farmland to the SW, once out of sight, the Goshawks presence was obvious when panicking Crows called loudly. On the marsh a ♂♀ Reed Bunting were seen on the largest Bramble patch and willow scrub by a ditch, a typical habitat for this species.

Early in the morning of the 14th I visited Thompson Water and following a series of night frosts the majority of Thompson Water was frozen with only an area of open water in the middle of the lake where all of the present wildfowl were congregated. The counting of the wildfowl was made easy by the enforced gathering with Mallard (292+), Wigeon (3), and several Gadwall noted. A single Marsh Harrier (♀) sat throughout my visit in dead trees within a reedbed, even at range, the creamy coloured head and overall dark plumage is distinctive.

On the morning of the 16th I had a pleasant walk along Fairstead Lane in Little Cressingham and a check of a large game strip produced an impressive 300+ Linnets and a number of Bramblings and Chaffinches too, all three of these Finch species are attracted to good feeding within the game strip which is a source of various seeds and grains for the birds to feed upon. Nearby, a single Woodlark (example right) was overhead performing its wonderful display and song-flight. It is worthy of note that our local Breckland is one of the strongholds for Woodlarks in Britain.



On the 25th I had an early morning walk beginning at St. Botolph's Church in Stow Bedon, passing through Lower Stow Bedon,

following the Rocklands Road to as far as Mere Road, and back to Stow Bedon. Walking along Rocklands Road I approached a large game strip and immediately thought of good numbers of Finches here to feed, and I was right as there was a very large flock of 350+ Linnets and 250+ Chaffinches, all of which were attracted for the good feeding. Also of interest a flock of 20 Golden Plovers flew over.

On the 26th a visit to Thompson Common was to prove rewarding with lots of birds in song, a sure sign of better weather to come. Many Song Thrushes were seen and heard, also Nuthatches and Treecreepers were in song as was Marsh Tit. A reed-filled pingo held a singing Reed Bunting, and nearby two Woodcock were seen, a very enigmatic species which has sadly suffered big in recent years.

On the 29th I met friends Darren Cowles and Carl Moss for a mornings birding at Lynford Water and Arboretum. Lynford Water held about 60 Tufted Ducks, also a pair of Great Crested Grebes with their resplendent head-dresses were seen on the water. Also present here was a single Great White Egret, a Water Rail. The highlight at Lynford Arboretum was the presence of 25+

Crossbills, a superb Finch whose bill has evolved to extract seeds from cones. A check of 'Hornbeam Alley' produced a singing Marsh Tit. The morning was rounded off with a lovely coffee in the relaxing surroundings of the cafe.

The Wayland Partnership

2026 didn't start well when a leak was discovered in the heating system. It has taken a while for the insurers to investigate, report and suggest solutions due to the time of the year and the inevitable rise in heating issues. We do apologise for any inconvenience and the fact we have felt unable to open Dragonfly because we really couldn't expect our lovely volunteers to work in the cold. We have now had the purchase of electric heaters agreed by our insurers and, hopefully, repairs will soon follow, so that we can be back to normal very soon. Our very grateful thanks to local tradesmen who came out to try to identify the problem and offer solutions. There are some truly lovely people in Wayland.

Thank you to all who came to the talk by historian Andy Reid on the history of Watton. It was very well attended and Andy was very pleased with the interest shown. He drove a long way to do this for us and we are very grateful for his time. His research is meticulous and we all learned that there is a lot more to Watton than we realised. His book is available from the museum if you would like to learn more.

JUST GIVING CAMPAIGN. Like all charities at the moment we are always looking for funding to help us carry on with our work. The competition for grants is high, making them harder to obtain. We have set up a JustGiving site and are appealing for your support. Even a tiny amount of a pound or two each from people across Wayland will help us meet rising costs and focus on working for the

community. Please think about donating. To donate go to our website www.wayland.org.uk or use the link checkout.justgiving.com/c/3580680

Thank you so much if you decide to support this local charity which is there to serve Watton and Wayland.

FILM AND TALK BY JULIAN HORN. On March 5th we have an illustrated talk by Julian Horn on aspects of Watton's RAF history. The focus follows the detailed story of one man, who was shot down while on an operation from RAF Watton, and his escape and evasion from recapture despite extensive injuries. Julian is a popular local speaker with an extensive knowledge of the history of RAF Watton and of the local area. There may be those who live in the town, and quite possibly in the houses where the base once was, who know very little of the former base and especially of the sacrifice and heroism of those very young men who served there.

The talk will be held at the Methodist Centre 6.30 for 7pm. Tickets are £7 and available from Wayland House or Adcocks. Contact details are below.

DRAGONFLY GALLERY. A reminder that we plan to hold an exhibition and competition on the theme Wonderful Wayland. Any medium of your choice. Entries should depict your feeling about what makes Wayland special to you. A maximum of three pieces per entrant. Contact Wayland House for more details. Deadline is March 26th. We will post our opening times on facebook and on our website.

CONTACT DETAILS
email; officewaylandpartnership@gmail.com or phone 01953 880204

National Women's Register

Looking for a group of lively minded women? Consider joining the National Women's Register. The Dereham and Swaffham group meets fortnightly. We are a friendly, group of women of all ages and backgrounds, getting together for conversation, laughs, and fun. What we do: Lively discussions (on everything from travel to local issues), walks/ outings. A welcoming, relaxed atmosphere where you can share your views or just listen.

Try us out: Come along to a free taster session! Programme for the next few months
9th March 10.30 am What I would do to give myself a HAPPY DAY

24th March 10.30 am Visit to Bridewell Museum Norwich

8th April 2 pm Should there be a Mobile free area the same as there is a smoking free if so were? Do we spend too much time on our Phones, Tablets etc. if so have we thought about why
23rd April Bluebell Walk Blickling. Plus Picnic

11th May 10.30 am What 6 people would I invite to dinner and Why?

