

The Ovington Oracle

February 2021

A reminder for those, like me, prone to forget: I believe there are some traditions, (new and old) which occur on 14 February – Valentines day.

Originally a remembrance of the Christian martyr, St. Valentine of Rome, who died 269AD. It wasn't until the 14th century that it became associated with love. The symbols of Cupid and the cardioid heart shape appearing in the 18th century with a transition to printed cards in the 19th century.



Note:

This February there is no 'Wayland News' Newspaper, usually delivered alongside *The Ovington Oracle*.

Julian Horn [Wayland News editor] says a March issue will be produced.

Keep well, stay safe.

Local COVID-19 information: ovingtonclerk.wixsite.com/home

National COVID-19: www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Village Information: ovington-village.org.uk

Parish Council: ovingtonclerk.wixsite.com/home

Oracle back copies: ovington.org.uk/oracle

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William Morris
1834-1896

Late February days; and now, at last,
Might you have thought that winter's woe was past;
So fair the sky was and so soft the air.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus Illness)

Editor

In response to rapidly rising cases and subsequent deaths, the country has entered its third lock-down.

This is the law: You must stay at home. You may only leave or be outside for a permitted reason.



The most important action we can all take is:

- stay at home
- protect the NHS
- and therefore save lives.

Detailed information is available at:

www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home

Your Parish Councillors will try to help with any queries or problems:

Karen Weir: 07735 205990

Timothy Birt: 01953 889208

Pete Bate: 01953 885204

Jeremy Woods: 01953 883953

David Welsted: 07443 538969

If your situation is medical or urgent phone 111 or 999

If you have any coronavirus symptoms:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

get a free test, phone 119 or see www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test

Welcome

Village

We offer a warm welcome to Mark Blaxland who has moved in The Street. Under current restrictions there are not many social events going on in the village but we hope you will join us in village activities when a level of normality returns.

Interesting Characters in our Churchyard

Chris Lewis

Rev John Roscoe, Rector of Ovington

Last month I wrote of our Admiral, Edwin Little, and mentioned his marriage to the daughter of the Rector of Ovington. He too was an interesting character which cannot be demonstrated better than by his obituary in Nature 17 December 1932. He is buried in our churchyard, see www.findagrave.com.

By the death of the Rev John Roscoe, Honorary Canon of Norwich, at Ovington Norfolk on 2 December at 71 years of age anthropological studies in Great Britain have lost a highly valued worker and the foremost authority on the beliefs and customs of former days among the Baganda and related peoples of East Africa.

John Roscoe the son of James J Roscoe of Liverpool, was trained as a civil engineer but turned to mission work. After a period of training in the Church Missionary Society's college at Islington he went out to Africa as a lay worker in the services of the society in 1884. He was not ordained until 1893. In 1899 he became principal of the theological school at Mengo and, after holding this post for 10-years, retired from mission work in 1909.

The early years of Roscoe's work as a missionary in Africa covered a stormy period in the history of Uganda in which the intrigues of the king Mwanga, and still more of his Lubare priests played English and protestants against French and Roman Catholics and Islam against both until the establishment of the protectorate was forced on Great Britain as a virtual necessity. As the powerful king had died only shortly before his arrival in the country Roscoe had the advantage, inestimable for his

subsequent studies, of seeing something of the workings of a great African kingdom even though in disturbed conditions before it had been modified by European control. Further in his studies of the Baganda institutions his own first-hand observation was supplemented by the help of his friend Sir Apolo Kagwa the native katikiro or Prime Minister of Uganda who not only gathered in his house, for Roscoe's benefit, old men from distant parts of the country who were repositories of obsolete custom and belief but also submitted Roscoe's material to the test of his own knowledge and critical judgement. Roscoe had taken up an anthropological enquiry as a relaxation from teaching but his early papers published in the Journal of the Anthropological Institute show that he was a meticulously accurate observer who at the same time was competent to see his facts in their broader relation. His reputation was confirmed and hearts by his books "*The Buganda*" and "*The Northern Bantu*".

On his return to England Roscoe received an honorary MA degree from the University of Cambridge for his services to anthropological science and lectured in the university on the anthropology of Africa. After a period of service as curate of Holy Trinity he was presented by the University to the living of Ovington which he held for the remainder of his life.

