

Oct /
Nov
2023

378

Tostock Chronicle

Get the latest on news
and events online at
www.tostockpc.org.uk

A big thank you to everyone who took part in the 2023 Tostock Quiz and to Billy for being such a marvellous compere! It was a great night, enjoyed by all and hopefully not too many sore heads the next day!

Proceeds of £521 was raised for Dementia UK. Congratulations to '2 Rude' for being the winning team!"

Stu



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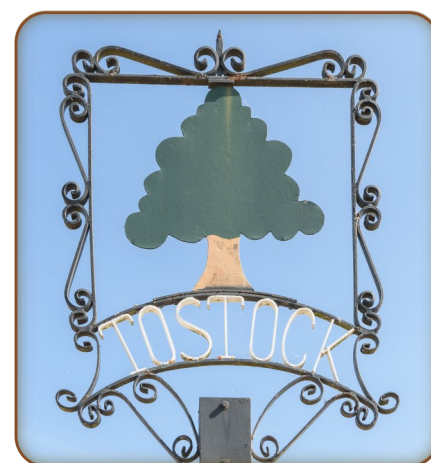
*If you want to write an article for the Chronicle,
just let me know.*

**We are looking for someone to take over the
Tostock Website. Not much experience required.**

Coming Soon

STEM Day Saturday 21st October 2023

Boogie Nights Friday 1st December 2023



A big **Thank You** to Steve and Jill Gardner for quenching our thirst over the years, and feeding us some pretty tasty food (especially the deserts). Good luck in your retirement.



Regulars

Coffee Mornings — Every 2nd Tuesday of the month from 10.30 am. In the village hall or on the Green.

Past & Present — Every 1st Tuesday of the month from 7.30 pm in the village hall

Bingo — Every last Tuesday of the month from 2.00 pm in the village hall

Tostock Church Christmas Cards

All Profits go to St Andrew's
Church Tostock



£1 each

Available from

Jean O'Reilly 01359 270337

•
Maureen Cytacki 01359 271481

•
Gail Moyle 01359 270787

•
Jim Langlois 01359 270456

Christian Aid Week

The house to house collection in
Tostock, made a total of £571.28.

Many thanks to all our collectors and all
who gave so generously.

Well done!

Barney Harrison

Mobile Library

The mobile library will be in Tostock on
October 6th and **November 3rd** at the
following times -

Perkins Way 15.40 - 16.00

Gardners Arms 16.05 - 16.25

Tommocchio



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01359 270605

or email tostocktvh@hotmail.co.uk
to reserve it for your event

NEXT EDITION

December 2023 / January 2024

Please may I have your contributions on or
before **15th NOVEMBER**
preferably in word format, much appreciated.

kim.mars84@gmail.com

07950 682 499

Tostock Art Show

Another Successful Art Show

This year's 43rd Art Show was heralded a great success by visitors with many saying it was one of the best. The standard was high across an impressive range of media from traditional oils and watercolours to silk paintings, machine embroidery, linocuts and collages. One artist had replaced canvas with hand saws for her oil paintings!

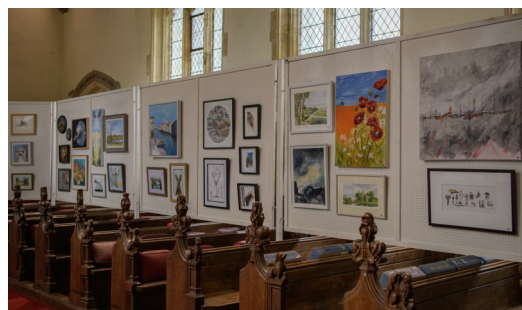


Everyone was asked to vote for their favourite picture and Bury St Edmunds artist Andrew Harrington was chosen with his painting 'Blue Horizons'.

There were over 200 pieces of art on display from 70 different artists. Martin Hayman won the raffle, 'Blue Boat at Thorpeness', painted by Woolpit artist Jeanette Martin. Art sales were similar to last year and sales of greeting cards and prints were up. The teas continue to make a great contribution thanks to our magnificent bakers.

All in all, a wonderful community event that raised around £2,000 to be shared between Tostock Village Hall and St Andrew's Church. We would like to thank the many people who helped, both in the preparation and throughout the weekend, and all our visitors. It would not happen without you.

See you all next year!



**Diane Mathews and
Vanessa Malcom**

Tostock Past & Present Society

Our Autumn season began with the return of Clive Stevens who gave us an excellent talk on the Friendly Invasion Part 2. Clive held all our attention for 90 minutes giving us explanations and photographs which most of us had never imagined.



Clive covered the end of World War 2 and the logistical nightmare of disposing of surplus military hardware. As an example there were 117,200 planes to be scrapped plus tanks, staff cars, motorbikes, cycles etc etc.



