

HM Queen Elizabeth II



1926 - 2022

THE SEAVINGTONS' NEWS - OCTOBER 2022

<p>Large Garden</p> <p>Hopefully sunny but feel free to bring cushions and blankets just in case!</p> <p>Takeaways</p> <p>Sunday Roasts</p> <p>Daily Menu</p> <p>Snacks</p> <p>Please call us to hear our current opening times or book your takeaway or garden table</p>	<p>See our current Menu</p> <p>On our website www.newinn-ilmminster.co.uk</p> <p>Or our Facebook page @newinnilmminster</p> <p>Call us on 01460 52413</p> <p>Booking advisable</p> <p>We would love to see you soon</p> <p>Thank you and stay safe!</p> <p>New Inn Dowlish Wake TA19 0NZ</p> 
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The Seavingtons' News

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

HM Queen Elizabeth II has been laid to rest and the period of official mourning is over. However, the memory of the Queen's lasting service to the country and Commonwealth over her 70 year reign will endure for decades to come. Those who were privileged to meet her recall her blue eyes, her smile and mischievous sense of humour, recently demonstrated for us to all to see in the clip of her sharing a liking for marmalade sandwiches with Paddington Bear. Who will ever forget her spoof parachute landing at the opening of the 2012 Olympics?

I was very young when King George VI died and I have no recollection of his passing. I do though clearly remember the Queen's Coronation. All the family gathered at my aunt and uncle's home just north of Taunton to watch the ceremony on a newly acquired 405 line black and white television. My abiding memory, as a 5 year old, was that it was all very long and slow moving. Shortly afterwards the whole primary school was bused to the cinema in Whiteladies Road in Bristol to see the film of the Coronation in colour. A first-ever visit to a cinema was much more exciting.

95% of the UK population have only ever known one monarch. She was a familiar figure beamed onto our television screens with ever greater openness via newscasts, Christmas broadcasts and a number of documentaries. Many will have seen her as she made official visits across the length and breadth of the country. I recall first seeing her in 1958 when she came to Bristol to inaugurate a new telephone exchange and make the very first STD (subscriber trunk dialing) call. Prior to that, most long distance calls were connected manually by an operator. She could not have imagined how telecommunications would change during her reign; the explosion in use of mobile phones, satellite phones, fibre optic cables and gigabit connections.

More widely she has witnessed enormous strides in science and technology. She flew on Concorde, yet at the time of her accession most passenger planes were driven by propellers. The advances in medical science now offer treatments for diseases which were incurable in 1953.

I saw her for the last time in 2015 when she arrived in Galashiels to open the Borders - Edinburgh Railway. That day also marked her becoming the longest reigning British monarch. There was no fanfare or anything special to mark an historic milestone. She just got on with the job, another 'day at the office'.

I happened to be in London on the day when the the Queen's coffin had returned to Buckingham Palace from Scotland. I took the opportunity

to go to St James Park and take a moment to reflect. The Royal Standard fluttered listlessly over the Palace. The gun carriage which was to carry the Queen's coffin stood ready in nearby Wellington Barracks. Huge crowds had already gathered along The Mall to watch the Queen being moved to Westminster Hall. I sensed they were happy to wait as long as necessary, just wanting to say farewell. Most moving were the messages left with floral tributes gathered around trees in the park. She will be missed.

St Michael's Church Seavington

Mondays	8.00 am	Morning prayers (Iona/CW)
Sun 2 Oct	11.15 am	Café Church in Seavington Community Café
Sun 9 Oct	11.15 am	Harvest Festival - St Marys Church
Thurs 13 Oct		Benefice Harvest Supper - St Peter & St Paul
Sun 16 Oct	10.30 am	Holy Communion (CW)
Sun 23 Oct	10.30 am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Sun 30 Oct	10.30 am	Café Church at St Peter & St Paul

First Sunday each month - Café Church. Please join us for an informal service in the Seavington Community Café preceded by coffee and croissants. **Everyone is very welcome.**

Rector for Seavington: Rev Tracey Hallett

M: 07854 489753 E: tracey.hallett@icloud.com

Church Office: 07831 982470: office@southpethertonchurch.org.uk

The Seavingtons' Weather in August

	<i>This Year - 2022</i>	<i>Last Year - 2021</i>
Temperature		
Average Minimum	13.22°C	10.64°C
Average Maximum	25.18°C	20.40°C
Mean	19.20 °C	15.52°C
Rainfall		
Monthly Total	12.6mm (0.5")	65.2mm (2.61")
Total for Year	358.8mm (14.35")	453.2 mm (18.13")

The temp reached 33.8°C (92.8°F) on 13 August. Most of the month's rainfall fell on a single day. 10.6mm on 16 August.