For 18 years of his stay in Africa, Roscoe had been in close touch with Sir James Frazer. This association of field worker and comparative anthropologist had proved little less fruitful on both sides than the similar Association between Sir James and Baldwin Spencer in another field. In 1919 Roscoe was invited through the efforts of Fraser to undertake further work in East Africa as leader of the Mackie ethnological expedition under the aegis of a committee of the Royal Society. This was a one-man expedition most of which was accomplished by bicycle. Roscoe visited a number of peoples on the Uganda Congo border and on Mount Elgon again keeping constantly in touch with Fraser by correspondence and report, as he maintained, to the great advantage of the work of the expedition. His results were embodied in three volumes, each with a separate title, published in 1923 while a popular summary appeared as "*The Soul of Central Africa*". A general review of his life as missionary and anthropologist had already appeared in 1921 under the title "*Twenty five Years in East Africa*". It is a book which by its restraint reveals the strength of his character.

Rainfall

Rod Rumsby



The rainfall total for December was 134.5 mm or 5.3" quite a soggy month.

The total for year 2020 was 734mm or 34.28", somewhat higher than the previous year.

This month, up to 21 January is 64.5mm or 2.5".

Parish Council (PC)

Heidi Frary (Clerk)

A report from the unconfirmed minutes of the 20 January meeting held via Zoom.

Councillors: Karen Weir (KW-chair), Pete Bate (PB), Tim Birt (TB), Dave Welsted (DW), Jeremy Woods (JW)

Matters Arising

Residents queried the planning situation regarding ReEvolution. TB has spoken to the planning manager at Breckland and they are aware and have given guidance.

Correspondence

Meeting adjourned to receive a presentation from Chris Lewis of the allotment association requesting a grant to help fund repairs to the boundary fence and entrance.

DW made a request on behalf of the PCC for a donation towards hand sanitisers for use before church services. However, the PC does not have power to donate to 'places of worship'.

It was agreed to donate £270 to the allotment association.

Planning

3PL/2020/1142/F: Ruxley House, Carbrooke Road – change of use from garage to ancillary living accommodation (retrospective). APPROVED

3PL/2020/01074/HOU: Wood Farm, Dereham Road, Ovington – remodel of existing bungalow. APPROVED

Finance and Precept

Councillors agreed payments (full details on website) and reviewed our financial position relative to that predicted in the precept calculation.

Councillors identified additional spending requirements and requested a 5% increase in the precept for 2021-22, which equates to just under £1.50 extra per band D household. The total parish precept request therefore will be £5,182.

Village issues

JW reported good progress on ditch clearance by the farmer and also that there may be some sewerage contamination. It was agreed to ask residents to check their septic tanks were not full and operating correctly and to report the issue to the Environment Agency.

It was noted that the 30mph rusty posts have still not been replaced.

Adjournment for public participation

The meeting received reports from:

- County Councillor Bowes, including the appointment of a new highways engineer for the area and an update on flooding issues.
- District Councillor Crane, including information about Breckland's budget which will rise by £4.95 per band D household but allowed enhanced services for waste, Covid support and animal welfare. Following Brown bin collection delays, Cllr Crane asked residents to leave their brown bin in its normal collection place and it will be collected in due course.
- TB (District Councillor role), included concerns about secret financial decisions at *Barnham Broom Golf and Country Club* (which opposition parties had 'called-in' for scrutiny) and the sale of *The Green Britain Centre*.

More details of the reports are included in the official minutes.

Next meeting:

17 March, 7:30pm, likely via Zoom.

Legal documents at: ovingtonclerk.wixsite.com/home

Ovi Dog Walkers

Jeremy Woods

We have given permission for those in the village who have dogs that need exercise, to use the Crown Land field to get back to the village centre from the Allotment field to the Crescent and vice-versa. The route is not a public right-of-way, nor being dedicated as such.

The track is well defined and includes walking across the connecting field at the back of the Rectory. Both fields are used as Hay crops when Summer eventually comes. Dream on! However, there are some simple rules that should be followed:

1. Only Ovington Residents and dogs may use this route.
2. The existing paths must be followed.
3. Dog poo must be picked up. It is poisonous to the animals who rely on the hay for food.
4. Dogs must be kept on leads, all the time, while walking in these fields.
5. Use of the paths is only permitted during daylight hours.

Recently, people have been seen walking around the field at night, which is not allowed and could be hazardous! Currently, all fields in the area are water logged. In the case of this path, this has led to flooding at the bottom of the track in the Crown garden. If you do not have wellies, do not use it. In case of an extreme problem, the dinghy is available nearby!

Happy trodding!

Census

Every ten years there is a National Census, which is this year and despite COVID-19 it will proceed. 21 March will be census day. It is expected that most people will fill in their census entry electronically, but paper forms will be widely available too.

Village Notice Board

The notice board includes general village information such as Parish Council agendas and contact details but there is also room for other pertinent village information (but not commercial advertising!). Please contact Tim, details on back page, if you have a village notice for display.

Septic Tanks on The Street

There is some evidence of contamination in the newly cleared ditch at the western end of The Street. Please check your foul water systems are working properly and septic tanks are emptied regularly, thanks.

