

The Gossip

H O R N T O N

ISSUE 121

MAY 2021

Pete dons DJ for BAFTA ceremony



Pete Bebb donned his DJ on the evening of April 11 and, with his wife Alex and a bottle of champagne, settled down to watch the BAFTA awards ceremony on TV. He had been nominated for an award in the visual effects category.

The ceremony was remote this year because of the pandemic. "It was disappointing not to have a red carpet event to go to but understandable," said Pete. "No new dress for Alex – boo!"

Pete's nomination was for his work on the World War 1 film *Greyhound*. He works for Double Negative, a world-leading visual effects house. Although he and his team didn't win the BAFTA award, the nomination was accolade enough for a project that was hugely challenging.

"Unusually in the visual effects industry, the company originally employed for the movie was fired by Tom Hanks after half the budget had been spent," said Pete. "We took it on but started from scratch and in four

months completed what would normally have taken a year.

"We had a crew of more than 1,000: 500-600 in India and 200-300 in both Vancouver and London."

In *Greyhound* Tom Hanks, who wrote the screenplay, takes the role of a US Navy Commander assigned to lead an Allied convoy across the Atlantic during WW11. His



convoy is pursued by German U-boats and becomes involved in what would come to be known as the longest, largest and most complex naval battle in history: The Battle of the Atlantic.

"The ocean was essentially another character in the film and capturing its appearance through computer generation and doing so authentically was particularly challenging," said Pete. "We had to create shots that looked like they had been filmed for real."

Most of the film happens in daytime but there are some scenes at night because that is when the Wolfpack tended to attack. "It was essential to get the night time look right," explained Pete. "We didn't want to cheat the lighting as this would have taken us away from the authenticity we were aiming for."

"The solution presented itself in the action. Light sources like tracer fire, distress flares and explosions gave us what we needed for the correct perceivability."

In order to successfully achieve the visual effects required for *Greyhound* on time and within budget Pete had to run a tight ship. The project was almost military in the planning.

"Our aim was to create shots that have a raw and visceral feel but remain authentic to the period and respectful to the subject matter," said Pete. His nomination for a BAFTA award suggests that he achieved just that.

Hornton waits

Cherwell District Council's planning committee was to have made a decision on May 20 on the retrospective planning application from landowner Sandra Kerwood for the much expanded Wroxton motocross site. Unfortunately, the decision will not now be made until the committee's June meeting.

Some 200 objections from the residents of Hornton and surrounding villages are registered on the CDC planning portal and will be considered by the planning committee, together with the few submissions from supporters of the application.

Hornton Parish Council chair John Offord said: "This is the biggest planning issue we have faced: it threatens to blight our homes and our countryside for decades."

So Hornton waits, with fingers firmly crossed.

Kevin calls it a day

After many years as an active member of Hornton Parish Council, Kevin Wain is stepping down.

As many people will know, Kev and Jane took on a new business venture a couple of years ago and understandably, as we come out of Covid restrictions, Kev feels he needs to devote all his energies to that.

Parish Council chairman, John Offord, said, "We would like to thank Kev. He has been a great councillor, ready to turn his hand to anything and especially helpful in sorting things like the website or IT issues. I know I speak for all his colleagues on the Council when I say we will also miss his common sense and humour."

Kev will continue his voluntary work for the playground and, as his swansong, is coordinating the spring litter pick.



To find out how you could join the Council see below.

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seeks your help

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Hornton Parish Council

If you enjoy living in Hornton why not help keep the village running? The Parish Council has a vacancy and are looking for an energetic person to join. No experience is needed, just a willingness to get involved.

Please contact the clerk, Fiona Donaldson, to find out more.
Email: Clerk@Hornton.org.uk
or call her on 670505



Catherine Vint took this photo of bluebells blooming in the woods at Edgehill



Kate Matthews

Facing the challenge of training to be a doctor in a pandemic

Kate, 23, was born in Kidderminster, lived in Stratford for a few years, then moved to Hornton in 2005. Her primary schooling was at The Croft in Stratford and her secondary schooling at Stratford Girls Grammar School followed by sixth form at KES. During a gap year she worked in a pub in Fenny Compton and a café in Stratford. With the money earned she undertook conservation work on the Caribbean island of Montserrat, using her scuba diving training to survey reefs. She is now at the University of Southampton training to be a doctor. When at home in Hornton she lives with her parents Kevin and Sara and brother Alex.

"I'm a lark rather than an owl and usually up around 7.30am. I always have the same thing for breakfast: toast with almond butter and banana and a cup of tea. Then around 8.30am I start academic work.

If I were at uni I'd be going to lectures and tutorials or be on a practical placement but now instead everything is online. I've even had a surgical placement online, watching hours of Youtube! You go to university to have fun and meet people so working alone and online can be very difficult - it's hard to keep motivated. I try to plan each day's work and stick to the plan to be as productive as possible.

Having completed three years of my degree in medicine, I'm now doing a one-year Masters

degree in Public Health (Management). In October, pandemic permitting, I'll be back in Southampton to do my final two years to qualify as a doctor.

In my third year I had some great practical placements including at a GP surgery on Hayling Island and, most interesting, on a hospital respiratory ward in January - March 2020. We were getting lots of pneumonia cases, many more than usual, and the medical staff were asking each other why this was happening. It was a sign of what was to come.

I've been disappointed not to be involved in Covid work; the university wouldn't approve it so I came home. However, I was able to make a small contribution by being a buddy to Elin and

Karl. Elin is a doctor who lives in Hornton, and I helped with childcare, leaving her free to work.

I take a break at lunchtime – just a sandwich or soup maybe – then I take Clemmie, our old and adored springer spaniel, for a walk. Then it's back to work again.

Growing up, I always wanted to be a vet because I love animals but having spent time in a care home during work experience from school, I began to lean towards medicine. I'm considering GP and Public Health work after qualification, rather than hospital, because I think I'd prefer the more holistic approach and better work/life balance that it offers.

When Dad comes home from work we all have a meal together. We're all science-minded so we have great conversations, great debates. We're lucky to have common interests. After dinner I'll often do some baking. I also paint: animals, landscapes even portraits. I'm self-taught so just for fun. If I watch television it tends to be documentaries.

