

LOOK OUT

THE PARISH MAGAZINE FOR

ALPHAMSTONE, LAMARSH, GREAT & LITTLE HENNY

MIDDLETON, TWINSTED AND WICKHAM ST PAULS



MARCH 2021

www.northhinckfordparishes.org.uk

WHO TO CONTACT

Team Rector: Rev Gill Morgan
revgillmorgan@outlook.com
584993
Usual day off Friday

Team Vicar: Vacancy

Team Administrator: Fiona Slot
fi.slot@yahoo.co.uk
(working hours 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Tuesday and Thursday)
278123

The Church of St Barnabas, Alphamstone

Churchwardens: Desmond Bridge 269224
Susan Langan 269482

Magazine Contact: Melinda Varcoe 269570 melinda@varcoe.com

The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Great & Little Henny

Churchwarden: Jeremy Milbank 269720

Magazine Contact: Stella Bixley 269317 p.bixley@btinternet.com

The Church of the Holy Innocents, Lamarsh

Churchwarden: Andrew Marsden 227054

Magazine Contact: Bret & Rosemary Johnson 227988 bretuk89@yahoo.co.uk

The Church of All Saints, Middleton

Churchwarden: Sue North 370558

Magazine Contact: Jude Johnson 582559 judevh11@hotmail.co.uk

The Church of St John the Evangelist, Twinstead

Churchwardens: Elizabeth Flower 269898
Henrietta Drake 269083

Magazine Contact: Vacant

The Church of All Saints, Wickham St. Pauls

Churchwardens: Janice Rudd 269789
Ann Robertson 269624

Magazine Contact: Susannah Goodbody 269250 gdby@goodbodys.net

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Magazine Editor:	Magazine Advertising:
Annie Broderick 01787 269152	Anthony Lyster 0800 0469 069
1 Broad Cottages, Broad Road	The Coach House
Wickham St Pauls	Ashford Lodge
Halstead. Essex CO9 2PG	Halstead. Essex CO9 2RR
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Pastoral Ponderings



Dear Friends,

Seasonally, this time of year I would usually be writing about Lent, preparing ourselves for Easter, considering what we might give up or change in our lives. Yet it feels as if we have been going through a 'Lent' of sorts on and off for the past year.

On the 20th March 2020, pubs, restaurants, cinemas, theatres and gyms were told to close and with a last pint in The Half Moon before they shut their doors it was only 3 days later when we were in national lockdown. Our Lent course on the environment and creation was stopped in its tracks and suddenly the country had drawn to a halt giving us all time and opportunity to take stock of our lives.

I remember asking and reflecting during that first lockdown on what we would leave behind when we got back to normal and what would we take forward with us. I guess the question really was what have we learnt about life while in lockdown?

One year on, when we thought we would be through this and living our 'new normal' lives, we are still perhaps asking the question, what have we learnt about life, not just in lockdown but through this pandemic. What have learnt as a nation, community, family and individual? We have missed hugs, family, friends, celebrations; we have lost loved ones, said goodbye in unusual ways, our plans have been disrupted and life put on hold. And yet perhaps we still have more to face with the economic and emotional aftermath.

I wonder, if what we have learnt is to love life and to cherish our relationships? Not to waste life in anger or resentment with fear or material greed but to live it abundantly with love, forgiveness and gratitude.

I invite you to continue through the pandemic and through Lent with this as our goal so that come Easter we will be ready to celebrate the new life and unconditional love this festival offers.

Take care, with prayers

Gill

Rev Gill Morgan

Rev Paul Grover

Paul has decided it is time to move on from his ministry in North Hinckford. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge his time with us and say thank you for all he has given and for the lives he has touched. We would like to wish him well in his future ministry, wherever that may take him. May he go with our prayers and God's blessing.

You can give a one off gift or a regular contribution to our churches
through Just Giving.

Go to www.justgiving.com/northhinckfordteam



SERVICES

We are offering weekly worship via Zoom, YouTube and Facebook until further notice.

Check our website for updates www.northhinckfordteam.org

on Sundays

Service via Zoom, 10.00am

Service of the Word available on YouTube

on Wednesdays

Morning Prayer via Zoom, 10.00am

Story Time available from 2.00pm on FaceBook

www.facebook.com/northhinckfordteam

www.youtube.com/revgillmorgan

You are very welcome to attend these services.

Please email our Team Administrator for the Zoom link, fi.slot@yahoo.co.uk

A number of our beautiful rural churches are open for private prayer. Please follow Covid 19 guidance when you visit. Churches are open at:



Belchamp Otten (Sunday morning)

Foxearth

Ovington

Pentlow

Twinstead

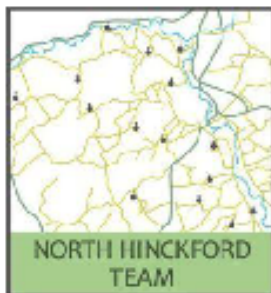
LENT 2021

LENT REFLECTIONS

Join us via Zoom on 6 consecutive Tuesday evenings, at 7.00pm, from 23rd February. An opportunity to reflect together during lent.

For more details contact Rev Gill revgillmorgan@outlook.com

To book your place contact Fiona Slot fi.slot@yahoo.co.uk



NIGHT PRAYER (COMPLINE)

Daily During Lent at 9pm

If you haven't used Facebook before then use this link just before 9pm

www.facebook.com/northhinckfordteam

We will be there every night during Lent

(Everyone can watch, you don't need to join Facebook or have an account)

Coffee, chat and prayer.....

During lent this year we are unable to get together in person so let's get together via Zoom.

