

HATHERN HERALD



The Hathern Parish Council Magazine

SUMMER 2023

hathernparishcouncil.org.uk



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WELCOME

...to your summer edition of the Hathern Herald.

It's felt like a long spring but finally we have some good weather and the sun is shining, meaning it's the perfect time to get outside and explore the village and beyond. Check out Peter Sergeant's article on page 10 about the Normanton-on-Soar ferry boat.

Dave Neville goes diving into the archives for a very interesting look at how Hathern Band was once split in two, find this on page 6.

In a very special Meet The Neighbours, we meet Mary Smith, who has just recently celebrated her 100th birthday - Happy Birthday Mary!

As we go to print, we're just heading into Hathern's Big Week so I'm sure there will be some pictures and articles from that in our Autumn edition.

As always, if you would like to get in touch with the Herald Team, please let us know. We're always looking for interesting subjects to write about and also for contributors to the team.

That's all for now, enjoy your summer and we'll meet again in our Autumn issue.

Benjamin Hardy

Benjamin Hardy
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MEET THE NEIGHBOURS MARY'S CENTENARY

Mary was born in Littlehampton and grew up in Rustington, a small village in West Sussex. She joined Brownies and then Guides, and has been involved in Girlguiding since she was 3 years old and is still involved in Trefoil Guild today.

Just before WW2 Mary went to London and trained as a Nursery Nurse and worked in childcare throughout the war, after which she secured a job with the English Medical Officer for Schools and went to Ethiopia for 3 years looking after their five children.

After returning to England, she met and married Henry, a Naval Chief Petty Officer and they had two children together. Once the children were born the family moved to Thatcham in Berkshire. Here she founded Thatcham Playgroup when one of her children

went to school leaving the other with no playmates, first in her home and then moving to the Church Hall. Thatcham Playgroup is still running today.

Once the children had left home, she retrained as a medical secretary and worked in Wayland Hospital in Bradfield, a home for mentally ill patients. When Wayland closed Mary went to work with her friend who set up a business of homes looking after elderly people. She eventually retired aged 81 years.

Since retiring she volunteered as an adviser for the Citizens Advice Bureau for several years. She also worked as a volunteer usherette for Watermill theatre and recorded the Newbury Weekly News for blind people with Kennet Cassette

After the death of Henry, she moved to Hathern to be near to her daughter Jennifer. She joined Loughborough Trefoil Guild and the local Womens Institute, Gardening Club and Oasis. She enjoys going to church and served coffee at the weekly coffee mornings.



MEET THE COUNCILLORS

Whilst there weren't any Parish Council elections in Hathern this year, we still experienced a significant change in our Councillors, with three long standing members stepping down from their roles.

We would like to thank Roy Dann, John Boyes and Dave Neville for their amazing contributions over many years, we expect we will all see them at future meetings keeping an eye on the new Parish Council!

Those who remained from the previous Council did have to put themselves forward for re-election, however the election was uncontested due to no new applicants and therefore Ben Murdoch, Martin Clayton, Rachel Bennett and Shona Farmer remained as Councillors. Ben Murdoch is stepping up to take the role of Chair, with Martin as Vice-Chair. Maureen Spencer continues as Clerk.

We have been fortunate to receive two applications from interested parties however

we still have one vacancy, please get in touch with us if you are interested in finding out more. You'll find all of us involved in village events and enjoying the village walks and amenities, please feel free to say hello!

Here, we introduce your Councillors (pictured, left to right) and we asked each of them one question - who is an interesting person you've met? It's basically an excuse to name drop!

Ben Murdoch

Our new Chair Ben moved to Hathern from Australia in 2005 from to work with Richard & Inger Mee at Oakley Grange Farm. He briefly moved back to sunnier climates, but chose to return and now lives in Hathern with his family, working at Roberts and Lyons as a Yard and Stock Manager. Ben enjoys spending time with his family and all things sports; watching, playing and supporting his children's games.

Ben's interesting person is cricketer Sir Gary (Garfield) Sobers, with whom he enjoyed a drink and conversation at a black tie dinner.