Village Diary - Forthcoming Events

*All events, unless otherwise shown, are held in the Millennium Hall
For bookings call 07905 215993 or hallbookings@theseavingtons.org*

Sun 2 Oct	11.15 am	Café Church in the village café
Thurs 6 Oct	10.15 am	New Class - Tai Chi - See page 4
Fri 7 Oct	7.00 pm	Launch of the Sydney Vaux historic photograph collection. Free. No advance booking required. Contact Phil Nichols: 07805 233248
Tues 18 Oct	6.30 pm	Parish Council Meeting - Café
Wed 19 Oct	10.30 am	Village Get2gether - all welcome. Café Contact Gill Beveridge 01460 242828
Fri 21 Oct	7.30 pm	RSPB - 'Life on a Seychelles Island' an illustrated talk by Sally Mills. See page7
Thurs 27 Oct	7.30 pm	Gardening Club. Gardeners Question Time with a panel of local experts. See page 6
Sat 29 Oct	9.00 am	Just a Brisk Walk - start Hall car park. Duration: about an hour returning to the car park. Contact: Matthew Towill E: towill916@btinternet.com

To keep up to date, check out the village web site (www.theseavingtons.org) which is updated regularly with information on events and other village matters. Pass the address on to your friends so that they can keep in touch as well.

Advertising Rates

	Annual	Monthly
Full Page	£100	£12
Half Page	£ 50	£ 6
Quarter Page	£ 28	£ 4

For all queries regarding advertisements please contact:
Ray Thorogood. E-mail: adverts@theseavingtons.org

Don't Forget

The Latest Copy Date: 20th Oct. for the next issue

Editorial content and diary entries to; Stephen Morris.
A: Chapel Court House, Seavington St Mary, Ilminster, TA19 0QN
E: news@theseavingtons.org T: 01460 242058

Village Diary - Regular Events

Evolve Fitness

One hour sessions daily, except Tuesdays
All sessions to be pre-booked with Kierhan Ellis
Contact E: kierhan@evofitnessstraining.com

Balance Pilates and Wellbeing

Every Monday
Pilates Intermediate at 9.15am - 10am
Pilates Matwork one All levels 10.10am - 10.55am
Contact E: lisarock70@gmail.com for booking form

DMV Sequence Dance Club

Every Wednesday at 7.15pm
Contact Marj Vincent E: m9dmv@hotmail.com

Wessex Women's Choir

Every second Saturday 10.30 - 12.30am
Contact Gail Clarke E: 2gailbclarke@gmail.com

Yoga and Mindfulness Classes

Every Tuesday
9.30am Gentle Hatha Yoga
6.30pm Strong Body and Mind
Contact Lissa Milton E: hello@lissamiltonyoga.co.uk (see page 25)

HEC (Home Education)

Fridays 10.45-15.30 HEC Contact: Jenn Hodge 01460 510042

Tai Chi - 10.15-11.15 am every Thursday starting 6 October
Call Age UK 01823 345626 for more information and to book a place.

Seavingtons' News Distribution

Around 330 copies of The Seavingtons News are printed each month. A copy is delivered to each household in the two parishes free of charge and additional copies are available to pick up in the Millennium Hall, Shop, The Volunteer and Shepton Beauchamp Shop.

The current month's edition and archive copies can be found on-line through the village website: www.the-seavingtons.org, then click on "Village Organisations", "The Seavingtons News" and download a copy onto your device.

If all of that sounds a bit complicated a pdf copy can be e-mailed direct to your e-mail address. Free of charge to villagers or £5 per year for family, friends and former residents living elsewhere.

Alternatively, a hard copy can be posted each month for £15 a year.

Send requests + addresses to the Editor: news@theseavingtons.org

Village Voice - letters to the Editor

Some of you will recall that some time ago a small team from St John Ambulance came to the village to train a group of villagers in CPR and the use of a defibrillator. There was no charge for the training so it was decided that the News would make a donation of £100. Our original cheque was lost and our Treasurer has only just received the following letter of thanks.