Put the kettle on and grab a slice of cake on Thursdays during lent at 10.30am, starting on 25th February.

If you wish to attend please let Fiona Slot know and she will email the Zoom link to you, fi.slot@yahoo.co.uk





Crafty Women

Crafty Women thought you might like to see what some of us have been up to during Lock Down.

If you would like to join us as and talk about yours and our work in knit, crochet, paint, weaving or sewing etc., you would be very welcome to join us via Zoom on:

Monday March 15th from 10 o'clock onwards, you will be most welcome.

We exchange ideas and hints and we have a good natter too!

Last month's crafty work was made by Linda from Wickham St Pauls.

For more details contact Rosemary Ingram on 01787 267969 or Fiona Slot on fi.slot@yahoo.co.uk



By Linda of Foxearth

VISIT OUR WEBSITES

www.northhinckfordteam.org

www.achurchnearyou.com/benefice/08/315BJ

www.explorestourvalley.co.uk

A pause for thought

I wonder if you heard the BBC radio 4 series of five programmes last spring entitled “The Passion in Plants”? Having heard them all, I enjoyed looking for the plants discussed as I went on my daily Covid 19 walks. I didn’t know about all these fascinating associations, and was even unfamiliar with many of the plants. Here is what I picked up (and if there are any errors of fact, I take responsibility – the BBC is fully absolved!)

Have you ever thought about how people celebrated Palm Sunday before the appearance of any kind of palm in this country, or at least in this part of England? It is interesting to reflect on the fact that knowledge about, and access to, many plants that were commonplace in the Middle East were not available to the general public in England a few centuries ago. So substitutes were often thought of. Starting at **Palm Sunday**, we have specific plants associated with the various stages of Jesus’ final days, crucifixion and resurrection. Since Palms were not available in England for the Palm Sunday processions, branches of **pussy willow (goat willow) – *salix caprea***, or **yew – *taxus baccata***, commonly found in churchyards, were used. In our church services nowadays we use imported palm to make the crosses that are distributed.



Then there are associations with the **Last Supper (Maundy Thursday)**. This was Jesus’ celebration, shortly before his crucifixion, of the Jewish feast of the Passover. At the Passover, bitter herbs are eaten to remind Jews of the bitter times the people of Israel suffered when in exile. On this day, traditionally in England, the herb called **tansy – *tanacetum vulgare*** was used – a deep yellow flower which was eaten for its medicinal and healing properties (although it is also toxic) and was known to be bitter-tasting. Another association with the Last Supper is the **elder – *sambucus nigra***. This rather scruffy tree is said to be the one from which Judas hanged himself in shame, and it can have a fungal growth on it, known as “Auricula auriculae Judae” – “Judas’ ear”. (Another contender for this role is the **Judas tree – *cercis siliquastrum*** which grows in Southern Europe and Western Asia.)



Good Friday is traditionally the day on which **town hall clock – *adoxa moschatellina*** opens. It is so called because it has five small flower heads at the top of a single stem, resembling the four faces and top of a town hall clock – and it is a symbol of watchfulness. Its Latin name comes from the fact that it has a musk-like scent. These tiny flowers are apparently common in hedgerows – they flower in early April, but are difficult to see, so I have yet to find one, in spite of walking around with my head down in any shady patches of trees.



The **hawthorn** – *crataegus monogyna* - so common and beautiful here at this time of year, has been brought into the **Crucifixion** story as the tree which provided the wood for the cross on which Jesus was crucified. And its wickedly strong and sharp thorns were said to have been used in the crown of thorns placed on his head. There is another version which says that it was **the aspen tree** - *populus tremula* - that provided the wood for the cross – and that its leaves make the characteristic rustling sound because it is shuddering in shame at having been used for this purpose. In some Celtic traditions the aspen is the subject of abuse and curses for this reason.



On the other hand, there is a tradition that says the aspen was proud to have been associated with such a glorious and world-changing event. There is a very beautiful Anglo-Saxon hymn “The Dream of the Rood” (it is long, but worth reading in full on the internet) describing the feelings experienced by the wood that was used for the crucifixion – “I quaked when the warrior embraced me—yet I dared not bow to the ground, collapse to earthly regions, but I had to stand there firm Listen - the Lord of Glory honored me then over all forested trees, the Warden of Heaven’s Realm!”

Trees in general have significance in all major world religions and in the Bible they have an important role both at the beginning of the Old Testament, and at the end of Revelation in which there are descriptions of the **Tree of Life**, the leaves of which are “for the healing of the nations”.

On **Easter Day**, the day of the resurrection, when Christ stepped out of the tomb, his foot is said to have fallen on a soft carpet of **pearlwort** (a kind of chick pea). Traditionally, in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, this flower has been used to ward off evil spirits and to protect mothers in childbirth. (It was also thought to be useful to have a piece in your mouth before kissing the man you wanted to “bind” to you!)



As Mary approached the risen Christ in amazement on that Easter morning, Jesus warned her “don’t touch me”. And so the flower **touch me not balsam** - *impatiens noli-me-tangere* - came to be associated with the **Resurrection**. Its name derives from the fact that when the seeds are ripe, the plant ejects them at speed. (This is an important plant – rare in our part of England but found occasionally elsewhere in the UK – since the netted carpet moth relies totally on this plant for its existence.)



Finally, at **Easter** and during **Pentecost** the **wood sorrel** - *oxalis acetocella* - blossoms. And so that flower acquired the name “**alleluja**” (“praise the Lord”) all over Europe. “Alleluja” is not used in the Church liturgy until Easter Day, the day the flower is said to open.



So now we have covered the whole story of our Church tradition from Lent to Easter Day.