Shona Farmer

Shona has lived in Hathern since 2010, having lived here initially from 2002-2006. A

Marketing Manager at Charnwood Molecular in Loughborough, outside of work she enjoys watching rugby and cricket with her family and being an unpaid taxi for her son who plays both sports. Shona takes advantage of the many walks in and around the village so do say 'hello' if you see her!

Shona was fortunate to meet Sir David Attenborough a few years ago and be his chaperone at an event she had organised. Shona reports he was down to earth and lovely!

Martin Clayton

Martin, our Vice Chair, moved to Hathern as a child and follows in the footsteps of his parents who were also Councillors for Hathern Parish Council. Martin works as a Wealth Manager with one of the UK's largest Private Wealth Companies. You'll often see him involved with village events and showcasing his musical talent at gigs at the local pubs, supported by his wife and baby.

In managing the bands for Wicked Hathern Festival, Martin met Motown legend Martha Reeves. It was a chilly English evening so Martin loaned Martha his WHF staff hoody only for her to return to America with it!

Rachel Bennett

Rachel, an Engineering Manager at Rolls-Royce Small Modular Reactors, has lived in Hathern since 2014. Outside of work and being a Councillor, Rachel works on renovating her house with her husband. You can find her supporting village events with Hathern Village Association.

At a charity dinner, Rachel was seated next to Olympic ski jumper Eddie The Eagle. They spoke about his other skills as a plasterer and plumber for most of the evening!



DAISY BANK UPDATE

In the last days of the previous Parish Council's term, the paperwork was finally signed to bring the green spaces of Daisy Bank in to public ownership. The Parish Council is now responsible for the pathways, play areas and green areas of the estate. We are grateful to William Davis for allowing the option to be given to the Council to take this on and even more grateful that we can finally add these areas to our responsibilities!

Daisy Bank residents will have received a small leaflet saying hello - anybody using the play area will have noticed the signage changeover to show our contact details. If you notice anything on the estate that you feel needs Parish attention, please do contact the Clerk.

The green spaces mowing now falls under our remit. Moving forward, plans are afoot to install a new waste bin and create a new seating area.

Special thanks must go to both Roy Dann, outgoing Chairman, for his persistence - alongside Keith Harris, outgoing Borough Councillor who was also hugely influential in keeping the cogs moving!"



WHEN WE WERE TWO:

Hathern Parish Council has recently changed solicitors which has meant retrieving all the documents being held by the former solicitors. As a result, two fascinating minute books have come to light. These date from the start of the Parish Council in 1894 to 1908, and from 1929 to 1936. They provide a fascinating window into the issues in the village during those years. One of those issues was dealing with the bands. No that's not a typo. In 1894 Hathern had two brass bands.

It was in 1890 when Hathern Band, which had been going since 1856, split in two. Several members left, based round the Miller family to form the New Band. These were highly political times; the Miller family and supporters were Conservative and the remaining Old Band were of the Liberal persuasion - no Labour Party in

those days. In 1893 the New Band came third in a competition in Coalville entitling them to now call themselves Hathern Prize Band. Needless to say, the Old Band weren't amused and, keen to add "Prize" to their name, entered competitions during 1894, eventually coming second at Hinckley. So now we had Hathern Old Prize Band, and Hathern Prize Band.

Back to 1890. The split was acrimonious, and the Old Band took the New Band to court. The Old Band claimed that music belonging to them had been taken by the New Band, and that Thomas Miller was refusing to return his uniform. It's difficult to follow the claims and counter claims in the court report, but the upshot was that the judge found for the Old Band, awarding them 18 shillings, reducing to one farthing if the property was given up. Things were no better in 1894 when a member of the Old Band was charged with being drunk and disorderly at Hathern Cross. All the witnesses at the Police Court were members of the New Band and the defendant was found guilty being fined fifteen shillings.



