

# *The Ovington Oracle*

December 2021



## *Season's Greetings*

Not long now until the winter solstice.  
On 21 December I'll be raising a glass  
at 3:59pm, the precise time when we  
change from increasing darkness to  
increasing light.

Enjoy and stay safe.



## Contents

Ovington History.....	3
Rainfall.....	4
Gardener's Delight.....	4
Messages.....	6
Village Hall.....	7
Church News.....	8
Village History.....	9
Fancy a flexible walk near Dereham?.....	10
Coronavirus (COVID-19).....	11
And finally .....	12

### December Public Village Events

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1	2	3	4	5 C
6 VH	7	8	9	10	11	12 C
13 VH	14	15	16	17	18	19 C
20 VH	21	22	23	24	25 C	26 C
27 VH	28	29	30	31		

VH:Village Hall, PC:Parish Council, C:Church, (p):see page p

National COVID-19: [www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Village Information: [ovington-village.org.uk](http://ovington-village.org.uk)

Parish Council: [ovingtonclerk.wixsite.com/home](http://ovingtonclerk.wixsite.com/home)

Oracle back copies: [ovington.org.uk/oracle](http://ovington.org.uk/oracle)

---

# Ovington History

*Chris Lewis*

## What's in a word?

Back in the 13th century Ovington (then known as Oviton) was divided into two Manors one of which was originally part of Saham but held in 1256 by John Bozun who, it is noted, was granted a charter from the King for a "Free Warren".

At that time the right to hunt game throughout the kingdom was reserved for the sovereign. Game then being defined as hares, coneys (rabbits), pheasant and partridge. The king would however grant warrants to landowners to hunt game of a specific type and in a specified area using bows, arrows, dogs or hounds in return for the stewardship and protection of the game from others who might want to hunt it. The word warren derives from the Germanic "warian" meaning to take care of, and originally refers to the freedom to hunt game rather than describing the nature of the land in question. It is more akin to "warranty" or security from any legal penalty for such activity.

It is not known what game John Bozun was allowed to hunt. Pheasants although introduced by the Normans were locally extinct until the 19th century and the land around Ovington is not popular with rabbits, they prefer the sandy soil of the Brecks. However the native grey partridge was common in East Anglia so may have been his main quarry.

Those not allowed to hunt the King's game could, nevertheless, breed such creatures in captivity. These establishments became known as warrens. The office of warden was used for the overseer of a warren and now typically refers to anyone responsible for the care of a game reserve or even an institution.

---

## Rainfall

*Rod Rumsby*



The rainfall for October totalled 91.5mm or 3.6", a bit of a damp month.

Although everywhere seems very wet in the garden, (mainly heavy dew) the total rainfall so far (21st) is only 18.5 mm or 0.73". However wintry showers are forecast for the end of this week, let's wait and see shall we!

---

## Gardener's Delight

*Barry Lambert*

The tobacco plant (*Nicotiana tabacum*) (not to be confused with Cannabis and Hemp) was introduced to England by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1570 following his expeditions to the Americas. Belonging to the same group of plants as Nicotiana (Flowering Tobacco) are grown today for their sweet scent and tubular flowers. The seed of smoking tobacco was sold by most of the seed catalogues in the 1950's, 60's and 70's. Sown in gentle warmth in March-April the seed soon germinates and is then pricked out into seed trays before being potted into small pots in a greenhouse before hardening off and planted out in May. As the plants grow, all side shoots and flowers are taken off ensuring that all growth goes into the production of large healthy leaves. In September – October the green leaves are stripped from the plants, made up into small bunches and hung in a dry place away from damp for about 50 days when the leaves turn brittle and yellow in colour. As they dry the centre vein is then cut from each leaf, the half leaves are then ready for pressing. A small wooden press can be made easily consisting of 2 pieces of flat wood about 18" in length about 6" wide, joined at each end so that the space inside is about 6"x3" with a loose fitting lid which can slide down inside to press the leaves, Each half leaf when laid flat in the press needs to be lightly painted with a clean brush with a mixture of thin black treacle, liquorice, whisky or rum on each leaf until the press is tightly filled, when a weight can be placed on the top lid for about 2-3 months, so that when the stick of tobacco is taken out it looks like a piece of 2"x2" wood and is almost ready for smoking.

