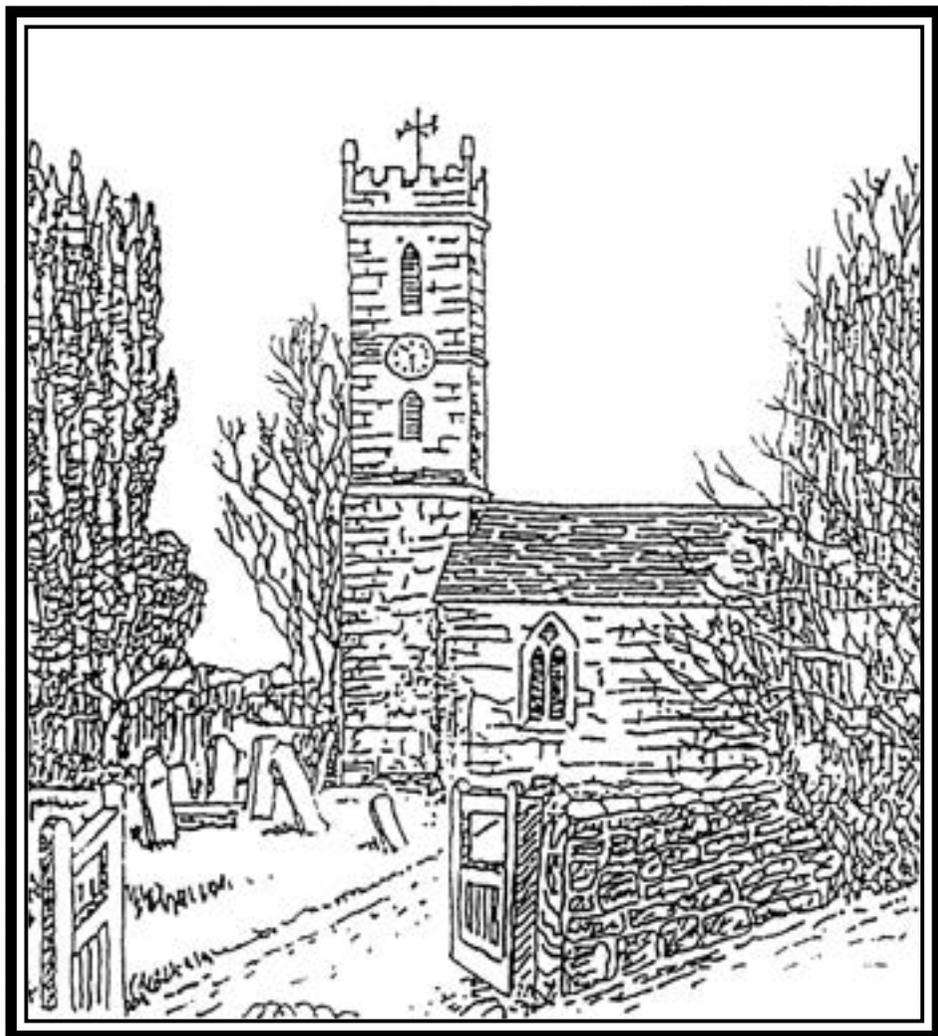


TIBBERTON & CHERRINGTON PARISH MAGAZINE



APRIL 2020





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so appropriately, as they said, 'for two elderly ladies'. Margaret Mortimer brought another unknowingly appropriate poem to the evening with William Henry Davies's 'Leisure'. It began with 'What is this life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare' and ends with 'A poor life this, if full of care, we have no time to stand and stare'. Rather too many of us in these Coronavirus days now have *plenty* of time to stand and stare and to *enjoy* our surroundings. Joan's rendition of 'When I am An Old Woman I Shall Wear Purple' was magnificent and had us all laughing and nodding our heads.

After the readings we all gathered round the table for delicious 'eats' and 'fizz', well it was a birthday party, and had good and enjoyable conversations!