The global concern about the climate and the extinction of species has been sharpened by Covid in the past year – I know many people have found, like me, that it’s been good to have a chance to look more closely at the natural world and to think about the catastrophic effects humanity’s activities are having on it.

I don’t think I would have found all these plants had it not been for the restrictions of Covid “lockdown” last April and I am looking forward to searching in our hedgerows again this year. Perhaps I will find **adoxa moschatellina** - “**town hall clock**” this year – any clues as to where to look, please?

Helen Morgan



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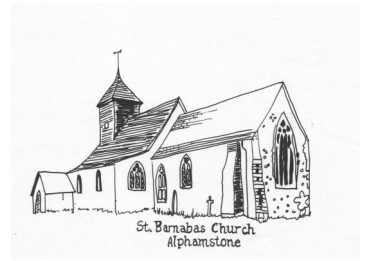
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Enquiries to

Sandra O'Sullivan: 269255



Alphamstone



Magazine Contact

Melinda Varcoe

269570

Parish Clerk

March 2021

Alphamstone News

I have just re-read Alphamstone's page in the Look Out last March. What a carefree, innocent world we were living in, with barely a whiff of viruses, masks, vaccines, lockdowns or cancelled lives and plans.

I remember going with a friend to the Lake District during the first week of March, and, although dimly conscious of something unpleasant brewing elsewhere in the world, we enjoyed a week of walking, and mixing freely with people at a literary festival, blissfully unaware of the cataclysmic storm clouds on the horizon. That was then. This, an entire year on, is now. In between, some of us have experienced the horrible effects of Covid19 for ourselves, and we have all suffered separation from family and friends. But at last an increasing number of us have received our first vaccination, and maybe are daring to imagine the refreshing breeze of freedom beginning to blow through the fear and restrictions. The world we have to return to looks rather battered today – saddened, depleted, broken, with shuttered shops and closed schools, over-stretched hospitals and shell-shocked families. We have a long way to go to climb out of this nightmare, as politicians keep reminding us. The only thing to do is search for the glimpses of colour and joy among the grey – and isn't spring the best time to do that? Although it's icy cold February when I'm writing this, beneath the snow there are aconites and primroses; on the bare twigs the birds are singing, green buds are beginning to show – all the clichés of promise and light. So let's allow ourselves to welcome the best time of year, and start rebuilding the world we really want, one hopeful step at a time.

For now there's not much to report while we're all still in lockdown – won't it be wonderful when we can plan, meet up and do wildly exciting things like drinking a cup of coffee together?!

St. Barnabas Church

Important news which affects us all

There are to be major changes within the North Hinckford Benefice.

It is with great sadness that I have to announce that the Rev Paul Grover has resigned as our non-stipendiary minister. Paul has served this community remarkably well having found his vocation and developed it under the leadership of Rev Margaret. At St. Barnabas we were very honoured to be the church that backed Paul as he went forward through the selection process and beyond. We will be very sorry to see him leave. We have also lost the potential of Helen Grover, who is soon going to take up a curacy in the Diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

We were doubly blessed, because not only was Paul an excellent minister (to the churches primarily in this part of the benefice, but also throughout the Team) and a good friend to boot, he was, as I said before, non-stipendiary – meaning that he took no salary.

His departure leaves us in an interregnum and looking for a vicar to work alongside the Rev Gill Morgan, our Rector.

We will, in all likelihood, be looking for a part time Vicar, which will increase the total share paid by the parishes that make up this benefice by something in excess of £20k, making the total approx. £110k, split between the fifteen churches.

Collectively, and in the heady pre-Covid days, a good number of our parishes were struggling to pay at the old rate. Somehow and from somewhere we will need to find this increased share for all our churches to remain viable. (More on that later, when the details and exact figures are clarified)

Gainsborough's House



These strange and difficult times have made short term planning very difficult indeed but we are very happy to report that building work on the new National Centre for Gainsborough has continued and will continue in lockdown according to the government's advice. Significant progress has been made on the refurbishment and conservation of the historic house, in developing new visitor facilities and the construction of the new galleries. The work on the historic house will bring out the period character and make

it feel more like a house now that the major art exhibitions will take place in the new building.

The new building gives extraordinary views over the whole site, not only of the back of the house but the town and landscape beyond. The Quay Theatre and the spire of St Peter's are visible as well as the distant field where Mr. and Mrs. Andrews sat for Gainsborough 270 years ago. Building progress has progressed enough that it is now possible to get a real sense of the scale of each of the new rooms and how they will work. The scale is impressive, whilst maintaining the sense of character and intimacy that is so integral to Gainsborough's House.



The challenges that we all face at the moment make our project all the more needed and it is clear that Gainsborough's House will be a hub for the artistic heritage of the region and the cultural offer of the town. We can't wait to see the doors open with major Gainsborough paintings filling the new gallery spaces and the house reflecting the passions and haunts of the artist's world. This will be followed by a series of national and international exhibitions as well as new works by artists and the activities of those in our surrounding communities.

We look forward to being able to welcome friends of Gainsborough's House to hard hat tours of the site when restrictions lift and to welcoming you all when we re-open.

For further information, please contact: mail@gainsborough.org

Gainsborough's House, 46 Gainsborough Street, Sudbury, Suffolk. CO10 2EU

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Gainsborough's House Information Point at 47 Gainsborough Street is temporarily closed

National Centre for Thomas Gainsborough opens 2022

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Great & Little Henny

March 2021



Look Out Magazine

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Magazine Contact

Stella Bixley 269317

Parish Clerk

Shelley Boydell 07801 492312

Volunteer required – Mary Wilson has been delivering the Look Out magazine to residents of Henny Street for a considerable time. Understandably she has decided to retire. We greatly appreciate the time she has so kindly given up each month to deliver the magazine to our doors.