In Cuba some of the finest cigar wrapper leaves are aged for a number of years like fine wine. A few weeks will do here. Make a start by using a sharp knife by shaving thin slivers of tobacco from the end of the block to be rubbed between the hands and if dry can be flavoured with alcohol to be used as pipe or cigarette tobacco using a filter tip, any tobacco left over with any dust can be ground up in a mortar-pestle and after flavouring with menthol or other spices are mixed in making ideal snuff.

## Nicotine

Tobacco owes its sedative and habit-forming powers to the drug “nicotine”, a deadly and dangerous poison which is present in all tobacco. Nicotine shreds are burnt in special lamps in greenhouses. The fumes being most effective against aphids. It is very poisonous if any concentrated material is not washed from the skin.

Mark Twain:  
“If I cannot smoke in heaven  
then I shall not go”

*Editorial Note: This is a fascinating historical insight from our recent past, but now we know tobacco and nicotine are significantly hazardous to health.*

---

## Messages

Jill Burgess

### Poppy Collection

The door to door Poppy collection on behalf of The Royal British Legion raised the fantastic amount of £145. Many thanks to all you generous villagers for your kind donations to such a good cause in its centenary year.

---

Linda & Tim Birt

### Seasons Greetings

Linda and Tim wish all our neighbours and friends a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year. In lieu of cards this year we are giving a donation to the **British Red Cross**,

*“connecting human kindness with human crisis”*

---

David Welsted

### Raffle Draw

A reminder that the Christmas raffle will be drawn after our Carol Service on 19 December. The prize is a fantastic Christmas Hamper.

---

## Village Hall

*Christine Reilly*

At some stage over Remembrance weekend, somebody stole one of our large planters which are just starting to come into full flower. They are positioned by the recycling banks to prevent people parking on the manhole covers, so it is particularly annoying that one has been stolen.

Many thanks to all those generous people who have donated prizes for our 'Raffola' stall at Watton Festive Market. At time of going to press, we think we have reached our target of 200 prizes, which is amazing. The weather forecast is not good but hopefully will not deter the crowds in Watton from enjoying the festivities. Now where did I put my gloves and thermals ... ?

Coffee mornings will continue every Monday throughout December. Pop in for a chat and some coffee & cake from 10:30am.

Depending on how the pandemic goes, we are aiming to put together a programme of events for 2022 in the New Year. In the meantime, we wish everyone in Ovington all the best for the festive season and look forward to seeing you at the village hall next year.

Thank you for your support.

---

## Church News

*Jean Rockett-Woods (JR), Lay Minister*

Services and events for December :

5 Dec – 10:30am	Holy Communion – Advent 2
12 Dec – 10:30am	Family Service – Advent 3 (JR)
19 Dec – 6:00pm	Carol Service – Advent 4 (JR)
25 Dec – 10:30am	Christmas Day Family Service (JR)
26 Dec – 10:30am	Family Service (JR)



If you were unable to attend the coffee morning in our church last month, organised and run by Jane Lambert and helpers, you missed a chance to see the wonderful decoration that Jane did in readiness for our Remembrance service the following day. My special thanks go to Jane and those who helped by baking and serving cake and coffee. Jane's decoration is a fantastic piece of artwork. If you were unfortunate enough to miss this spectacular then please pop up to our church which is open during the day between 9:00am and 4:00pm.

Tickets were sold for a raffle which will be drawn after our Carol Service. The prize is a fantastic Christmas Hamper. The money raised will be shared between the British Legion's Poppy Appeal and our church.

Our Remembrance service was very well attended. Thank you to all who took part in this special service where we remember all who gave their lives in war that we might all be free from tyrant's rule.