Dear Mr Thorogood

Apologies for the delay in sending this Thank You letter for your very kind donation of £100 that we received recently.

It is very kind of you to think of St John Ambulance and I am delighted that we have been able to help with the training of villagers in the use of the defibrillator installed outside Seavingtons' Community Shop.

Please do let me know if I can be of any further assistance and thank you to everyone once again.

With best wishes

Louise Jones

Community Fundraising Manager

St John Ambulance, 7-9 Marlborough Court, Manaton Close, Exeter

The Seavingtons' News wants to hear and publish your views on both the "News" itself and topics of importance or interest to our community. Please send your letters to the address on page 1. All opinions and views expressed are the sole responsibility of the writer and do not reflect the views of The Seavingtons' News. For legal reasons we must have the name and address of the writer but can normally publish over a pseudonym on request.

Village Mart

WANTED

Occasional pet sitter / dog walker.

Required to pop round during the day to feed our cat and cocker spaniel and to take the spaniel for a walk.

Please call either Stephen or Elaine 01460 242058

The Seavingtons' News is pleased to offer a free advertising service to village residents provided that the advertisement is of a non-commercial nature.



Seavington Gardening Club

Kate Mulligan (01460 242023)



40th Anniversary Tea Party

What better way to spend an afternoon than in the company of friends enjoying lovely food, a celebration cake and sparkling wine. The fact that there were around 80 people made up of past and present members of the Gardening Club and invited guests in the Millennium Hall for this occasion made it very special.

A year later than expected, thanks to Covid, the Gardening Club finally held the 40th Anniversary Tea Party. It was a very relaxed affair with a photo presentation slideshow to jog memories, a quiz to tax brain cells and a chance to chat and catch up with everyone. Our guest of honour was Muriel Haddon who had been one of the 16 founder members of the club back in 1981. Having recently celebrated her 90th birthday she happily helped us mark our 40th by cutting the cake.

Many thanks to everyone who attended, the volunteers and helpers and to the Gardening Club Committee for all their hard work. I hope everyone enjoyed themselves.

Next Meeting

Thursday 27th October in the Millennium Hall - "Gardeners' Question Time" led by a panel of local garden experts.

Doors open 7.00pm for 7.30pm start and refreshments will be served. Admission free to members and visitors £2 payable at the door.

Flower of the Month Competition will resume.

For further information please contact Jo Culham - tel 01460 241555

Harvest Supper - Help Wanted

Can you please help save the village harvest supper. See page 11.

Contact the Editor E news@theseavingtons.org T: 01460 242058

SOUTH SOMERSET RSPB GROUP

Life on a Seychelles Island – with 250,000 Seabirds

An illustrated talk presented by Sally Mills. In 2007, after 13 years as site manager of RSPB Ham Wall reserve, Sally took a two year contract on Aride Island. Her talk will focus on the marvellous birds and challenges of living on a remote island.

Friday 21st October - 7.30pm
The Millennium Hall, Seavington St Mary

Entry: Group members £4, non-group members £5, under 18's £1 (tea/coffee & biscuits included) – wheelchair access

NON-MEMBERS VERY WELCOME

For further details contact: Denise Chamings (group leader) on 01460 240740

www.rspb.org.uk/groups/southsomeset www.facebook.com/groups/RSPBSouthSomersetGroup

A registered charity: England & Wales no. 207076, Scotland no. SC37654



Seavington Villages Oil Scheme

By ordering in bulk the Seavington Villages Oil Scheme provides participants with heating oil at very competitive prices. Orders are placed with our supplier on a regular basis and participants' orders are collected together by the organiser, Nigel Key.

You are notified of the delivery 24 hours in advance and deliveries are made directly to your storage tank. You pay the supplier after delivery.

The closing date for the next order is:

Friday 7th October

To take advantage of the scheme and to place an order contact Nigel Key T:01460 241540 E: oil@theseavingtons.org

Message from our Rector

Reverend Tracey Hallet

The death of Queen Elizabeth II stunned and saddened so many of us, and we continue to give thanks to God for her life and legacy. It has been an absolute privilege to serve Her late Majesty. She was indeed the servant Queen who served the King of Kings! Her faith was inspirational. Her death has connected the Church with its community at a profound level.

