

Whimble News



Whimble Wassail 2023 (photo by Sue Ayers)

Feb/March 2023

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DRINKS 12-8pm

Normal menu available: THURS-SAT 12-2.30pm/5.30-8.30pm
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**NO QUIZ NIGHT IN JANUARY
NEXT BIG QUIZ, SUNDAY FEB 19th.**

Please book as it will be a busy one....

Band Nights 9pm: Jan 27th: New Heroes, Feb 24th: K2

EDITORIAL BY SARAH THACKERAY

Hi everyone, and a slightly belated Happy New Year

I hope this edition of the Whimble News finds you in good health, as we begin 2023. There are so many bugs and nasty illnesses around so, with my Health Practitioner hat on, I'd like to encourage you to look after yourselves with nourishing food, fresh air and daily exercise. Also, do look in on your neighbours and vulnerable members of our community, who might be struggling at this time of year. How about going to the next Soup'n'Sarnie? It's a perfect way to socialise, keep warm and have a hearty lunch. The next one is on Saturday 25th February.

I must say that food is never far from my thoughts so, on that note, I'd like to say a BIG THANK YOU to Jessica Knee and Jo Walrond-Smith for organising and hosting a really successful Community Lunch at the village hall on Christmas Day. What a wonderful village activity, that I'm sure, with willing volunteers, would be a welcome annual event. The Hall committee kindly donated the use of the hall too, so thank you to all involved. (see page 10) I might add that, as my cooker decided to pack up on Christmas Eve, they nearly had a few extra guests!! But, with a bit of creativity (and fast running with roast potatoes & parsnips to another fan oven down the road!!) we managed. Phew!

After a couple of years absence, it was wonderful to see the return of the Whimble Wassail on 'This Old Twelvey Night'. As a newcomer to this village tradition, it is a real delight to welcome this fascinating, noisy, musical, symbolic (and dare I say boozy?) celebration. With such a good turnout I'm sure the bad spirits were well and truly dismissed, so we should get a great apple crop this year. Check out the photos and feedback on pages 30 and 31.

From a long-held tradition to a brand-new village venture, I am delighted to give a big shout out to WHIMBLE FEST 2023. This new community day is being held on SATURDAY JULY 8th. It has Community, Sustainability and Arts at its core. See page 9 for more details and how YOU can get involved. Whether you'd like to have a stall, promote your skill, sell your products, donate a prize, or volunteer with practical hands-on help. This looks like being a fabulous fun filled day!

On page 38 'Just Ten Questions' this time features Helen Bowker of Cotley Farm, with her thoughts on farming today, her love of Whimble and, of course, those special reindeer.

Other articles which might tickle your tastebuds (you see I do have food on the brain??) are Whimble Weather p15, The Community Theatre on pages 22 and 23, and lots of dates for your diary. No need to be bored in 2023.

It is with great sadness that the village will be saying farewell to Donna and Marc Slater and their family after many years at The Thirsty Farmer. I know I speak on behalf of everyone who has frequented the pub that they have felt truly welcomed, superbly fed, entertained and cared for by them and all their team. Cosy drinks around the fire, summer evenings in the garden, band nights, quizzes, special events, local group meetings, coffee mornings, Saturday breakfasts and charity fundraisers are just some of the delights they have provided. Donna and Marc, we wish you the very best of luck in your new adventures. You will be very missed.

I'm off for a little snack and a cuppa now, so why not make yourself one too and snuggle down with this edition.

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What's On In Whimple

FEBRUARY

- 5th Winter nets start at The Cricket Club for all levels
- 14th WI Meeting, Estate Manager Gittisham Estate 2pm in the Hub
- 16th, 17th, 18th The Real Inspector Hound (comic play). Talaton Hall. (p22)
- 18th Comedy Night at The Hall with Fitz Of Giggles
- 19th Big Quiz - Thirsty Farmer. Booking essential.
- 24th History Society talk In the Victory Hall at 7.30pm - Barry Hamblin: *Operation Black Buck: The Vulcan Bomber raids in the Falklands*
- 24th Live Music in the Thirsty Farmer with K2
- 25th Soup n Sarnie in The Hall

MARCH

- 4th The Whimpletons Murder Mystery Night with a Chilli meal. (p16)
- 14th WI Meeting, Pudding tasting, quiz, photo comp 2pm in the Hub
- 23rd, 24th, 25th March: Rats The Musical (p23)
- 31st History Society AGM in the Hall at 7.30 followed by Bryan Short talking about *The History of Coinage*

APRIL

- 11th WI Meeting, B&Bs in S W America 2pm in the Hub.

A promotional poster for a comedy event. The left side features a black background with vertical lines and a small, stylized figure of a person standing on a pedestal. Below this, the text 'FITZ OF GIGGLES COMEDY' is written in a large, white, serif font. The right side has a dark red background with white text. The text reads: 'Comedy at Whimple Village Hall!', '18 Feb, 20:00', and a paragraph: 'We are delighted to be bringing comedy back to the Village, hosted by Fitz who you may have met before... Doors at 7.00pm for an 8.00pm start!'.

Tickets available from:

<https://www.fitzofgiggles.com/events/comedy-at-whimple-village-hall-3>

WHIMPLE STORES



Happy 2023 to all of our Customers.

As I write, we are putting the last bits and pieces of the Post Office away ready for collection by Post Office Ltd. We are truly sorry that the closure of the Whimple Post Office counter will have an impact on our customers but we could not continue to subsidise its operation out of the Stores funds, particularly when the cost of electricity for fridges, freezers and lights has trebled with more increases expected in April.

We have leased a machine from Payzone that replicates most of the bill payment, council tax payment, and electric top-up functions that were available at the Post Office. We are selling the main types of stamps and we are providing cash withdrawals. In the future, we hope to provide a parcel drop off and collection service.

We can also provide a cash deposit service with the money transfer taking place within 24 hours.

Our attention can now go onto making further improvements to the Stores, increasing certain food and drink ranges and potentially installing a dedicated drinks fridge. Keep an eye out for changes.

