

The Horsington & South Cheriton

Villager

Issue No. 70

March 2018



The prizewinning team from Milborne Port Opera on stage at the Questors theatre

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All opinions expressed in articles published are those of the authors and not of the magazine.

To view past and present copies of the Villager go to the Wincanton Window website
www.wincantonwindow.co.uk and click on the 'Villages' link.

Events Diary March 2018

Day/Date	Time	Event	Venue
Thu 1st	10.00am	Art	Village Hall
Fri 2nd	10.00am	Art	"
Sat 3rd	7.00pm	Village Hall Dinner	"
Mon 5th	Lunch	Ladies' Pub Lunch	Blackdog, Chilmark
	5.30pm	Pilates	Village Hall
	6.45pm	Pilates	"
Tue 6th	10.30am	Upholstery	"
	8.00pm	Badminton	"
Wed 7th	10.00am	Adult Tap Dancing	"
	8.30pm	Music Night	Half Moon Inn
Thu 8th	10.00am	Art	Village Hall
	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting	"
Fri 9th	10.00am	Art	"
Sat 10th	7.30pm	Film: Breathe	Village Hall Milborne Port
	2.30pm	National Trust Association Talk	Digby Hall, Sherborne
Mon 12th	5.30pm	Pilates	Village Hall
	6.45pm	Pilates	"
Tue 13th	10.30am	Upholstery	"
	8.00pm	Badminton	"
Wed 14th	10.00am	Adult Tap Dancing	"
Thu 15th	10.00am	Art	"
	7.30pm	WI Joint Meeting	Village Hall North Cheriton
Fri 16th	10.00am	Art	Village Hall
Mon 19th	5.30pm	Pilates	"
	6.45pm	Pilates	"
Tue 20th	8.00pm	Badminton	"
Wed 21st	10.00am	Adult Tap Dancing	"
Thu 22nd	10.00am	Art	"
Fri 23rd	10.00am	Art	"
Mon 26th	5.30pm	Pilates	"
	6.45pm	Pilates	"
Tue 27th	8.00pm	Badminton	"
Wed 28th	10.00am	Adult Tap Dancing	"
Fri 30th	7.30pm	Wincanton History Society Talk	Wincanton Memorial Hall

WINCANTON MUSEUM AND HISTORY SOCIETY TALK

March 30th @ 7.30pm—Wincanton Memorial Hall

A momentous marriage in 1948 between a (black) African Chief and a (white) English woman
by **Derek Hudson**

£5 for non-members or £2 for members.

wincantonmuseum.org.uk

Photographs on pages 3 & 5 provided by Richard Gaunt

A (Coarse) actor's life for me! by Richard Gaunt

Milborne Port Opera recently won the World Coarse Acting Championships in London. Among those appearing were Horsington's Chis Bailward and Richard Gaunt, who directed the show and is a 3-time winner of the competition. We asked him to elaborate on his history as a Coarse Actor.*

Back in 1964 people said I did quite well in the school play, playing Pistol in Henry V. Home from boarding school for good a few weeks later, I needed to construct a social life and the girl next door introduced me to the Questors Theatre in Ealing, then and now London's leading amateur theatre.



My ambitions were more focused on the girl, than the theatre. But she promptly disappeared to University and out of my life and, so I concentrated on the theatre, embarking on a 2-year part-time acting course. This provided me with lifelong friends, an education in drama and the theatre and a chance to develop presentation skills, very handy in my subsequent careers.

One of the characters I met at the Questors was Michael Green, then the Sunday Times rugby correspondent and the author of a number of very funny best-sellers called "The Art of Coarse...." Rugby, Golf, Sailing, Living, and of course "Acting". Or how to ruin an amateur dramatic company.

Michael's book portrayed a world in which the inexperienced, bumbling, naïve, amateur newcomer could shoot to the top in any chosen occupation with a bit of gamesmanship, opportunism and cunning. Coarse Acting is still in print, by the way, still going strong after 50 years.

In fact there was nothing "amateur" about the Questors. Production standards and discipline were of the highest order. But everyone recognised someone in the "Art of Coarse Acting", and many of the anecdotes in the book were about members of the Questors.

From 1965 to 1986 I appeared in about 21 shows at the Questors, playing leading and character parts, with 3 appearances in the Edinburgh Fringe and one in London's West End.

Which is where Coarse Acting come in.