26th May 2 pm Saying and their meaning Pick 2 and research

10th June 2pm Lynford Arboretum visit and Walk

25th June 2 pm Visit to Jean's garden
If you fancy trying us out, send us a message or find us on the NWR website to join: office@nwr.org.uk. nwr.org.uk.

A Little Something New is About to Hop Into the Paper...

Readers might want to keep their eyes extra sharp soon, because something playful is coming to the Watton and Wayland Times. We're getting ready to launch a brand new competition called 'Hare & Seek' — and yes, the name is exactly what it sounds like.

Hidden somewhere in each issue will be a tiny hare, tucked away among the articles, adverts, or features. Your mission will be to spot him. Once you've found our elusive little visitor, you'll be able to send in your entry for the chance to win a small prize. It's designed to be fun, light hearted, and suitable for the youngsters and just tricky enough to make you look twice. Think of it as a little wink every month from the paper to you!

Full details will be revealed in the next issue along with the very first Hare & Seek. Get ready, the Hare & Seek is about to begin.



Needless to say, when the competition starts in earnest, Harry the Hare will be somewhat harder to find than above! It is a Hare-Brained but Brilliant competition, thanks to Lorren and friend!!

Wayland Show

It gives me enormous pleasure to step into the role of Chairman for this year's Wayland Agricultural Show, particularly as we prepare to celebrate a truly remarkable milestone: our 150th anniversary taking place on Sunday 2nd August. Having served on the committee for the past ten years, and as someone born and raised in the Wayland area, this show is deeply personal to me. I understand just how important it is to preserve events like ours, not only because they showcase the very best of our livestock, farming, and local produce, but also because they bring our rural community together in a way few other occasions can.

The Wayland Show has its roots in agricultural events dating back to 1460, with four shows held annually in the area. However, the modern iteration began in response to the agricultural unrest of the 1830s, when local leaders formed an association in 1834 to promote industrious habits among workers and award prizes in various categories. The first event officially named the Wayland Show occurred in 1857, organised by the Wayland Agricultural Association on land owned by solicitor William Massey in Back Street, Watton. Over the years, the show has moved locations, including sites near High Street and opposite the brewery owned by Thomas Crawshay Frost, a descendant of ironworks founder Richard Crawshay. Notable venues

included fields in the George Trollope area, now developed into housing, and Beehive Corner, better now known as Barn Ruche. Although the show faced some cancellations, notably during WWI and a few instances since, it continued through WWII. There are lots of interesting details still to uncover and these will be shown as part of an exhibition at the 2026 show on Sunday 2nd August.

Agricultural shows across the country face real challenges, as does the wider rural way of life. But with your continued support, I firmly believe we can protect this wonderful tradition for future generations to enjoy. The show simply would not be possible without the dedication of our hardworking volunteers, the commitment of local farmers and stockmen, and the generous backing of businesses and sponsors who support us year after year. Their loyalty keeps the heart of Wayland beating.

And what a year we have planned! With livestock remaining firmly at the centre of the show, we are proud to host several prestigious attractions, including the National Norfolk Horn Sheep Show, the National English Goat Show, British Goat Society milking classes, the return of the Norwich & District Goat Club Produce Show, as well as Dexter cattle and Holstein Young Breeders classes. Beyond the livestock rings, we are excited to be rebuilding our trade stand market lanes, welcoming a wonderful new Antiques &

Collectables section alongside expanded craft and food markets, perfect for visitors looking to browse, taste, and discover something special.

We are especially proud to be a show that welcomes families. Whether it is a child seeing farm animals up close for the very first time, enjoying the excitement of the main ring, or simply spending a summer's day outdoors together, the Wayland Show offers something for every generation. Many of today's visitors once came here as children themselves, and it is that sense of shared experience, of traditions passed down, that makes the day so special.

Our main ring programme promises a full day of entertainment celebrating rural skills and heritage, including working demonstrations from magnificent Suffolk Punch horses, a thrilling jousting display stunt team, terrier racing, falconry, vintage vehicle parade, and of course the much-loved Grand Parade of livestock champions. Whether you are a long-time supporter or visiting for the very first time, you can be assured of a warm Wayland welcome. Bring the children, bring the grandparents, and come ready to enjoy a day filled with community spirit, discovery, and celebration.

Come and help us mark 150 years of the Wayland Agricultural Show and be part of its future

For more information visit our website www.waylandshow.com



Jordan Stone 2026 Wayland Agricultural Show Chairman .

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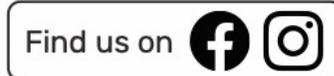
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*T&Cs apply. Offer dates: 01.04.25 - 31.03.26. Registration required. Selected models only.

The Wayland Players Swap November for May

Members of The Wayland Players enjoyed an evening defending their title at the Men's Shed Quiz on Friday 6th February as an evening off from rehearsals for their next play (right).

'How the other half loves' is a mischievously funny comedy by Alan Ayckbourn and will be on stage at the Queens Hall on May 7th to 9th.

The reason for the change of dates is to avoid the two drama groups in Watton being on stage within weeks of each other in the Autumn, leaving the town without any theatre for the rest of the year.

Tickets will be on sale at our wonderful honorary ticket agents Adcocks immediately after the Easter weekend.

Jenny Mann, Chairman, The Wayland Players



Why Hitchcock Would Be Proud?

In the last Codeword, I set a little side-competition by asking who the YouTuber was that sadly passed away just before Christmas. I dropped two clues: the slightly obscure Codeword answer, "Hitchcock would be proud," and the more obvious (if you watched him!) nudge in the text, *So have a go... Shall you?*

"Join me . . . Shall you?" and the "Hitchcock Would be Proud" were favourite phrases of the YouTuber in question — Florida based Adam the Woo, whose real name was David Adam Williams. (Pictured below).

My wife and I have watched Adam daily for the past eleven years. In that time, he became the sort of friend you never actually meet, rather like the pen-friends of years gone by. But we got to know him, his friends and his family June, Jim, Faith and Ryan.