Would you like to volunteer to deliver the Look Out magazine to the residents of Henny Street? There are currently 21 magazines to deliver. Annual subscriptions to the magazine also need be collected. The magazines are delivered to your door for you to then distribute.

If you would like to volunteer please contact Stella Bixley 269317 or email p.bixley@btinternet.com

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Henny e.newsletter -

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Please do not hesitate to let us know if you need shopping or medication collecting - we have a list of volunteers who can help you.

Thank you to those volunteers who have offered to help neighbours who are self isolating.

Email hennynewsletter@gmail.com

or phone 269507 if you need assistance.

Henny Parish Room



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Garden Clippings

The river continues to run at a high level with a few days of flooding following a spell of rain. Even relatively small amounts of rainfall propel the river level upwards. Pools of floodwater linger, reluctant to drain away, on the water meadows. The bomb crater, within the water meadow, now resembles a large pond. Debris, left high and dry following the flooding, is caught up in the sheep fence running across the meadow. Sadly this includes an assortment of discarded packaging, plastic bottles etc. which have been, at some point, tossed into the river. This mound of debris has been of some assistance to walkers during times of flooding. We have seen them precariously balanced on the debris, hanging onto the barbed wire top strand of fencing for extra support, as they try to negotiate the deep flood water at a higher level. I must say we have had some entertainment observing the antics of walkers. Two men were seen with trousers rolled up, carrying their trainers and wading through the knee high flood water with bare feet. Not an enviable option given the temperature of the water! Two young women were in fits of giggles as the water spilled over into the tops of their wellington boots as they struggled across. Others have prodded fearfully into the depths with their walking poles and decided to turn back. Dogs have had great fun charging about, spray flying in their wake.

A few days have passed since I wrote the previous paragraph, a blast of very cold weather has arrived with snow, ice and very low overnight temperatures. The temperature last night was forecast to dip to minus ten degrees, the coldest night for ten years. Outside the snow that fell earlier this week still lingers in places. The view across the water meadows is akin to frozen tundra! Our terracotta pots now resemble giant cupcakes with a liberal topping of royal icing!

The bird table has been a hive of activity with a constant flurry of visitors. The robins and blackbirds appear to expend a vast amount of energy chasing each other away from the food supply. In addition to the usual offerings of bird seed, fat balls, insect suet squares (much preferred to the fat balls) and peanuts, I add mealworms and also handfuls of wheat during harsh weather. The wheat is for the pheasants and dare I say for the four pigeons who visit the feeding area. My father, a farmer, would be horrified to know that I feed pigeons!! There is quite a squabble between the pigeons and collared doves if they arrive at the same time. The collared doves usually win and drive the much larger pigeons away.

A beacon of golden yellow at this time is the Hamamelis (witch hazel) on the millpond bank. It is a large specimen and looks fabulous against a clear blue winter sky. We recently planted three young witch hazel's on the island but due to all the recent flooding they have spent a while with their roots underwater. In flower at the moment but not sure what the long term repercussions of being so water-logged will be. It is relatively fleeting however.



The intense cold has created some incredible ice sculpture around the garden. Beside the sluice gates spiral formation icicles encase overhanging branches.



Further into the garden a truly magical natural wonder awaits where the spray from the weir has created a multitude of extraordinary icicles. The photos illustrate some of them.



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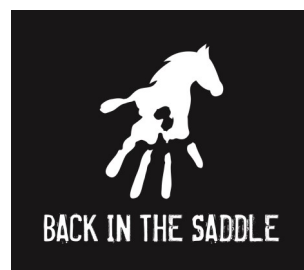
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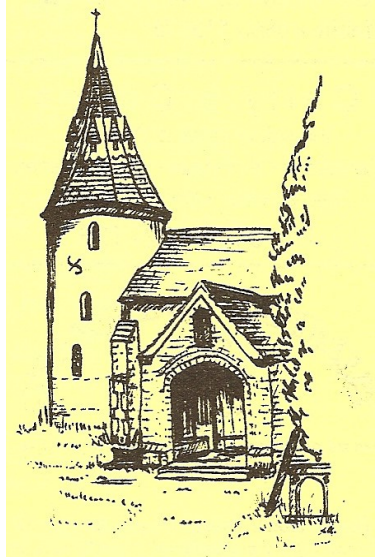
Lamarsh

March 2021

Lamarsh Notebook

The Building of the Railway to Sudbury Part Two

by Andrew Clarke



Magazine Contact
Bret & Rosemary Johnson 227988
Parish Clerk

We continue Andrew Clarke's fascinating account from last month's Look Out.



Cheffins Map showed several wild schemes around East Anglia after the completion of the line to Colchester and Cambridge.

The first part of the line, the short line from Colchester Station to the Hythe was completed by 31st March 1847. Meanwhile, work had started on the difficult route north of Marks Tey.