Next month we move to the Present with a talk by the Samaritans. Last year they celebrated 50 years in Bury St Edmunds. They are staffed in the UK by 22,000

volunteers. They never apply any pressure and are renowned for their listening skills.

For further information please get in touch.

Anthony Scully (Chairman) email a.r.scully@btinternet.com

Speakers for Tostock Past & Present Society 2023 (7:30 pm in the Village Hall)

October 3rd - The Samaritans

November 7th - AGM + Helen Simmons ***The Battle of Fornham:*** 17th October 1173

This meeting will be followed by the AGM

December 5th – Slide show from the Tostock Archives

All talks are held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm, and are open to everyone (non-members £4)

Tostock Carpet Bowls Club

Doreen Buckle

The summer friendlies are coming to an end and fixtures are being arranged for the Bury League Winter Season. We had a good turnout for the friendlies – two clubs we played were Old Newton and Horringer who we don't normally meet. A number of our members have entered into various competitions organised by the Suffolk Association.

The first of the fixtures are:

Thursday 5 October - Woolpit - home 7.30pm

Tuesday 24 October - Stanningfield - away 7.30pm

If anyone is interested in trying carpet bowls please contact Keith or myself.

Pets' Service at the Church



Even the star of '*It's a Dog's Life*' gets a blessing

Tostock Poor's Estate

If there are any older residents of Tostock (must have been resident for two years) who wish to apply for the Christmas Contribution, could they please contact **Sharon Markell** on 07891 467273 for an application form. All enquiries are treated with strict confidence. Previous recipients need not apply.

Village Planters

Tostock has four village planters that were kindly funded by the Parish Council in 2019. The planter in Church Road is looked after by Sue Marriott and Jeanne O'Reilly, Gail Moyle looks after the one situated at the A14 end of Norton Road and I look after the one in New Road.

The planter at the other end of Norton Road, near the railway bridge, has been looked after by Margaret and Keith Osborne. Sadly they will shortly be leaving the village so we wondered if anyone would be interested in taking on the maintenance and planting of this planter.

If anyone is interested could they please contact me on 07891 467273.

SHARON MARKELL

St Andrew's Church Tostock

Benefice of Pakenham, Norton & Tostock with Great Ashfield, Hunston & Stowlangtoft

Rector Revd Katherine Valentine Tel 01359 235095

Email kavalentine677@gmail.com

Website for more details of all our churches - including
Tostock - see the national Church of England
website www.achurchnearyou.com

Our benefice Church magazine is also available online
at www.vcnews.org.uk



Songs of Praise at Romney Cottage

Mondays 16th October 10am & 20th November at 10am.

All are welcome to this informal worship where we sing and pray together for our village, and enjoy refreshments afterwards.

MEMORIAL SERVICES - 29TH OCTOBER 2023

Come and light a candle for your loved one

All Saints' Day is on the 1st November and this time of year is traditionally the season when we remember and give thanks for the lives of those we have loved who have died. As in previous years we will be holding Memorial and Thanksgiving Services across the benefice. During the services names will be read out and there will be the opportunity to light a candle in memory of each person, whether named or remembered in silence. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

All Memorial Service dates and times are -

St Mary's Pakenham 3pm (Stowlangtoft names will also be read at this service)

St Andrew's Norton 4pm (Tostock names will also be read at this service)

All Saints Great Ashfield 5pm (Hunston names will also be read at this service)

We will be sending invitations to the families of those for whom we have conducted funerals during the last two years. **However, all are welcome to come no matter how long ago you were bereaved.** In that case please let us know if you would like us to include your loved one's name/s in the service. Please contact Revd. Katherine Valentine with details (01359 235095).

(NB these memorial services are not to be confused with the Remembrance Service on November 13th when we remember those who died and suffered in the war).

Bishop Mike's visit 29th October 10am at Great Ashfield

We are very pleased to welcome Bishop Mike to our Benefice service in October. He is coming especially to see and dedicate the work that has been done in the church to open up the chancel and make it more suitable for use by the whole community. Everyone is welcome to come and join in and see the work that has been done. It has made a real difference!

St Andrew's Church Tostock

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2023 CHURCH SERVICES

Our beautiful and ancient church is open every day for visitors and private prayer.