We had our second Christmas here in Whimple and have been truly touched by the number of greeting cards we received from our customers as well as some gifts. This has sealed the welcome we received from the Whimple village a year ago and we feel we are now a true part of this wonderful community.

At the Christmas Carol service, we decided to open and serve mulled wine and hot chocolate with 50% of the takings going to the Dementia UK Charity. We thought that we would serve around 20 cups. We ended up selling 80 mulled wine and chocolate drinks but ran out of the mulled wine towards the end of the queue. Sorry to those who missed the wine, we will increase the stock for next year.

We are trialling taking a regular milk supply from Oak Park Dairy (who advertises in this publication) which will complement the regular milk we receive from West Country Milk (Freshways).

Oak Park Dairy milk and cream products are rich and smooth and have a distinctive flavour probably generated from the absence of high-volume processing. The milk and cream sells in returnable glass bottles (deposit required) and costs more than standard milk but is well worth it. We will have samples available for you to taste before committing.

We like to stock ranges of foods to celebrate key calendar events such as Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, Easter, Mothering Sunday etc and usually dress our window to give a hint about what is coming. It is worth having a look at the window to see if you want to try out something different for dinner.

Please try to shop local wherever possible. Despite shortages elsewhere, we have a good supply of eggs thanks to our local suppliers.

We have a range of fresh vegetables and we have a lot of products at similar prices to the main supermarkets. All this with the added benefit of zero car miles, free parking, a joke or two and a quick chat about almost anything!

Finally, we would like to thank everyone for the generous donations made to our charity collection boxes on the counter, for buying the Whimble Primary School Cards with over £300 raised in 2022 and for buying our other charity greetings cards raising £68.

Rory, Sharon, Sabrina and the Team



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Saturdays and Sundays	09:00 to 12:00
Public Holidays	08:00 to 12:00

WHIMBLE FRONT ROW CLUB

Look out for details of our next film

With complimentary snacks, BYO Drinks and ice cream available in the interval.



The winner of the 'spot the Santa' competition in the last issue was:

Josh Denton

Well done Josh!



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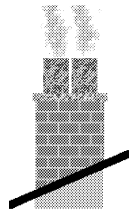
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WHIMBLE FEST 2023 SATURDAY 8th JULY 12 NOON - 5.30pm WHIMBLE PARISH FIELD

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Put the date in your diaries for this exciting and new village event. With **Community, Arts, and Sustainability** at its core, we are sure that it will be a great day out for ALL

There will be 6 Zones to explore:

- **ARTS & CRAFTS** - TOP QUALITY, LOCAL PRODUCTS to browse & buy
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Planning is well under way, but it's certainly not too late to get involved. We'd love to hear from you. We especially need assistance with online marketing and promotion. Do you have the skills? Also, with events like these, the more hands on board the merrier. So, if you would like to be involved in one of the zones, or can spare a few hours - e.g. leading up to Whimble Fest, setting up/clearing up, or assisting on the day, THEN DO GET IN TOUCH. Contact: sue.turner1@sky.com

WHIMBLE FEST 2023 IT'S GOING TO BE A CRACKER!!



Community Christmas Meal Thank You

I am an 84year old single male who lives in the Square , Whimple. As a result of being informed of this event by a good friend of mine, Linda, my ex-wife.

I contacted Jessica and reserved myself a seat. I arrived soon after mid-day and was warmly welcomed by Jo. I could see that the committee room in the Victory Hall had been nicely prepared for persons to sit at decorated places.

When the meal was displayed there was every item plus for eating. Nothing had been forgotten. I was assisted to select my meal and I was very pleased with my meal, which was followed by a choice of sweets.

Jo Walrond-Smith and Jessica Knee, together with their helpers, are to be praised and sincerely thanked for preparing this worthy event. They also made special home deliveries to those who could not attend. In addition, there were those who came and collected their meals.

It was said by Jo that they hoped to repeat it again in 2023. This clearly indicates the caring attitude of many who live here.

David E. Ambrose Family Motto 'In Heaven Is All My Trust'.



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The Mural in Whimple Church

VOL. IV, Pl. 2.



J. Hayward, Dcl^o

W. Spreat, Chromo. Lith.

About four years ago a black and white image came to light in the Heritage Centre; a copy of a painting which had reputedly existed at one point in Whimble Church. This isn't as surprising as it might seem as, during the medieval period when very few people could read, it was common practice to paint images of saints on Church walls as a teaching aid and example of how ordinary human beings could strive towards exceptional virtue. These images were commissioned from travelling artists who worked to a pattern usually using cheap, locally available clay pigments.

The image shows St Christopher carrying Christ across the river. He was a particularly popular saint and was typically placed opposite the south door so that he would be seen by anyone entering the church. This was important because seeing St Christopher was believed to protect a traveller from the likelihood of a sudden and therefore unshriven death that day; a possibility much feared during medieval times. St Christopher was also especially popular in rural areas, amongst manual labourers, because his act clearly suggests that physical effort can, in itself, be valuable in the service of Christ. The two figures at the bottom, whose names are now unknown, are believed to be the donors of the mural.

It isn't easy to determine the date it was painted. The range of feasible dates extend from around 1400 when the church was built to 1540 when the effects of the Reformation meant that wall painting began to disappear. The design of the mural is based on a woodcut imported from Germany in 1423 and thereafter widely copied within the UK. The style of clothing, hair and the presence of the ships and mermaid in the design all take us towards the end of the fifteenth century therefore 1500 would seem a reasonable suggestion.

The mural was likely hidden under plaster and largely forgotten during the Reformation. We do know that Whimble Church and many other parish churches nearby suffered the destruction of their Catholic images by the new Protestant movement. If you take a look at the remains of our Rood Screen near the bell tower, you can see how the saints were 'defaced' rather than completely destroyed – an act that was peculiar to English iconoclasm.