There was great excitement in Sudbury about the coming line. On the large meadow behind the gardens of the houses that lined the Market Hill, the road later called 'Great Eastern Road' was built. This was to be the site of the new Railway station, built as a terminus. Several plots were laid out 'for the erection of Maltings, Mills and Manufactories and all buildings calculated for mercantile purposes'. These plots were auctioned at the Rose and Crown Inn. The rest were reserved for the new terminus of the line. This station wasn't built as a terminus, but on the alignment of the junction between the railway from

Marks Tey and the proposed line from Stowmarket. It was built conveniently close to the Market Hill, 'The proper terminus and station will be not more than 200 yards from the Market Hill and the entrance will be opposite the Bear Inn'. Sadly, the new terminus was fated, within twenty years, to be abandoned for passengers, and converted into a Goods Depot. Already, by 1847, things were looking less than hopeful for the grand scheme of the direct Norwich route, and so further acts of parliament were obtained allowing the company to extend from Sudbury to Clare with a branch from Melford to Bury St. Edmunds. Bruff, the engineer proposed a tunnel around Sudbury anti-clockwise to get to Long Melford, but the idea was abandoned due to the curve required. The line would have to take the route of the valley through to Long Melford instead. The idea was shelved for a decade and the railway to Clare and Haverhill became reality only in September 1865, taking the graceful route above the water meadows on an embankment.

The entire construction of the line was contracted to George Wythes for £190,000 and work commenced in August 1846; the section of track from Marks Tey to Sudbury was started early in 1847. The two major constructions were the Chappel viaduct and the cutting at the Mount Bures ridge. At first, Peter Bruff had decided to build the bridge from laminated timber on brick piers, which was a method advocated by Brunel. However, the team who had commenced with the foundations of the bridge in July 1847 discovered that the valley floor was not silt and peat-seams but good solid clay that could take the weight of a brick bridge. Unfortunately, the contractors were familiar with the hard bricks made from London

clay and were unimpressed by the 'soft reds' used in East Anglia. However, the contractor Weston, whose men were starting work on the long Mount Bures cutting, came across a large seam of clay that would be ideal for bricks and set to work constructing temporary kilns. Within three months they had managed to make two million bricks and, at the same time, solving the problem of how to dispose of the clay in the deep cutting of the Bures Ridge.

At the time, the Colchester and Stour Railway Engineers Report spoke of the difficulties involved with the work between Chappel and Bures.

"The large embankments at Chappel are closed, and a road laid over the viaduct; a continuous line of rails is now, therefore, laid nearly from Marks Tey to Mount Bures at the summit, at Mount Bures, about 25,000 cubic yards have yet to be removed to obtain a single road, out of nearly 400,000 cubic yards originally contained in the cutting. The completion of this cutting is the measure of time for opening your railway, as until this is done, and a continuous road laid, the ballasting the line up to the junction with the Eastern Counties' Railway, and which ballast must be brought from the Stour Valley side of the summit level, cannot be proceeded with. The material in this cutting proved so difficult to remove that the contractor has been obliged to resort to blasting to expedite the progress of the works; and, he is at work on both sides, removing the earth towards Chappel and towards Bures, I am in hopes that he will have the gullet through so as to enable him to proceed with the ballast in a month from this time."

"At Bures, about 3,000 cubic yards of earthwork have to be removed to embankment, but this cannot conveniently be done until the embankment is made up from Mount Bures, when two or three weeks will suffice for its completion."

In the summer of 1848, a young man named William York was buried under a fall of earth in the Stour Valley Railway cutting at Little Cornard and died the next day.

By January 1849, the works of the Colchester and Stour Valley Railway Line were within three-quarters of a mile from Sudbury, and the Railway company confidently announced that the line would be open in June.



The method of making the shallower type of cutting

With all the excavation going on, it was no surprise that some fossils and archaeology were found. In February 1848, the labourers employed on the Stour Valley line in the parish of Lamarsh uncovered, 14ft under the surface, the head and tusks of a mammoth. The teeth measured 10", the tusks broke when being removed but measured 11ft in length. The following year, as railway workers were excavating the line at Great Cornard, nearly opposite the Five Bells Inn, they discovered, 12ft from the surface, a large tooth and a tusk, 4ft in length, of the mammoth or fossilised elephant. At the end of 1848, labourers upon the line at Mt Bures discovered about 5ft below the surface, three amphorae about 3ft high and very small at the neck, one was taken out perfect and another with a handle and spike broken off, the other two were broken. (Greek or Roman Jars). Another implement was found with two outer prongs and having double points "upon which are knobs of brass similar to which are placed on the horns of cattle."

The Marks Tey to Sudbury section of the line opened in June 1849 at a temporary terminus near Clovers Mill. The first passenger train to Sudbury, carrying an official party from Colchester, ran on July 2nd, full of civic dignitaries and officials of the railway company, it was met by a wooden triumphal arch at Marks Tey, decorated with garlands of flowers and foliage. Unfortunately, the arch was too small. As the train entered the branch line at Marks Tey, the engine's chimney struck the triumphal arch, causing it to crash onto the boiler of the engine. Thus garlanded, the train continued its way to Sudbury, being greeted en route by a band at Bures and bells at Sudbury, where a great crowd awaited it. Because the permanent

station was still unfinished, and the train had arrived early, the honoured guests had to walk into the town and cool their heels at the Bear Inn for a couple of hours before sitting down to a celebratory banquet at the town hall.

The opening week was an auspicious one, far exceeding the expectations of the directors. The general opinion was that the line was excellent, superior to many. Among the goods sent was the novel one of 50 sacks or more of fresh green peas for the London market. This was a sign of things to come, with a huge transport of fresh produce overnight to the metropolis, arriving at Covent Garden by the early morning. The railway also transported a great quantity of flour to London on that first week. Sufficient coal arrived via the railway to depress the going rate from 22s 6d to 19s a ton. The terminus near the market hill opened in July.