TOSTOCK services are highlighted below

OCTOBER 1ST 17TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY		
8am 10am	Holy Communion (BCP) Family@Church HARVEST	Norton Pakenham
OCTOBER 8TH 18TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY		
9.30am 9.30am 11am	Holy Communion (BCP) Morning Worship Family Communion	Tostock Great Ashfield Pakenham
OCTOBER 15TH 19TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY		
9.30am 11am 11am 6pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Family Communion Morning Worship Evening Prayer and Praise	Pakenham Great Ashfield Norton Tostock
OCTOBER 22ND 20TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY		
9.30am 9.30am 11am 11am	TOAST Family Communion Holy Communion Morning Worship	Great Ashfield Norton Hunston Tostock
OCTOBER 29TH ALL SAINTS SUNDAY		
10am 3pm 4pm 5pm	Benefice Holy Communion with Bishop Mike Memorial Service Memorial Service Memorial Service	Great Ashfield Pakenham Norton Great Ashfield
NOVEMBER 5TH 4TH SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT		
8am 10am	Holy Communion (BCP) Family@Church REMEMBERING	Norton Pakenham
NOVEMBER 12TH REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY		
8am 10am 10.45am 10.45am 10.45am 10.45am 3pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Act of Remembrance Remembrance Service Remembrance Service Remembrance Service Act of Remembrance Remembrance Service	Pakenham Norton War Memorial Great Ashfield Norton Tostock Stowlangtoft Pakenham
NOVEMBER 19TH 2ND SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT		
9.30am 11am 11am 6pm	Holy Communion (BCP) Family Communion Morning Worship Evening Prayer & Praise	Pakenham Great Ashfield Norton Tostock
NOVEMBER 29TH CHRIST THE KING		
9.30am 9.30am 11am 11am	TOAST Family Communion Holy Communion (BCP) Morning Worship	Great Ashfield Norton Hunston Tostock

St Andrew's Church Tostock



On August 19th, we celebrated the baptism of little Ellis Marriott at St. Andrew's Church, with a large congregation of family and friends. Following his Baptism, Ellis received his Baptism Candle from Terry Newbold, watched on by Revd

Katherine, his mum and dad, big cousin Ava and The whole Congregation during The Family @ Church Service in Pakenham on 3rd September.



The annual Pet Service was held on August 27th in the Churchyard with more pets and owners than ever—our doggy visitors were very well behaved as usual and each received a Blessing and a well-earned treat.

Our Harvest Festival is on Sept 24th when we give thanks for our food and our Blessings, by bringing items to Church to help others – tins, packets are given to the Refuge in Bury St. Edmunds. The Church will be decorated on Saturday 23rd from 10am.

The monthly Coffee Mornings are continuing at the Village Hall, sadly we have not been able to hold one on the Green for a while as the weather has been too hot! The dates for the next ones are Tuesday Oct. 10th, Tuesday Nov. 7th, and Tuesday Dec. 12th, which will be in aid of Charity. All dates at 10:30 am. All welcome!

On November 18th the Christmas Fair takes place at the Village Hall from 12 – 4pm, with light lunches, teas, lots of stalls and a big Hamper Raffle. It is always a very busy afternoon, so we try to get things organized on Friday 17th. This year, the Hall is needed for something else during the Friday morning, so if you have any items for sale, please bring them on Friday afternoon from 2pm. Last year a Vigil was held in Church to remember the War in Ukraine. One year on we are arranging another Vigil on Sunday November 5th, from 11am - 12 noon. Please come for a short time or for the whole hour, to light a candle, to reflect on the conflict. There will be a collection for an appropriate Charity.

November 12th is Remembrance Sunday, our Service takes place at 11am In Church.

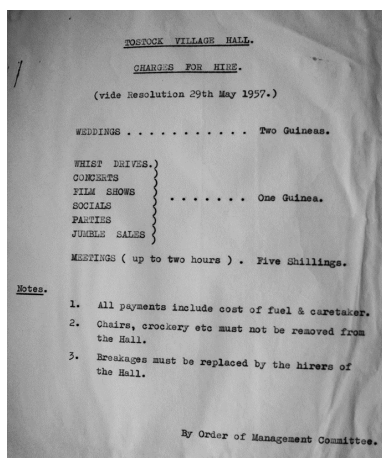
Advance notices: The Carol Service with gifts for the Refuge will be on Dec. 10th at 3pm.

The Salvation Army Band will play in Church before Christmas.

The Floodlights for October are sponsored by Jean Le Fleming, in loving memory of Peter.

Jeanne O'Reilly

In 1955 the village took ownership of the Old School. In the archives there are invoices for the first couple of years covering such items as electrical rewiring, boilers, heaters, cutlery, tea cups and saucers, chairs etc.



The hall was used by different organisations for meetings. One user was the County Library who had Library Subcommittee meetings and in 1956 they were paying 1 old shilling per week and an additional shilling for when a fire was used.

In 1957 there is a notice displaying the charges for hire as seen on the left.

In July 1962 the Tostock Drama Club had its first production in the hall of 'The Happiest Days of

Your Life'. The club expanded over the years to become the Tostock Operatic and Drama Society, otherwise known as the TOADS. This was run by Mrs Sheelagh Millman and lasted for over 25 years.



The following are pictures of events that were held in the Village Hall during 1956 and 1964.



PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE AUSTIN FAMILY kindly given by Mrs. Stiff (nee Gladys Austin)

The Austin family at Diamond Wedding celebrations - April 1958 - Tostock Village Hall (the old School) :



A Tostock diamond wedding

first left - Rev. Lilley - fifth left Mrs. Lilley (with cup).
FRANK & ALICE AUSTIN at head of table with sons, daughters and grandchildren.