And then along came Coronavirus. So, sadly, while we are all self-isolating and relying on very kind friends and neighbours to do our shopping and, of course, taking the instructions from the Government very seriously, we will not be holding our monthly meetings. See you on the other side of Coronavirus!

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

It was a strange feeling on the 19th March to be meeting in the Village Hall without any members of the public attending. But that was the situation as the Councillors followed the Covid-19 rules for their hour-long meeting. Instead of the usual format, everyone sat the requisite two metres plus distance away from each other but that was where the differences ended as the usual business was discussed in detail.



Three planning applications were considered -

TWC/2020/0094 – an application for a lawful development certificate for use of land as an existing garden at Bobaston Cottage.

TWC/2020/0159 – erection of a first storey side extension at 5 Wrekin View

and TWC/2020/0160 – Reserved matters application for the erection of 1 house at Honey House, Tibberton.

Two previous applications had been decided sine the last meeting -

TWC/2020/0029 – erection of 1 house at 66 Back Lane which had been withdrawn and

TWC/2019/1039 – outline application for the erection of up to 9 dwellings on the land between Rivers Edge and 45 Cherrington Road which was refused.

On the same land the decision was made by the planning inspector to dismiss the application TWC/2019/0251 for nine dwellings.

Further news on the May Public Meeting will be announced when we have a clearer picture of what we can and cannot do at the time.

The Parish Council would like to thank all the volunteers at the shop for providing such a sterling service – a lot of work has been going on behind the scenes to keep things running during this time of lock-down and we're sure everyone is most appreciative. Councillors would also like to express their thanks to all the staff at Tibberton School for keeping things running for those

children who are still attending school. It can't be an easy time for anyone and to keep that sense of normality for the children is again very much appreciated.

In these unusual times it is good to see people out walking their dogs. But please could all dog walkers clear up any mess that their prized pets may leave. This issue raises its head periodically and after a while where the situation of dog mess seemed to be improving it now appears to be a big problem again – especially on the playing field. Children and families are now using this area more than ever, and it's not pleasant to come home and find that their child has stood in something messy.



The Neighbourhood Plan group and the Parish Council would really like to thank all those who responded to the recent Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire either by paper or online. Over 100 responses were received and we are really appreciative of the heart-felt nature of many of the comments. It was pleasing to see that there were also some expressions of interest to help see new projects started and hopefully these will be explored in more detail when times get back to some sort of normality. The Councillors were very thankful for all of the hard work that all the members of the steering group have put into this project. From the questionnaire comments and the drop-in comments there is clearly a lot to do as well as a lot to try and retain in our lovely Parish.

Finally, it is recommended to follow the Tibberton Talk Facebook site to see what is happening in the Parish and what is available to those who may need help and support.

Please stay well and stay safe and follow the recommendations by the Government.

TIBBERTON VILLAGE SHOP

When the last commercial village shop closed its doors in 2010, and a small group of villagers started thinking about opening a *volunteer*-run village shop, none could have thought that ten years later a nasty, nasty virus would cause such world-wide turmoil.



At the time of writing, the Government is *telling* us all to STAY AT HOME except for shopping for basic necessities; to travel to work only when we cannot work from home; to exercise outside once a day, and not to meet others even friends or family. Thank goodness for good old fashioned telephones, for mobile telephones, iPads etc!

Tibberton Village Shop (TVS) has joined forces with *Tibberton & Cherrington Community Support Helpline* (T&CCSH) to ease the shopping a little for those who need help in getting essential food items and medications to you.

All you need do is telephone **T&CCSH on 700749** any time from 10am-4pm 7 days a week to order your groceries. One of the 30 T&CCSH volunteers will then contact you to arrange delivery.

Newspapers and magazines existing orders will continue and new orders can be placed for collection from the shop using the Contact Us order form on the **TVS website** or telephoning **550021 or 550763** 11am-2pm seven days a week. To keep us all safe don't forget to use the hand sanitiser before touching anything!