During the period of mourning, the Churches in our Benefice have welcomed so many people from our local communities, offering the Parish Church as a sacred space to light a candle and to take a few moments quietly and prayerfully to reflect. At this deeply sad time, we were blessed with a moment of joy as The Church Conservation Trust confirmed St Marys Church (Seavington St Mary) is now permitted to remain permanently open – perhaps some may say that it was God’s perfect timing?

And so, we now look forward to celebrating harvest at St Marys on Sunday 9th October at 11:15, Everyone welcome. For me, harvest is a much beloved season. It evokes childhood memories from school days when we all decorated our boxes (fresh from containing new school shoes) and packed them full of tins for people less fortunate than ourselves and carried them on the long walk to school for the harvest thanksgiving service. In early adulthood I moved from urban surroundings to rural Somerset and have since come to value the hard work and commitment of the farming community, to appreciate God in creation and indeed be thankful for God’s gift of creation to us.

It would be great to meet more of our farming community and I really do hope that you will join us for the Benefice Harvest Supper on 13th October 6.30pm St Peter and St Paul’s South Petherton. We will share a communal bring and share supper to mark the tradition of a harvest meal which once was given by the farmer and his wife to the farm labourers as a reward for their hard work after the last load had been carried in from the fields. If you are busy harvesting right now and if your livelihood depends on a good harvest here’s a prayer for you:

God of the harvest,

so much depends on timing:
when to gather in the crops,
waiting for the best time,
watching the weather anxiously,
nervous of everything being destroyed.

Often, we see none of this uncertainty in our food supplies.

Be with everyone whose livelihood depends on the harvest,
and guide their decisions for the benefit of all of us.
Through your Son, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

With all Good Wishes and Prayers

Rev Tracey

Village Harvest Supper

The Flower Ladies of St Michael Church had hoped to run the Harvest Supper again this year with 15 October as the provisional date. Unfortunately due to a combination of circumstances the ladies are now unable to do so.

The event has been extremely popular in past years and is one of the few opportunities for villagers to get together. It would be a huge shame if we were to lose it. The Flower Ladies have done a great job but, this year, it is time for a new team to take over. **If you are willing and able to help please let the Editor know asap.**

T: 01460 242058 E: news@the-seavingtons.org

Community Land Trust

John Schofield 01460 240805

The CLT held their Annual General Meeting on the 15th September in the Hall. Following a minute’s silence to remember our late Queen, Chair Peter Ash described this year’s activities. All our properties are let, and normal repairs and maintenance continue. Cash awards have been made for new furniture in the café, and to the gardening club and flower ladies.

Two long-standing board members stood down, Pauline Parsons and Karen Ogde. We thank them both for their long service and hard work. Three new board members have been appointed: Louise Layzell, Jim Pendleton and Nicola Potter. Peter and Moira continue as chair and treasurer, and Nicola and I were appointed vice-chair and secretary respectively.

We are here to disburse funds, including start-up funds, to worthy village groups, clubs and causes. Approach any member of the board if you think you might have a requirement or wish for some help. No idea is a bad idea!

For more information and blank forms please refer to the CLT section of the village website: theseavingtons.org, and follow the links.



Over the Counter

Vicky Rahilly (vickyrahilly30@gmail.com)

There is certainly a feel of Autumn about the village and it is hard to believe the AGM was already 2 months ago. Martin picked some of this up in his guest edition last month (thank you Martin!) but here are some headlines for you. The draft minutes will be on the village website in October (www.theseavingtons.org).

AGM

There was a very well-attended AGM on 22nd August in the cafe, with 24 shareholders and committee members present. The Treasurer, Paul Taylor, gave a brief resume of the accounts, which showed that the shop and cafe had a turnover of just under £200,000 in the last financial year, an increase over the previous year. The overall surplus before tax had also increased to £34,000. However, the Treasurer urged caution in view of the current level of inflation, changes to VAT and a probable reduction in the availability of grants in 2022/23.

The Chairman, Martin Crowther, highlighted all the hard work that has been going on behind the scenes and thanked everyone for their contributions to the continuing smooth running of the shop and cafe.