Back to Hathern Parish Council. The council owned Round Bank at the top of Wide Street. Round Bank was larger then and was a popular venue for village events. Both bands wanted to play there on these occasions and the council had to act as referee. Up to 13 June 1895 use of the Round Bank had been on a first come first served basis, but the council decided then that for 1896, the Old Prize Band would have Whitsuntide and August Bank Holiday and the Prize Band at the Wakes with the bands alternating this arrangement each year. That doesn't seem to have held because the council had to adjudicate on many occasions. For instance in 1898, the council gave the Old Prize Band Whit Sunday evening and Wakes Sunday afternoon, and the Prize Band Whit Sunday afternoon and Wakes Sunday evening. There were occasions when the bands did play together, notably at Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebration in 1898 and the relief of Mafeking in 1900.

Eventually the two bands merged in 1917. There was a long strike at Hathern Brick and Terracotta Co. at Hathern Station and the strikers wanted a band to accompany them on a march to a big meeting in the Market Place, Loughborough. Because of the war, neither band could find enough players so they amalgamated as the Hathern United Prize Band.

Dave Neville. Acknowledgement to Geoff Fletcher, band historian for information in this article.

Photographs courtesy of Hathern History Society.

For further information about Hathern band, visit their website.

www.hathernband.co.uk





OPEN FOR BUSINESS HATHERN HOME ROASTED COFFEE

Passing through Hathern on the A6 Loughborough Road, there's no indication that something exceptional hides behind no. 157. But here is Hathern's own coffee roastery. It's a bit special, being able to offer visitors a "Hathern blend".

Hathern Coffee is the brainchild, passion and enterprise of Chris Hill.

It started with an espresso coffee pod machine in 2017. Big disappointment, big mistake. Except that it triggered an obsessive quest to produce the best home coffee. Over several years, lots of trials and errors (some undrinkable!), Chris honed his skills as a roaster until he was happily giving home roasted coffee away to friends and family. When people started asking to buy it, Chris recognised a crossroads: was this just a hobby or was it going to be more?

No contest. Chris signed up for a business support scheme. He produced a business plan, invested in a commercial roaster and built the microroastery. He worked on a website and visited potential customers. He worked on bespoke standardised blends - experimenting and tasting trial after trial (he still does that!). With the launch of the website in May 2022, Hathern Coffee was officially born.

As well as business practicalities, there were wider issues. Coffee is big global business involving significant ethical considerations - environmental and social. The Fairtrade movement did a lot to help small growers, but the trade still has a long way to go. Small growers, ethical dealers trading through to smaller processors and end producers is one way to a fairer relationship and it's the way Chris chooses to go. He buys raw beans from three sources currently:

- The Green Coffee Collective supplies only rare and exclusive limited edition lots.
- Lot20 Coffee is a small company dealing personally with growers in Kenya. Chris even had the good fortune to meet Sidney, who runs Lot20 (pictured).
- Covoya Coffee Company is a larger ethical dealer providing wider choice.



Hathern Coffee products fall into two categories, blends and single origin beans.

There are currently three blends which are carefully created with lots of trial and sampling to meet Chris's exacting standards.

- Hathern Max with beans from South America, Africa and India
- Hathern Gem - Brazil and Ethiopia
- Hathern House - Brazil, Mexico and some robusta*

(*the best quality beans are invariably "Arabica" varieties. "Robusta" beans are generally considered harsher, less interesting and used for cheaper bulk products. However, containing three times the caffeine, the addition of a few robusta in a good arabica blend adds a background "kick".)

Single origin beans are an opportunity to try something new and different. They are grown in small quantities and supply can be a one-off. While Chris tries hard to maintain a regular range, there is no guarantee that any one bean variety will reappear.

There are options for customers who want a reliable regular coffee, for others who like a taste adventure - and those who enjoy

both. Beans can be ordered whole or to any grind from finest coffee machine to coarsest "Cowboy Brew" for that "Blazing Saddles" reenactment.

Sales are developing on two fronts - businesses and individuals.

Customers can already enjoy Hathern coffee in local outlets like Passion Cafe in Shepshed, Brown's restaurant in Loughborough and The Dew Drop, the Church and the Anchor here in the village. Individual sales are online or by contacting Chris personally. He delivers local orders free, or they can be picked up from the roastery by arrangement.