Tostock Church School

In July 1970 a Parish meeting was held to decide on if to sell the Old School (Village Hall) as a private dwelling. Fewer than 40 villagers attended the meeting in the Village Hall. Mr F.D. Styles, the then secretary of the Tostock Community Council, laid out the reasoning for selling the village hall.

The reasons were that a considerable amount of money would have to be spent on repairs and modernising and even then, it would be unsatisfactory for large events. Plus, the playing fields needed changing rooms to be built and it would be more economical to build one building as a village hall and include changing rooms.

A few of the villagers felt that a new hall would price itself out of the market for certain organisations. Mr A.S.R. Villar, parish council chairman, argued that as no loans would have to be repaid (the sale of the old village hall would be large enough to enable a grant to be obtained without the village having to raise further funds), he could see no reason why charges should have to be increased. There were some concerned villagers but the proposal to sell the hall was accepted by 27 votes to two. With two registered abstentions.

On 30 October 1974 the Old School went up for auction at Everard's Hotel in Bury St Edmunds by H.C. Walton & Son. It was advertised as having planning consent for conversion into a dwelling house or to demolish the existing building and erect one dwelling on site. The Old School realised £5,250. The new village hall was built in 1974 and situated in Norton Road.

There have been three owners of the Old School to date and thankfully the original building has been retained and sympathetically modernised.



Jim Langlois

Tostock Jubilee Trees Update



My name is Bella and I thought it would be nice to give you all a short update about the Jubilee Trees.

I checked them over the Summer Holidays and gave them a good watering. The Oak tree that we planted was once a long twig and now has beautiful green leaves and several acorns on it. It looks as if it has grown approximately 30cm since we planted them in February.



Did you know?

That they say an oak tree takes 300 years to live, 300 years to grow, and 300 years to die.

Hope you enjoyed my article.

Bella Franks age 8

Fun Friendly Stretch Pilates



Cavendish Hall,
Thurston IP31 3RU
Monday 9:30am
Tuesday 10:00am

Tostock Village Hall
Norton Road
IP30 9FT
Wednesday
9:30am



with
Kirsteen

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60 min class**

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St Andrew's Church, Norton
IP31 3NB

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An Autumn Concert



on:

Saturday 11th November 2023 at 7.30pm

to hear:

Alastair Blay & Friends

With music from Schubert to Lennon

Refreshments available
Donations to St Andrew's Church

FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT:

Penny Mathieson: penny.mathieson@btinternet.com or 01359 232472

Martin Wood: ali.etal@tiscali.co.uk or 01359 242367

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WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

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TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP - ELIZABETH DUNN

SECRETARY - SUSIE WALTON

COMMITTEE MEMBERS -

JOHN AND LIZ ADAMS AND NIGEL KAINES

MEMBERSHIP FEES 2022-23

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP	£40
COUPLES MEMBERSHIP	£25
ADULT (SINGLE) MEMBERSHIP	£15
CHILDRENS MEMBERSHIP (U16S)	£5
GUEST COURT FEES — ADULTS £2, CHILDREN £1	

WE WOULD ENCOURAGE FEES TO BE PAID BY BACS BUT CASH AND CHEQUES ARE ALSO ACCEPTED

BANK DETAILS - ACCOUNT: 01082391 AND SORT CODE: 30-91-49
PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AS REFERENCE

IF YOU WOULD LIKE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE CLUB OR WOULD LIKE TO CONTACT US, CALL OR EMAIL -

ELIZABETH DUNN (01359 270270) - EJD1@TALKTALK.NET
OR

SUSIE WALTON (07793 406076) - SUSIEWALTON85@GMAIL.COM

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Long Lost Families

This summer has turned out to be quite special for our family. Not only have we had a new addition to our family as our Grandson Ellis was born, but after nearly 80 years my husband met his sister, Liz, and one of his nieces Gogi, for the first time as they made a surprise visit from America.



Liz and Eldridge share a father, William Ellis, who had been posted to Britain during World War II and found himself here, in Tostock, guarding Italian Prisons of War. Eldridge's father William was posted to France before Eldridge was born so he had never met his father, all he had was a couple of photos, that William had left behind for his mother.

Fast forward to "Lockdown" 2020, our son Andrew read a book titled "Britain's Brown Babies". This was the name given to mixed race children by the American press who were born in East Anglia during the war; 14 in total were raised in and around Tostock. Andrew decided he'd try to track down his American side of the family.

He discovered through DNA matching that there were some relatives living in Los Angeles and it turned out to be Eldridge's half-sister Liz. She agreed to make contact and formed a relationship over the internet with Andrew and his wife Lauren. Eldridge had a couple of face-to-face meetings via Zoom and hoped one day to meet her in person.