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

Jean – 07749 870485



---

# Village History

Chris Lewis

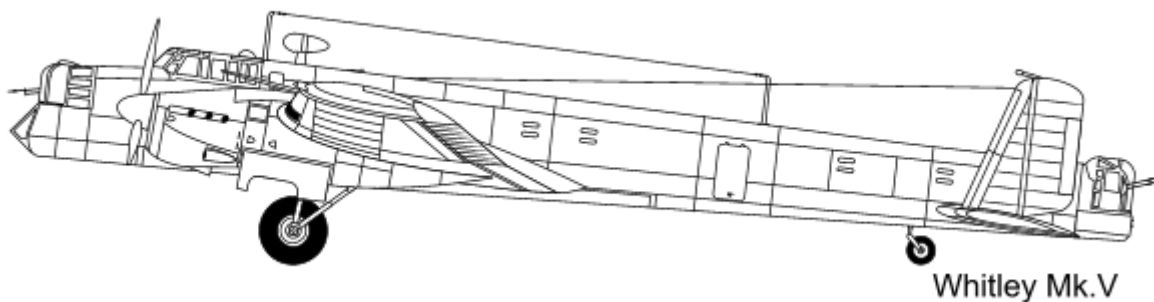
## **Sgt Philip Thomas Wright (RAFVR 960409)**

Those who attended the Remembrance Sunday service in our church will have seen the memorial to the one member of our community who fell in the second world war.

Philip Wright was a member of a Whitley aircraft crew engaged in a secret mission supporting a Dutch Special Operations Executive (SOE) agent, Gozewijn Ras, code name Lettuce, sent to organize sabotage groups and to select drop zones in occupied Holland. Unfortunately he was captured by the enemy who were forewarned of the next supply drop.

On 29/30 July 1942, the Luftwaffe were waiting to shoot down the Whitley of 138 Squadron, which crashed at 00:58hrs near Rijssen in vicinity of a wooded area known as the Haarlerberg. All seven men on the aircraft were killed and were buried at Holten General Cemetery, Holland.

Philip Wright was just 22.



---

## Fancy a flexible walk near Dereham?

*Ken Hawkins*

Dereham Walkers are Welcome is holding its last short walk of the year on Friday 3 December. On this occasion, the walk is being combined with one of our longer walks, so there will be five choices:



- a short (3½ mile) walk
- a 5½ mile walk
- a 6 mile walk
- a 6½ mile walk and
- the full 7½ mile walk

Everyone will walk together to start with, with the first four options requiring people to make their own way back to Dereham along clear and easy to follow routes, though without a walk leader.

For full details and for any questions, please see the web-site or contact Ken Hawkins:

Email: [ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk),

Mob: 07561 813243.

More walks are being planned for 2022, starting with a medium length walk on 1 January, and including the short walks on the first Friday of every month. The details will be settled soon, but if you want to be first to know, ask to join our emailing list.

[DerehamWaw.org.uk](http://DerehamWaw.org.uk)



# Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Editor

Nobody yet knows the consequences of the new COVID 'variant of concern', but a clear message from virologists is that existing vaccines will not be rendered completely ineffective.

Coronavirus remains a serious health risk, especially as vaccine efficacy reduces over time. The 'booster vaccine' will restore or improve the original protection. Also, taking the Flu vaccine will reduce potential pressure on the NHS.

You should stay cautious to help protect yourself and others.

- Meet outside, or open windows and doors for indoor visitors
- If you think you have symptoms stay at home and take a PCR test
- Wear face coverings in crowded places and on public transport
- Check in to venues when you go out
- Wash your hands with soap regularly, and for at least 20 seconds
- Get vaccinated !



## And finally ...

Rod

More home schooling for the over – 60's (remember?)

>> My Mother taught me to appreciate a job well done.  
“If you are going to kill each other, do it outside. I've just finished cleaning.”



>> My Mother taught me more logic.  
“If you fall out of that swing and break your neck, your not going to the shops with me.”

>> My Mother also taught me to be a contortionist:  
“Just look at that dirt on the back of your neck”

### **Submission deadline for next issue: 22 December**

Edit and Production: Timothy Birt (01953-889208)  
(Printed with my Ecosys printer on Stone House Farm, The Street, Ovington,  
100% recycled paper) Thetford, Norfolk. IP25 6RT

Proof reader: Christine Reilly (885848)

Please send contributions to either above or email:

[oracle@ovington.org.uk](mailto:oracle@ovington.org.uk)