Hathern Coffee is still very much a developing business currently juggled with a full-time job. The ambition is to grow slowly and steadily towards a commercially viable roastery with its own customer outlet.

In the meantime, lucky Hathern to have such a positive, human-scale enterprise in the village - and our own local coffee!

Graham Patient

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SPECIAL FEATURE

NORMANTON-ON-SOAR FERRY BOAT

What links (pun intended) the following: the River Fal in Cornwall; the River Avon in Warwickshire; and the principal river of Leicestershire, the River Soar? Answer: they all have chain ferries providing crossing points but while the King Harry Ferry on The Fal is a pedestrian and vehicle-carrying vessel powered by diesel engines and the Stratford-upon-Avon one is a pedestrian-only craft driven by a hand-turned winch, the Normanton-on-Soar version is an example of the least complicated ferry boat of all, being propelled across the river by the ‘hands-on’ operator simply pulling on the chain which is anchored between the banks (Fig 1).

Chain ferries (or cable ferries) have long been used to effect river crossings and the one which connects Nottinghamshire with Leicestershire at Normanton is a perfect model of the type. It allows river traffic to pass over the slack chain at the bottom of the river when it is not in use: when required, the chain is put under tension by means of a winch and the operator pulls on it where

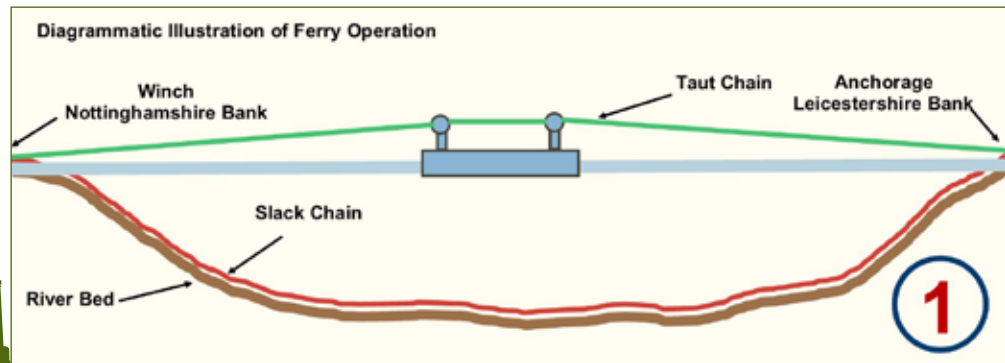


it passes between the two pulleys on the upstream side of the boat (Figs 2 & 3).

There has been a chain ferry crossing at Normanton since the late 18th century but while there are well-placed signs and a carved marker (Fig 4), directing would-be passengers to it on the Nottinghamshire side of the Soar, there is just one marker on the Leicestershire



bank (Fig 5), directly opposite the ferry chalet and decking which was built next to the landing point in 2017. Newcomers to Hathern may, therefore, be forgiven for not knowing of



the chain ferry’s existence if they have never walked along the river towards Loughborough from the weirs at Zouch or from Dishley Pool towards Zouch. It is also certainly true that no one passing through Hathern on the A6 would be aware of it, there being no brown ‘tourist attraction’ signs directing them to it as there are on the A6006 to Rempstone at the junction with Moor Lane leading to Normanton (Fig 6) or at the junction of Leake Lane and Normanton Lane in Stanford-on-Soar (Fig 7).



Given that it is called the “Normanton-on-Soar Ferry Boat”, of course, it is not surprising that it is well-advertised on the eastern side of the river and, moreover, that it is a central feature of the Normanton village sign (Fig 8). The passenger traffic that it attracts, however, is two-way and for those heading on foot or on bicycle from Hathern (or anywhere else, for that matter) for lunch in Normanton or the footpaths and cycle-ways in Nottinghamshire,



it provides an inexpensive and delightful way of crossing the Soar when it is operating. It is open for business at weekends from 1st April to 30th September between 10 am and 4.30 pm and is staffed by volunteers, most of whom live in the village. Fares (in cash) are £1 per person each way and bikes and dogs are charged at 50p each way. During the week, walking groups may be accommodated by ringing 07487 252784. All operating times are, naturally, subject to the weather and the river conditions so it is always worth checking whether the ferry is open before setting out. Given its position just south of St James Church with its distinctive spire, it is not hard to find your way to the ferry point from Hathern as there are so many footpaths which lead down to the river and you can enjoy the river crossing for yourselves.