As a family we hugely enjoyed doing Pete Lemon's lockdown quizzes and joining the WhatsApp group chats. And I loved being part of the village lockdown choir. Music is important to me. I play the viola in the Southampton University orchestra and run the medics' choir. I also play the piano and violin and I'm trying saxophone.

Another enthusiasm is walking. I run the medics' walking club at uni and I love walking around Hornton. Seeing the damage done to the countryside between our village and Wroxton by the expansion of the motocross site there was one of the reasons that I decided to join with the many other objectors to the planning application and wrote to Cherwell DC. I was also aware of the extensive research making clear that excess noise impacts people's health; it elicits stress which can have severe downstream health consequences.

Living alone for a while in Southampton taught me a lot about myself. I need a purpose in life – something to work towards. That's why I try to do something for charity each year. I was musical director for the virtual medics' musical this year which raised more than £1,000 for healthcare charities in Southampton and a couple of years ago I cycled from London to Paris in three days, raising £1,400 for Breast Cancer Now.

The need for structure is there each day; going to bed at a regular time is part of that. I'm usually tucked up by 10.30pm."



Looking back

In the Summer 1992 issue of *The Gossip* Eileen Williams wrote of the pleasure she derived seeing green woodpeckers in her paddock at Home Farm on Bell Street. The editor of *The Gossip* added this: "Sadly Eileen will not be here to see whether the woodpecker returns. The Williams family are moving from Home Farm to a barn conversion at Alkerton."

"They have lived in Hornton for the last 18 years and are the last farming family to move from the main village. We in Bell Street will miss them and the quacking of their ducks and the cock crowing early in the morning."

Tim and Eileen Williams were tenant farmers and Tim was the herdsman at Hornton Grounds Farm. When Home Farm was sold, it was bought by Martin and Jan Dawkins who modernised the farmhouse and from the farmyard and paddock, created the lovely garden that remains today.

When the Dawkins moved to Witney, John and Laurie Furneaux took over Home Farm until they, in turn, moved on, in their case to West End House in Hornton. Polina Kurdyavko now owns Home Farm House.

Twin turn on Feedback

If you tuned in to Radio 4's Feedback programme on March 26 you would have been surprised to find not just one Corke being a reviewer but two.



Hornton's Roger Corke and his twin brother Andrew, a retired vicar from Wimborne, Dorset, both keen Radio 4 listeners, were invited by the BBC to step out of their comfort zones and listen to something that wouldn't normally be on their listening radar. In this case it was episode one of an eight-episode podcast series, *The Battersea Poltergeist*.

The podcast is a supernatural detective story, a paranormal cold case from the 1950s, re-investigated through a blend of drama and documentary. It's the true story of one of Britain's strangest hauntings which took place at 53 Wycliffe Road, Battersea.


Roger and Andrew reported on Feedback that they had both enjoyed the first episode. Roger was sceptical but ready to listen to all episodes in the hope that the series would indeed solve the mystery.

Did it do that? No spoiler here. You'll have to listen to the podcasts, available on BBC Sounds.

Progressive dinner

Dust off your diary with plenty of advance warning for the revived Progressive Dinner which will be happening on Saturday 16th October. This is the weekend before autumn half-term so shouldn't clash with any long-awaited holidays. Look out for all the info in the next issue of *The Gossip*.

Anne Joyner



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Chapel open

The Chapel is open and again following the service pattern of the first and third Sunday of the month at Chapel and second and fourth Sunday at the Church. The library is also open and there is an overflow bookcase in the small meeting room.

Visitors to the Chapel are asked to follow the pandemic safety rules; hand sanitiser is provided.

Newcomers

A big welcome to Hornton for the Pauls, the Bibbs and the Cockrills. Ian and Linda Paul with son James and black Lab Alfie moved into Grafton Rise on Bell Street some months ago so it's a belated welcome to them. Stuart and Gill Bibb are the new owners of West End Cottage. Their children are grown up.

Martin and Louise Cockrill are moving with their two sons from Coventry to Elmbank 3 on Millers Lane. Louise says: "Hello everyone. We are Martin, Louise, Seth and Joseph Cockrill. I was born in London but grew up in a village in Warwickshire and I'm very much looking forward to getting back to a country life. Martin and our boys have only ever been city folk but love the countryside. Joseph is planning what to grow in our garden while Seth is keen to get out and explore the local footpaths.

"We have been bowled over by how welcoming and friendly everyone is. Looking forward to getting to know more of you post Covid. In the meantime, a socially distanced wave from the Cockrill family."