Adam always opened the day's video with a shot or two of where he was and after explaining what day held in store, he would end the intro with ". . . And I am inviting you, yes you, to join me . . . Shall you?". We always did.

"Hitchcock would be proud" is a phrase often used to describe scenes that echo the suspenseful, dramatic style of Alfred Hitchcock - especially those involving flocks of birds. And that is exactly what Adam would say whenever he spotted a gathering of them. It became one of his many endearing trademarks.

His daily 'vlogs' (vlog being a contraction of video log meaning a video diary) covered a very wide range of subjects both in America and last year, many other countries.

The sheer breadth of the subjects he covered was incredible - always meticulously researched and presented in Adam's own unique way.

There is so much one could say about him. He was a pioneer in the world that YouTube has grown into, and his influence reached far beyond his videos. I have never seen so many middle-aged men openly in tears for the loss of their best friend.

If you would like to know more, just Google his name — there is a wealth of news, tributes, and memories out there. As well as all his vlogs on YouTube which can still be watched.

And, although they will never know who we are or read this, our hearts go out to Adam's friends, but especially to his mother June, and father Jim, his sister Faith and her husband Ryan.



Who's Been & Coming at Swaffham & District u3a

The committee took a well-deserved rest in January after a very busy December. The Christmas party was attended by over 100 members and was enjoyed by all. The u3a also had a presence at the Rotary Club's community event and sponsored a Christmas Tree in St Peter and St Paul Church.

The speaker on 5th February was Henry Kilvert who gave us an

overview of the work of YANA, the charity 'You Are Not Alone', that gives guidance and support to those working in agriculture to cope with the pressures and isolation of farming life. Not only do they give support, but they offer counselling and their help-line is open 24/7 for those in need. Henry stated that those who work in agriculture and other rural businesses are often reluctant to seek support for depression, stress or anxiety but talking about problems and seeking help make it easier to cope and can improve quality of life. The money raised by the u3a sponsored Christmas Tree in December was given to the charity and members also gave generously at the end of the meeting.

Looking further ahead.

On 5th March we have Marta Stec from the Snetterton Dogs Trust Centre who will be introducing us

to the work of the Dogs Trust. Marta will be accompanied by a couple of well-behaved furry friends. In April we have a speaker from the Phoenix Birds of Prey Rescue who will be bringing along 3 or 4 birds. Marta will give an overview on the work of the rescue and an insight into these hunters and their habitats.

Anyone is welcome to join the u3a. The only criterion to join is that you are no longer in full-time employment and have the time to take part in the activities on offer. We meet at Holme Hale Village Hall on the first Thursday of each month. Doors open at 9.45am for socialising and the meeting starts promptly at 10.30am finishing by 12 noon. Further details on all the activities covered by Swaffham & District u3a are available on our website: swaffham.u3asite.uk

Last Month's Codeword Result

Last month's winner was drawn at the February WI Meeting, and the prize was another "choose your own prize". The answer to the puzzle was: "HITCHCOCK WOULD BE PROUD"

The winner this month was B Tyler and the Runner Up was C Mallon

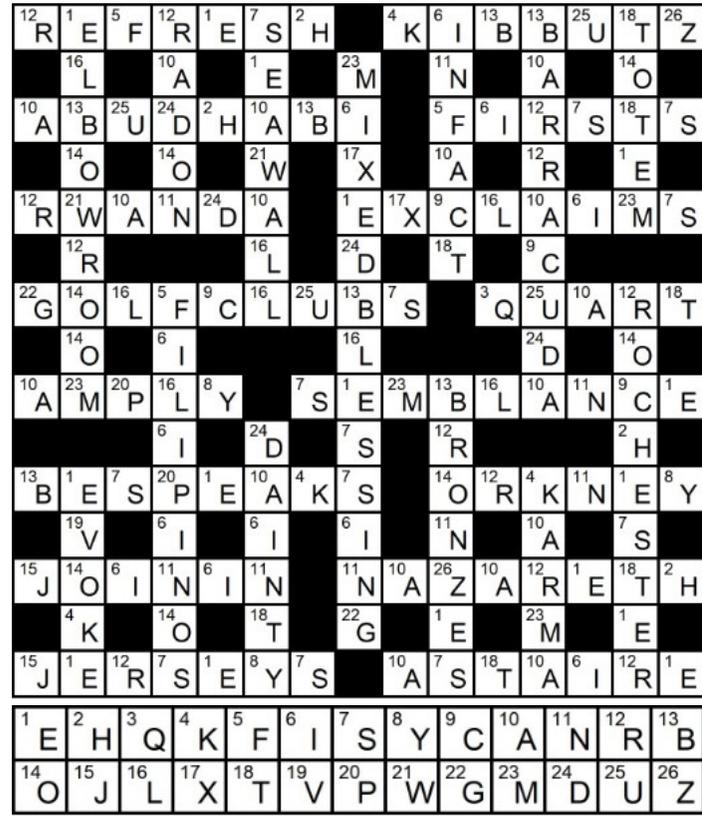
The side competition was won by S Beeny. To explain how the winners were drawn; all correct entries were recorded in a table as they arrived, each line of which has a single card from a standard pack assigned to it. e.g. 6 of Diamonds or 7 of Clubs etc.

For the draw, the President was given the pack, which she shuffled as she wished, and then drew one card for the Winner and one for the Runner Up.

The Editor supervised and correlated the cards drawn with the table of entries, and if it was there was no winner assigned to that card, it was discarded and another card drawn.

In that way I ensure winners are drawn at random and fair play is guaranteed. As always, I hope you found the puzzle both fun and not too challenging.

For the next Codeword grid and more details of this month's competition please see page 15.



History repeating

We've been here before
Shhh! Don't make a sound.
We've been here before
heavy boots on the ground.

We've seen this before
why cant the world see?
We've heard this before
how can this be?

We've been here before
tearing families apart.
We've been here before
and it's breaking my heart.