In 1972 Michael Green organised The World Coarse Acting Championship at the Questors as a fundraiser. I was in one of seven teams (one was from the Royal Shakespeare Company, no less). We wrote and rehearsed a disastrous drawing room whodunnit from an idea of mine in a matter of days, and, with no idea how it would play or whether it was funny, trooped on to the stage to perform it. The laughter started from the second the curtain went up and continued building. Nervous as hell, we carried on, doggedly.

The whole point about coarse acting is no matter what happens (and everything did in this production) the show carries on.

We won the competition and the handsome chamber pot which went with it. We all retired to the bar with the laughter ringing in our ears and thought no more about it, until a day later the telephone rang. It was the BBC, who must have had a reporter in the house. Were we free to perform it on TV the next day? Schedules and meetings were hastily re-arranged (we all had proper jobs), and off we went to Lime Grove to appear on “Nationwide”. Again, we had no idea how it would play on TV, until we saw the laughter in the gallery. The director and technicians were falling about.

We performed the show, called “Streuth” one more time at Salisbury Playhouse for a fund raiser. On this occasion, the theatre was packed to the rafters and it was impossible to finish the play because the laughter was so loud. I could not hear my fellow actors speak. It is something which very few performers ever experience, and something I will remember for ever with pride.

There were two more Coarse Acting festivals at the Questors in the 1970’s and we won again in 1977 with a gritty northern mining drama called “A Collier’s Tuesday Tea”, largely written by me.

In 1977 we decided to try our luck in the Edinburgh Fringe. At our own risk and expense, but led by the very capable Michael Green, we performed 4 playlets – our two prize winners- “Streuth” and “Colliers”, an opera “Il fornicazione” and a cod Shakespeare “All’s well that ends as you like it”, both by Michael Green.

We were a huge box office success. As I recall, we were up there with the Cambridge Footlights Review, and some other hopefuls just starting out, Billy Connolly and Rowan Atkinson, to name just two.

Two years later we went to Edinburgh again with a new show with four more plays, taking a much bigger theatre in George Square. Again, it was a huge commercial success and we transferred to the Shaftesbury Theatre in London’s West End for a season, and performed in front of the Prince of Wales, who became a great fan. Ultimately, fatigue set in. We all had careers and families and these come first.

It slowly dawned on us that we had perhaps started something, particularly after we went to Edinburgh. Morecambe and Wise, The Two Ronnies and many others all started performing pastiches of amateur dramas or musicals. Michael Frayn, the author of the hilarious “Noises off” acknowledges that innocent eavesdropping in an Edinburgh pub inspired him to write the play that we never got round to. Victoria Wood’s “Acorn Antiques” is superb tv coarse acting. And now, “The Play that goes wrong” and its spin-offs (its authors all started off at the Questors) are enjoying great success on tv and in the theatre.

Shortly after this my career took over and I retired from acting, missing a third successful Edinburgh Coarse acting gig. But 30 years later, with corporate life behind me, I spotted an item in the Blackmore Vale Magazine inviting people to audition for the MPO’s “Mikado”. The rest is history.

Actors never go away. They merely “rest”

**Or rather injected the coarse elements that enabled the talented cast to walk off with the trophy. RG*

Milborne Port Opera will be performing a longer version of their prizewinning show “The Murder at Shakerley House” in the Milborne Port Village Hall after Easter.



Murder at Shakerley House 2017. Richard Gaunt far left, Chris Bailward dead on the floor.



Richard 2nd from left at Edinburgh fringe in “A Colliers Tuesday tea in 1979.

CHRIS BAILWARD COMPLETES HIS JOURNEY FROM SICILY

The Po plain is the main agricultural area of Italy intersected by flat straight roads. My next day took me along it, through Imola, famous for the San Marino Grand Prix circuit, and Bologna on my way to Modena. As I approached Bologna the police were setting up road blocks that I coasted through and towards the centre I was prevented from proceeding by dense crowds of people waiting to catch a glimpse of the Pope who was visiting that day. It took a while to get through the City and I was unable to see the main sights but I eventually got back into the countryside, passing the Carpigiani Gelato University on my 71 mile journey.

The following day saw more of the same as I crossed the River Po, passing small Parmesan cheese factories and cycling along the levee of the river along almost deserted roads, past poplar plantations and Lambrusco vineyards on the 73 mile journey to Cremona, a city most famous for violin making. Sadly, being a Monday, I was unable to visit the closed museums and contented myself with a stroll around the centre and the magnificent cathedral with its bell tower, at 112.7 metres the tallest brick tower in Italy and the oldest over 100 metres in the world.