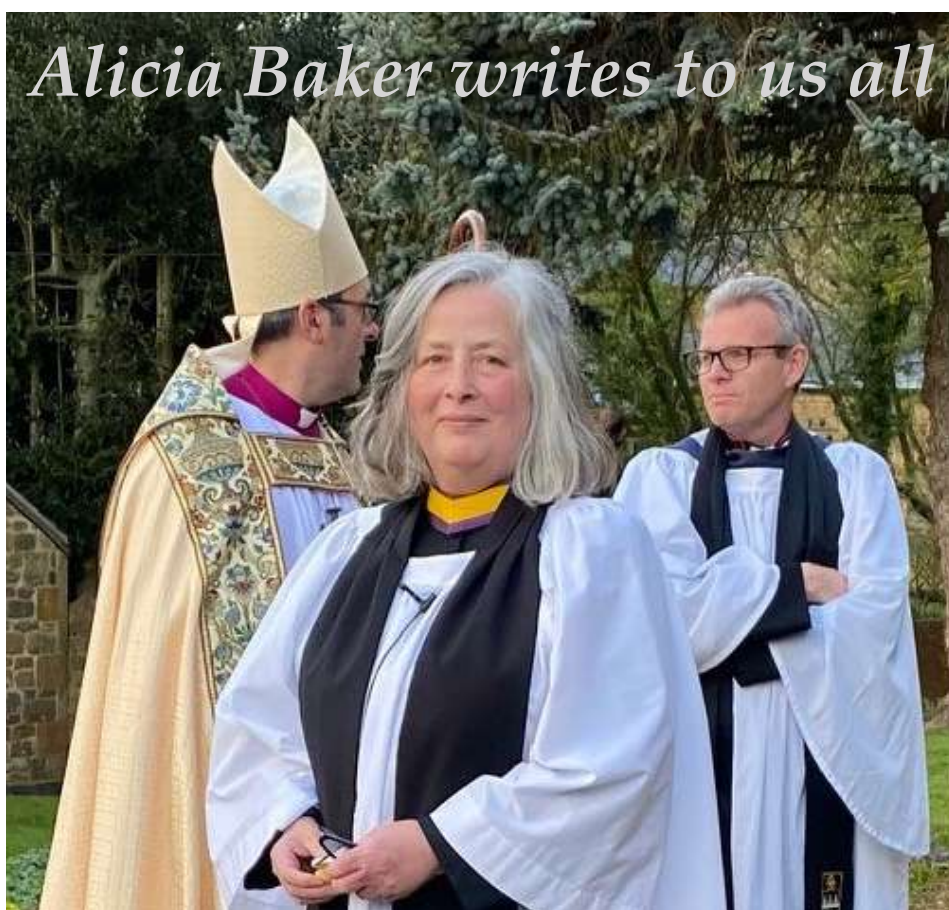
Bonny boys



Laura Hemmings introduces us to her twin sons, Leo (left) and Toby

Toby and Leo are now 12 weeks old and are doing really well. They already have their own little personalities and have put on a good amount of weight since coming home. They are now both over 7lbs which is amazing, considering they were so small not that long ago and born nine weeks premature.

They have brought us so much happiness after a sad start to the year with losing Dad and, as you can imagine, keeping me (and my mum!) very busy!



Alicia with Bishop Gavin and Associate Archdeacon David

Alicia Baker, who was installed as the new rector of the Ironstone Benefice on May 4, writes to us all.

I am so much looking forward to meeting you all in the Ironstone Benefice. I met a number of you late last year and I was very encouraged by your enthusiasm and thoughtfulness.

A few words about myself: I was born in Bristol and grew up within Gloucestershire, living in Cirencester for 11 years until I went to University in York. I have three older brothers who live in various parts of the UK. In York I studied Mathematics and Music and I became a committed Christian through the Anglican Church there, St Michael-le-Belfrey which stands in the shadow of York Minster.

After a PGCE in North London, I began work as a peripatetic music teacher around the Manchester area whilst living in Glossop which is situated on the edge of Manchester and within the Peak District. I became part of the church in Glossop becoming more and more involved in the leadership, whilst really enjoying teaching and playing in a number of orchestral groups.

I began to wonder if I was called to full-time licensed ministry and began the process of discernment. My church background discouraged the ordination of women and I explored work as an overseas mission partner. I gave up my teaching and moved south to study at All Nations Christian College which prepared

people for overseas work. Unfortunately, medical issues meant I had to wait to travel and while I was waiting I spent some time working for a church in East London. This is where my call to the ordained ministry was encouraged.

After this I spent a year in Peru, two more years training, this time back in Bristol, a curacy back in East London, then west again, this time to some Welsh valleys for my first post as a vicar and deanery mission enabler. After this I went to the Black Country for 8 years.

I have so enjoyed every part of this journey because I enjoy a challenge, I love meeting new people and experiencing new possibilities. Working within different contexts means new approaches for the parish and the priest, it is about working to new goals and opening my mind to old traditions as well as new cultures.

I come on my own as I have never married. I have a faithful greyhound at present who loves people but unfortunately needs to stay away from cats and other dogs.

I would love to be able to engage with a folk music group in the area to see if I can re-ignite my musical skills. I enjoy lots of artistic genres and even took up woodcarving while in Wales!

As someone said when they wrote to me, I hope I will be able to join in not just the church life within the communities but also the social and community life.

Blessings, *Alicia*



"In 1940 I was seven years old; I was evacuated from London to Hornton, with my sister Audrey who was five. We arrived on Sumner's coach, which stopped outside a little general store that had a lovely bow window..."

On 1 September 1939, two days before war was declared, the British government began evacuating children from towns and cities. It was the largest movement of people ever seen in Britain. Most travelled by train with their schools and went to live with foster parents. Evacuation was an adventure for some who had never been to the countryside, but others were homesick and unhappy.

Away from home

Hornton village provided homes for many children throughout the war years. This was not a voluntary undertaking, but authorised by the government, and luckily the children found themselves in friendly, loving surroundings. Many evacuees from inner-city



Gladys Miles, the surrogate mother to the Naulls sisters

areas had never seen fields and farm animals before or even eaten vegetables.

Janet Terrett (née Miles), who lived with her family at Belle Vue in Bell Street remembers Mavis Langton "who stayed with us for just under a year - she was very thin and pale and my Mum and Dad were concerned as she ate very little and disliked almost everything except bread and jam."

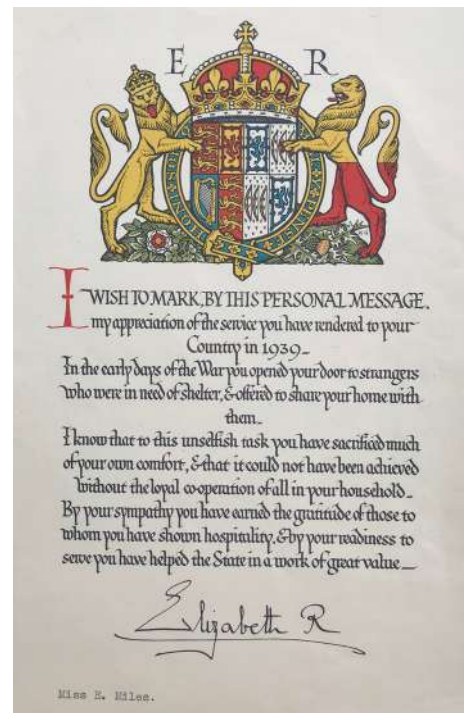
City children were often shocked at the basic way of life they encountered in country villages. Hornton evacuee Joan Naulls recalled: "We had a bedroom on the top floor. There was no bathroom at that time, but there was a hipbath in the outhouse where a huge copper was used to heat the water, which was pumped from the well. The toilet was outside and to us was really primitive, as were the candles used to light us to bed."