Terry Gibson received a round of applause and a bouquet as she stood down from the committee. Other members of the committee were re-elected, but no new members came forward at the meeting.

Arts and Crafts update

Sarah Harmer has organised a crafting mini market for October with several crafters joining us. Angela Edwards will be displaying her decorative origami boxes ideal for wrapping small gifts such as jewellery or chocolates instead of wrapping paper as well as her sparkly handbag charms and keyrings. Chris Wright, from Martock, will be selling beautiful earthenware pots which combine function with colourful decoration. Local resident Janine will also be supplying her cute felt animals (foxes, bunnies and cheeky mice) which always sell well. Sarah herself will also be joining us with bright and bold aprons. All handmade - what a selection! Sarah and Carol Talbot will also have their work on the walls of the cafe to brighten the days as we head into winter.

Never too early to start planning for 2023!

Sue has been very organised and stocked some beautiful 2023 diaries, calendars and family planners. These are fantastic value and have already been selling very well. I recently purchased a glue free fully recyclable pocket-sized diary at a fraction of what it would have cost on the high street and was really impressed. Don't miss out!

Finally, a reminder: we still have several virtual vouchers remaining on our system; some with quite a lot of credit. Could we please urge you to come and use these as unfortunately we cannot refund them.

Thank you for your continued support.

SEAVINGTON SHOP AND CAFÉ

Delicious homecooked food and freshly baked cakes.
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**Cafe opening times Monday - Friday 8.30am - 2.30pm,
Saturday 8.30am - 2:00pm (last orders 1.30pm).**

ARTS & CRAFTS

October Arts & Crafts 'mini market' including felt animals, origami gift boxes, beautiful pottery and bold handmade aprons. All unique pieces by local artists.

Craftwork by Sarah Harmer and Feltings by Carol Talbot will be on sale in the café.

LOCAL PRODUCE RANGES AVAILABLE

Did you know we stock Miles Tea, Border biscuits, local cider, eggs and potatoes? Shop local and support local businesses!

Shop opening times Monday to Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm,
Saturday 8.30am - 2.30pm

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We are agents for Evri parcel service

We look forward to seeing you!

W: www.theseavingtons.org/community/village-store-and-cafe

FIND US AT: Water Street, Seavington St Mary TA19 0QH

Tel: 01460 249730

FACEBOOK: seavington store

South Petherton Tennis Club

Natalie (secretary1.sptc@gmail.com)

Not many people know that tennis was introduced to America by a Bermudian lady. Mary Ewing Outerbridge, born in Philadelphia in 1852 to wealthy Bermudian parents, first encountered tennis on the lawns of a friend's home when she and her family were holidaying in Bermuda in 1874. The game had recently been introduced to Bermuda by a British man, Thomas Middleton. Mary was so impressed with the game that she took equipment, including racquets and a net, when she returned to America. But the move almost ended in failure because suspicious customs officials in New York impounded the equipment before they relented and released it. With the help of her brother, Mary set up the first tennis court in the US in the grounds of the Staten Island Cricket and Baseball Club, which was near where the Staten Island Ferry Terminal is today. She hosted the first national tournament in 1880, but sadly died in 1886, aged only 34, a year before America's first championship game for women was held. In recognition of this historic feat, Mary Outerbridge was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1981 and into the Staten Island Sports Hall of Fame in 1999.

COACHING: Whether you're a beginner or a veteran - and over 3 years old, coaching by our two popular professional coaches, Rachel Apsey and Natalie Carpenter, is available for members and non-members in group or individual sessions. Please contact us for more information and to find out how we can help you to get playing.

CARDIO TENNIS: the ultimate full body workout, which is fun, social and designed to get you moving. One hour session every Saturday at 1130. No tennis skills required and non-members welcome. For information and to book, please contact Rachel , e-mail E:rachelatennis@gmail.com.

MONSTER SMASH HALLOWEEN SPECIAL FOR JUNIORS aged 5+: Monday, 24th October 9am-1pm. Certificates for all. Prizes for the Best Dressed. £20 members/£24 non-members. Spaces are limited so please contact Nat asap for information and to book - 07810 251642 / natstennis@yahoo.com

STEPPING STONES: Saturday, 1st October & 3rd November 2022 1-2 pm: FREE one hour session held on the first Saturday of the month all year round. It is open to anyone, who would like to come along and play some fun mixed doubles.