We've been here before
all the violence and lies.
We've been told before
don't believe your eyes.

We've read this before
George Orwell foretold
we just closed the book
thought " yeah, but that's old"

We've been here before
How many more must die?
We've been here before
Who next you or I?

Miss Mardle

Thompson Community Hall

Thank you to all who came to enjoy the Wayland Shantymen. We had a great evening, many of the audience singing along with the more familiar choruses after enjoying a simple supper. Our March events are:

FILM NIGHT March 6th 7pm screening. We will be showing *The Ballad of Wallis Island*, a British comedy-drama. Entry is £5 including popcorn. Ice cream sales
SECONDHAND BOOK FAIR. The first of our 2026 Book Fairs supporting Thompson and Griston charities is on March 14th 10-3.30. There will be the usual huge number of books to select from, refreshed all day. Refreshments, including our famous cheese scones with bacon, will be served until 3pm. Other attractions are cakes and bakes, plant sale, and chocolate tombola. If you wish to donate books we will take them at the sale, or on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings 10am-12noon, or by arrangement with you. Contact us for more information. Our next dates are July 18th and November 21st.

QUIZ NIGHT Saturday March 28th 7.30pm. Teams of up to 6. £3 a head. Licensed bar selling wine and beer.

As well as the above events we have a coffee morning every Tuesday 10am-12noon with fresh cheese scones and home made cake.

A number of groups meet in the community hall such as Stitchers, Wayland Quilters, dog training and more. Check out our website calendar or what is happening at Thompson.



Spring Is In The Air . . .

Did you know that the first day of Spring almost always coincides with the International Day of Happiness (March 20th)? This intentional pairing was established because Spring brings a period of increased sunlight and warmth that lifts the mood of many, bringing hope, renewal, and new beginnings.

The founder of the International Day of Happiness, Jayme Illien, championed the idea that the equinox brings opportunity for a fresh start for humankind, marking it as a perfect time for focusing on happiness as a global human goal.

It is true that the Spring Equinox brings happiness to many. The winter chill still clings to the air, but looking out of the window a different story is unfolding. The snowdrops have appeared, followed by the cheerful, bold yellow of the early daffodils and the soft purple hues of crocuses. Spring is, without a doubt, on its way.

It is easy, in the dark months of January and February, to feel as though the cold

will last forever. Yet, nature teaches us the profound lesson of patience and resurrection. Beneath the frosty, brown soil, life has been preparing to burst forth. Those delicate green shoots are a sure reminder that winter is not the end of the story.

In the Bible, spring flowers and the renewal of the earth are powerful metaphors for the hope we find in Christ. Just as the earth brings forth beauty from a barren state, we too are offered a time of renewal. The Song of Solomon reminds us: "...for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time for singing has come..." (Song of Solomon 2:11-12).

As the days grow longer and the flowers brighter, may you find joy and new life in this beautiful season.

With every blessing, Vanessa x
Reverend Vanessa is the rector for the Wayland parishes of Breckles, Caston, Great Hockham, Griston, Thompson, and Stow Bedon. She is available for baptisms, weddings, funerals and pastoral visiting.

You can contact her on 07984 318885 or by email at vanessadlayfield@gmail.com

CODEWORD

It was very interesting to see the variety of wishes that readers had in relation to what prize they would like. So, I have decided to do that again. Let me know with your entry what you would like as a prize and I will try to fulfil your wish as creatively as possible within the budget I have set myself :-)

Each number in the Codeword grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. In the lower 'control' grid I have given you two letters to start with. Copy each of those letters to all the matching numbered squares on the big puzzle grid.

Now, using your knowledge of the English language, work out which letters should go in the missing squares.

As you discover the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and the control grid. Consecutive squares are not necessarily just one word.

Finally, when you have all the numbers in the control grid, decode the following codeword(s):

24, 23, 4, 12, 3, 7, 19, 8, 17, 14, 21, 25, 18, 13, 26, 25, 23, 22, 2, 26, 19

Send the Codeword you think is the answer along with your name and contact details in an envelope marked 'Competition' to Julian, Care of Adcocks, 32 High Street, Watton or by email to wattontimes@gmail.com

All correct entries received BEFORE midnight on the 12th of the month of the paper, will be put into a draw, and the first entry drawn will win the prize whatever it is.

There will also be a Mug & Coaster set for the Runner Up

Last month's winner's name and the solution to last month's Codeword are on Page 6. Entry is open to everyone, but in relation to all aspects of the competition's conduct and results, the Editor's decision shall be final.

25		10		22		22		25		12		21		21
21	19	24	16	26	25	24		5	25	19	21	7	19	22
19		2		25		5		3		4		5		24
12	1	25	13	22		5	8	22	22	14	25	3	26	23
3		8		12		26				8		25		25
14	8	21	25	23	16	19	24	23		16	26	23	8	5
7				25		21		8				8		8
	18	24	8	13	16	8	23	17	18	13	12	4	10	
18		21				5		14		12				17
8	19	8	22	14		26	20	21	26	23	22	8	1	26
22		13		25				4		17		23		21
15	24	8	6	6	8	4	25	13		9	25	11	11	25
24		6		25		12		24		12		25		2
26	7	26	18	19	12	2		18	12	14	26	5	8	25
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

St Mary's Church, Watton

Church Road, Watton, IP25 6DQ
www.stmaryswatton.org
Weekly Wednesday Services at 10am

Sun 1st	10am	Holy Communion
	5pm	Choral Evensong
Fri 6th	2pm	World Day of Prayer Service
Sun 8th	8am	BCP Holy Communion
	10am	2nd Sunday
Sun 15th	10am	Mothering Sunday (HC)
Sun 22nd	8am	BCP Holy Communion
	10am	4th Sunday
Sun 29th	10am	Café Church

Polish Catholic Community

St Mary's Church, Watton, IP25 6DQ
Every Thursday and Saturday at 6pm – 8pm

All Saints Church, Thrextton

Sunday 1st March 10.30a.m.
Everyone welcome

Ashill Group Services

Sunday 1 March (Lent 2)

9.30, St Nicholas' Ashill, Lay-led service
10.30, St John the Evangelist's, Ovington: Holy Communion
10.30, St George's, Saham Toney, Lay-led service

Sunday 8 March (Lent 3)

9.30, St Nicholas' Ashill, Holy Communion
10.30, St John the Evangelist's, Ovington, Lay-led service
10.30, St George's Saham Toney, Holy Communion.