Perhaps not all evacuee children were settled and happy. John Bridgeman at Eastgate House believes that eight boys stayed there during the war: "They came with their little brown suitcases containing all their possessions. Bolts were fitted on the outside of the bedrooms to stop the boys running away".

Fitting in, staying on

Joan and Audrey Naulls stayed with the Miles family at Jubilee House in Bell Street and had a happy time. Joan later wrote: "Gladys (Miles) was a wonderful surrogate mother to us, she did everything for us including teaching us to knit and even made clothes from hand-me-downs. We played with the children in the village because it was a close-knit community, you knew everyone from one end of the village to the other."

Joan and Audrey's brother Alec was taken in by the Wheeler family at The Gables, Millers Lane. On leaving Hornton School at 14 years of age he found work in the village at Poplars Farm and was given the responsibility of looking after a milking herd of 20 cows.



The letter of thanks from Queen Elizabeth sent to all the families who had provided a home to child evacuees during the war

Coming back

Some children loved the village so much that they revisited as adults, coming back year after year after the war ended. Norma Martin recalls that Charlie Evans, who lived with her aunt and uncle, Lil and Frank Price, next door to the Old Red Lion, always said that the village was wonderfully welcoming and that it was a happy time for him. After leaving school he was taken on as an apprentice by Roland Miles at his radio repair shop in Bell Street. Later Charles came back to Hornton every summer for the Church picnic lunch held at Eastgate House. He stayed in touch with Norma's mother, Daphne Sadler, for many years.

Laurie Stewart-Furneaux

Secretary, Hornton History Group

Thanks to Elisabeth Jeffs, Janet Terrett, Norma Martin, John Bridgeman and Paul Burden for their invaluable contributions. The full article will be posted on Hornton History Group's website.

War Plum Pudding

Ingredients:

1 breakfast cup breadcrumbs
 ½ breakfast cup sugar
 ½ breakfast cup currants
 ½ breakfast cup raisins
 4 level tablespoons sago
 ½ pint milk
 ½ teaspoonful bicarbonate soda
 Pinch of salt

Soak sago in milk for one hour. Mix all ingredients together and steam for 3 to 4 hours. Serve with sweet sauce or custard.

Enjoy. Perhaps!

Elisabeth Jeffs

Pavilion update

Pete Lemon reports

The Pavilion Committee are hoping to reopen as soon as Covid restrictions allow and we look forward to welcoming all users back to the hall.

Lockdown has been tough for us and we suffered a crippling series of bills to have the heating system repaired followed by an unexpectedly high electricity bill as the estimates had been too low.

There is much to do, and we are appealing for new people to join the committee to help run the hall and stage fundraising events. If you can spare a few hours a year to bring your enthusiasm to this invaluable village facility please contact Glen Walther, via Sarah at Sarah.Walther@hotmail.com.

Pavilion Events

Pilates (Monday - evenings) and Keep Fit (Tuesday evenings) are both planning to return when allowed.

A "Thank goodness the Lockdown is Over" Summer Fete is planned for 10th July at the Pavilion and in the playing field. So put that in your diaries now and keep an eye out for more details. We're planning a fun filled afternoon and early evening for all the village to come together once again and remind us all how lucky we are to live in Hornton!

September - Theme Night - details to follow

November - The players return in "Act Naturally" directed by Anne Joyner.

More dramatic news

First the bad news. Due to all the uncertainty, but mainly the pressure the children have been under, I've decided not to attempt to put together a pantomime for next winter. By summer 2022 I'm sure this last couple of years will be but a distant memory and we'll be able to recruit the usual huge cast of talented, uninhibited folk of all ages and deliver our much loved Hornton Panto once again. Hint - it'll probably be Cinders, cos we loved Andre and Roy's Ugly Sisters so much!

Now the good news. I'm delighted to report that the much postponed comedy, Act Naturally, will now be re-scheduled for the weekend of 18th, 19th and 20th of November. We'll be performing on the brand new stage (at last!) in the Pavilion, cabaret style with groups seated around small tables, so some distancing will still be practised.

Sadly, two of the cast are no longer involved, so if anyone would like to volunteer to help with front of house and stage management for this production that would be great, just give me a call on 01295 678082. Rehearsals won't start until late August and further details will be in the next issue of *The Gossip*. Meanwhile, please add the dates to your calendar!

Anne Joyner

Get the best out of JUMPA

As JUMPA gets back up and running here's a quick reminder of how to get the best out of it.

Booking. Nick Atkinson puts a booking sheet in the cabinet to the right of the gate every week. If you want to make sure the court is free then just reserve a slot. There are weekly slots reserved for coaching Sundays 9-10am and some Mondays the school uses the court for PE. Please leave the court as you found it.

Net. So if you take the net down please put it back afterwards.

Rubbish. We are looking at getting a separate recycling bin given the amount of recyclable and plastic bottles in the current bin. We can't recycle glass, so please take any bottles home for recycling.

Please enjoy this great village facility and thanks to the small band of volunteers who keep it mown and tidy.

Steve Woodcock

Anyone for tennis?

Hornton's tennis coach, Godwin Abah, who started tennis lessons again at the JUMPA court in April, will be running summer camps in the school holidays. For more information contact Godwin on 07786432530 or at godwinabah@yahoo.co.uk

It's on!

Well, we are on for the Hornton open gardens event on Sunday 4 July, 2 to 6pm. Proceeds will be shared equally between Katharine House Hospice and Hornton village causes.

The £5 entry fee covers all the gardens; children free. Tickets will be available from The Cottage, Church Lane - cash only. Refreshments will also be available at The Cottage, again for cash and there will be a plant stall. Contributions of plants for that will be most welcome. Dogs must be on leads please.

So far seven gardens plus the allotments have signed up but the more the merrier so please do consider opening. There's no need to stress about making your garden pristine. That aside, we need visitors as well as helpers on the day and those oh so important cake bakers. Please do contribute in whatever way you can.

If you haven't already made a note of the date, please do that now before those empty diaries get filled up!