By October a great traffic was being carried on in both passengers and goods on the new Stour Valley Railway. To everyone's surprise, there was a great increase instead of a decrease in the coal trade on the river Stour barges at Sudbury. Although great quantities of coal were being sold at the railway station, the trade of the coalyards connected with the navigation were increasing so much that barges could not keep up supply, and other places had to be fixed up at the Quay for receiving coal. The downstream traffic also increased, with quantities of heavy goods such as corn, flour and malt which were sent down the River Stour to Mistley. The Stour Navigation was able to transport via the Thames in increasingly large quantities right into the heart of London, near the river where development was then taking place. The cost-per-mile by barge for bulk goods was cheaper than the railway despite the need for trans-shipment from river barge to the larger estuary barge at Mistley. The negotiations that had been proceeding for the merger of the Stour Navigation and the Railway fell through when it became apparent that this increased trade was going to be long-term. This increased trade, together with the fact that the Stour Navigation had just expended several thousand pounds in the previous few years in improving the river, decided the company to continue in competition with the railway.

The extension to Bury St. Edmunds and Clare was abandoned for lack of funds, as was the spur to Halstead. In 1862 the Eastern Union Railway and Eastern Counties Railway were amalgamated into the new Great Eastern Railway. The Stour Valley Railway company lingered on until 1900.

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Musings of a local

Janet Penfold

February is the month when the beautiful snowdrop graces our gardens and wayside verges. This delicate flower emerges from the rough, wet grass - a perfection of white petals, a bride arriving at the church for her wedding. I have made a decision NOT to look forward in time just in case ANOTHER 'nasty' emerges to thwart our progress into a world where we are protected from this dreadful virus.

Now is the time to read the books we have admired from the distant past. *Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Graham, first published in 1908, is one of my many favourites. It is the delightful tale of the adventures of *Mole, Ratty, Badger, Otter* and the impetuous *Toad of Toad Hall*. We can all identify with them - especially in the recent surge of interest in the natural world. We have our own 'wild wood' in Alphamstone.

When I retired from teaching, in the long, distant past, I began to keep a diary. I felt that this might be an aid to prevent me from 'losing it' (as the young ones put it). I have been reading these memory-jogging narratives. Did I *really* wade through a fast-flowing river to reach the top of a tepui? Did a daughter *really* paint her sitting room using a different dark colour on every wall? These diaries reveal my reactions to events, and the strong opinions I hold. Possibly I *am* losing it!

Holiday advertisements have also become essential reading. Could I endure five days on a coach touring the Lake District? Would I enjoy a short cruise on a small boat where everyone was vaccinated and scintillating?

I must be patient. The time WILL come to set forth into a normal world again.

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Middleton

March 2021

From the Churchwarden's Pew

Not a lot to report as we've all been hibernating in our houses in the lockdown. Hopefully by the time you read this we may well be on the way to escape. Main points of conversation :- Read any good books lately?, Had your vaccination yet? Holiday plans-Ha Ha! How many long tailed tits etc. etc. did you count on Birdwatch?

As I write the snow is still covering gardens and fields and unfortunately ice over the village roads as the blocked drain in Rectory Road is still flooding down the village. At the moment it is more like a glacier.

We had a very important visitor here. Congratulations to Dillon and his parents for a brilliant snow Elvis.

We hope to have a Coffee Morning, Books and Bric-a-Brac sale as soon as Covid permits, so all those unwanted treasures you have emptied from drawers and cupboards can find new homes.

All items gladly welcomed and will be socially distanced in the church shed!

Storehouse Foodbank

As you will be aware we've not been able to open the church to receive gifts for the food bank but they continue to need donations to help those who are finding life particularly difficult at the moment. Sainsbury's and Waitrose have Storehouse collecting points in their stores and gifts of money can be made via their website stourvalleyvineyard.org

Ladies Circle

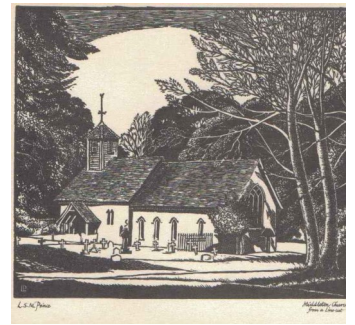
Times they are a changing. Ladies Circle held it's first Zoom meeting this month. Despite the inexperience of the host and the mixed ability of those joining in, it went very well. We had a few odd problems with microphones and cameras to sort out but we managed an hours chat. It was interesting to see what we all looked like with rather longer hair than usual! Zooming is not quite the same as sitting round a table with a biscuit and a cuppa but it gave us a boost during this depressing weather. Ah well, it will soon be Spring.



A group of ladies are continuing to keep the church porch decorated – thank you ladies the arrangements are beautiful.

Many of us have now had our first vaccination for which we are very grateful regardless of which vaccine we were given. We now await the call for the second dose. It seems impossible that it is a year since the first lockdown. I am sure like me, most of you thought it would all be sorted and we would be back to normal by the summer! I'm keeping my fingers crossed for this summer.

Keep smiling folks.



Magazine Contact

Jude Johnson 582 559

Parish Clerk

Shelley Boydell 07801 492312

Virtual Easter Hat Competition



*Make an Easter Hat in any medium and let your imagination run riot.
Lockdown has given us lots of opportunities to be creative!*

*There will be a virtual Easter Hat Parade and judging on Zoom
on Saturday 27th March at 10am*

*If you are unable to Zoom, entries can be dropped off at Janice's or Ann's
houses and they will be modelled on Zoom. Each entrant will be given a
number to be displayed with the hat. Judging will be for the overall best,
the zaniest, and the most colourful, with prizes for the most creative.
If you wish to take part, please contact Ann 269624 or Janice 269789 by
Thursday 25th March.*