Sunday 15 March (Lent 4: Mothering Sunday)

9.30, St Peter's, Merton, Holy Communion
9.30, St Nicholas' Ashill, Lay-led service
10.30, St John the Evangelist's, Ovington, Lay-led service
10.30, St George's, Saham Toney: Lay-led service

Sunday 22 March (Lent 5: Passion Sunday)

9.30, St Nicholas' Ashill, Holy Communion
10.30, St John the Evangelist's, Ovington, Lay-led service
10.30, St George's, Saham Toney: Lay-led service

Sunday 29 March (Palm Sunday: Holy Week begins)

9.30, St Nicholas' Ashill, Holy Communion
(This is the only service in the Group on this day.)

There are normally lay-led services on Sundays when there is not Holy Communion: 9.30am at Ashill; 10.30am at Saham Toney; 10.30am at Ovington



All Nations Church

All Nations Church, Watton

We meet every Sunday at 10:30am at the Youth and Community Centre on Harvey Street.

We would love to have you with us.

March at ANC

- 1st March – Community Café
- 8th March – Worship Service
- 15th March – Community Café
- 22nd March – Worship Service
- 29th March – Community Café

If you would like to get in touch or find out more then please email:
hello@ancwatton.co.uk

Or call Harry on 07999 564055

If you are interested in an introduction to the Christian faith and a chance to ask any questions you have then please get in contact to join our next Alpha course.

The Wayland Group of Parishes

Sunday 1st March

10.30am Service of the Word
Holy Cross, Caston
Service of the Word with Hymns for St. David's Day

Sunday 8th March

10.30am United Holy Communion
Holy Trinity, Gt Hockham

Sunday 15th March

10.30am United Holy Communion
St Peter & St Paul, Griston

Sunday 22nd March

10.30am Family Worship
St Botolph's, Stow Bedon

Sunday 29th March Palm Sunday

10.30am United Holy Communion
St Martin's, Thompson

Monday 30th March

6.00pm Compline
Holy Trinity, Gt Hockham

Tuesday 31st March

6.00pm Compline
Holy Trinity, Gt Hockham

Wednesday 1st April

6.00pm Compline
Holy Trinity, Gt Hockham

Friday 3rd April Good Friday

10.00am – 3.00pm
The Wayland Churches will be open for private prayer & reflection

Sunday 5th April Easter Day

10.30am United Holy Communion
St Margaret's, Breckles

Wayland Group Parish Churches

St Margaret's, Breckles; Holy Cross, Caston, Holy Trinity, Gt Hockham; St Peter & St Paul, Griston St Botolph's, Stow Bedon; St Martin's, Thompson

Wayland Quilters

We have had very busy meetings in January trying to decide what we would like to learn to make or where to go or any ideas we have for the year ahead. By the time you read this we will have had our AGM which was held on the 10th February. Hopefully our plans for the year will have been finalised and we can start some new interesting pieces of work. New members always welcome contact Rosemary on 07766 957949.

What's On in March!

At St Mary's Church

Church Road, Watton, IP25 6DQ
www.stmaryswatton.org
wattonchurch@gmail.com
01953 881252

Tues 3rd 5pm – 6pm Prayer & Praise: Sing your favourite worship songs & pray with & for the community. 1st Tues of month.

Wed 4th 1.30pm – 4pm (location in Watton) Bereavement Group: Contact Linda Benton on 07803 017340 or linbenton2978@gmail.com for details. 1st Wed of month.

Fri 6th 2pm World Day of Prayer Service: Crafted by the women of Nigeria, join us and share in refreshments afterwards.

Sat 7th 10am – 12noon Saturday Chat: Join us on the 1st Sat of month for our coffee morning. Come with friends or alone and make new ones!

Tues 10th 2pm – 4pm Tuesday Club: Join us for a social afternoon of games & laughter here at St Mary's. Confectionary prizes to be won! Donation gratefully received for refreshments. All welcome!

Thurs 12th 2pm – 2.30pm Prayer Gathering - Led by Rev Dave Cossey. Come join us as God's people to lift up both our community & the wider world in a time of informal prayer. 2nd & 4th Thurs of month.

Fri 13th 2pm – 4pm Craft Group: Enjoy refreshments & company whilst crafting. £1 donation.

Wed 18th 1pm – 2.30pm Ecumenical Ladies' Prayer Group: At Home Church, Dereham Rd, Watton. Fellowship followed by prayer time. Please bring a packed lunch, hot drinks provided.

Fri 20th 2pm – 4pm Community Cinema: Showing 'The Choral'. Doors open at 1:15pm for 2pm start. £5 ticket on the door inc. hot drink & cake.

Sat 21st 10am – 1pm Easter Craft Fayre: Lots of crafty makes to check out, combined with delicious cakes and refreshments - an enjoyable morning is guaranteed! Any crafters wanting to sell their wares? Contact us to book your stall for only £5.

Wed 25th 7.30pm – 9pm Choir Practice: Please contact the Parish Office should you wish to join.

Thurs 26th 10am – 3pm Open Church: St Mary's open to all to visit, pray, explore, and discover what we offer the community. Friendly volunteers on hand to help with any enquiries.

2pm – 2.30pm Prayer Gathering: Led by Rev Dave Cossey. Come join us as God's people to lift up both our community & the wider world in a time of informal prayer. 2nd & 4th Thurs of month.