Bloomers bread and pastries (for delivery to your home on Saturday) can be ordered as above but orders need to be submitted by 10pm on Tuesday.

If you have any other shop questions please call 550763 or 550021 11am-2pm seven days a week.

No doubt during our daily 'exercise' we may see some of you and look forward to passing a brief 'time of day', albeit a safe six feet distance from one another. We look forward to that. On our exercise walks we might like to take our cameras and mobile telephones with us to capture **photographs for the Village Shop 2021 calendar**. The theme for next year is 'Tibberton Village Life'. Over the past few years villagers have taken some fabulous photographs of our beautiful village and we very much hope that we can have some striking photographs for the 2021 calendar. The photographs need to be 'landscape' and should be sent to tibbertoncalendar@gmail.com by 31st May.

Thank you to all those involved in setting up and running *Tibberton & Cherrington Community Support Helpline*.

BRIDGE PROBLEM OF THE MONTH

Playing in the ever-popular 3NT there are a number of elements to be aware of, not least a potential 'blockage' in a long suit on which the contract depends, as in the case of the Diamond suit in this hand -

				<u>NORTH</u>	
		Spades	A Q 6 2		
		Hearts	A K 7		
		Diamonds	Q 9 8 6		
		Clubs	Q 5		
		<u>WEST</u>		<u>EAST</u>	
Spades	10 8 4	Spades	K J 9 5		
Hearts	J 10 6 3	Hearts	Q 9 5		
Diamonds	4	Diamonds	J 10 5		
Clubs	A K 9 6 2	Clubs	10 8 3		
				<u>SOUTH</u>	
		Spades	7 3		
		Hearts	8 4 2		
		Diamonds	A K 7 3 2		
		Clubs	J 7 4		

South ends up in 3NT and receives the lead of the 6 of Clubs taken in hand with the Jack. Do we see any dangers, other than the obvious need to make 9 tricks before conceding the lead and witnessing a 'flurry' of Clubs? *Solution page 24*



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See our website www.tibbertonvillageshop



What are they used for?

We all hope to remain healthy and independent for as long as possible however there can come a time when we are no longer physically or mentally capable to make decisions for ourselves.

While a person still has full mental capacity and can make their own decisions that person can appoint an Attorney (or several) who will manage their affairs & make decisions on their behalf when they can no longer do that. There are two types of Powers:

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Health Care Decisions

A Health Care Decisions Power covers medical treatment & welfare to include residence and medical decisions. It can give your Attorneys power to refuse or consent to treatment on your behalf.



Rachel Davenport

I am Rachel Davenport a local friendly Solicitor based at our Newport Office I have a lot of experience with dealing with elderly Clients in the locality.

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I very much look forward to meeting with many of you in the coming weeks.

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Celebrating the 98th birthday of Tibberton WI with a light-hearted literary evening



Barrie Everitt, Chair of the Village Shop committee with the last customer, Graham Eyles, before the shop closed for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic. Shop open for deliveries – see article.

What do rabbits say before they eat? Lettuce pray.

What did the Easter bunny say to the carrot? It's been nice gnawing you.

TIBBERTON & CHERRINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH **APRIL 2020 UPDATE**

Do YOU know that YOU, YOUR FAMILY and YOUR PROPERTY are part of our Neighbourhood Watch (NW) Scheme if you live in our Parish? You don't? Please read on to find out more!



We Don't Buy Crime / SmartWater – We have only 4 kits left to be registered. Please contact Nick Greenall quickly to reserve your kit!

SmartWater VEHICLE Signs – The news is that these signs are part of a vehicle protection kit which can be obtained directly from SmartWater. Their website is being redeveloped so please contact them via on **0333 320 7797** or by email customerservices@smartwater.com or visit their website <https://shop.smartwater.com/vehicles-enq/>

To help keep your vehicles safe, please read this West Mercia Police article now on the Parish Council Website: <https://tinyurl.com/rswt69b>

SmartWater Road Signs – These and our new Neighbourhood Watch signs will go up when we can do that safely.