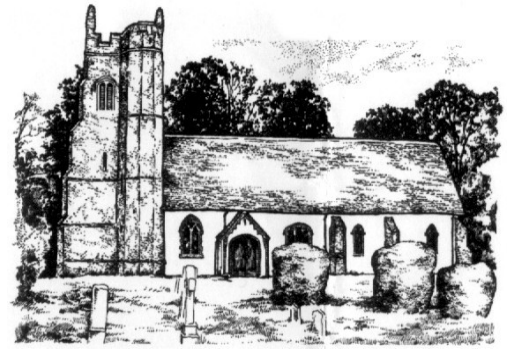
The competition is open to all ages

Adults £2 Entry

Children up to 11 years of age Free

In aid of your Parish Church

Wickham St Pauls

**Magazine Contact**

Susannah Goodbody 269250

Parish Clerk:

Diane Jacob 07907 631172

March 2021

Church Services

Unfortunately we are still unable to hold services in church for the foreseeable future. If you have access to a computer, you are invited to join in with the Zoom services that are held every Sunday and Wednesday morning at 10:00 am.

Post Office & Library

Post Office: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9:00 am to 1:00 pm in the Village Hall

Mobile Library: Sadly still no Library van

Events Information

Easter Hat Competition

Make an Easter Hat in any medium and let your imagination run riot.

The competition is open to all. Adults £2 / Children under 11 years old are free.

To enter, contact Ann 269624 or Janice 269789 by Thursday 25th March.

There will be a virtual Easter Hat Parade and judging on Zoom on Saturday 27th March at 10:00 am.

Judging will be for the overall best, the zaniest and the most colourful with prizes for the most creative.

If you are unable to Zoom, the hats can be dropped off to Ann or Janice, they will be modelled on Zoom.

All in aid of your parish church.

This and That

Wickham Lottery

Congratulations and a cheque for £25 go to Mrs. L. Davis, who is the holder of No. 6, the winning bonus ball for February.

Act of Remembrance

Sadly, at the beginning of February the country reached the awful milestone of 100,000 people who had died from COVID-19. Along with Chelmsford Cathedral and various other churches, our church bells were rung 100 times in remembrance of all those who have died. Thanks go to our Tower Captain, Ted. In addition, a Prayer Tree has been set up in the Churchyard for people to attach their own thoughts and prayers.

Wickham W.I.

The Wickham W.I. Committee felt so sad for their members as all actual meetings were still cancelled due to the COVID lockdown, so came up with the idea of delivering 'A Little Bag of Happiness' to each member which contained the following:-

- ◆ Hand Cream and Emery board to give those hands a Spa Feel
 - ◆ Tea / coffee is a pocket Hug – Always there when you need it
 - ◆ A Bookmark to share all those new reads to enjoy and explore
 - ◆ Chocolates for that naughty but nice feeling
 - ◆ And a heart to remind you that somebody is always thinking of you
- (All wrapped up in cellophane tied with a lovely red ribbon by Sandra and Anne).

It was also decided to arrange a Zoom Coffee meeting in February (in place of the usual evening meeting). Unfortunately, members had to make their own drinks, but could use the contents of their Little Happiness Bag!!

Parish Council News

Our 26th January meeting was again by 'Zoom' and lasted just one hour. It wasn't as exciting as the 'Handforth Parish Council' meeting in December, but we did have a full complement of Councillors and three members of the public, so it was very well attended. We were joined by District Councillor, Wendy Scattergood, and our County Councillor, David Finch, and as always, thank them for giving up their evening and giving us their reports.

If you'd like to 'Zoom into' our future meetings, the link is on our website or Diane, our Clerk, will be happy to send the link to you. Everyone is invited to our meetings, you can have a say in the public session at the start of the meeting and you can leave at anytime if the excitement gets too much!

A131 Long Gardens – Traffic Calming

The application to the Local Highways Panel (L.H.P.) is awaiting validation, so it is progressing albeit it will be a long haul. As mentioned before, some of the properties come within the Twinstead boundary, so we will be working with Twinstead Parish Council.

Church Road Additional Parking

It is now on the Highways agenda in March for discussion.

Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

We didn't have a great response from residents to form an NDP group, but five of your Parish Councillors have stepped in to fill the gap. We still need representatives from businesses, local groups, landowners, developers and residents to form the group.

Your commitment in time is just a couple of hours a week, not every week and no specific times, except for a monthly group meeting, presently via Zoom.

Shellards Cottage

There were concerns about the progress of the refurbishment works, and it was agreed we should contact the Planning Enforcement Officer for assurances. May we take the opportunity to thank Alan and Barbara for giving us an update on the renovations.

Christmas Tree

It was agreed to purchase a Christmas tree 7 ft tall with good roots, to be planted by the end of March at a cost approx.£145.00. It will be planted next to the flag pole.

Wickham St Pauls Parish Council Responsibilities

We hold bi-monthly meetings to discuss local matters with residents and our roles and duties include maintaining land we own, (The Green), local planning advisory and support concerns, and projects of residents. Your initial contact ideally is with your Parish Clerk, but your Councillors are always there to offer assistance where we can.

Our continued thanks to all our residents who do contact us direct with their concerns and suggestions and we will continue to address them to the best of our ability.

Useful contacts

Clerk	Diane Jacob	07907 631172	parishclerk@wickhamstpaulsparishcouncil.org
Chairman	Derek Stokes	269284	derekstokes@wickhamstpaulsparishcouncil.org
Vice-Chairman	Martin Cooper	269236	martincooper@wickhamstpaulsparishcouncil.org
Councillor	Janice Barlow		janicebarlow@wickhamstpaulsparishcouncil.org
Councillor	Angela Johnstone		angelajohnstone@wickhamstpaulsparishcouncil.org
Councillor	Paul Snazell		paulsnazell@wickhamstpaulsparishcouncil.org
Councillor	Ian Ward		ianward@wickhamstpaulsparishcouncil.org
Wickham St Pauls Parish Council website			www.e-voice.org.uk/wickham-st-pauls

Braintree District Council Responsibilities

Some of the services they provide include refuse and recycling collections, street cleaning, enforcing environmental and other legislation, planning applications.