Sat 28th 10am – 12noon Messy Church: Kids, bring your adult for a FREE morning of fun, stories, play and craft activities (aimed at primary age, but all ages and families welcome). PLUS! Food and drinks served too!

February's Winners of the 200 Club!
1st prize £50: Alan & Gill Smith, No. 184
2nd prizes £25 each: Stephen Fletcher, No. 149, Alison Tyas, No. 76

"I will give you rest" World Day of Prayer 2026 Nigeria

Our sisters in Nigeria invite us to join them for the World Day of Prayer on Friday 6 March 2026. The service they have prepared reflects on the theme, "I will give you rest."

St Mary's Annual World Day of Prayer Service, crafted by the women of Nigeria is on Friday 6th March at 2pm in St Mary's Church, Watton, Church Road, IP25 6DQ. Please join us and share in refreshments after the service.

The World Day of Prayer is an international, women-led, ecumenical movement that shares the hopes, concerns, and prayers of women from around the globe. Each year, women from a different country craft a service, sharing their

unique spiritual journey and culture. For 2026, the women of Nigeria have created a service that speaks to our need for peace and solace, drawing on their faith and experiences in a world filled with struggles and anxieties.

The preparation for this day is extensive. The writing country and theme are chosen years in advance, and the service then travels to the international committee in New York for translation and dissemination to national committees in over 120 participating countries. From there it is adapted and shared locally, culminating in gatherings at hundreds of churches every March.

This day is a powerful demonstration of global solidarity. It begins in Samoa and moves across the world in a continuous wave of prayer, finishing 38 hours later in American Samoa. It truly is a worldwide day of prayer!

For further information and resources, including details of services in your area, please visit the World Day of Prayer website: wwdp.org.uk

Norfolk Wildlife Trust Breckland Local Group

At the time of writing, we had not had February's AGM and talk, hopefully it will be a good evening.

On Wednesday 11th March we have Frank Street, Wildland manager for Nattergal at High Fen Methwold, a rewilding wetland site. Frank is also a bird ringer, bat rehabilitator, amateur lepidopterist and our

own Wayland Wood warden's husband! As a follow up to this talk we have also got a walk booked with Frank at Nattergal in the Spring.

As usual the talk is at the Methodist Centre, High Street, Watton, IP25 6QU, starts at 7.30pm and costs £3 non members, £2 members. There is also a raffle and refreshments.



We offer you a warm welcome at Purpose Church

The Watton Sports Centre, Dereham Road, Watton, Norfolk IP25 6EZ.

Website purposechurch.org.uk

Sundays: 10.30am morning service

Thursday: Community coffee and chat 10.00am

If there is something you would like us to pray for please let us know

More information contact Nick

07940049933 or nicknundy@gmail.com

WI Women Take Lifesaving Into Their Own Hands

February has been and gone being the shortest month of the year, and now we are heading into March and hopefully Spring! At our February meeting our speaker was Julian Horn, the Editor of the Watton and Wayland Times. We were very fortunate to have him come to talk to us and it was a very entertaining and informative evening, which was enjoyed by us all. It was also a busy meeting as members were allowed to bring a friend without charge, so it was a full hall. On 7th of February we had some sessions on CPR given by the St. John's Ambulance which proved popular and were very helpful and informative! (St John's team picture top right). To enable us to put this on we used money that we had from our late member Jane Broscomb who would have been very pleased to see how popular the morning was and we supplied refreshments for the attendees which was much appreciated! As usual our clubs are now in full swing,

Book Club, Lunch Club and Craft Club to name but a few! In March we have a craft workshop evening at the meeting on 12th, in the Methodist Hall in Watton High Street. Our speaker is Sandra Woods and we will be participating in craft which will be our competition at the end of the workshop and Sandra will be our judge. If you are interested in joining us please feel free to come along and see what goes on, or contact Margaret Herbert on 01953 882269. Visitors and new members are always welcome.



Watton Methodist Church

57 High Street, Watton IP25 6AB
 wattonmethodist.chessck.co.uk
 Minister: Rev Neil Vels

Sunday Service Times
 10.30am in Church;
 6.30pm in the Large Vestry
 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays

Wednesday Coffee Morning in The Methodist Centre
 Weekly from 4th 9:30am to 11:30am
 Alongside the Country Market

Tuesdays@2 in The Methodist Centre

Next meeting 10th March at 2pm
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Money, Money, Money!

Here at Museum 4 Watton, we have an extensive collection of money, notes and coins spanning over 2000 years of British monetary history. King Offa of Mercia is credited with introducing the first true, standardised silver coinage system in Britain around 760 C.E. He introduced the silver penny, creating a system of 240 pennies to a pound, which became the basis of British currency until 1971 and decimalisation.

Our oldest and rarest coins are from Iron Age Britain, during the time of the Iceni. We also have examples of coinage from the Romans, Anglo-Saxons, the Commonwealth and beyond.

The first currency (standardised money) in use in Britain appears to have been in the form of iron currency bars, first appearing in Britain around 2000 BCE. They are rarely found in Norfolk, and unfortunately we don't have an example at the museum..... yet!

Our first coin of note is an incredibly rare Bury Helmet silver unit and is around 2000 years old (right). The Iceni had four denominations of coinage, two of gold alloy (staters and quarter staters) and two of silver alloy (units and half units), which were produced during four separate periods: the 'early local', 'first', 'middle', and 'late' periods. The Bury Helmut (so called because a number were found at Bury St

Edmunds) was found in Watton in 1992 and has been on quite a journey, finding itself in New Zealand, where it was purchased and then donated to M4W. There are just nine recorded examples of this coin in existence and our example is the only one on public display. The obverse of the coin depicts the head of a woman or goddess, and the reverse depicts a horse. We also have in our collection an Iceni gold quarter stater from around 50bc. These coins often feature intricate and distinct motifs like the "Norfolk Wolf" or crescent moons, and are often linked to tribal royalty. Silver units invariably have a head on the obverse and a horse on the reverse. Half units are more variable, with complex designs, usually including a boar on the obverse and a horse on the reverse. Some later coins include the letters ECEN, which may represent the tribe name Iceni or a tribal leader. Most British Celtic coins were struck. The method by which struck coins were produced remains unclear. There was no



standardised system of producing coinage in England until Athelstan, who established the first country-wide mints in 928, but it is generally agreed that most coins were struck using a four-step process. A craftsman would engrave the intricate designs into hard iron or bronze dies. First, a fairly exact amount of metal would be weighed out in the form of powder or nugget. The metal would then be placed in a clay mould and heated to form a blank or flan. Examples of which have been found during archaeological excavations. The blank would then be flattened before finally being placed between two dies and struck. The lower die would be concave in order to hold the blank in place, while the upper die would be convex. These dies were often larger than the coin itself, so often only partial scenes are present on the struck coins, giving them a unique individual finish.