My son Rob had decided that he would like to join me cycling over the Alps, so he flew with his bike to Bergamo and cycled through Milan to meet me at Vigevano, my next stop, 72 miles from Cremona. I crossed the Ticino river by an interesting covered bridge at Pavia and found more empty cycle routes along the bank. The two of us set out along side roads, passing rice mills and a flock of Sacred Ibis on the large rice stubbles through the flat countryside, so it came as a shock in the last 20 miles of 63, to suddenly find ourselves climbing hills that, by the evening, had become mountains surrounding our overnight stop at Borgofranco d'Ivrea.

The next day we climbed up the Aosta valley between towering mountains and through Alpine pastures with bell wearing cows playing a bucolic symphony. The weather was warm and sunny until a strong wind blew up as we started the serious climb out of Aosta to our stop at Etroubles, a journey of 51 miles but with about 5000 feet of climbing, some in excess of 1 in 10.

The wind blew fiercely overnight and was still strong as we started the climb over the Col du Grand St Bernard at over 8000 feet. The day started sunny but we could see clouds building ominously as we approached the summit and by the time we reached the Swiss Border, 100 metres south of the top of the Pass we were in cold, damp fog which chilled us to the bone whilst the gale nearly blew us off our bikes. There was ice around the fringe of the lake at the summit so the 28 miles downhill to the Franciscan Monastery Hotel in St Maurice where we were to stay were far from easy with frozen fingers making braking difficult. It was not until we got to Martigny and some sunshine that we thawed out and what should have been an immensely enjoyable day was spoiled by the weather.

The next day dawned bright and clear but still decidedly chilly. We joined the Rhone cycle path, smooth and well maintained for the 12 miles to the shores of Lake Geneva. The sun came out and warmed us up and by 1 pm we were at our lunch stop at Thonon-les-Bains having passed the Evian water bottling plant on the way.

A good lunch induced a bit of slackness and we took a long time to reach Geneva, winding our way along back roads and through housing estates before emerging once again into the country with a view across to Mont Blanc, glistening white in the far distance. Once in the City we paused to take pictures in front of the famous *jet d'eau* before battling through the traffic to our hotel next to the airport, convenient for Rob to catch his plane home the following day.

I carried on out of Switzerland and back into France, 12 miles of fully segregated cycle track taking me out of the City, before going off cross country. This caused a puncture, only the second of the trip but a new tube got me going again only to have a second puncture about 10 miles further on, once again easily fixed, but leaving me short of spare tubes. I was following river valleys through the southern Jura mountains, and the scenery was beautiful, although it involved a lot of climbing and descending in rather dull weather conditions. At Poncin, for the first time, I crossed the path that I took when cycling down to the Mediterranean and back in 2015 and after almost 5000 feet of climbing, arrived at Bourg-en-Bresse.

I was now, roughly, retracing my track of 2015 and I made my way through Macon and joined the cycle way that follows the old railway line to Chalons-sur-Saone, through vineyards and interesting countryside. The weather was fair and I had an enjoyable run until I had to deviate from my route because the Tunnel du Bois Clair, at a mile long the longest tunnel on a cycleway in Europe, was closed to allow the hibernating bats some peace. This meant some extra climbing but not too steep and I was soon back on track. After an excellent *menu du jour* I had some steep climbing up unmade tracks, accompanied for a couple of miles by a large but friendly black dog, before descending to Charolles (the origin of Charolais sheep and cattle). At this point I had to join a very busy main road and had the most frightening five miles of cycling of the whole trip. I was relieved to turn off and make my way to my B&B north of Paray.



The next day the weather turned distinctly chilly and I set off in fog which persisted until lunchtime. My route took me along canal paths and cycle-ways so I was not hassled by traffic but the lack of scenery and views made the journey tedious and this was the pattern for much of the remainder of my journey. I was shadowing the river Loire which I crossed a couple of times during the 74 mile journey to Nevers, an attractive town with a fine cathedral that overlooks the river.

A second day in the Loire valley, on well made cycle paths and through open fields with acres of maize, took me to Sully-sur-Loire, with an iconic, moated Chateau. 86 miles was the longest day's journey of the trip and I was pretty exhausted when I arrived.

Now feeling that I was on the home straight, I made my way to Chartres, its magnificent Cathedral visible 12 miles away, by-passing Orleans and leaving the Loire behind. After an initial ride through some lovely oak woods, lots of flat open countryside made for an uninteresting day and a saddle sore that had been with me for ten days became very uncomfortable.

Another foggy start to the day on Day 24 took me through wooded countryside, partly along an 18 mile cycle track that followed an old railway line before I arrived at Ile de Sees a grand farmhouse converted to a Relais Hotel. The room was comfortable and the food excellent but mosquitoes spoiled my sleep.