Caution – Odd Activity

On Monday (18 Jan) I had a knock at the door by a middle aged man saying I am from next door (I knew this was not correct) just to let you know the lead has fallen off your chimney.

At least he did not say he would mend it, which we would have declined anyway. We checked and everything was OK. We wondered if he was 'casing the joint' just to see where older people lived?

Did anyone else in Ovington have this caller? I understand the same thing happened in Watton and Shipdham.

Grace Rumsby

Church News

Jean Rockett, Lay Minister



Due to the lock-down we have not been able to hold services since Christmas Day. However, we have been able to keep the church open daily for private prayer.

Unfortunately our church will have to be closed from 1 February to the end of March for repairs. These could not be completed previously due to a lack of funding. Although Chris Springford moved out of our village he has still been busy working for our Church by getting funding to complete this work, for which we are very grateful.

2020 was a strange year with the introduction of lock-down and was very difficult for some to cope with. 2021 hasn't started so well, again in lock-down, and I am missing seeing you at our services, particularly our specials. Due to the work to be carried out in the church we will once again miss out on our Mothering Sunday service. All future services will be governed according to which Tier we are in, and hopefully we will be in a better position after the church repairs have been finished. Any change in this situation will be shared on the village notice boards.

With the disruption of lock-down and church repairs my wedding plans to the lovely Jeremy have been put on hold. We are both hopeful that we will be married before 2022! In the meantime we are concentrating on getting Joyce's garden back to its former glory.

I have been able to join with some of you for a virtual coffee morning each Monday morning which is great. These Zoom get togethers were organised by Jill and it would be lovely if you could join us.

As always, my prayers for each one of you continue daily.

With love in Christ

Jean

Tel: 07749 870485

“Horry”

via Rod Rumsby

Those of you who read the Wayland news may have heard of Boy Sid's mate Horry. Well we are never sure how old he is but if you believe some of his tales he must be pushing one hundred and twenty by now. I did find a bit more about his ancestry recently which may make his age a bit more recent than he claims. It went like this...

But first I must explain that Horry talks in real broad Norfolk and to do him justice I should write it as he speaks. But, there's always a 'but' isn't there(?) the editor tells me no-one understands Boy Sid's diatribe so I'd better translate Horry's tale into plain old boring English.

[Editor: turns out I was wrong, most people love Boy-Sid and his dialect. They say he's easy to understand; so I just need to try harder and get my ear in.]

Horry came up to me a couple of weeks ago and asked if I knew where he could get a Haggis as he wanted one for Burns Night, and boy Stephen doesn't have any in his butcher's. I was a bit surprised and asked him why the interest in Burns Night as I wasn't aware that he was from Scotland. Well he said, I'll have you know, I have Scottish blood in my veins. So I asked him how come, and he said that his Great Grandma was Scottish, she was one of those ladies that came down to the various fishing ports to gut and clean the thousands of Herring that were brought ashore by the fishing fleets. She was working at Yarmouth one year when she fell in with the skipper of a local drifter. To cut a long story short the pair got married and began the production of the clan that eventually resulted in Horry. I couldn't help Horry in his quest for a Haggis, so he said he had heard up the pub where they were running free around Saham Waite and he would take his old shotgun and go and see if he could bag one. I held back a laugh and wished him well, saying that if he bagged several I would take one off him. Some time later my wife told me that a strange parcel had been found on the doorstep, all wrapped up in an old corn sack. I opened it up and there was a lovely big haggis, I looked at it carefully but couldn't see any sign of shotgun pellets nor marks made by a snare. The next day I went and saw Horry and asked whether he knew anything about the Haggis, he just tapped his nose and said, ask no questions and you'll hear no lies. I enjoyed that haggis though.

Translated by 'Boy-Rod'

And finally ...

Rod + Tim



- >> Job interviewer: "So, tell me about yourself."
Candidate: "I'd rather not, I want this job."
- >> My luck is like a bald guy who just won a comb!
- >> I told my wife she was drawing her eyebrows too high.
She looked surprised.
- >> Sometimes, someone unexpected comes into your life out of nowhere, makes your heart race and changes you forever. We call those people policemen!!!
- >> The easiest time to add an insult to injury is when you're signing somebody's broken bone plaster cast.
- >> Struggling to find a parking space, in desperation the driver prays:
"Lord, I can't stand this. If you open a space up for me, I promise I'll give up drink and go to church every Sunday."
Just then, the clouds part and the sun shines on an empty spot.
Without hesitation, the man says: "Never mind, I found one!"

Absolutely finally, courtesy of Woody Allen

- >> "I don't want to achieve immortality through my work. I want to achieve it by not dying."

Deadline for next issue: 20 February

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