IMPORTANT! Scams and COVID-19 - West Mercia Police Advice **(26 March 2020)**

Updated figures show there have been 105 reports (nationally) to Action Fraud since 1 February 2020, with total losses reaching nearly £970,000.

The first report relating to Coronavirus, or COVID-19, was received on 9 February. There were 20 more reports that month. Since then, there have been 46 reports between the 1 March and 13 March, and 38 reports in just four days (14 March - 18 March).

What scams are we seeing?

The majority of reports are related to online shopping scams where people have ordered protective face masks, hand sanitiser, and other products, which have never arrived.

Other frauds being reported include ticket fraud, romance fraud, charity fraud and lender loan fraud.

Phishing emails

We have also received over 200 reports of coronavirus-themed phishing emails. These attempts to trick people into opening malicious attachments could lead to fraudsters stealing people's personal information, email logins and passwords, and banking details.

Some of the tactics being used in phishing emails include:-

- Fraudsters purporting to be from a research group that mimic the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organisation (WHO). They claim to provide the victim with a list of active infections in their area but to access this information the victim needs to either: click on

a link which redirects them to a credential-stealing page; or make a donation of support in the form of a payment into a Bitcoin account.

- Fraudsters providing articles about the virus outbreak with a link to a fake company website where victims are encouraged to click to subscribe to a daily newsletter for further updates.
- Fraudsters sending investment scheme and trading advice encouraging people to take advantage of the coronavirus downturn.
- Fraudsters purporting to be from HMRC offering a tax refund and directing victims to a fake website to harvest their personal and financial details. The emails often display the HMRC logo, making it look reasonably genuine and convincing.

Protect yourself

1) Watch out for scam messages

Don't click on the links or attachments in suspicious emails, and never respond to unsolicited messages and calls that ask for your personal or financial details.

2) Shopping online

If you're making a purchase from a company or person you don't know and trust, carry out some research first, and ask a friend or family member for advice before completing the purchase. If you decide to go ahead with the purchase, use a credit card if you have one, as most major credit card providers insure online purchases. For more information on how to shop online safely, please visit: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/shoponlinesafely>

3) Protect your devices from the latest threats

Always install the latest software and app updates to protect your devices from the latest threats. For information on how to update your devices, please visit: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/securing-your-devices>

For the latest health information and advice about COVID-19 please visit the NHS website. If you think you have been a victim please report to Action Fraud <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/reporting-fraud-and-cyber-crime>

For information about protecting yourself against rural crime visit the West Mercia Police Crime Prevention Website:

<https://www.westmercia.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/rc/rural-crime/>

From 30 March 2020, MOT due dates for cars, motorcycles and light vans will be EXTENDED by SIX months. This is being done to help prevent the spread of coronavirus.

<https://www.gov.uk/.../coronavirus-covid-19-mots-for-cars-van>

You must **NOT** take your vehicle for its MOT if you or someone you live with have COVID-19 symptoms, or if you're extremely vulnerable from COVID-19.

Nick Greenall (550021, ng899@btinternet.com)

Nick Carter (550641, the.nick.carter@icloud.com)

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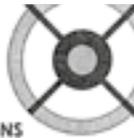
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THE SHOP MAY NOT NOW BE OPEN FOR A PERIOD OF TIME BUT THERE IS STILL A GOODLY GROUP OF "SWANS" (PADDING LIKE MAD) BELOW THE SURFACE) TO KEEP THINGS AFLOAT.

THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH FOR GIVING YOUR TIME ON OUR BEHALVES.