The consistency in the weight of the silver units (often 1.25g) and the high quality of the engraving indicate that the Iceni had artisan moneyers at their disposal.

We also hold the collection of the late Derek Kendal, a keen metal detectorist, who found hundreds of coins in a relatively small, undisclosed area of Watton. The majority date from between the 1200s to 1650; might this indicate the site of an early marketplace? Derek's collection is on permanent display at the museum.

Not all coins in our collection were issued by the treasury.

In 1670, Christopher Hey, a wealthy Watton mercer and builder of the clock tower, issued his own coinage/tokens in reply to the shortage of small change issued by the treasury. It had become uneconomic for the treasury to mint small coins, but It made

sound business sense to mint your own. Because, of course, any coin you took in payment, you gave change in your own currency, and the only person able to accept that currency was you.

We have several pound notes worthy of mention too. The first is a £1 Treasury note dated 1923 and signed by Warren Fisher. It has King George V and a depiction of St George slaying the dragon on one side, while the reverse gives a detailed sketch of the Palace of Westminster.

The one-pound note type B249, 1940, was issued during WW2. The Bank of England were concerned that Germany would flood Britain with counterfeit money. To prevent this from happening, it was decided to incorporate a metal thread (security thread) into the notes, a technology the Germans didn't have. This concept was not a new idea; it had first been patented in England in 1848. But, whilst patented in the mid-19th century, the first banknotes with this security feature were not formally introduced in Great Britain until 1940, under the threat of German sabotage. They were trialled again in 1945 before being standardised in 1948. In 1984, the Bank of England improved metal strip security by introducing a "broken" or windowed security thread that appears to weave in and out of the paper.

Coins are commonly found by detectorists and people digging in their gardens. You may have found a coin yourself and wish to have it identified. Please call in, we have specialist equipment to help in the identification process.

The Museum is Open Wednesday-Saturday 10-4

01953 797060 Free Admission

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Great Hockham Gardening Club

One way and another the weather is always in the news, usually because of the inconvenience it has caused, so forecasting the stuff accurately can be lifesaving. To gain an insight into how this is achieved we were given a most interesting talk by Chris Bell, The Chief Communications Officer from Weatherquest.

Originally from Huston, Texas, Chris first came to the UK to study meteorology and climatology as part of his studies at Louisiana State University. After completing his Master's degree, he moved back to Norfolk and joined Weatherquest in 2005.

Weatherquest is a company based in the UEA, Norwich. They provide tailored forecasts for customers with particular needs not necessarily included in the mainstream forecasts. These might include predicting the sowing conditions for farmers and wind and sea conditions for those servicing off-shore wind farms and oil rigs.

Chris began by saying that to know what is going to happen in the future you have to know what is happening now, by observing the weather now. Not just in the local area, but all around the world. Not just at the surface, but all through the atmosphere. So, how do you observe the atmosphere? All around the country - and the world - are weather stations.

Each station consists of a special enclosure called a Stevenson screen - See picture. Designed in the 19th century by British civil engineer Thomas Stevenson, this device has become a global standard in meteorological observation. It allows instruments to be exposed to freely circulating air while shielding them from rain, solar radiation, wind and other interfering factors. Its primary function is to create a controlled microenvironment that reflects true ambient conditions, making data more accurate and comparable across time and space. Stevenson screens remain a common sight wherever high-quality meteorological data is collected.

What instruments are kept inside a Stevenson screen?

Dry bulb and wet bulb thermometers measure air temperature and humidity. Maximum and minimum thermometers may also be included to track daily extremes.

Hygrometers measure relative humidity, often in conjunction with dry/wet bulb thermometers.

A barometer measures the atmospheric pressure.

An anemometer used to be the spinning variety, but could freeze up; now they have no moving parts, just spikes that vibrate.

A laser points up to the sky and measures cloud base, important for airfields.

To measure visibility, another laser shines a beam of light from one side of the enclosure to the other, measuring the scattering of light. In old days aircraft controllers would guesstimate visibility by looking out of the window.

Rather than poking in a stick, a third laser measures depth of snow.

Cynics have said that forecasters might just as well use a crystal ball: invented by John Francis Campbell in 1880, the Campbell-Stokes sunshine recorder focuses the sun through a glass sphere onto a strip of waxy paper.

The melted area indicates the periods of sunshine. This instrument is now being replaced with a more modern device. In addition to data from the Stevenson screens, information is gathered from several additional sources.

Ships provide surface observations from where stations cannot be located.

Every commercial aircraft is automatically signalling back information. One of the most well sampled places is 30,000 feet above the Atlantic. Other special aircraft fly into storms. If you ask what is happening on the ground we pretty much know, but ask what is happening at 2,000 feet, we really don't know. To fill this gap weather radar can measure precipitation - where it's raining, how hard, snow or sleet and what direction it's moving. Several countries have national

meteorological agencies that will launch balloons and fly drones. As soon as a satellite goes up it saves lives. It can watch storms in real time, measure ocean wave height and record pretty much every lightning strike around the world.