In 1845, when St Mary's was extended, a new south aisle was added and part of the original north wall removed. It was at this point that the mural came to light. Rather than allowing it to disappear completely, John Hayward, the diocesan architect, copied the mural showing how it was placed between the two windows. Apparently, there was also an image of St George between the next pair of windows but it had deteriorated beyond the possibility of useful copying. Hayward's friend, Lt Col William Harding, fortuitously included the painting in the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society's *Transactions*, a copy of which was found discarded on the floor of a barn in 1940 and sent to the sister of the vicar of Whimble Church. We were able to find this in the Rectory and finally we had a coloured reproduction of the medieval mural.

A copy now hangs appropriately on the wall opposite the south door. It is amazing to think how much luck was involved in enabling its recovery. If you do go along to have a look – there are some curiosities I would love to answer. Why are the windmill sails in that position? What is the figure under St Christopher's left elbow doing? Why does the male donor have a black thumb?

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Chi [chee] noun: the circulating life energy
Equilibrium [ek.wɪ'lib.rɪ.əm] noun: a state of balance



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A Window on Whimple's Weather – November/December 2022

Another year has whistled by for Whimple's two weather stations, with lots to report.

Slewton Crescent Weather Station: <https://bit.ly/35qwR9K>

Cobden Lane Weather Station: <https://bit.ly/3bt3FTf>

A Live and historical data sets are available for each station, through the links, above.

After the record dry and warm summer and then fairly dry weather continuing into September and an exceptionally warm October, all changed at the end of the year with a very wet November and very cold start to December.

November – This month was exceptionally wet, with over 200mm of rain, more than twice the average. A series of low pressures moved in on brisk south-westerly winds with peak gusts on the 7th, when some minor damage was reported in the village, mainly to trees. The first two weeks were also very mild, especially on the 13th with a balmy 17.3°C, before temperatures fell back to nearer normal levels. The only frost of the month at -1.8°C was early on the 19th before it turned very unsettled again, with flooding on the 21st as over an inch of rain fell that morning when a deep low crossed from the west. Pressure rose strongly in the last two days of the month heralding a move to winter.

December – Temperatures this month were more than 5°C colder than November, with the first 17 days unusually cold. Sadly precious little snow fell, apart from a small amount on the 10th, and the coldest temperatures for more than 10 years reached a bitter -8.2°C at dawn on the 16th. Early on the 17th a bit of treacherous rain froze on pavements, until the easterly and northerly winds suddenly switched on the 18th back to southerly allowing much milder weather to arrive – but also rain. The 19th was a very wet and windy day, but at least it was comfortably mild. It stayed unsettled and mild through to Christmas, with some rain every day for the rest of the month. At least Boxing Day was mostly dry and sunny – perfect for a walk around the village or further afield, and it stayed dry in The Square on New Year's Eve, after a rather dull

and wet day. 2022	November	Date	December	Date
Warmest Day	17.3 °C	13/11/2022	13.9 °C	19/12/2022
Coolest Night	-1.8 °C	19/11/2022	-8.2 °C	16/12/2022
Windiest 24hrs	52.6 km/h	07/11/2022	36.0 km/h	19/12/2022
Wettest 24hrs	27.7 mm	21/11/2022	17.0 mm	19/12/2022
Av. Maximum	13.3 °C	N/A	8.3 °C	N/A
Av. Minimum	6.5 °C	N/A	1.2 °C	N/A
Total Rain	204.2 mm	N/A	99.0 mm	N/A
Total Sunshine	53.3 kWh/kW	120.3% of Av.	35.3 kWh/kW	113.3% of Av.

Note: Wind data is from Cobden Lane, while other data is from Slewton Crescent.

Phil Dominy and David Brewer.

Please send any comments/questions to dominypr@hotmail.com

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Puppy Raising 2023

With the start of the New Year comes the first days of new beginnings, new adventures and new experiences. This year, why not do something really special? When we say volunteering for Guide Dogs is life changing, we're not just talking about the people we'll support. You'll gain new skills; build confidence you never knew you had and have amazing experiences that you genuinely couldn't find anywhere else.

There are around 2 million people living with sight loss in the UK. Guide Dogs, a UK-wide charity with a community team based in Exeter, supports people with a visual impairment to maintain their independence and live the life they choose. There are lots of different services on offer, ranging from volunteer-led services such as My Sighted Guide through to the support for children and young people, access to technology, and the iconic guide dog service.

This year, we are urgently appealing for new volunteers to sign up as Puppy Raisers. This means looking after future guide dogs for the first year of their lives, socialising them and giving them a loving home. It's a hugely rewarding role with lots of support and training on offer, plus you will meet lots of new people in your area who are also raising pups.

Many of you may think saying goodbye to your pup would be too difficult, but our volunteers say nothing beats the rewarding feeling of knowing you have played a huge part in changing someone's life. Terry describes the moment he said goodbye to the first dog he fostered:

"We were really attached to the first dog we fostered, Carli. However, we get to see her with her owner and that makes it all worthwhile. We went to our local centre and Carli came to greet us but immediately returned to her owner's side as if to say 'I've got a job to do'. Carli has given her owner the opportunity to go to university and live a full life."

Sometimes, the first step can feel daunting, but if you're volunteering with Guide Dogs, our welcoming and supportive family of both staff and volunteers are walking alongside you throughout.

Start volunteering at: www.guidedogs.org.uk/how-you-can-help/volunteering-for-guide-dogs



Christmas Eve Carols In The Square

It was difficult to know how many people would turn out on Christmas Eve, after the gap, but I needn't have worried! What a great turn-out. Best guess, 200 people with our band of 8.

Great idea from Whimble Stores, to sell hot drinks, with ½ of the proceeds going to Dementia UK, our charity for this year. The shop contributed £88 to our collection, which, along with online donations and gift-aid, made **£458.44**. The highest ever.

If you still have a carol booklet, please can you return it to the shop, we seem to lose a few each year, unfortunately.