GREATLY APPRECIATED

Dave Westcott

BOOK CLUB



George sprawled on the comfortable sofa. Our hostess had perched herself on a hard upright chair immediately beneath a wide shelf. Fay was concerned she would bang her head and encouraged her to move closer to the rest of us. Our hostess addressed the group. "I confess I have only managed the first few chapters, I am a busy lady, you know."

"Well, I only managed the first few pages," admitted Fay.

Should we read something a bit simpler, I wondered. Paddington Bear perhaps or Little Women? The author of The Book was an intellectual member of the upper class who had written a sophisticated biography of a famous lady at the court of Louis XV of France. "All those long French names," moaned Patsy. "I could neither pronounce them nor remember them."

"But wouldn't you have liked to have met Madame?" asked Fay. "She seemed such a warm, fun-loving person." "The author described her as being everything to everybody, the king, the court, her family and the bourgeois," said Betty. "Which she could not have been," said Mary.

Felicity was more sympathetic. "Court life must have been hard for her, her health was poor, she suffered two miscarriages and the death of her young daughter." "No NHS in those days," remarked Henry.

"She was only 43 when she died," said Betty.

"What a hectic, pointless life they led at Versailles," said Mary,

"It was established by Louis XIV to keep the lords out of mischief," explained George. He further enlightened us with his extensive knowledge of eighteenth century French history and went on to discuss interesting incidents described in The Book until it was time for tea and cake and general gossip until it was time for home.

A week later five members of the Book Club met again to discuss the merits or not of a story written by the first author to write science fiction.

"I'd never normally read this kind of book," said Betty. "I don't like science fiction or space stories." Undeterred, our host explained how well written and well constructed the story was, how it was similar to ancient Greek tales, yet included ideas about the fourth dimension.

"It is also a subtle and imaginative comment on the comfortable lives of the Victorian middle class," said Mary.

"And dependent on the toiling ill-paid working class," added Betty.

Henry muttered something about dark satanic mills.

"Once again we read about the class system," commented Sally. "Those in the light above and those who dwell in the darkness below."

"In the story those below have the upper hand," said Mary. "A very dark story," said Henry gloomily. "Should one really travel in time?" asked Betty.

But we had no George to enlighten us, so we ate chocolate biscuits and wondered whether we would ever meet again.

Here's something for our younger readers this Eastertime

THE LEGEND OF THE EASTER RABBIT

Many children in European countries are told that Easter eggs are brought by the Easter rabbit. Here is the legend of how it started.



Once upon a time when the Christ Child was alive, the earth began to die. Oh, the sun still shone and the seasons came and went, but nothing seemed to matter any more. The birds forgot to sing and the flowers forgot to bloom. The trees stood stiffly and people said, "There's no point in working hard any more."

The Christ Child said, "You must not give up hope. The earth will not die. I am here to bring new life. I need a messenger to go and tell this to the world. Who will help me?"

The animals clamoured to be the chosen messenger. "Choose me! Choose me!" they said. The Christ Child knew it would be impossibly unfair to choose any one animal in preference to any other, so he said, "Whichever one of you can travel fastest round the world can be my messenger."

"It will be me," declared the deer. "I'll do it fastest," said the salmon.

"The job's as good as mine," sang the eagle.

"Perhaps I'll be first," whispered the rabbit.

And the creatures set off: leaping, swimming, swooping, running, each in their own preferred way.

The deer was off to a good start. She leapt sure-footed across the land. But then she met some others, jumping over crags and streams. She stopped to join in ... and soon time disappeared.

The salmon started well. He swam strongly downstream towards the open sea. But once there, he saw sunbeams dancing on the waves like golden pennies. He stopped to watch ... and soon time disappeared.

The eagle too began with speed. He soared high over the mountain tops towards more distant lands. But, when high in the sky, he noticed a small foreign field mouse scuttling around down below. He swooped and dived ...and soon time disappeared.

The rabbit hopped. Then paused for breath, looking round, ears turning, nose twitching. Then hopped some more. Quickly on. White tail flashing. Hop and hop. Stop. On and on. Steadily. Round the world and back.