Lynn Corke

lynnjcorke@aol.com Telephone: 670673

Spring draw winners

The winners of the Church's spring draw were:

- 1st prize of £109: Gavin White
- 2nd prize of £72: Bob Langton
- 3rd prize of £38: Tom Gibbs



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Lockdown

Research suggests that during the pandemic the UK dog population has increased by 10%. Hornton is doing its bit! Six new dogs have found homes in our village. But have these lockdown dog acquisitions been a success? Were the new owners prepared for what can be absolute chaos? Have they experienced buyer's remorse? No fear! Hornton folk are made of sterner stuff. Read on.

Fracker

Hanging out with the family

After several years of deliberating over the merits and responsibilities of dog ownership we finally adopted our dog, Fracker, in January 2021. Skipping past the juvenile delinquency of a puppy we instead offered a retirement home to a hound who has transitioned from running with the pack to snooping and sniffing around Hornton instead.

All the classic beagle traits are there: doleful eyes, insatiable appetite, selective hearing and total indifference to a thrown ball or stick. While that sounds like a downer, what it really means is that you have a small, gentle dog with big personality and charm who loves going for walks and hanging out with the family.

Tristan Koberl

Loki

Super friendly pup

Loki, 6 months in May, is our Fox Red Labrador Retriever and co-incidentally arrived just as we went back into full lockdown.

A super-friendly and inquisitive pup he loves nothing more than playing with and meeting other dogs. But when playtime is over you'll pretty much always find him snuggled up with his favourite soft-toy elephant for a long snooze.

Both sensitive and loving Loki also has a mischievous streak and definitely lives up to his name - Loki is the Norse God of mischief!

Having the capacity to eat almost anything, he's also a real goofball and has had us in stitches many times.

He has been a wonderful addition to our family and we really couldn't imagine life without him.

Kate Birch

Nellie

Desperate to meet and greet

Nellie is an energetic, sociable cocker spaniel, who many will have met and recognise from the fact that her entire body wags when she sees people and other dogs.

It may be hard to believe for anyone who has already met her but she is a very calm and relaxed dog indoors, often asleep or at the window watching the world. However, when she leaves the house she is full of energy and desperate to meet and greet anyone and everyone.

Pros: Great walking companion, hilarious, very gentle temperament and clever dog who is easy to train

Cons: Very(!) free spirit, likes to sit on our feet (all of the time).

Matt Adams and Danielle Drew-Bear



dogs

Hazel

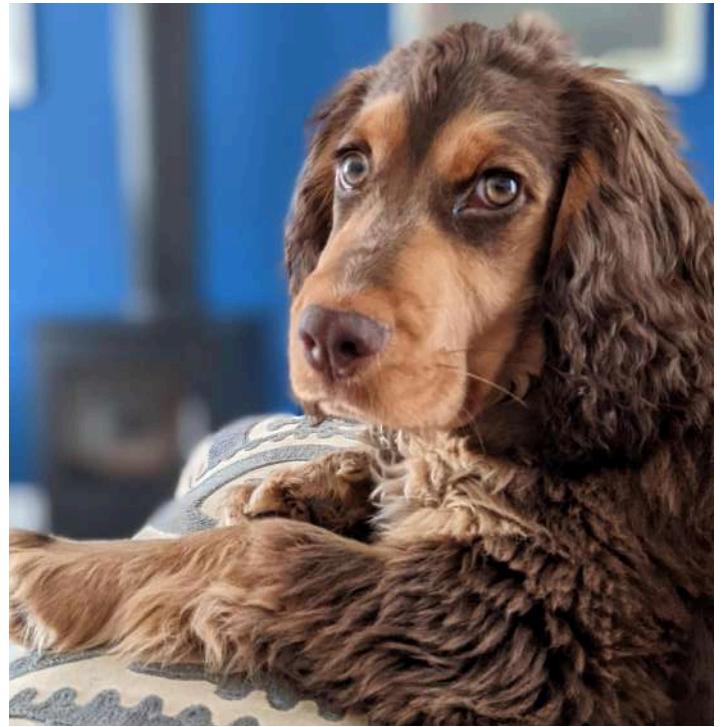
A sucker for a cuddle

At six-months-old Hazel is settling in well to Hornton life. As people who've met her will know she's a sucker for a cuddle and loves to say hello to anyone she meets!

Likes: tennis balls, sugar snap peas, tummy rubs, socks, bubble baths. Dislikes: the Hoover, lie-ins, the garden hose, missing out on anything.

In true crazy cocker spaniel style she is a bundle of energy and we wouldn't have it any other way!

Katie & Morgan



Lockdown Louie

Dog behaving badly

Our son wanted a dog and decided on a beagle. He ordered his pup and in April the breeder sent him a video of his puppy playing with his brother. On seeing the video, I immediately fell in love with the brother, Louie. My son said that he had already been purchased.

In May my son picked up his puppy. The following day he telephoned to say that if I wanted Louie, he was available as the person who had ordered him had returned him to the breeder after only 24 hours as his son was allergic to him. My grandson immediately went to collect Louie.

Louie the beagle was born the day before lockdown on 22nd March 2020. We love him dearly, but he has not been the easiest of dogs. I have had puppies before and know that they love to chew things, but Louie has burrowed through the back door twice, chewed the blinds and the curtains, my mobile phone, many shoes and slippers, dusters, brushes, the dresser, the log basket and logs, his bed, in fact anything he can get his teeth into.

He has also been an escape artist, as next door will witness, having brought him home many times. He has even run across the road to neighbours opposite on several occasions and once jumped into their pond. He loves people and if you walk up Bell Street you may see him sitting on the bank above our drive.

Julie Stanley



Dibley

And Milo

It turns out that you can teach an old dog new tricks. Well, at least you can remind him of ones he used to know!

The arrival of an eight-week-old Labrador in January, son and grandson of Merlin and Monty (Higgins), brought into the life of our 13-year-old black lab, Milo, a needle-toothed, biting little bundle of black joy we named Dibley.

Milo, a sedate old gentleman used to easing himself into the day with a light breakfast before returning to bed until around 11, had a rude awakening. He was sure the newcomer would be leaving soon and normal sleeping arrangements would surely be restored. But no, it transpired he was here to stay and Milo would have to teach him a lesson or two.