It would be great to have more musicians next year...
Emma Palmer





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The POW+R Group continues to be proactive in protecting our village from anything that would harm the distinctive character of our community and our rich agricultural and architectural heritage - our way of life to some extent. It is one thing to write about our special traditions, but it was a joy also to be present at this year's Whimble wassail. A traditional ceremony to encourage new growth and a bountiful harvest of the apple trees. It usually takes place on Old Twelvey Night, the 17th January, linked to the Gregorian calendar in 1752. It started outside the New Fountain / Heritage Centre and proceeded, with lamps, to the first orchard where the Wassail King and Queen were to toss old apples and toast at the apple trees, sing a few lines of a traditional verse, all in good pagan spirit, to encourage a good harvest. Of course, there was some cider, and then off to the next orchard for more cider and then to the Cricket Ground for some more cider. It was quite a gathering, certainly over a hundred. Critically, it is these fields that need our protection from the avaricious desire to build more homes in our village.

East Devon Draft Local Plan 2020-2040.

The guiding principles to POW+R Group is the fundamental belief in self-determination for the citizens of the Parish of Whimble, and the principle of localism. It is the policy of the Government that power should be exercised at the lowest practical level - close to the people who are affected by decisions. The objective being to enable the entire Parish of Whimble to have a direct and strong say in the way the village and wider parish develops through the creation of a set of policies and community directed actions tailored to the demands, needs, concerns and desires of the local people. This is the purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan. Through recent consultations that many villagers completed both in person and online, vital feedback has been gathered around the specific items affecting Whimble, with reference to various plots of land in and around the core village. This provides additional evidence when creating our own Neighbourhood Plan. Apart from our normal article, POW+R Group added a flyer, which we know had an impact on the number of responses to the East Devon Local Plan for 2020 to 2040. In addition, another independent group from Whimble produced a further flyer with more details to focus on. It must be stated that the online survey did take a great deal of time going through each separate section.

POW+R Group submitted a five-page report to highlight what is considered appropriate for our village and our 'Red Lines'. Critically, it is accepted that there is an appreciation that villages will evolve and grow, however there is a strong desire to keep developments to less than 10 dwellings. The acceptance is to ensure conservation and enhancement of the natural historic and built environmental.

It is also on the proviso that the maximum number of new dwellings would be 10 dwellings per 5 years, up to 2040. There would be an expectation that 50% would be affordable. This is in line with the feedback from your responses to the Village Questionnaire and feedback given on post-it notes at the Village Consultation in the Victory Hall last February.

We are aware that the EDDC is pushing for substantial levels of development on the western side of East Devon, with these including a second new town and local employment growth. What they say is that the focus on development is being directed to the towns and villages with the greatest range of services and facilities.



Whimble Neighbourhood Plan - We are now moving forward with pace, knowing we have more to undertake in completing some of the vital sections and policies. As the EDDC develop their Local Plan we must be ahead and get our draft complete, slightly later than anticipated, by Easter. We will then present the plan to Whimble residents for your observations and suggestions, before proceeding to the final version and village referendum. It so important to get this right first time, and if it takes another month, so be it. We are happy to take any further comments from villagers.

Communication Mast - POW+R Group have made a formal objection to the proposed installation of a 18m (58ft 6in) monopole, supporting six antennas, which has now been reduced to 16m (52ft .6in) but our objection still remains.

Post Office - There is no doubt that a Post Office in the village is a valuable asset, but that asset has costs attached to it. It is appreciated that the financial package by the Post Office offered to typical village stores is insufficient to cover overheads. It is a huge loss to our community to no longer have this service within our village and I am sure we will all miss it greatly.

The New Fountain Inn - In a recent visit it was clear that the New Fountain is taking shape, as work progresses to achieve an open day at some time during March. It will be great to have this historic pub back, as part of our village community with Lee taking the helm.

Thirsty Farmer - The POW+R Group are deeply sad to see Donna and Marc Slater, move on after five years at the helm. They have done a fantastic job and have taken the pub into a higher league of excellence in customer service and food, receiving this year a Taste of the West Gold Award, in the South West. The high cost of energy has made a difference to their business strategy.

Cranbrook Expansion - As an ongoing measure we are still monitoring the developments at Cranbrook that have an impact on our village. This includes what are known as SANGS - Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace - which provides residents of Cranbrook recreational sites for walking, informal games, dog exercise etc. This will be ex-agricultural land and woodlands. A number of acres will be within our Parish. In theory they act as a 'buffer zone' between Cranbrook and Rockbeare and Whimble and help to provide vital distinction between the settlements.

By the time this edition of the News reaches everyone, January will have come and gone and we will have had our first meeting of the year which was the AGM held on Tuesday 31st January 2023. It was good to be able to report on a year without disruption and a full programme of events. More details in the next edition and hopefully more information of the events we are planning for 2023.

In the last edition of the News, I should have reported on the very interesting and informative talk we had by Dr Robert Dunn from the Met Office. Despite the awful weather that night, his talk on Climate Change attracted an excellent audience. Clearly a subject of much interest to us all and we were shown a whole range of graphs and other information showing things have changed over many decades. All in all a very informative talk

One of the two key events in every year is our Annual Spring Plant Sale which raises much needed funds to cover the running costs of the Annual Flower and Craft Show. This year we are having to run this event on a Sunday afternoon and the date is Sunday 21st May and will be in the Village Hall.

The Annual Flower and Craft Show is planned for Saturday 12th August 2023. We will be working on the new schedule in February and will endeavour to have it ready for the plant sale in May. As reported in the last edition of the News, we have already agreed the subjects for the photography Classes. All the classes are for a coloured or black and white print, maximum size being 6" x 8", or 150mm x 200mm. The titles for this year are: 'Silhouettes'; 'Clouds'; 'Pond Life'; 'Bark'; 'Laughter'; 'A Gateway'; 'Mischievous'; 'A Non Flowering Plant Subject' (e.g. Ferns, Fungi, Mosses, Leaves etc); 'Sunset' and 'A Landscape'. Hopefully there are some suitable titles for all those keen photographers we have in the village!

We are looking forward to another full full programme of events this year and, as and when we have more details, they will appear in a future editions of the News. Details of all our activities are on our website, www.whimble-vpa.co.uk so do take a look there.

Paul Wilson, Hon. Chairman

Mrs. Mary Northcott

Mrs. Mary Northcott (née Harris) passed away 15th December 2022 aged 93.