Andrew and Lauren went to America last year and spent some time with Liz and other members of the American family. They then hatched this plan for Liz and Gogi to make a visit to England to coincide with Ellis' Christening on the 19th of August. The plan was in place and on the 18th of August, Eldridge met his sister face-to-face for the first time. To say it was emotional is an understatement.



Lots of time was spent talking. Liz told us she knew nothing about her brother in England although her father had spoken very fondly of his time here in England, and Eldridge

discovered that his name came from his father's brother, who was also called Eldridge; Eldridge's full name is Eldridge William. We spent a few wonderful days showing Liz and Gogi the local sights including Cromer, Lavenham and Sandringham.



One of Liz's requests was to visit The Gardens Arms as her father had spoken about evening spent in the pub with the locals. All too soon it was time for them to leave with a promise that we will visit them in LA next year.

Sue Marriott

Tostock Crochet Club

Members needles and hooks have been very busy preparing for this years creation, to accompany the crochet Christmas tree, on the village green this Christmas.

But they have also been busy crafting other projects including various postbox toppers and a decorated wheelbarrow full of fruit and vegetable which was displayed in the church for the craft and wheelbarrow show in June. We are also making crafts to sell at the Village Christmas fair in November, so come and find some unusual homemade gifts for Christmas presents.

Any budding village crafters are welcome to join us in the new year when we start planning our 2024 Christmas project!



Tostock Book Group

A jolly gathering of the local group, to discuss their latest chosen tome.

Strangely, not a book in sight.

And some forgot to hide their wine glasses for the photo.



Tostock Village Hall News

The Village Hall Committee has not met formally since the last Chronicle - our next meeting will take place on **Tuesday, 17th October** at 7.30pm. If you have any matters relating to the village hall or its playing fields that you would like to be discussed, please email tostockvillagehall@outlook.com.

For all booking enquiries, please email tostocktvh@hotmail.co.uk

Tostock Art Show

A MASSIVE THANK YOU to Diane, Vanessa, Phil, Adrian and all of the many the helpers who set up, helped during the weekend, or were there to dismantle the Tostock Art Show. It was another great year with so many talented Artists displaying their artworks.

Tostock Village Hall Improvement Project Community Fundraising Ideas

Our community in Tostock has a great track record of fundraising, with annual events such as the Tostock Art Show and our previous Fireworks events, as well as many other village activities and evenings. As the Village Hall Improvement Project moves forward, raising money as a community will be very important. Not only will it lead to the village having a greatly improved community venue, but the amount of village fundraising is also vital to the external funding applications that we make.

We are currently looking at various ideas, such as having a **Tostock Village Hall Hundred Club**, which is like a small lottery where residents of Tostock could buy numbered tickets to go into a regular draw. The draw is then made monthly, with a percentage of the profit given as a prize and the remainder going to the Village Hall Improvement Project funds.

We are also excited to be holding our first **Tostock Boogie Night in the Village Hall on Friday, 1st December 2023** (see below for more information). Tickets are £10 and include a hot dog as well as a welcome drink of mulled wine or fizz. You can also let us have your favourite song to boogie to from the 70's, 80's, 90's or Noughties to add to the playlist!

If you have any fundraising suggestions or ideas, we would love to hear them – please email us on tostockvillagehall@outlook.com

TOSTOCK

BOOGIE NIGHTS

**Friday, 1st Dec 2023 from 7.30pm,
Tostock Village Hall**

Tickets £10 per person

Book in advance: email tostockvillagehall@outlook.com
or call 01359 272633

Ticket price includes BBQ Hot Dog & Welcome Glass of Mulled Wine or Fizz
Raising important funds for the Tostock Village Hall Improvement Project

Cont..

Tostock Village Hall News (cont..)

Village Hall Improvement Project Update - Autumn 2023

In order to progress several of the grant applications, we will shortly be submitting a planning application for the Village Hall. The submitted application will address many of the major areas for improvement which were identified through our community consultation phase. An image of the external view of the planning application which will be submitted is shown below.

It is important to note, that we are submitting an application, which would allow us to complete an ambitious wish-list of improvement work. However, our ability to do this is entirely dependent on the funding that we can secure and accordingly improvement work will be able to be completed in a phased approach once we have relevant funds in place.

Further details of the planning application and the drawings will be available to view both in the Village Hall and on the noticeboard outside when they have been finalised. We will continue to keep you posted, however, if you have any further questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to email us via tostockvillagehall@outlook.com



Tostock Fireworks

Tostock Fireworks is to take a break in 2023 - a decision has been made to not hold this years village fireworks event, with the break allowing for a considered review of the organising of the evening.

The team of volunteers, who run this popular family and village event, very much intend for Tostock Fireworks to return in the coming years.