PAY & PLAY: Non-members can play tennis in South Petherton by booking online up to one week in advance. Full details are on SPTC's website. www.southpethertontennisclub.co.uk

Bug of the Month

Anne Crowther

Glandular Fever (Epstein-Barr Virus -EBV)

As we enter October, our youngsters have perhaps headed to college or university for a new academic year. Along with 'Freshers Flu', and coursework, Glandular Fever can be an unwelcome guest at the beginning of term get togethers.

Glandular Fever was first described by Emil Pfeiffer in 1889, he characterized it as an 'infectious process with fever, a swelling of the lymph nodes including an enlargement of the liver and the spleen and with a pharyngitis'.

Glandular fever or infectious mononucleosis (mono) or EBV, has been dubbed the 'Kissing Disease' as, although it can be caught at any age this viral infection mostly affects young adults. Most EBV infections are thought to occur during childhood and cause only mild symptoms, or no symptoms at all. Like many other viruses of this type, this one doesn't ever completely leave – it sets up residence in the back of the throat but is mostly trouble free.

EBV is found in the saliva of infected people and can be spread through kissing, exposure to coughs and sneezes, and sharing eating and drinking utensils. EBV can remain in the saliva of someone who has had glandular fever for several months after their symptoms pass, continuing to be infectious. Some people may continue to have the virus in their saliva on and off for years. However, if it has caused glandular fever, you are likely to develop lifelong immunity and therefore only catch it once. As it is caused by a virus EBV cannot be treated with antibiotics.

Common symptoms can take up to 6 weeks to develop and include a high temperature (fever), a severe sore throat, swollen glands in the neck and fatigue (extreme tiredness). More severe symptoms requiring urgent medical help include developing breathing difficulties or a rasping breath (stridor), difficulty in swallowing fluids or developing intense abdominal pain due to an enlarged spleen or liver. Anyone who has been diagnosed with glandular fever should refrain from contact sports and risks of falling until fully recovered due to the potential to damage the liver or spleen.

While the symptoms of glandular fever can be very unpleasant, most of them should pass within two to three weeks. Fatigue, however, can occasionally last several months. EBV has been implicated in some cancers, (for example naso-pharyngeal) and auto immune diseases such as multiple sclerosis and Hodgkin's lymphoma. Research is ongoing in the hopes of finding a vaccine to prevent these occurring because of EBV.

Good luck to all our budding students!

St Margaret's Support Groups Taunton and Yeovil

St Margaret's Support Groups are open to anyone affected by a life-limiting illness – patients, their families and friends. As well as providing an opportunity to meet others in similar situations, our trained volunteers can offer visitors:

a listening ear ◊ provide free information ◊ help signpost to other services
 The groups are run on a drop-in basis – there is no need to book or to be referred
Or perhaps you would like to become a volunteer to help run these groups?

St Margaret's Hospice, Taunton TA1 5HA Thursdays 2pm-4pm
Octagon Theatre, Yeovil BA20 1UX 10.30am – 12.30

For further information please contact Lesley Burgess
 E-mail: lesley.burgess@st-margarets-hospice.org.uk; Tel: 0845 070 8910



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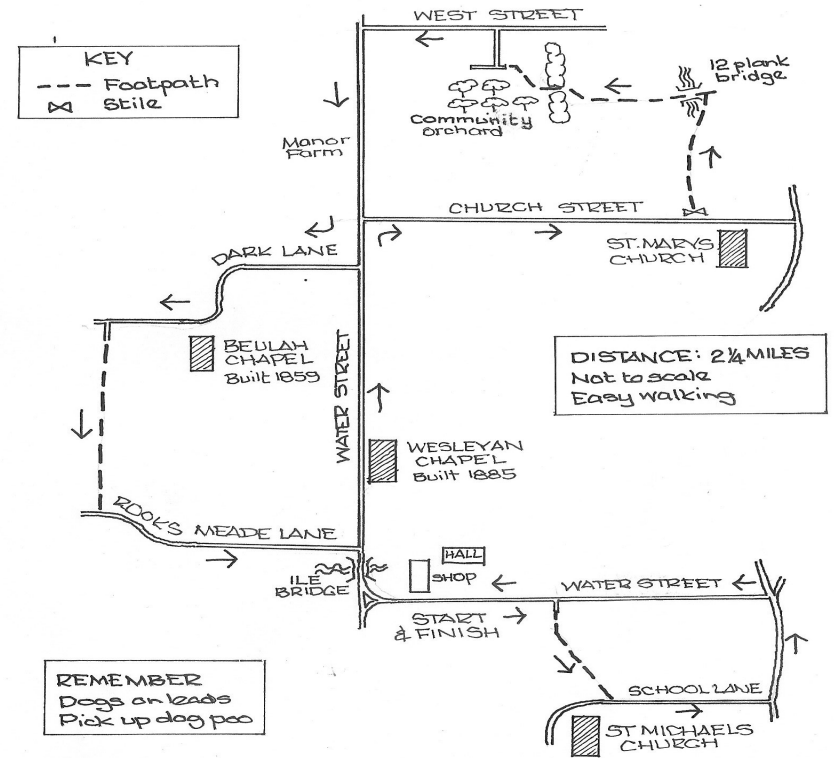