Wife of the late Michael Northcott, mother to Anne and Margaret.

Maggie Whittle



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Whimble History Society



The last few months have been busy as, at long last, we are returning to normal and events we would normally see in our yearly calendar are taking place once again.

The Christmas Lunch at the Cricket Club was very successful, with a number of members attending, as was the Christmas shopping event in the Heritage Centre.

The winter talks in the Hall remain popular – especially the one just before Halloween when Janet Dowling came to talk to us about *Devon Ghosts*. The talk on the *Murder of PC Potter* at Whiteway's factory will have taken place by the time you get this but on Friday 24th February don't forget to come along and hear Barry Hamblin discussing *Operation Black Buck* about the Vulcan Bomber raids in the Falklands. The talks are free to members and £2 for anyone else. Anyone who would like to become a member of the History Society can do so by downloading a form from the website or by signing up at one of the talks.

I was very pleased to see so many people attending the Wassail on Ol' Twelvy night, despite the cold. It's always good to finish off with a drink, hot soup, pasties and music thanks to Jim Causley, Emma Palmer and their folk musicians. As always, the members of the Committee managed a tight ship and the lanterns produced in Hilary Nowill's workshop looked delightful against the dark. Many thanks to Paul Starkey and Sue Ayres for the photos. Also really good to see that Talaton ran a Wassail this year – the more the merrier.

The Display Group is beginning to put together ideas for updating the presentation in the Heritage Centre and deciding on new topics to explore. If anyone is interested in joining us, please get in touch on info@whimble.org. Similarly, anyone interested in Stewarding once the Heritage Centre opens in April can also get in touch – newcomers to the village always welcome.

Louise Walmsley (Curator)

All photos by Paul Sharkey





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Let's Talk Whimble

We are still meeting on Tuesday mornings 10am to noon at The Pea in the village square. Anyone is welcome to join us for a cuppa and a chat.

We recently had a very interesting visit from Ottery Help Scheme. The charity has been running for 30 years and has evolved from some volunteers providing transport for patients of the doctors surgery to the constantly evolving support network it is today. They are keen to reach out to villages and Whimble is covered by the services they offer. If there are services you would like to see in Whimble they would value your feedback.

They still offer transport services – a return journey to RD&E hospital will cost you £20 if your visit is under two hours and the driver will wait for you and drop you door to door. You can even hire the wheelchair adapted minibus.

Other services they offer are:

- Befriending – volunteers will ring you or visit you at home if you feel isolated.
- Bereavement support – volunteers are trained to offer support in person or by phone.
- Memory café – monthly groups supported by trained staff are held at Ottery cricket club.
- Friendship group – monthly support group for those looking to form new friendships.
- Activity groups – promoting connections and wellbeing.
- Seated exercise classes, nail cutting services, wellbeing trips
- Time for you – support service for carers – enabling carers to take a break
- Form filling - help to fill in forms such as attendance and carers allowance – if you have any type of disability or illness that has meant you have needed support for 6 months or more.
- They also provide chargeable services such as cleaning, shopping, meal planning, food preparation, enabling visits and help with household paperwork.
- Free legal clinics – 30-minute free consultation–next clinic 16th Feb–phone 813041
- Guide to supporting someone with Dementia – useful contacts around our area

We also talked about the mental health wellbeing coaches available at Coleridge medical centre and the drop-in support at the Silver Otter café on a Friday.

There was also a reminder that the fire service offers free safety checks which are available to many people and families and provides some great advice to stay safe in your homes.

Ottery Help Scheme are keen to hear of any services you would like to see them providing and they have provided some leaflets of their services for the shop. Contact them on 01404 813041 or info@otteryhelpscheme.org.uk.

Jenny Sanders

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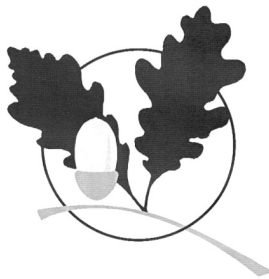
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Whimble Victory Hall News

Our bookings continue to be strong and the hall hosted a variety of events in the run up to Christmas including quizzes, talks, a Soup'n'Sarnie Christmas special and a delicious lunch prepared and cooked by Jo Walrond-Smith, Jessica Knee and team for some of the community on Christmas Day.

The committee meets regularly and continues to work on projects to make improvements to the hall. We have a new logo which we hope will help make us stand out, with thanks to Katie Williams for the lovely design.

We recently installed a new boiler (thank you Jason O'Dell), new billiard table baize, have improved ventilation in the kitchen and improved our external lighting.

Ali Tierney, our bookings secretary, has a new mobile number for enquiries: 07778 681280.

Di Wilkins, Secretary



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JUST TEN QUESTIONS

Having recovered from her extremely busy Cotley Christmas, Helen Bowker spared a few minutes to chat about the changes in farming over the years.

Q1 Can you tell me a bit about your childhood and whether you always saw yourself running a farm? I really spent all my childhood outdoors with my father, Raymond Burrough at Gateshayes Farm. I learned a great work ethic from him, as well as a love for this way of life. I didn't really see myself doing anything else apart from farming. I went to university and worked away for ten years, but came back to Whimpe in the early 90's.



Q2 How would you describe Cotley Farm? Gateshayes is really the main part of the business and Cotley is a diversification of this, a small seasonal enterprise. We started growing Christmas trees in the early 2000's. We started selling about 30 and gradually increased sales over the years. Cotley Christmas is mainly a fun time of the year when we get to meet lots of people. We're providing a traditional offering to people as an alternative for their Christmas shopping as well as hopefully a memorable experience on the farm.

Q3 Is running a small, family run, local farming business still a viable way of farming in the present economic climate? Well, we do farm at Gateshayes & Cotley, plus we rent other land. However, we are unusual in that we are a mixed farm. Over the years the drive for efficiency normally means that farmers specialise more and more. However, we have always felt that it is important to have variety and this has worked for us over the years. In 2001 the foot and mouth epidemic put severe pressure on our business and prompted us to explore diversification. Also, it suits our personalities to have variety.