Every day there are about 93,000 ground-based observations, 47,000 from ships and 175,000 from aircraft. Even with all this detail there are still huge gaps as to what we know. In say Hockham, just down the road might be three or four degrees colder than you have in your back garden. Temperature could be different on one side of your house than the other, and forecasters have no idea of that information.

In the old days forecasters would fill in isobars on a map by hand. Now there is no such thing as human forecasters. Over the last hundred or so years some very clever people have determined how physics dominates heat, moisture and pressure moving about in the atmosphere. They have been able to construct mathematical models that can predict what is happening between now and the future. But once the observations have been put into the model it would take a human days to do the calculations.

Housed in a room about four times the size of Hockham village hall, a Cray XC 40 supercomputer can process 14,000 trillion observations in one second. That is more than two million calculations for every person on the planet - every second. 215 billion observations from all over the world every day are needed just to make a starting point for a forecast. Observations from all the above sources are going live into supercomputers in a number of countries. Each will

take the worldwide data and run it through their own models. Meteorology is one of the few sciences in the world where everyone still cooperates, even during the Cold War, although Covid recorded a dip in forecasting data. Weather Quest doesn't run a super computer. They take the data from the Met Office, America's NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and others. Every hour the model will tell you what it predicts for the next 8 or 12 hours. But there may be a bias in your particular area - regularly. Forecasters will take information from those locations and then correct the data for that model to reflect what happens in reality. If live information is coming in, that

can also be used to correct the model. So, in the last instance, the human can still go in and adjust.

What can you trust? Small errors at the beginning will grow into large variations in the predictions - the butterfly effect. Different computer models will predict slightly different outcomes. Chris asked us how far ahead might we expect to get a reliable forecast, one that we could trust? Some members thought one day, others said ten. Chris said both answers were correct. He showed us two charts. One showed a low in the North Atlantic. The prediction would be breezy, unsettled, individual small areas of low pressure would develop, there might be two or three days when it is going to rain. Under these conditions there would be a low accuracy in the forecast, perhaps only two to three days. On the other hand, if there was a big area of high-pressure blocking the jet stream, as there was in late spring and early summer 2018, when there was no rain for forty days, the reliability would be different. A farmer asked him when he was going to get rain, Chris told him for sure that he wouldn't get any for the next 15 days, and he was completely right. It's all about confidence, probability.

Chris answered many interesting questions from members, and I hope I have conveyed what a fascinating and informative presentation Chris gave us in the space Julian has made available to me here. You can't better having a talk given by someone who is really knowledgeable and passionate. But predicting the future is not that simple. Perhaps we should not be as harsh on Michael Fish as we have sometimes been.

Our next meeting will be at Hockham village hall on Wednesday 11th of March. Chris Davey will be showing us how to grow irises, weather permitting. Edward.



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 Saturday 11th April Afternoon Tea at Poppylands 1940s Tearoom & Wroxham Adult £45 Child £25
 Sunday 26th April Holt Sunday Market & Sheringham Adult £20 Child £10
 Saturday 9th May Railway Mystery & Cream Tea Adult £45 Child £30
 Saturday 23rd May Southwold & Dunwich Adult £45 Child £25
 Saturday 6th June Springfields Outlet Shopping/Quilting Show Adult £25 Child £15
 Saturday 20th June Coastal Mystery with Lunch Adult £45 Child £25

Holidays 2026
 North Wales 27th July - 1st August
 Turkey & Tinsel Bournemouth 27th - 30th November

Shows 2026
 Cromer Pier Summer Show 5th August 2.30pm Show Adult £50
 ABBA Voyage 26th September 3pm Show £125
 Thursford Christmas Spectacular December 2pm Show £TBC
 Cromer Pier Christmas Show 15th Dec. 2.30pm Show Adult £50

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Watton & Wayland Times

Deadline is 4pm on the 12th of the month preceding publication and that is the last date and time that copy will be considered for inclusion. Arrival of your copy before deadline does not guarantee inclusion. You can contact Julian by telephone on 01953 571990 or 07864720480 or by email to: wattontimes@gmail.com

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Ashill Memory Cafe - What a Year!



Well, what a first year we've had at Ashill Memory Cafe!

From a monthly morning session at the Call-In we're now holding additional afternoon sessions due to increased numbers. Also we now offer a regular weekly morning "Drop in" session, where our members can come for support, coffee and a chat.

We'd also like to thank various individuals and agencies for their continuing support, including our regular sponsors Adcocks of Watton and The Old Windmill Pub at Cressingham, Becki at Watton Bakery who continue to supply our cakes & Pam at Ashill Fruit Farm who provided us with fruit juices last year. All gratefully received.

Thanks also go to representatives from MIND, Community Dementia Support Advisors, Community Welfare & Enablers and Admiral Nurses who attend to give advice or

support.

Activities we've enjoyed include craft sessions, bingo, singing, card & board games, Corn hole, chair exercises, raffles, jigsaws and art. Musical entertainment is always popular and we've been lucky enough to host the Pot of Gold Shanty crew, Richard Winch, Ian Clews, Simon Goldsmith (Elvis) & Louise Elder. Our members also always enjoy the Afternoon teas provided by the Market Cross Cafe in Swaffham.

On of our most successful events was 10 pin bowling at Strikes in Dereham where several of our members and volunteers showed their secret talent! We hope to continue with more "Awaydays" in the warmer weather.

We'd also like to thank the White Hart pub in Ashill, especially Chris and Michaela for hosting our very popular monthly Quiz on the last

Monday of each month. Also John and Jo, our Quiz masters, for coming up with challenging but fun questions every time. This event is open to all in the community but needs booking with Gill for refreshment numbers.

Our first year culminated in a fantastic Christmas party at the Community centre, where we were entertained by the Pot of Gold Shanty crew and Richard Winch, and enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea.

Of course none of this would be possible without the support of our 10 volunteers who give up their time each week to ensure our members feel supported, informed and entertained.

We're all looking forward to another year ahead & planning regular and new activities.

For more information contact Gill on 07548626337



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