"Well done. Bravo! The first one home," cried the Christ Child when he saw the rabbit. "You shall be my messenger."

But the rabbit suddenly felt shy. "How will anyone believe me?" he asked. "No-one will take any notice of me. They won't believe what I say."

"Take this," said the Christ Child, and he handed the rabbit a brown egg, still warm from the hen. "Take this as a sign of new life and tell the world that as surely as the egg is new life, so am I."

The rabbit took the small brown egg and looked at it. Its new life promise was safe inside, everyone knew that. The rabbit waved goodbye to the Christ Child and set off again round the world. This time with the Christ Child's message of new life and hope.

Everywhere he went he left an egg. One for each mother and father, daughter and son. Everywhere. In every town and in every village.

After many years of travelling the rabbit returned to the place where he had last seen the Christ Child. He asked where he was. "He'll be a grown man now," he said.

"The man died on a cross," they said. "His body is in a dark cave. You're too late. You can't help him now."

"No," said the rabbit. "You're wrong. He's here to help us. He promised hope and new life. Look!" And he showed them an egg.

And the people understood. The next day they heard the news that the Christ Man was indeed alive.

"You're a good messenger," they said to the rabbit. But already the rabbit was gone. Gone again around the world with his message of hope and new life, hidden in an egg.

Perhaps the Easter Rabbit will visit your house with an egg. But perhaps it will be a big chocolate egg instead of a small brown hen's egg. Happy Easter, everybody!



LEAVE YOUR DANDELIONS ALONE

When mowing your lawn, avoid cutting your dandelions. That is the advice of the president of the British Ecological Society, Prof Jane Memmott. It will help to save the bees. She explains: "Dandelions are a fantastic source of pollen and nectar for the early pollinators in particular. If they were rare, people would be fighting over them, but because they're common, people pull them out and spray them with all sorts of horrible things when they should just let them flower. If you leave the lawn to three or four inches, then dandelions, clover and daisies can flower and then you end with something like a tapestry, and it's much nicer to sit there and watch the insects buzzing about."



Prof Memmott encourages everyone to get a bee hotel for their garden.

"There's nothing nicer than being sat in a chair with a glass of wine and watching the bees going in and out of your own personal little beehive. Even just a potted plant on a doorstep will provide lunch for a bee or a fly or a butterfly."

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) is endorsing this request, stating that nearly 7.5million acres of meadows and pastures rich in wildflowers have been lost since the Thirties, thus removing a vital source of food for pollinators, many of whom are now in steep decline. The nation's 15 million gardens could help a lot in supporting bees, butterflies and other bugs looking for nectar.

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ST. JAMES THE LEAST –

On the nonsense of having a lavatory at church

The Rev Dr. Gary Bowness with another of his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace', a Rector of the old school, to his trendy Curate nephew.



My dear Nephew Darren,

This year, the rigours of Lent have taken second place to a far more pressing matter: the installation of a lavatory at St James the Least of All.

Personally, I entirely disapprove of this additional sign of decadence in our moral fibre; we have survived perfectly happily for the last 800 years without one, so why is there such an urgent need now? And being surrounded by acres of fields, there seems to be a completely acceptable alternative.

It also spoils the pleasure I used to take, informing ushers at weddings, having liberally refreshed themselves at our local pub before the Service, that we have no facilities and that they would just have to wait. Their look of pained resignation, developing to clear signs of repentance as the Service progressed, was most cheering. It also meant that wedding parties did not linger after the Service but disappeared with commendable speed to safe havens.

I anticipate that now we have the thing, a sub-committee will form to devise a commissioning Service for the person who will be in charge of its maintenance. I can already foresee Lady Bartlett proposing an appropriate set of robes for the office holder – although it will need some tact to select suitable insignia on the sleeves.