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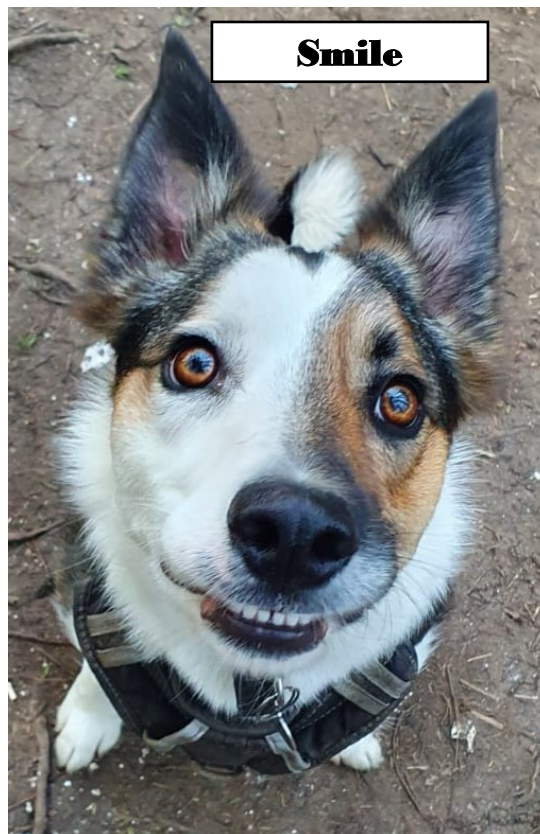
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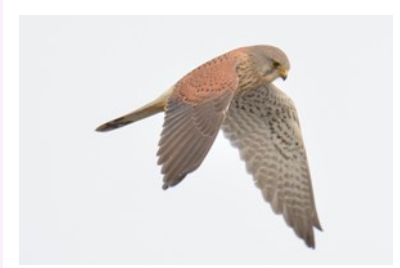
It's a dog's life

Smile



Whether you are spinning round Tostock in the Porsche, walking the dog along the footpaths, or riding the saddle along the bridal paths, or literally pedal powering your cycles for pleasure or to the local shops. You can't but help noticing a hovering Kestrel. Most of us know a Kestrel when we see one – small, agile falcons, frequently seen hovering beside roads, or sitting on telegraph wires, or posts with their eyes fixed firmly on the undergrowth.

Common Kestrels (*Falco tinnunculus*) are usually seen in the countryside, but now are adopting well into the urban environment. Prolific hunters, blessed with speed and special skills, including their characteristic hover, Kestrels' main diet is small mammals, but they also occasionally take small birds and insects. When hovering, Kestrels keep their heads perfectly still, but can move their body to stay in position, enabling them to spot prey with super clear vision and make a quick, precise, deadly attack. They can also track down small rodents, such as voles, using ultra- violet light emitted from rodents' urine. For a Kestrel its like following a map of glowing paths. I find that a most incredible fact. To survive a Kestrel needs to catch between 4 and 8 voles a day, more in Winter. Catching food enables them to catch several mammals in a day and reduces the risk of losing food to another bird. When a Kestrel dives for a kill it stays on the ground for a short time. This is when it will feel most vulnerable and will often mantle their prey to hide it from other predators overhead. Mantling also makes the Kestrel look larger than it really is, which can deter predators.



A male Kestrel has a blue-grey head and tail with a rich brown colour on its back. A female is mainly brown and is larger than the male, a general rule for birds of prey. A male Kestrel is, in my opinion one of the UK's most beautiful birds and we're lucky to have these stunning little falcons around Tostock. They normally lay 3 to 6 eggs in late April to early May. Incubation starts once the 3rd egg has been laid and takes 27 to 29 days.

The female does most of the parenting, while the male is out catching food for the whole family. The female goes hunting once the chicks are old enough for her to leave them. Unlike most birds – especially birds of prey, there is no aggression between juveniles as they're happy to be together until they fledge and then are still often seen perching together. Their territories vary depending on amount of prey available. Normally it is 1 km square around the nest, but some have been found to stretch to 10 kms square. Kestrels are vulnerable to substances used to control rodents, both they and Barn Owls are susceptible to secondary poisoning from eating poisoned rodents. The RSPB classifies them as amber as changes in farming practices have affected their numbers. So it's great to see Kestrels adapting to urban environments. Hopefully, over time, numbers will start to climb as it would be terrible to lose them.



Cont..

Many of you will have seen the classic film "Kes" directed by Ken Loach, and based on the novel "A Kestrel for a Knave" by Barry Hines. This superb film reached the grand old age of 50 just before lockdown in 2019, having become a familiar site on tv over the last half century. No doubt most of us living in Tostock have seen it sometime or other in our lives. The film set around Barnsley, in South Yorkshire, it's the story of a boy called Billy Casper, growing up in a rough coal-mining area in the 1960's, and how his life is changed by rearing a young Kestrel. Released to critical acclaim at the time, the book is used in GCSE English Literature curriculums today. The writer Barry Hines was inspired by what countryside he still had left outside his back door, living as he did just outside Barnsley, in a small village called Hoyland Common. And while it was an area scarred by industry, there was still plenty to see.