Q4 Has Brexit had a positive or negative effect on the farming industry?

Short Term it probably helped because of the drop in the pound, causing the value of our products to go up. However, longer term we are very concerned over the trade deals that the Government is negotiating. We have very high welfare standards and regulations in this country. Bringing in food from other countries with lower levels of regulation is consequently less safe and could undercut us. It is very frightening. Commodity production is very volatile. For example the pig industry has almost been decimated since Brexit. Farmers are having to look at diversifications such as solar farms, to secure a regular income.

Q5 And what about the climate? Are you noticing a need for changing your methods?

The weather is definitely more impactful now with excessive rain or long droughts. We are part of Arla, a cooperative for selling our milk, so we have a particular sustainability agenda. As part of this we audit our energy and resource use. Therefore, through different areas of sustainability we are improving our carbon footprint. Today the cow is seen as the enemy and though methane is a damaging gas, interestingly there are 28% less cows in this country than thirty years ago.

Our regional climate is not suitable for growing a lot of arable crops. Also, in the west country, there is so much land you can only grow grass on (and Whimble clay is certainly not ideal for growing vegetables!!). So, we try to have a very grass-based feeding system for our livestock to make responsible use of the land with regards to climate change.

Q6 Are there any important changes or regulations that you would like to see in place? Less regulations probably! With our cooperative we are being asked for more information all the time. This is good as it makes sure things are done properly but it is time consuming. We are happy to do this as long as we aren't penalised by cheaper, lower quality foodstuff being imported.

Q7 Having just attended my first Wassail, it's obvious that Whimble's cider heritage is still an important part of village life. How are you keeping this bit of farming going? The lovely orchards were planted at a time when everything was handpicked. So today the whole topography is not suitable for machinery, and sadly they are now totally uneconomical. However, our participation in an environmental scheme has enabled us to plant 800 trees in the last 4 years and they have now been converted to organic status. We believe the traditional orchards define the heritage of our village and are a rich source of wildlife and we are committed to trying to maintain them.

Q8 I can't interview you without asking about the reindeer! So, for those WN readers who haven't heard your story before, how did it start? We belong to the British Christmas Tree Growers Association and I visited a farm in Swansea in 2008 that had reindeer, and just fell in love with them. We were used to dealing with large animals and you manage reindeer in a similar way to sheep, so we had the confidence to be able to look after them. We started with two and now have six. They can't be tamed like a horse and they like their own space. They still have their wild instinct and I suppose they are a halfway house between a pet and a farm animal. Really, having reindeer transformed the business and gave it something special.

Q9 What are your plans for Cotley Farm for the future? There are a lot of changes ahead in farming, so we never stop investing otherwise we go backwards. Also, we have always tried to employ local people from the village and this has been a great link with the local community for us. We provide flexibility with hours and part time work and it's important to us to continue this. We are continually adapting and aiming to provide an enriching experience for visitors within a working farm.

Q10 Finally, why is Whimble special to you? I was born here and have strong family connections. (My mother Margaret Burrough, still sleeps in the bedroom she was born in at Gateshayes Farm.) We are very blessed to live here and thankful to my grandparents for enabling us to move into Cotley. Whimble is an exceptional community, it's very pretty and in a great location. We do have some of the best views from Cotley Farm, I feel very privileged to live here.

Do you have something special to share, or know of a Whimble resident who might like to be interviewed? Contact me at sarahthackeray9@gmail.com

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We have experienced many days when the urgent demand is much higher than the capacity of our doctors and nurses, but in the last few months demand has exceeded capacity on a daily basis.

We always aim to provide safe care. Safe care for Coleridge Medical Centre means that our Duty Doctors - whose job it is to manage all of the demand for same day medical appointments – should have no more than 40 patients in a day.

In the last few months, our Duty Doctors have had urgent, on-the-day lists that have been more than double this, with an average of 95 patients in one day. This has reached well over 100 in the last 2 weeks alone. This does not allow for sufficient breaks or unseen GP work such as home visits, prescriptions, test results, sick notes, reviews, etc. These numbers do not include routine appointments, or the urgent appointments picked up by our fantastic Nurse Practitioners. For the wellbeing of our patients and all our staff, this is no longer sustainable for the practice to maintain.

Coleridge Medical Centre – as do many other surgeries – will now be setting a daily limit on how many patients we can book for urgent on-the-day assessments. Once we have reached this capacity, our team will be asking patients to contact other parts of the NHS whose role it is to provide urgent help (such as 111 or 111 online), or to call back on alternate days.

If our patients can use our urgent on-the-day capacity carefully, then we hope that we will have enough urgent appointments to offer. This means:

- Not asking for an appointment that day if your problem is not medically urgent. Most things can and should wait for the next routine GP appointment.
- Using www.nhs.uk, pharmacies, and 111 for minor illnesses and how to manage these at home. Much of the additional demand we have had in recent weeks is patients calling in the first few days of minor illnesses which, most of the time, can be treated successfully at home until the normal period of symptoms passes. For example, it is normal for a cold to last up to 3 weeks. The amount of calls we receive for these self-limiting symptoms means that we can't provide a safe service to the patients who do develop more severe symptoms or have serious medically urgent problems.

If all our patients use our urgent on-the-day appointments responsibly, we will have the capacity to get to all of our patients with serious medically urgent concerns. When we do reach our capacity for urgent on-the-day appointments, we will ask patients to contact other services who can help, such as NHS 111, pharmacies, MIU, etc.

Staff have been asked by our clinicians to provide this information to patients. We understand that this is a change to how the practice has been operating for the last 2 and half years, and we continue to appreciate your support and understanding towards our staff.

We thank you for supporting us in this change to ensure that we can be there for you when you need us.



East Devon DayTime Band's Christmas Carolling Donation to Ukrainian Emergency Fund

I am pleased to report that the East Devon DayTime Band's Christmas 2022 Carolling performances held during November and December at IKEA Store Exeter raised £481.33 that has been sent to a Ukrainian Emergency Relief Fund humanitarian organisation viz The Ukrainian Red Cross.