In fact, the project has not been entirely successful; we still need to have a lock fitted and so at present, occupants have been advised to sing hymns loudly. A hymn book has been installed as an *aide memoire*.

The greater difficulty arises from our antiquated plumbing system. A member of the congregation can leave a Service perfectly discreetly; they can enter the lavatory unseen by anyone, but on flushing, water is drawn through pipes running the length of the inside of the building with a thunderous roar.

I am sure that in your worship centre you will have lavish cloakrooms furnished with colour co-ordinated walls and towels, baby-changing facilities and video monitors relaying everything going on in the service. But we are made of sterner stuff, and I maintain that our congregation should be grateful that they now have a lavatory at all. And to think that someone suggested it should even have heating!

Your loving Uncle Eustace

- What did one Easter egg say to the other? Heard any good yolks today?
- Why shouldn't you tell an Easter egg a joke? It might crack up!
- What do you call a very tired Easter egg? Eggs-austed.
- What's an Easter egg's least favourite day? Fry-day.

FROM OUR WILDLIFE WATCHER - *It is still a lovely time of year*

Our weather is certainly not boring and continually surprises us, whether from the amount of rain which falls or the pendulum swing from frosts to temperatures of 17+ whilst still being officially 'Spring'. The clocks have now changed and time will tell if the sunny 17+ was a foretaste of our summer, or simply gave us false hope and diverted our attention from Coronavirus!



Our wildlife does their best to get on with their lives irrespective of what occurs to us humans. The hedgehogs continue to move around under cover of darkness, with only their droppings giving a clue as to their nightly ramblings around our garden.

Early last month it was announced that researchers from Nottingham Trent University were trying to find out the role traffic has in the decline of Britain's hedgehog population. The current restrictions on human movement will have halted this study. However, it doesn't take an expert to deduce that 'hogs are struggling with lost habitats, and that with declining acreage to search for food, they face increasing competition for that food. Additionally, they are potentially having to travel further and perhaps seek new habitats, all of which makes them increasingly vulnerable to becoming victims of our increased road traffic. The researchers were keen to determine whether hedgehogs would use tunnels under roads, which could reduce the number of deaths, and whether the age of the 'hog determined their chances of getting safely to the other side of the road. When the study is eventually concluded, the intent is to provide guidance for planners and developers.

The current restrictions on human movement due to Covid-19, resulting in less traffic, may have positive effects for hedgehogs too, during this, the beginning of their breeding season. As one of Britain's much-loved creatures, I'm sure we'd love to turn around the fortunes of our spiny garden visitors.

It's a real joy to hear the birds singing now, as they too have young needing food. Their unmistakable songs, cries and calls confirm that new life is happening all around us. Careful observation *can* reveal where the birds in our gardens are nesting, although they usually go to great lengths to keep their nests concealed in order to raise their young successfully, so it's best to enjoy watching from a distance.

Staying indoors provides an opportunity to watch our garden birds, possibly brushing up on their identification, and if we can put out some food and water for them, they will be regular visitors to our gardens.

Perhaps you have something in common with Joan Bakewell? (86-year-old baroness, author, playwright, journalist and television presenter, whose intellect combined with her appearance earned her the famous sobriquet: "the thinking man's crumpet" coined by Frank Muir in the 1960s, reflecting the attitude of the times.) She revealed recently that she was self-isolating and,

with time on her hands had bought her first ever bird feeders and bird food, in order to watch the birds in her garden. If you've never had the time to look out of the window at the birds, I'm sure you too will be captivated by their activities.



The recent sunshine and warmer weather has encouraged the insects to appear. The early flowering plants, such as heather and aubretia prove to be magnets for bees and butterflies alike, whilst the solitary bees have appeared and are investigating lawn edges and banks with a view to excavating nests. The female builds her nest by herself, digging out a nesting chamber in the ground and adding moistened pollen to the chamber before laying an egg. She then seals off that section of the nest before moving on to the next chamber. Whilst most solitary bees nest solitarily, you'll often find other solitary bees have found sites close by if it's a favoured site.