The book is full of small scale, but vivid observation. Both wild, both alike in their love of freedom, and contemptuous of the world around them. He called the Kestrel – Kes, as he would a friend.

A cushion of mist lay over the fields. Dew drenched the grass, and the occasional sparkling of individual drops made Billy glance down as he passed. One turf was a silver fire.

The drop had almost forced the blade of grass to the earth, and it lay in the curve of the blade like the tiny egg of a mythical bird. Billy moved his head from side to side to make it sparkle, and when it caught the sun it exploded. The Kestrel becomes the centre and anchor of Billy's otherwise difficult, unstable life.

Cont..

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Poverty pushes him into stealing a book on falconry because they won't let him join the library, and then he takes a young Kestrel from the nest. His taking of the raptor might remind you of a real life character who also took a Kestrel from the wild (Chris Packham). Was Chris influenced by reading *Kes*? It's not of course, a thing that should be encouraged (you could end up in prison), but in both cases, a strong connection to the natural world was formed. Barry Hines had taken inspiration for the novel from his own younger brother Richard, who had raised and trained a Kestrel. And when it came to the film, he refused to sell the rights to Disney, or to allow a happier ending. The result was a classic movie, in part because of the superb writing, and in part because of the naturalistic acting David Bradley, who played Billy, was even told that 1 of the 3 Kestrels used in filming would be killed at the end, to get his horrified reaction – in fact a bird that had died of natural causes was used. Finally, the use of authentic dialect played its part, too, not least when Billy articulates to his teacher exactly what makes *Kes* so special. (it's not a pet), Sir, hawks are not pets. Or when folks stop me and say (is it tame) Is it heck tame, it's trained that's all. It's fierce an' its wild, an' it's not bothered about anybody, not even about me, right. And that's why it's great ... they can keep their rabbits an' their cats an' their talking budgies, the're rubbish compared wi' her.



Landscape changes, both book and film were based in a thoroughly industrial area, and showed the benefits of nature in an area dominated by coal mining, but today that same area offers some of the best birdwatching in Britain. Subsidence, flood protection and local councils, along with the RSPB, have made the area an area not to be missed. Here is what the Barnsley Biodiversity Trust say about the area. Barnsley is a special place for nature. Blanket bog and heather moors have breeding Dunlin and Golden Plover, low lying wetlands, breeding Avocet and Bittern, woodlands, grasslands, rivers, and former pit stacks and railway tracks support biodiversity. The RSPB saw the potential and took over the management of some of the old mining areas from the local councils, with Old Moor now one of their flagship reserves with over 100,000 visitors a year. It is one of many reserves in the Dearne Valley, with many of them including the word (Ings) an old Norse term for water meadows and marshes. Had I have known, I could have used that word (Ings) in the last edition where I mentioned the Tostock low meadows (ings). They act as a flood plane to prevent flooding downstream, and in fact in 2007 these (ings) collected enough water to save 3,000 houses from being flooded. Floods may come at any time of the year and may affect breeding, but most birds can start again.

Falconry dates back to ancient Mesopotamia in 2,000 BC, and came to western Europe in the early medieval period, brought by the Nomads such as the Huns and Alans. The Anglo-Saxon poem "The Battle of Maldon" makes reference to it, and it is depicted in the famous Bayeux Tapestry. Most birds of prey were taken from the wild and (hacked) into submission to hunt for their owner. A Kestrel for a Knave starts with an excerpt from the 1486 Boke of St Albans, and which matches different raptor species to particular ranks in society.

Cont..

Emperors flew Eagles, while Billy's Kestrel only ranked as the bird of a poor man, thief, or Knave.

The 1981 wildlife and countryside act tightened up the law in Britain and encouraged falconers to breed their birds in captivity. If Kes had been filmed today, perhaps Billy Casper would have ended up as a warden looking after one of these amazing places for wildlife, as well as being a member of the Barnsley bird study group.

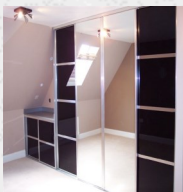
I earlier mentioned about Chris Packham but I too openly have to admit after watching the film "Kes" on television sometime in the late 60's I had a desire and inclination to train a Kestrel for myself, at that particular time I was working at a day-old chick hatchery. The hatchery based in the village of Fornham All Saints and surrounded by a horse paddock. It was a common sight to see a Kestrel almost daily hovering over the area, or sitting on the fence posts.

It often occurred to me whether I could attempt to persuade the Kestrel to take live bait in the form of a day-old chick in the hopes of training the Kestrel into some form of control hoping it would land on my arm and take bait straight from my hand. Days later I started my experiment on two separate occasions I put a live day-old chick out into the middle of the meadow there it was chirping away, within 20 minutes the Kestrel plunged down and took it. The same thing happened a second time, however my conscience soon got the better of me. My act of bad behaviour of cruelty to those poor chicks, and also I ran the risk of instant dismissal should I have been caught in the act. As things stand today I am most grateful not to have pursued it any further and totally admire the grace and splendour of the magnificent little falcons – so thank you Kes.