And so gradually Milo has come to love his new companion and frequent bed-fellow. He has learned again how to play, chase a ball and occasionally break into a run to follow the scent Dibley is tracking. But sometimes the whippersnapper needs to be reminded who's boss and whose bed this really is!

Pete Lemon



New-look farm shop



Tenant farmer Will Allan and his partner Brittany recently opened their remodelled farm shop at Hornton Grounds Farm. Brittany tells us about it.

First Will and I would like to say thank you to all who have managed to pop up to the new farm shop where we stock our very own grass-fed beef, pork, lamb and seasonal turkeys for all to enjoy. We are delighted with the fantastic response we have had from all who have visited us.

Will and I share the same dreams and passions: to be able to deliver the best quality products and create a fantastic farming environment, not just for our animals but also for our customers.

Will has been selling his pasture-fed beef, lamb and pork for a number of years but the shop was never really a farm shop for customers to appreciate the quality of the meats. So we decided to knock through

into Will's office and create a small but substantial farm shop for customers to enjoy and properly see what they are buying.

We have lots in stock from meat, preserves, chutneys, relishes, cakes, biscuits, sauces and gravy as well as everyday essentials including milk, sugar, flour and butter. On Saturdays we have fresh artisan sourdough breads from Marks Cotswold Bakery, which we believe many of you are familiar with as The Dun Cow supplied their bread to Hornton village during the lockdown.

Please, if you have the chance, pop up and say hello but if you are unable to don't worry as we offer a local delivery service with our refrigerated van.

In addition to the farm shop we offer outside catering for small to large gatherings and at the centre of this are our hog roasting ovens.


Win win

How do you fancy recycling an everyday item that usually goes into landfill and supporting a fantastic charity at the same time?

Fiona Bridgland has offered to be the hub for the collection of empty medicine blister packs. "Just pop them into a box by our gate at Proffitts House and once a month I'll take them all to Superdrug," she says.

Superdrug are working in conjunction with recycling innovators TerraCycle who will convert the packaging into reusable raw materials using its unique recycling process – preventing empty packs spending a lifetime in landfill. What's more, Superdrug are supporting the Marie Curie charity for each empty blister packet that gets recycled as part of the 'Little Packs, Big Impact' scheme. Marie Curie provides care and support to people with terminal illnesses and their families.


"It's easy, it's free and it's a win win situation - recycling and supporting a fantastic charity too," says Fiona. "Can you help? Please start saving your blister packs. It really is amazing how quickly they add up."



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Duncan with Jersey cow Parkplace Apollo Baby Love who was Champion Jersey at Hanbury Show in 2018

On the farm

Duncan Dawes, who with his family farms on the northern side of Hornton, tells us how the last 12 months have gone for them.

Poplars Farm is a small family dairy farm run by me, my wife Felicity and our children, Michael and Shannon. It is also home to the award-winning Parkplace Jerseys, Edgehill Guernseys and Foxy Holsteins.

During Covid, not too much changed on the farm as the daily tasks of feeding and milking, planting and growing the crops to feed the cattle still needed to be done. But it was a strange year on the farm, to say the least, where everyone was disrupted in different ways. Despite the lockdown, we have seen more people walking through the farm than ever before.

With the milk price only being two pence per litre more than we were getting in 1976 and with the extreme weather variations throughout the year it has made the last 12 months one of the toughest years we have experienced over the last 30 years living in Hornton.

For the first time we had surface water sitting on the fields on top of the hill, which meant we were unable to do any field work or fence maintenance which we are desperately attempting to catch up with now.

After a long hard extended winter, the weather has finally improved and the cows have been able to go back out into the fields, enjoying the sun! Which is always a pleasure to see. This has allowed us to free up time so we can start training the calves and cows for the show season, which we hope will start again once the Covid restrictions ease. Showing our cattle has always been a big part of our farm as it gives us the opportunity to show the public the best stock we have bred but also to show how kind and loving the cattle can be.



Glanmor Legend Okapi was Reserve National Champion at the National Guernsey Show in 2019

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Annus horribilis



March 2020 – March 2021 were 12 months that Martin Jones will never forget. Not only had his motorsport consultancy business been hard hit by the Covid pandemic but by October he was also beset with a major personal problem. His mother, at home on the Isle of Man, was seriously ill and the island had gone into lockdown. Martin takes up the story.

It was Friday October 9. I was sitting at my desk when my mobile rang. It was my father with the call that we all dread: "Mother has just been rushed to hospital and is very poorly, please come home." The Isle of Man had closed its borders so I had to apply for a visitors permit on compassionate grounds. I went route one and sent an email to the island's Prime Minister, who is a social acquaintance of the family. I had nothing to lose but didn't expect anything back. Fifteen minutes later, I got a reply. He sent his best wishes and without giving favour he gave me a step-by-step route to get the permit which I received 24 hours later.

I booked a ferry from Liverpool for Sunday October 11 then read the terms of my return to the island. I would have to self-isolate for 14 days, go straight to my designated address which was an apartment close to my parents and I couldn't even stop for fuel or supplies. A woman did do this and she got 14 days in jail for breaking the rule. The IOM police were on full alert.

As I set off for Liverpool docks, my father called again saying that Mother was worsening. A call to her hospital ward revealed I would need a negative Covid test result before I could see her. I was given a number to arrange a test, called it straight away and got a really helpful operator who booked me in for a test on the Monday morning.

All this was done before I boarded the ferry. There were only 12 cars on the boat and around 20 people. This was the start of

my realisation of how draconian the Island's Covid rules were.

On arrival at the IOM dock, at the guard-post, I was told: "You must go straight to where you are staying otherwise you will be arrested, held overnight then court in the morning and probably a custodial sentence, which would give you a criminal record which would limit International travel". I got the message and set off for the apartment.

I'd already planned to drive by my former home and wave to my son, whom sadly I hadn't seen for a long time. On the way there I became aware of a car behind me but didn't think that much of it at that stage. I got to my old home, slowed down and my son and I waved at each other. It was so tempting to stop but sixth sense kicked in. I got out of the speed limit area and put my foot down.