My final day In France again started in thick fog but by the middle of the morning I was in bright sunshine on a very cross-country route up rough tracks and grass headlands, but an enjoyable ride until I came to the outskirts of Caen where the traffic caused some problems. I spent the afternoon at the Museum of Normandy before making my way to the Ferry at Ouistreham which I reached in thick fog, passing Pegasus bridge which was being raised to allow a couple of tugs through Ouistreham was full of young black youths, presumably looking to stow away on the lorries that pass through the port. The Gendarmerie, however, were in evidence and searched the toilet block, in which I was sheltering from the cold fog, before I boarded the ferry at 10.30pm.

The overnight journey was uncomfortable but uneventful and I was off the ferry and on the road by 6.45 am for my 83 mile journey to Horsington. Just past Tisbury I was met by Rob who cycled with me to Home Farm which we reached at about 3 pm, greeted by the family, including, appropriately, given my send off from Sicily by my grand-son, my 3 grand-daughters.

So 1749 miles in 26 days (extraordinarily without any significant rain) took me from 30 degree heat in Sicily to cold and foggy England. Perhaps I should have done it the other way around?



Blackmore Vale and Yeovil National Trust Association AGM

Saturday 10th March 2017 8 2.30pm at Digby Hall, Hound Street, Sherborne
£3.00 members or £5.00 non-members, includes refreshments

A Talk by Emily Utgren (NT Stourhead) on The Remarkable Trees at Stourhead



BLACKMORE VALE U3A

Tuesday 6th March 2018

‘The Life of a TV Cameraman on Location’

A talk by Richard Edwards Henstridge in the Village Hall @ 2.30pm
Members £1.50 Visitors £2.50, refreshments included.

Dear Villagers

The roots of Mothering Sunday possibly date back to the Roman Empires – a time when Christianity was the dominant religion.

By the 16th Century it was customary to visit the Mother Church for Mothering Sunday, which is on the 4th Sunday in Lent. It became an occasion for family reunions, with the emphasis on the mother of the family. In those days it was common for the children as young as ten to be put out to work – boys as apprentices and girls as domestic servants living and working in various country manor houses (often far from their homes). Being given a day off for a reunion with their mother and family became a special day, perhaps the only day off they had all year. On their way home some children would pick wild flowers which were blessed in church before being given to their mother. While others, from Manor Houses, might take along the traditional Mothering Sunday simnel-cake.

Somewhere between the 16th and early 20th centuries Mothering Sunday began to fade out, but it was around the 1940s that Mothering Sunday traditions underwent a major transformation and came to more resemble America's Mothers' Day (perhaps influenced by the 2nd World War when many young people were away from their families). In the 1950s Mothering Sunday was notably celebrated throughout Britain, so why not keep traditions going and attend church, where children will receive posies of flowers to give to their mothers. A warm welcome awaits you and there is still time to go out to lunch afterwards! The Service this year will be held on 11th March at 11.00am and we look forward to seeing you.

God Bless

Rosemarie (Churchwarden)

St John the Baptist, Horsington

4th Mar	9.15am	Holy Communion with Sunday School and Baptism	
11th Mar	11.00am	Morning Prayer	
18th Mar	9.15am	Holy Communion	
25th Mar	8.30am	Holy Communion	Churchwardens
30th Mar	2.00pm	Last Hour at the Cross	Mrs Anne Jones 370626 Mrs Rosemarie Wigley 371478

St Nicholas, Henstridge

4th Mar	11.00am	Morning Worship	6.30pm Evensong
11th Mar	9.30am	Holy Communion	
	11.00am	Baptism	
18th Mar	11.00am	Morning Prayer	6.30pm Evensong
25th Mar	11.00am	Holy Communion	
30th Mar	7.30pm	Music with Meditation	

St Mary The Virgin, Templecombe

4th Mar	11.00am	Morning Praise	
11th Mar	9.30am	Holy Communion	
18th Mar	11.00am	Holy Communion	
25th Mar	9.30am	Holy Communion	
30th Mar	10.00am	Morning Worship	GOOD FRIDAY

SUMMER FETE (SATURDAY 9 JUNE)

Calling on all the talented craft makers, knitters, seamstresses, jewellers, carpenters, cooks and creative people in Horsington and nearby villages:



We Need You !!