Nature is all around us, our gardens can be havens for both us and our wildlife. Enjoy watching the wildlife, let it help take your mind off the news and together we'll get through this worrying time.

Meow

"What is your kitty's name, James?" asked the visitor. "Ben Hur," said James.

"That's a funny name for a cat. Why did you name it that?"

"Well, we just called him Ben – until he had kittens."

BRIDGE SOLUTION

Several Declarers attacked the Diamond suit by leading small to the Queen in Dummy and then small (ie the 6) from Dummy back to hand and the Ace and King. Whoops! The 9 of Diamonds remaining in Dummy is now a blockage denying access to the 2 long Diamonds in hand which are vital to the success of the contract.



The solution is simple. Firstly, look out for higher intermediate cards in the shorter length of an important suit. Secondly. Look out for a long suit in a hand with NO outside suit entries (or just one entry at trick one – as here). Once the problem has been spotted, careful play will overcome it.

It was correct in this case to play the 2 of Diamonds up to Dummy's Queen first, in order to cater for East holding J 10 x x (if West holds these cards, there is no way to avoid one loser in the suit – try it).

The second round **MUST** start from Dummy with the 9 (!) up to the Ace in hand. Now the King is led from hand and the second 'blocker', the 8 of Diamonds, is played under the King. The Diamond suit can now run, playing the 7 from hand and the last Diamond from Dummy – the 6, a single but vital 'undercard'. Diamonds have provided the full 5 tricks as required, which together with 2 Heart tricks, 1 Spade trick and the opening Club trick brings the count to nine. Contract made – the only way!



The Worst Witch

by
Jill Murphy
Puffin
Paperback
ISBN: 9780141349596
Ages: 7-9

Originally published in 1974, *The Worst Witch* has never been out of print. The tales of magic and mayhem at Miss Cackle's Academy for Witches, the grey-walled turreted school perched high on a mountain top surrounded by pine trees, have been enchanting children before *Harry Potter* was even a twinkle in J.K. Rowling's eye.

The Worst Witch is the first book in the series, where we meet Mildred Hubble in her first year as she finds her way around the long narrow corridors and winding stairs of this castle-like building. She also has to find her way around thick books of spells, master riding a broomstick and attend the magical potions classes. However, the Academy has so many rules that it's almost impossible not to break at least one of them every day. Mildred spends a lot of time in the Headmistress's office as she just seems to break so many rules! Mildred's black cat isn't black at all and spells go wrong for her too. A pig instead of a frog infuriates a classmate and she makes a laughing potion which isn't funny, but an escargatoire of snails turns out to be just the trick!

This is an enjoyable and readable series which quickly engrosses the reader so that it's easy to feel Mildred is a friend, and you can't wait to meet her again in the next book in the series to find out what misadventures happen next.²

About the author

*Jill Murphy was born in London in 1949, drawing and writing stories from as soon as she could hold a pencil. Her strict convent education provided inspiration for Miss Cackle's Academy in *The Worst Witch*, which she started writing when she was 15. After initially being rejected by several publishers, it was printed when she was twenty-four and sold out almost immediately, confirming her decision to be an author/illustrator.*

The Worst Witch book series have sold more than 3 million copies worldwide as well as forming the basis of a major ITV series of that name in 2017-2019. Mildred Hubble has had a further new lease of life with a musical version last year, which garnered much praise and been described as 'a splendid piece of theatre' and 'sassy' with enough jokes to keep youngsters and parents amused. Once 'normal' life resumes, so will the touring production.

Jill is also well known for her picture books for younger children, in particular the stories about the Large Family which detail the domestic chaos of an elephant family. "Peace at Last", "A Quiet Night In" and "Five Minutes Peace" have all won literary awards as well as striking chords with parents.

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