I got to the carpark of the apartment where there was a marked police car waiting for me, then an unmarked car pulled up. The ticking off started. One of the officers said: "We thought we had you when it looked like you were going to stop. Why did you try to outrun us?" My reply to that was that I had been told to get to this address as quickly as possible and that's what I'd done. Documents were checked again. I unloaded the car and poured myself a stiff one.

I didn't sleep well that night and was up early on the Monday, opening the curtains to the most beautiful view of the sea. I do miss the sea. After going to the Covid test centre, I headed back to the apartment and was stopped half-way there at a road block and grilled again as to what I was doing out etc. I must admit my mood was not in the right place for this one. At 8.00pm I received a text message with a negative test result.

The next day at the hospital I was told that I couldn't touch or kiss my mother. I was destroyed when I saw her condition, she was such a smart, proud woman; it was hard to take. I spoke to her and she woke up. I like to think that she recognized me. I asked her if there was anything I could do for her; she said "Sort this out" and she fell back to sleep. I spoke to the doctors and, as was her wish, signed the DNR form. I went back in, kissed her on the forehead, told her that I loved her and left. On the way back to the apartment I cried for the first time since I was a child. I called my father and told him to expect the worst.

On the day my mother died I got a call from the ward at 6.05am to inform me that I could come in at 9am for 10 minutes as the doctors had made the decision to remove the medical intervention. Mother

slipped away peacefully at 9.22am. I didn't shed a tear. I was relieved that she was at peace. I hugged my father and sister and left.

The next week for me was the longest of my life. I was grieving on my own, I was locked in the apartment, not allowed to go out, not even in the garden as it's a shared area. I kept myself busy. I wrote to the hospital ward and thanked them for allowing me the privilege of access to the ward and Mother. I sent them chocolates and made a donation. I deliberately used the word privilege as many people in the UK didn't get the chance to say goodbye as I did.

I'd become aware that Father wasn't doing very well, so it was decided that I should move into his apartment for a while to get him settled and make sure that he could cope. Mother had spoilt him rotten for over 60 years so it had rendered him domestically inept.

Mother's funeral was well attended and we had a family wake which was what she wanted. It was a closure for everyone. I started to make plans to come back to Hornton. My life is definitely here and I was missing it. I discussed my departure with Father; he wasn't happy at all. I agreed to stay for a couple more weeks to teach him to cook.

With the help of a doctor friend, Father is now much more settled and this progress has allowed me to return to Hornton. Some would say that the Dun Cow re-opening was the main reason (haha). It's so good to be back.

Neighbourhood Watch - Help!

Hi, my name is Sally Spencer and, as some of you know, I co-ordinate the local team of 'eyes and ears' for our village. I took over this role at the end of 2019. Along with a handful of villagers, I monitor the comings and goings, in a very informal way, within Hornton. We are fortunate that things are generally quiet here but it's always worth keeping an eye open.

What I need from you is more 'eyes and ears' particularly along Bell Street and Millers Lane. This is not an onerous task at all. If you are interested in coming on board please get in touch with me - sallyspencer59@gmail.com.

As a reminder, if anyone does see anything that they feel needs immediate action please contact BanburyRuralNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or call 101.

Thank you for your support.

Rising from the ashes



As we all emerge from the Time of Covid there is one bird that perfectly suits the mood. From time immemorial and from every corner of the world come stories and pictures of this bird.

Pliny tells us: "It is as large as an eagle and has a gleam of gold around its neck and the rest of it is purple but the tail blue."

Claudian adds to the description: "A mysterious fire flashes from its eye and a flaming aureole enriches its head. Its crest shines with the sun's own light. Its legs are Tyrian purple; swifter than those of the zephyrs are its wings of flower-like blue dappled with gold."

According to Dante: "On herb or grain it feeds not in its life, but only on tears of incense and cardamom. And spikenard and myrrh are its last winding-sheet."

The Assyrians called it the phoenix.

It has many other names: Fenghuang in China, Hou-on in Japan, Simurgh in Persia, Kerkes in Turkey, Zha-Ptita in Russia and Chol in ancient Jewish literature. It also features in the legends of Egypt, India and Assyria. Thought of as a female entity she is strong and durable and her tears have healing powers.

The Latin poet Ovid states: "Most beings spring from other individuals but there is a certain kind which reproduces itself. When it has lived five hundred years, it builds itself a nest in the branches of an oak, or on the top of a palm tree. In this it collects cinnamon and spikenard and myrrh, and of these materials builds a pile on which it deposits itself, and dying, breathes out its last breath amidst odours."

As it dies it spontaneously combusts and the bird and the nest are consumed by the flames. From the ashes comes forth a young phoenix, destined to live as long a life as its predecessor.

The early Christians saw in the symbol of the phoenix a representation of Jesus Christ and His Resurrection and to this day the bird decorates many churches around the globe. In Christian tradition, she symbolizes the victory of life over the dominion of death.

Echoes of these ancient symbols are all around us. The city of Coventry uses the phoenix as its emblem to mark the city's re-emergence from the WW2 blitz, and the flag of San Francisco features a phoenix symbolic of the destruction caused by the 1906 earthquake.

Meanwhile, the city of Phoenix in Arizona faces an apt and fiery future as for a third of the year the ambient temperature is over 100F. "I don't think we can rule out 130° in Phoenix in the future," says David Hondula, an Arizona State University professor who studies the health effects of extreme heat. A 2016 report by Climate Central predicts that by 2050, Phoenix will be among 25 U.S. cities in which heat poses a danger to human health for more than half the year.

Hopefully 2021 will be Hornton's year of the phoenix. May we emerge from this uncharacteristic lethargy, stretch our wings, and re-launch all the clubs, events and friendships we've so sorely missed – and plenty of lovely hot sunshine will be a bonus!

Birdbrain

No Mow May

May 1 saw the launch of No Mow May, Plantlife's rallying cry to put our mowers away for the month and let the flowers grow ahead of the *Every Flower Counts* survey at the end of May.