Peter Sergeant



For more information about the chain ferry visit <https://normanton-on-soar.co.uk/chain-ferry/> or, for a detailed history, obtain a copy of “The Normanton on Soar Ferry” by Malcolm Dark from www.reprintuk.com.

Acknowledgements: Stuart Sleight, Normanton-on-Soar Parish Council; Richard Clarke, volunteer ferry operator.

SPECIAL FEATURE
**THE WILDLIFE
BLOG**

Blog: noun, an informational website published on the World Wide Web consisting of discrete, often informal diary-style text entries.

With two years of hard graft starting to pay off, Hathern Wildlife Group wanted to share progress on more than a quarterly basis. So the blog was born. The group facebook page featuring top class local wildlife photography was already well known and appreciated. It made sense to attach the blog there. It is a weekly report not just on the practical work, but reflecting the social and community dimension of the activity as well.

The first post was in March with regular updates since then - to be found on the Hathern Wildlife facebook page - just ask to join: tadpole tales, shed shenanigans, pond planting and plenty more.

It started like this...

It's two years now. Two years since HWLG took on the challenge of turning a neglected, unmanaged corner of the Parish Council's allotments site into a thoughtfully managed wildlife haven. Two years of clearing brambles, filling skips with rusty metal, decaying carpet and non-degradable plastic - rediscovering and rebuilding the range of habitats, including a new large pond. Two years of Tuesday mornings and Sunday afternoons hacking, dragging, wheelbarrowing, digging, pruning, wheezing and creaking. And resting - refuelling with coffee, biscuits and banter.

Now we have something to blog about. So we are going to - to let folks know what we are up to - what the wildlife think of it - and what opportunities there are for anyone to join us. To get involved.

So, at this the start of our blog, where are we? What have we achieved so far? Well, on a relatively small scale, we have:

- created a woodland area
- de-brambled and reshaped an orchard
- dug out and filled a good size pond
- put in access paths

- built a dual purpose "dead hedge"
- set up raised beds for a wild flower nursery
- installed a young tree "park" - and moved on over 40 fruit trees to the recently planted Avederne Wood

It's all very new - we are still creating more than maintaining. That balance will shift over the coming year as more projects reach fruition.

Tuesday 21st March 2023

So specifically what have we been up to this week?

Sheds! We have been showered with offers of sheds. We could have built shed city - but stopped at 3. Two small sheds for storage had a lick of preservative today. Green suits them very well. Shed 3 is a larger glass-fronted structure that will provide shelter and somewhere to sit and watch the wildlife. This week we have been meticulously levelling the base - and trying to remember how the rest fits together.

We were also weeding the tree park so the young whips aren't choked by the abundant

bindweed and brambles. It's heartening to see them breaking bud - the baby crabapples, dog roses, hawthorn, dogwood and the rest.

And we started clearing the wildflower patch ready for seeding next month. That's another battle with bindweed and brambles.

Then we sat down for a coffee, some cake and a companionable chat, accompanied by robins and long-tailed tits on the bird feeders.

We sighed a satisfied happy sigh. It's good for you, this wildlife lark.

That was blog1. A dozen or so blogs later you can catch up with the on-going stories, find out exactly what on earth a dead hedge is, what is turning up in the new pond - and generally have a sense of what the group get up to.

Hathern Wildlife Group (HWLG) is a band of volunteers who work with the Parish Council in the village to restore and enhance the natural environment. There is no formal membership. Anyone can turn up and join in. The group get together regularly at the Shepshed Road Allotments site for working sessions on Tuesdays 10-12 and Sundays 2-4. Interested visitors (and potential volunteers) are welcome at those times.