We have received a touching, humbling and poignant acknowledgement from the Ukrainian Red Cross:

'...Thanks to the donations of compassionate people, our work saves hundreds of lives every day and alleviates the suffering of thousands of families....!'

We were delighted to welcome Roger Riggs as guest conductor at the IKEA performances.

With an additional Christmas 2022 Carolling donation received the Band distributed a total of £556.33 to four charities.

This has been the Band's busiest Christmas Caroling commitment to date with successful and well received performances at Churchill Living Retirement Lockyer Lodge, Sidford; Exmouth Stroke Survivors Club and Newton Poppleford Primary School.

East Devon DayTime Band is a brass ensemble formed in March 2017 with 9 brass players. The Band now has 15 players including percussion, who regularly attend weekly Monday rehearsals held at the Primley United Reformed Church Hall, Sidmouth. Devon.

Best wishes, Trevor

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'Twas the season to be merry, or something like that. Except, as we all know, Christmastime for many reasons is not joyful for everyone. Through the power of WhatsApp (other such weird names are available) I was sorry to read that I was not the only one to suffer the lurgy just in time for the festivities.



Several of my WI friends also spent their Christmases in a fug of possibly the worst cough and cold experienced in years. It was more paracetamol (other painkillers etc.) than prosecco and Rennie's rather than rum punch. Indigestion seemed to be an integral part of the experience. Although that could have been the pork pie, I lived for 20 odd years near Melton Mowbray so it has to be eaten!

Still at least we went ahead with our WI Christmas party this year. It was fabulous! Julia Green, of this parish, a seasoned and super talented performer entertained us with songs from My Fair Lady. Sincere thanks to her. Our bring and share buffet was as always, varied and delicious and it was just a lovely afternoon.

Fast forward to 10th January 2023 when we welcomed a representative from Devon Air Ambulance who gave us an insight into the vital and valued roles they perform.

14th February, we will have Justin Lascelles speaking about his role with Gittisham Estates. It's also Valentine's Day and so there could be a clash of loyalties. However, as our meeting is in the afternoon, this should leave sufficient time for a romantic evening meal, should the opportunity arise.

14th March will be a diet busting afternoon when we will sample various puddings in the name of research and development (I just made that bit up). Puddings to the fore plus a quiz and a photo competition. I fancy a dollop of magic lemon pudding - must dust off the recipe!

On 11th April we will welcome the return of Angela White. This time she will entertain us with anecdotes about her trip using b&bs in S W America. Should be amusing.

As we emerge from winter hibernation, we will be planning our events, outings, coffee mornings etc. There is a wonderful spirit of friendship within our WI and we are always keen to welcome visitors and new members.

If you would like to know more, then please contact Marilyn our secretary/treasurer on 821860. Until next time here's wishing you a very happy and healthy new year.

Di Eden





I am pleased to be able to start the year with some good news, which is to report that the application for a giant solar installation at Marsh Green, East Devon has been refused. We were pleased to help local residents fight this proposal to cover up yet more of our green fields with solar panels, but we have to wait to hear whether the applicant will go to appeal.

I would like to thank all of you who responded to our questionnaire, we are still fully analysing the results, which will be announced in the next newsletter, but it is clear that you fully support our campaigning to prevent too much development swallowing up so much of our green spaces. Many Devon members now live in close proximity to a solar installation, which is unsurprising as we now have at least 70 large solar farms in the County, with yet another application submitted recently at Willand, Mid Devon.

We continue to keep our planning consultant very busy with a variety of other issues. During the first two weeks of this year we have already submitted a response to the East Devon district draft local plan consultation

Last week we had a meeting via Zoom with Sir Geoffrey Cox, KC MP West Devon and Torridge. We discussed the proposed new link to bring solar energy from Morocco, the possibility of the return of onshore wind, and asked him for any news of the government's proposed reforms to the planning system. We are pleased to announce that Sir Geoffrey has agreed to attend an event to discuss matters with our members sometime later in the year, details to be announced.

This is one of several workshops and events we hope to arrange, and we will be attending several shows around the county during the summer, so we hope to see some of you at one or other of these events. We will also be running our two competitions for Devon's Best Churchyard and Young Landscape Artist. All details will be announced nearer the time.

We hope you will continue to support our efforts to protect the precious countryside of Devon, which we all love.

Keeping in Touch

Please let us know if you hear of any plans for development in your area, which you think we should be aware of. Thank you very much for your continued support.

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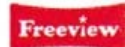
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Whimble Cricket Club

Get involved in 2023!

The start of a new year puts us on the countdown toward the season and 2023 is set to be another bumper year. We were delighted to be able to refurbish our cricket nets over the winter, flattening the base and laying a new batting surface in both nets. As soon as the weather allows, the netting will be back up and these will be ready to use.

Although things are relatively quiet at the club for another few weeks, there are some dates and events to look out for. Keep an eye on our social media feeds for these and bar opening times. A small amount of winter income for the club goes a long way, and your support is appreciated.

New Cricketers and Members Welcome

We had a fantastic number of juniors play at the club in 2022 and expect that to continue this year. New cricketers of all ages and abilities are welcome across our junior mixed, junior girls, adult league, and adult social sides. If you are new to the village, have been considering playing or coming back to cricket, or know someone who might be interested then this could be the year to get in touch.

Winter cricket nets for juniors and adults are now running on Sundays. Our juniors are at Broadclyst Sports Hall on Sunday mornings from 9.30am, adults at the Buzz-about-cricket centre in Cullompton from 1-3pm. Winter nets can be a great time to ease yourself into the game and meet other club members. We are also looking for some specific help in three important areas. If any of these could be you, please get in touch:

- A women's cricket lead to help take forward this important part of our club
- A volunteer to run our social media and marketing
- Umpires for weekend games from May to September.

Membership changes

For the many readers who are members of the club, we are making some changes to club membership this year. We are moving from the annual membership payment to a monthly direct debit for all playing membership. More information will be sent to members in the coming weeks. Social membership will still be charged annually. More information about this change can be found on our website at www.whimblecc.co.uk.