For our **"Horsington's Got Talent"** stall at the **Summer Fete on (Saturday 9 June)**, we need donations of handmade products to be sold. Last year was the first edition of the stall, and as the trial was a success we would like to repeat the experience again this year. Take the opportunity of these long and cold winter evenings and rainy weekends to create beautiful items with your friends and families! For questions and donations, contact Jeanne jmortarotti@email.com



Mr Canning's farewell by the PTFA

On Wednesday 7 February afternoon, parents and members of staff of Horsington School organised a farewell party for Mr Canning, the Air Class teacher (year 1 and 2). It was a surprise party and the surprise was kept intact as Mr Canning entered the room expecting another staff meeting. He was welcomed by a crowd of staff, parents and children, some of them now in secondary School but who wanted to say goodbye and thank him in person. Gifts and cards were exchanged but not many words at first as it was rather emotional and, as Mr Canning confessed, he was for once left speechless in front of so many people.

Mr Canning was appointed at Horsington School almost 10 years ago as year 1 and 2 teacher. It was his first job in teaching, a choice he consciously made coming from a totally different professional background. This would explain in part his personal approach to teaching, putting in first place the pleasure to learn and the desire to explore. He declared: *"There is nothing more fulfilling than to give a child the ability to discover the world through reading, to express their thoughts and ideas through writing, to problem solve through mathematics (my personal favourite). It's all about the children."* Six years ago, he decided to get a puppy dog and with the approval of staff members and parents decided to bring him to school. Bob the dog has since become the favourite of all the school's pets and the school's mascot. He has helped many children to grow in confidence and enjoy their time at school.

Mr Canning, and Bob, will be truly missed and we wish him all the best for the future. Mrs Brady, the current Fire Class teacher (year 3 and 4) is now taking over Air Class, while Miss Hardwill has now been appointed as the new Fire Class teacher, starting after the spring half-term holiday.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

by Angela Clayton

Fund raising for the Play Area continues and the Parish Council is grateful for the generous donations and support received so far. More funds are needed to reach our final target but the good news is that we have been able to order some of the new equipment and this will be installed in early April. The Parish Council will be supporting the Somerset County Council signpost restoration project to restore a number of historic cast iron posts also known as “fingerposts”. Several volunteers will be attending a workshop in March and will begin to refurbish these iconic signposts over the following months.

Moviola—Milborne Port

Saturday 10th March - Doors Open 7.00pm, film starts 7.30pm

Film: **Breathe**

Tickets: £5.00 in advance—£5.50 at door

Exclusively available from Wayne the Butcher, High Street, Milborne Port
For more information phone Martin Lancaster on **01963 251858**

WhereWestBegins the Non-profit Community Screening Company, presents:

Suffragette—Screening on 1st of March 7-9.30pm at Westlands Yeovil and also on 8 March 6.30-9pm at Wincanton Town Hall . Both screenings followed by a panel on "**Women's Leadership in our Community**" chaired by **Lynne Franks** (OBE for her services to women).

For tickets and info: www.wherewestbegins.org.uk



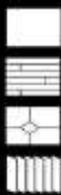
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(all phone numbers start 01963 unless otherwise stated)

NAME	CONTACT	TEL NO
Bellringing	Anna Piechna	370749
Buses (local)		0871 2002233
Citizens Advice Bureau, Wincanton		0344 88 9623
CAT Bus Ring and Ride Service		33864
Doctors Surgeries	Milborne Port (inc Templecombe)	250334
	Wincanton Health Centre	435700
French/Italian Conversation	Jeanne Mortarotti	202265
Horsington Church School	Head/Secretary	370358
PTFA	Abby Spoons	
	abzspoors@gmail.com	
Governor	Jean Boyd-Lee	371137
Ladies' Lunch Group	Rosemarie Wigley	371478
	Susan Maltin	371400
MP	David Warburton	020 7219 5225
Parish Council		
Chair	Jackie Pyne	370713
Clerk	David Chapman	370527
	www.horsingtonpc@gmail.com	
St John's Church		
Wardens	Anne Jones & Rosemarie Wigley	370626 371478
Sunday School	Deirdre Loftus	370091
Scouts	Geoff Crabb	370623
Social Services		0845 345 9133
South Somerset District Council		01935 462462
U3A	Jean Lindley	251256
Village Emergency Telephone System (VETS)		602500
Wincanton Town Council		31693
W.I.	Jackie Pyne	370713
Village Hall	www.horsingtonvillagehall.co.uk	
Chair	John Macdonald	370444
Bookings	Emilie Gordon	371396
Art	Gill Elston & Alison Clements	370236 370866
Badminton	Frank Beach	370767
Dance	Louise Holliday	362689
Football	Keith Norman	370332
Pilates	Carol Pirie	07885 798032
Upholstery	Andrée MacLeod	351918