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Walk No3: Chapels and Churches



Why two chapels?

The early Methodist Church split in the 18th century. The more Calvinistic (Beulah) Methodists believed that God had pre-ordained an elect number of people to eternal bliss while the others perished for eternity. John Wesley, influenced by the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius, rejected the Calvinistic thinking and preached salvation by faith. This schism lies behind the building of the two chapels in Seavington, the Beulah Chapel in Dark Lane in 1865 and the Wesleyan Chapel in Water Street 20 years later.

Nothing stays the same

The Seavington Stroller

The old adage that “nothing stays the same” has never been more true than in these last few years. Changes take place through personal circumstances, or through events outside our own control.

Walking through the village these last few days, I was once again taken by the relative silence and lack of activity, either pedestrianised or motorised.

At the start of 2020, we entered into our first “lockdown”. Initially it brought us out onto the lanes and the paths through and around our villages. A sense of “we are all in this together” and a strengthening of our community spirit. As the days turned into weeks, weeks into months and a second year, village events that cemented that spirit no longer took place and the community seemed to fragment as we tended to stay more within our own environment.

Finally, this year with a general lifting of restrictions, the Platinum Jubilee gave us all a purpose, to not only celebrate the magnificent achievement of Her Majesty the Queen, but to again meet and socialise with our neighbours.

The celebrations of quiz night, treasure hunt, wonderful flower festival, Fête, walk and picnic were enjoyed by so many and it was a pleasure to see unmasked, happy and smiling faces. Life it seemed was returning to normal.

Then a warm summer became a very hot summer with repeated heatwaves and unprecedented temperatures. Once again our highways and byways fell quiet as we sought shelter and relief in our homes. The personal contact of just a few weeks previously, evaporated once more.

Now with the cooler temperatures of autumn and having once again ventured out to repair the drought damaged gardens and walk and talk with neighbours, we have lost our beloved Sovereign. So once more we have taken to being inside, watching the drama of the passing of Her Majesty, again losing that personal contact in the community.

I have sat in my garden over these few last days and noted the absence of sound, of walkers, dogs, cattle in the fields or vehicle movements through the village, and in a reflective mood, I remembered the sad passing of several villagers, who during their time with us contributed in their own way to the diversity, character and fabric of our village.

Almost unnoticed, many villagers have also left to live elsewhere, their homes taken by new occupants who we have yet to meet and who have not had the opportunity to engage and contribute to our village life.

However, the one constant during all this time, has been our wonderful village shop and cafe, manned throughout by a strong group of

volunteers, a place where all are welcome and where, by chance, I also met again a friend not seen for some years.

Let us hope that with the ascension of a new King, we also have the start of a new lease of life in our community, to meet and enjoy social gatherings and village activities.

... Life ...

A short story by Anthony Leigh

It was the second week in July 2005 and London had not ceased to function and to carry on. Nor were the inhabitants and workers in this proud City, prepared to bow to the terror and threats of the recent horrific acts of violence carried out on the public transport the city was prepared to continue to operate and offer.