COMMUNITY MATTERS

HATHERN COMMUNITY LIBRARY

We held our AGM on 11th May and were delighted to see so many familiar faces there to support us. Our secretary Jon Smith-Moorhouse stood down, many thanks to Jon for all of his hard work as a trustee. Many thanks also go out to all of the volunteers who help keep the library going, as well as everyone who supports it by participating in the library lottery, and of course our many members and borrowers! We also had a great time at the Coronation Big Lunch running the Library photo booth – we were swamped with young people wanting to make their own crowns and have their photo taken sitting on our ‘throne’, we’re so glad it was



a success! We’ve got lots more great events planned for the next few months, including craft workshops, talks, the Summer Reading Challenge, a sponsored walk and activities for Hathern Big Week. Keep an eye on our social media and our website for upcoming events,

like Big Week activities, Coronation-themed events, craft workshops and more!

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

We are always looking for volunteers at the library and there are so many varied roles to choose from, so if you’re looking to give something back to your local community, and make new friends in the process, why not get in touch?



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Wildlife Walk, 1st June, 10am. A joint event with Hathern Wildlife Group for Hathern Big Week. Join HWG and HCL on Thursday morning to celebrate wildlife in the village. Collect a map from either Shepshed Road Allotments (where Hathern Wildlife Group will be based, at the new wildlife pond), Hathern Community Library, or from the library wildlife area in the Big Week tent. At your own pace, follow the trail to find hidden creatures and fun wildlife facts along the journey. Alongside this there will be children’s craft activities and stories in the Big Tent, hosted by Hathern Community Library. Storytime sessions will start at 10.30am and 11.15am. Please note: This is a self-guided walk. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

- Mandala Papercutting with Harsha, 17th June 17, 1- 3pm. During this class you will create a beautiful, colourful mandala. You will have some time to add colour, design and decorate your mandala. You will then learn the technique of paper cutting to make your mandala 3D. A great relaxing way to spend an afternoon crafting. £15 per person. If you are interested in any craft workshops, please email Harsha@IndialInspiredCrafts.com

- Library Talk With Peter Yorkstone – ‘The joys and sorrows of litter picking in Hathern’, 22nd June, 7.30-8.30pm. There is no charge for this talk, but donations to the continued operation CML and future talks are encouraged and can be made on the day. Please pre-book for this event – phone or pop into the library during opening hours – or contact us via our social media channels.

- Summer Reading Challenge - The Summer Reading Challenge starts on 1st July. This year’s theme is ‘Ready, Set, Read’ and will have a sporty theme. We will share details as soon as LCC makes them available.

LOTTERY

Hathern Community Library Lottery is based on the National Lottery and pays out each week on the Bonus Ball. Each ticket, from 1 to 59, costs £2 and 50% of the proceeds goes to the winner, 50% being retained by the library. In the event of no one having the winning ticket, the prize is rolled over to the following week, for one lucky person! The Lottery is a vital and significant part of our fund raising, giving us a broadly predictable level of income and actually covers about half of our annual running costs. This contribution has become increasingly more important to us as we have gradually lost grant income since we became a Community Library 7 years ago. If you would like to support us by buying a ticket (or two!)

every now and again - or even better by bagging yourself a permanent number - you can contact us through our Facebook page, or by email (janesorby@btinternet.com). Payment can be made through PayPal, bank transfer or cash. Our Lottery members are a loyal bunch of people who like the rest of us, want to see the library stay open, welcoming both the village and the wider community. If you can spare £2 a week, please consider joining us - the more tickets we sell, the higher the winnings!



OPENING HOURS

Tues 14:00 - 18:00

Weds 10:00 - 12:30

Thurs 14:00 - 18:00

Fri 10:00 - 12:30

Sat 10:00 - 12:00

CONTACT THE LIBRARY

<https://hatherncommunitylibrary.org/>

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www.Hatherncommunitylibrary.org

hatherncommunitylibrary@gmail.com

[@hathernlibrary](https://www.instagram.com/hathernlibrary)

HATHERN
Open Gardens

HATHERN OPEN GARDENS

24 & 25
JUNE 2023

12PM-5PM

£3
PER PERSON

PROGRAMMES AVAILABLE FROM HATHERN CHURCH