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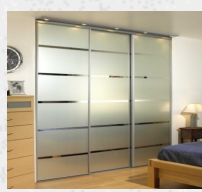
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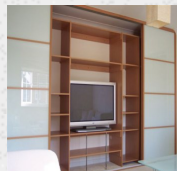


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Contacts in our Community

Tostock Parish Councillors

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Vanessa Malcom (VCh)	vjmalcomtpc@outlook.com
Roger Cross	roger.cross64@icloud.com
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Michael Baully (Poors)	
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Julian Kearsley	juliankearsley@btinternet.com
Glenn Lebbon	glenn@oakparkproperties.co.uk

Village Officers

Tree Officer	Vacant
Footpath Officer	Roger Cross
Litter Picker	Oliver Holland

Poor's Estate

Sharon Markell	01359 271190
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St Andrews Church

Rector	
Katherine Valentine	kavalentine677@gmail.com 01359 235095
Church Wardens	
Jeanne O'Reilly	01359 270337
Barney Harrison	barneybees@hotmail.com
Bell Ringers	Sue Marriott 01359 270143

Village Hall

Chair	
Graham MacDowell	crispincottage@hotmail.com
Hall Bookings	
Doreen Buckle	tostocktvh@hotmail.co.uk 01359 270605

Clubs

Bingo	Diane Brewer	01359 271127
Book Club	Julie Harrison	01359 270247
Brownies	Krystie	07975 556448
Carpet Bowls	Doreen Buckle	01359 270605
Cribbage	Jim Langlois	01359 270456
Crochet	Sarah Reader	reader-family@tiscali.co.uk
Past & Present	Anthony Scully	01359 270482
Rainbows	Krystie	07975 556448
Tennis Club		
Elizabeth Dunn	ejd1@talktalk.net	01359 270270
Susie Walton	susiewalton85@gmail.com	07793 406076

Village Map

<https://tostockpc.org.uk/our-village/tostock-village-map/>

More details and the latest up to date information can be found on our village website.

www.tostockpc.org.uk

Community Services

Emergency Police/Fire/Ambulance 999

Utilities

Energy power failures & Emergencies	08007 838866
Anglian water	08457 145145

Health

Woolpit Health Centre	01359 240298
Out of Hours	111
West Suffolk Hospital	01284 713000
BMI Hospital	01284 701371
St Nicholas Hospice	01284 766133

Advice

Relate	01284 767305
Samaritans (free call)	116 123
Drugs Hotline	0800 253 253
Citizens Advice Bureau	01284 753675

Police

Non-emergency	101
Crime Stoppers	555

Councils

Suffolk County Council	03456 066067
Mid Suffolk District Council	0300 1234000

Education

Thurston Community College	01359230885
Norton Pre-school	01359 232736

Pub

The Gardners	
Steve & Jill Gardner	01359 270460

Leisure

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Theatre Royal	01284 769505
Apex	01284 758000
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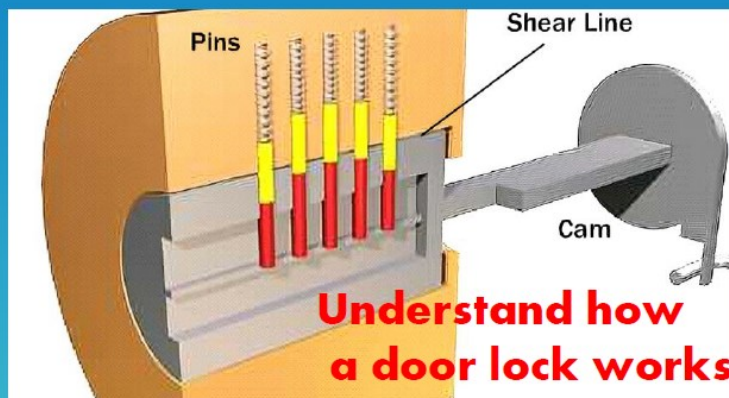
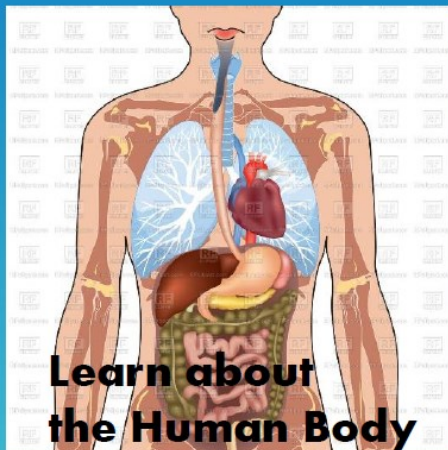
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