Maria clutched, more so, to her body, the small innocence that her 3 month old baby represented and waited her turn to step onto the platform of the bus. She paid her fare and sat on the first vacant downstairs seat at the front of the bus. There were many passengers already seated and standing. But it was quiet .. eerily quiet, and an atmosphere of uneasy tension was evidently felt throughout the entire bus, as well as the visible but not too discreet inquisitive, peering eyes that scrutinised every new passenger and their accompanying ‘parcel’, whether, briefcase, satchel, rucksack, baby or what else constituted a legitimate item of modern necessary ‘baggage’.

As the bus pulled away the baby began to cry and Maria rocked her gently to soothe her and, hopefully, to stop her from crying. It didn’t, and as Maria instinctively knew, she continued to cry, even louder.

The silence that had previously held the bus in a self-imposed discipline, was now broken with the ceaseless crying of Maria’s baby, and as Maria became more and more anxious she knew that it also affected her child. The interrupted eerie silence continued, which only highlighted Maria’s plight and so she gathered her herself together and decided to get off the bus at the next stop.

But before she moved any further Maria felt a gentle slight ‘tap tap’ on her shoulder and turned her head to face the woman sitting behind her ‘It’ll be alright ..’ the woman uttered quietly ‘go on .. It’ll be OK ...’ she continued with an assuring gentle warm smile. Maria smiled back with uncertainty and questioning moist eyes, regained her posture and began to undo the buttons on her blouse, and brought her child to her breast.

In a short now silent while, she turned carefully to face to her fellow passenger ‘Thank you ..’ she mouthed with in an acknowledged emotional smile

Letter from Venezuela

'Music is the answer'

Cecilia Córdova

The "Ministry of Intellectual Development" was created in the 70's in Venezuela. As you may imagine, this generated lots of controversy, as indeed the Minister of Loneliness did in the UK at one point. Mind you, at that time a Cabinet Minister for Women was also created highlighting the novelty and projection of our society in those days.

Also known as the Intelligence Project, it was aimed at improving educational opportunities in Venezuela. Cabinet Minister Luis Alberto Machado supported the notion that limits on intelligence are false and primarily tied to upbringing and social conditioning. This Ministry lasted only one presidential term (five years at the time). It had been set out to prove, among other highly ambitious objectives, that a group of Pemonas (a group of indigenous Venezuelan people based in the Amazon forest and marginalised from mainstream culture) could in just two months learn and be proficient with a violin to the point of performing a national televised concert in the main concert hall in Caracas. That programme comprised pieces of traditional classical music including the fourth movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

What is now known to all classical music buffs as "El Sistema" or the National System of Youth and Children's Orchestras, was founded back in the 70's. This was a burgeoning cultural initiative funded by oil revenues, along with other projects demonstrating a keen social interest. "El Sistema" headed by the economist and trained musician Maestro José Antonio Abreu (one of Machad's sidekicks) is a music education programme for children across the country, focused on vulnerable and endangered social groups aiming to rescue them from violence, drugs, crime, and poverty. The method as well as music studies, promotes values aimed at developing self-esteem and confidence, leadership, sense of commitment and community, responsibility, discipline, generosity and how to contribute to collective goals.

The programme has become a model for other countries in the wider world (including the UK). Unfortunately, it has been politized. Last November 8,573 musicians from the age of 12 to 77 gathered in the courtyard of the Venezuelan Military Academy in Caracas to perform Tchaikovsky's Slavic March to gain entry in the Guinness Book of Records as the "World's largest orchestra".

Gustavo Dudamel, the music conductor, currently director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic (formerly at the Berlin Philharmonic), comes from "El Sistema" and remains a controversial figure for Venezuelans due to his political association with the current regime.

"El Sistema" shows a romantic side of our country in a bygone era which is used as political currency. Behind this façade hides a country where poverty surpasses 90%, with unacceptable limitations on the minimum standard of life but where you can get tickets for great concert at great venues for the price of a breakfast at Seavington's cafe. Mind you - I know!

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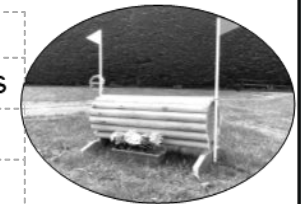
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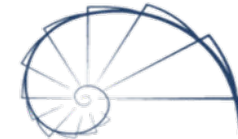
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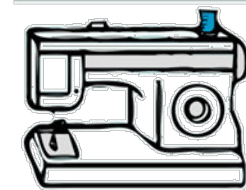
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