Plantlife is a British conservation charity working nationally and internationally to save threatened wild flowers, plants and fungi. It owns nearly 4,500 acres of nature reserve across England, Scotland and Wales. It has 11,000 members and supporters and HRH The Prince of Wales is Patron. You can find out more about the charity and the *Every Flower Counts* survey @ <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk>

Over the last couple of years, I have changed how I look after my grass and have incorporated wild flowers into the grass and borders. This year I've also embarked on managing the grass area around the top side of the pavilion and along the side of the football field. The task has been made harder by the cold dry spring we're having, although this is more of a long term project, so hopefully, at some time in the future, there will be more flowers and more importantly for our future, more pollinators.

Probably to the consternation of many villagers, I have asked the mower men of Hornton to let their mowers stay silent for the month of May. Our lovely green is already filling with daisies and those dandy lions! This afternoon when I looked the butterfly cups had made an appearance too.

However you look after your lawn, you too can take part in *Every Flower Counts* from May 22-31 and monitor the flowers and wildlife on your lawn.

There is also a road verge campaign, aimed at local councils. To mow less and manage verges to put the colour back into the countryside, the councils who have adopted this have saved money and created some spectacular verges. Without our pollinators we're all in trouble, so now we're out of lockdown, let's go wild this year.

Kevin Wain



Pet lambs at school



Unable to open for public lambing again this year, Charlie and Sarah Taylor of Hadsham Farm hit upon the idea of taking half a dozen of their pet lambs to Hornton Primary School in March so that children there could give them a feed and a cuddle. The weather was glorious so letting the lambs loose in the grassy playground proved a huge success.

Village spring-clean

Rock up, roll up your sleeves and get stuck in for the village spring-clean on Saturday May 22.

Volunteers will meet on the village green at 10.00am where they'll find equipment provided by the Parish Council, such as gloves, black bin liners and litter pickers.

Do come along and help to keep our village looking beautiful and litter free.

Village trail quiz

The weather-induced deadline extension for Lynn Corke's fun trail quiz has meant a delay in declaring who is the lucky winner. This will be announced in the next issue of *The Gossip*.

The answers to the quiz are now available on the Hornton website. But if you haven't done the trail, why not take advantage of better weather to have a go. It's timeless and though you won't win a prize it will be lots of fun.

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Rest assured

Farmer Roy Tew has asked The Gossip to reassure anyone who has seen the notices concerning Eastgate Farm posted around the village and is concerned about them that there is absolutely no ulterior motive at all at work here.

"Every ten years we have to go through this administrative procedure to confirm the existing status of rights-of-way on Eastgate Farm land," he says. "No changes have been made or are planned and villagers and others will continue to enjoy the use of these footpaths."

Church door error

"Unfortunately, the product used in error on the church doors has neither produced the required result in colour nor in finish," say church wardens. "We are committed to taking expert advice to redress the situation It will take time please be patient. We do not want to follow one mistake with another."



Before



After

Our prehistoric past – at last



Ichthyosaurs were ancient dolphins who lived in the shallow ocean that is now our green valley

When Chris Woodcock wrote in our August issue last year of the mini exhibition of prehistoric life in Hornton which she had researched and produced for display in the Chapel, little did she realise that it would be nearly a year before it could be seen.

But with the Chapel now open again, villagers will at last be able to see the display which shows how Hornton's green valley was part of a vast shallow ocean full of primitive creatures large and small.

Some of the fossils included in the display were found by former Hornton quarryman Richard Hillman who dug them out of the ground near his home at the start of this century. Says Richard: "It was pretty rare to unearth such well-formed fossils. The shells

and the round vertebra were about 12 to 14 feet down from the surface, then another 14 inches into the bedrock, where there was once sea."

Also included in the display is a fantastic range of fossils discovered by Barbara Neville's late husband Colin during the 50 years he spent with the Oxfordshire Ironstone Company. These fossils include a section of the backbone of a giant plesiosaur who was king of the ocean in those ancient days.

"The display is aimed at a family audience and at all youngsters who are dinosaur fans," says Chris. "Many thanks to all who donated exhibits and information – you are credited in the show."

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Rhubarb recipes

Here are a couple of recipes for that glut of rhubarb:

Lemon rice pudding with rhubarb

serves 6

Ingredients:

100g pudding rice
1l milk
50g caster sugar
250g rhubarb
1 chopped ball of stem ginger in syrup
100ml double cream
3-4 tbsp lemon curd

Method:

1. Put the pudding rice in a pan with the milk and caster sugar and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 40-45 mins, or until the rice is tender, stirring often to ensure it doesn't catch on the bottom
2. Meanwhile, cut the rhubarb into 3cm pieces and put in a pan with sugar to taste, the stem ginger and syrup. Bring to a simmer and cook for 7-10 mins, or until the rhubarb is soft but still holds its shape.
3. Stir the double cream and lemon curd through the rice pudding, then top with some of the poached rhubarb. This can look smart in pretty individual dishes!

Rhubarb cordial

makes 600ml

Ingredients:

300g golden caster sugar
zest and juice 1 orange
zest and juice 1 lemon
450g rhubarb, chopped
1 slice fresh root ginger, peeled

Method:

1. Put the sugar in a large saucepan with 300ml water. Bring to a simmer then add the zest and juice of both the orange and the lemon together with the rhubarb and the ginger.
2. Cook over a medium heat until the rhubarb is falling apart.
3. Pour the mixture through a sieve lined with muslin (a J cloth will do) and transfer to sterilised bottles. This will keep in the fridge for up to 1 month.
4. Serve diluted to taste with sparkling water (say 25ml cordial to 100ml water).

Enjoy!

Lynn Corke

Fly the Flag

Hornton marked the death of Prince Philip with the Union Flag flying at half-mast from the flagpole on the village green. That was absolutely the right thing to do, after his lifetime of service to the nation, but it made me think: if we can fly the flag at half-mast for a member of the Royal Family, couldn't we also do it when people in the village pass away - many of whom have given a lifetime of service to our community?

One of the wonderful things about living in Hornton is our traditions, which pass on from one generation to another. Perhaps we should start another and fly the flag at half-mast when one of our number passes on - assuming the family of the bereaved is happy for it to happen. Over to you, Hornton Parish Council...

Roger Corke

The Gossip

The copy deadline for the next issue of *The Gossip* is Thursday 5 August 2021 - submissions please to abbott@hornton.myzen.co.uk. To advertise in the next issue, please contact Cindy Koberl at ckoberl@btinternet.com.

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