Key dates for your diary

We expect to have cricket fixtures confirmed at all levels by early March, for now, some dates to be aware of are:

Winter nets start at all levels: From Sunday 5th February

Junior training begins: Friday 28th April

League cricket begins: Saturday 6th May

12th Man music festival: Saturday 9th September

Bonfire and Fireworks: Saturday 4th November

The pavilion remains available to book for private events during the day and evening, and where required a bar can normally be provided for bookings. I can be reached on 07989 234372, jameswoollam@gmail.com for booking enquiries.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the club in the coming weeks and months as we build to the season ahead. If you are interested in getting involved in any of the above opportunities, please get in touch.

James Woollam, Chairman

Whimble News goes Global

You might like to know that the digital format of this little magazine run by volunteers for YOUR VILLAGE, reaches Australia, USA, Cyprus, Qatar, Nigeria and Canada and another 18 far corners of the world. This map shows the countries that accessed our site in 2022 (the more visitors the darker the country).



WOW! Who knows how many people are discovering the wonders of Whimble?

www.whimblenews.uk



Whimble School's 2023 Wassail

On Friday 13th January, which was luckily quite sunny, the year 4, 5 and 6 pupils took part in a Wassail in the school's orchard. We would like to say a huge thank you to Emma Palmer and Jim Causley for giving up their time to come and teach us more about this tradition. They explained that wassailing wakes the trees and chases away anything preventing the tree from producing lovely blossom and then a great crop of apples later this year.

First, we learnt the words and tune of the wassail song and were soon singing 'our jolly wassail' as we walked in procession to the orchard, following our musicians and wassail King and Queen.

Once we had gathered around one of the apples trees, we sang the wassail song, and several pupils offered baked apples and toast to the tree. Next the king and queen read out a special message and finally we all cheered and made lots of noise (which many of us really enjoyed doing). After repeating everything while surrounding another tree, we retraced our steps back to school.



As part of our Fantastic Friday programme, the pupils in our KS2 classes have been teaching younger pupils in KS1 to play a variety of games, including dominoes, Frustration, Crocodile Dentist, Desk Skittles and Headbanz. Lots of pupils took turns, played fairly and listened to each other really well.



Happy New Year!

After two years of disruption, it was great to be able to hold all of our traditional Christmas events this year. That is not to say things ran smoothly. We held a lovely Carol Service in the church with our Key Stage 2 children and the PTA ran a fabulous Christmas fair for all the children.



After our Christmas dinner, we were lucky enough to host a group of visiting musicians from the Benedetti Foundation. The children enjoyed taking part in a music workshop involving a variety of body percussion techniques, and demonstrating different rhythms on a box drum. They played a vibraphone (instrument) and taught children a percussion pattern to perform whilst a beautiful tune on the Vibraphone was played above it.

On the last week of term, we had a phone call from an Ofsted inspector on Monday lunchtime, and this along with a lot of illness among our younger children meant limited rehearsal time and last-minute stand changes for many roles in our Christmas Nativity - 'A Little Bird Told Me'. Despite this, all of our children did an amazing job considering it is the first time for a long while they have had to speak in front of a 'live' audience, (it's more nerve racking than you think!)



The end of the week saw our Key Stage 2 children running around the MUGA in order to raise funds for ELF, a local Leukaemia charity - luckily the weather was kind to them, although cold. Finally, the Open the Book team of volunteers came in to present a special assembly.



Over the past couple of months our younger children have been studying local history and geography and were able to visit and discover more at the Heritage Centre. We thank them for accommodating our visit out of season.

The Spring term has started with some very dark mornings and awful weather - fingers crossed this improves. We have got many things to look forward to and I am sure, as always, the children and staff will continue through the term with energy and enthusiasm.



Carole Shilston, Headteacher



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East Devon District Councillor:	
Richard Lawrence	07703 350285
Parish Council (whimpleparishcouncil@gmail.com)	
<i>Chairman:</i> John Griffiths	823480
<i>Clerk:</i> Claire Rayner	812570
Primary School (admin@whimple-primary.devon.sch.uk)	
<i>Headteacher:</i> Carole Shilston	822584
<i>Chair of Governors:</i> Linden Best	822595
Whimble School PTA (Whimple.pta@gmail.com)	
Alisonshorer@hotmail.com	
St. Mary's Church	
<i>Parish Priest:</i> Rev. Marc Kerslake	822525
<i>Impact Cell:</i> Helen Bowker	823193
<i>Bellringers:</i> Marianne Randall	07834 809270
Book Group	
Tanya Mooney	823326
Cricket Club (jameswoollam@gmail.com)	
<i>Booking Secretary:</i> James Woollam	07989 234372
Football Club	
<i>Chairman:</i> Victoria Kendrew	07966 550260
<i>Secretary:</i> Lee Wheaton	077341 52120
Front Row Club	
<i>email:</i> frontrowclub@gmail.com	
History Society	
<i>Chairman:</i> David Rastall	822486
<i>Secretary:</i> Roger Smith	822244
Over Sixties Club	
<i>Chairman:</i> Arthur Iball	822905
<i>Secretary:</i> Beryl Iball	822905
Pre-School & Toddler Group (www.whimplepreschool.com)	
<i>Chair:</i> Joe Pearce	823512
<i>Information:</i> Jo Sibley 07794 652549 or admin@whimplepreschool.com	
Recreation Trust	
<i>Knowle Cross Sports Ground:</i> Roger Smith	822244
Scout Group	
<i>Group Scout Leader (and Marquee Booking):</i> Alex Spry	822844
Table Tennis Club	
Chris Beer	07787 544192
Tennis Club	
<i>Secretary:</i> Viv Brown	07876 653264
<i>Treasurer:</i> Glenn Starkey	07967 698600
Victory Hall	
<i>Chair:</i> Sue Ayres	823082
<i>Secretary:</i> Di Wilkins	758459
<i>Booking Sec:</i> Ali Tierney	07778 681280
Whimble Fest	
<i>Contact:</i> Sue Turner	sue.turner1@sky.com
Whimble and District Gardening Club	
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