Website	www.braintree.gov.uk
Address	Braintree District Council, Causeway House, Bocking End, Braintree.CM7 9HB
Tel	01376 552525
Email	csc@braintree.gov.uk

Ward Councillor for Stour Valley South

Mrs. Wendy Scattergood Tel: 01787 267800 Email: cllr.wscattergood@braintree.gov.uk

Essex County Council Responsibilities

Some of the services they provide include Highways, traffic management, libraries, adult and social care, education.

Your County Councillor

Mr. David Finch www.essex.gov.uk Tel: 0345 743 0430 Email: contact@essex.gov.uk

Westminster Member of Parliament

Mr. James Cleverly MP Email: james.cleverly.mp@parliament.uk
Address: House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
or Braintree Conservatives Association Office, Suite 11, The Centre,
Lakes Industrial Park, Braintree, Essex CM7 3RU

Your Local Police Contact

PC 3655 Craig Wheeler
Community Policing Team - Braintree

Essex Police
Phone
Email

C shift
101 ext. 400155
Craig.Wheeler@essex.police.uk

General information

Tree Survey

In November the Parish Council had an inspection of all the trees on Parish Council land, to identify the condition of the trees, and if work is required to ensure the health and safety of residents and visitors. Whilst this is also a requirement of our insurers, it does raise an interesting question as to whether private households are obliged to have their trees inspected to satisfy the conditions of their own insurers? As I type these comments, (Sunday 7th February), a tree has fallen down across a main road in Gestingthorpe, blocking it. There were no reports of injury, but could the incident have been avoided and could it have proved serious? Just a thought!

Does anyone know anything about planting water lilies?

We are aiming to plant some water lilies in the main pond and Susan Hillhouse of Park Farm has kindly donated some. Has anyone got green-fingers or in this case wet-green-fingers, that can advise us how to plant them? Contact Derek 269284

Recycling

There is a Tetra Pak black bin sited next to the Bottle Banks in the Victory Inn car park, which specifically takes food and drink cartons, i.e. milk, juice, custard, takeaway cups, all of which are difficult to separate at the recycling depots. We are only one of five parishes in the Braintree area to have these bins on a trial basis, due to end in June 2021. Our residents and neighbours appear to be making good use of it, please continue to deposit your cartons when you visit the Bottle Bank.

The Bottle Bank sometimes gets overflowed, but it is emptied every Tuesday, except for Bank Holidays and then it's a day later.

Flag Flying Programme

March

1 st	St. David's Day	St. David's
10 th	Birthday of the Earl of Essex	Union
11 th	Commonwealth Day (2 nd . Monday in March)	Commonwealth
17 th	Saint Patrick's Day Northern Ireland	Union

The St. George flag will be flown most of the time in between other appointed flags.

A full list of our flag flying days is posted on the village notice board and on the W.St.P. website.

Unusual Middle Names of Famous People

Alick	Frankie Howerd
Bonaventure	Spencer Tracy
Curran	Gene Kelly
Deforest	Humphrey Bogart
Houghton	Katharine Hepburn
Ira	Russell Crowe
Mungo	Hugh Grant
Paradine	David Frost
Tiffany	Richard Gere

. and our current political leaders

Alexander Boris de Pfeffel Johnson
Keir Rodney Starmer

One liners....

Someone stole my antidepressants. Whoever they are, I hope they're happy!

I've got a new job collecting all the jumpers left in the park at the weekends, but it's not easy, they keep moving the goalposts!

Whenever someone says, 'I don't believe in coincidences. ' I say, 'Oh my God, me neither!'.

My Long Lost Family

I thought readers might be interested in my very own “Long Lost Family” tale and the power of DNA. In 1966, when I was 12, my cousin came to live with my family. She was pregnant, unmarried and her parents couldn't bear the shame so she was dispatched to live with us. I can remember when in December she went off to have the baby, returned overnight a few days later and then returned home. I was told the baby was a boy named Alistair and the whole subject was never mentioned again. (Apparently, my Mother tried to speak to my cousin's mother many years later and my aunt denied that the baby had ever been born.)

Skip forward to 2018. I have always enjoyed researching my family history and decided that I would send my DNA to Ancestry.com to be analysed. As a result of the analysis I was contacted by Anne Lefevere, a passionate genealogist, living in Australia, who told me that we are cousins because her Great, Great Grandfather (Peter Lefevere) was my Great Grandmother's (Phoebe Lefevere's) brother. We exchanged e-mails and kept in contact.

In 2019 I received an e-mail from Anne to say that a man called Alistair, living in New York, had contacted her as he was related to her and indeed me. The man in question was born on the 1st December 1966. Could I shed any light on where he fitted in to my family? Of course, I was able to confirm that he was my Cousin's illegitimate son. Alistair had been brought up in Scotland and had had a wonderful adoption but his parents had recently died. He wrote:

“I understand how difficult it must have been for my birth mother in 1966. My heart goes out to her. My daughter and I would not exist had it not been for her and the tough decisions that she made. I would love to be able to thank her one day.”

Now I had a problem. My cousin is married and I had no idea whether her husband knew anything about Alistair. This was a big secret in the family but I truly didn't believe that this was my secret to keep. My cousin has never had any other children – would this news be welcome or something she would rather forget? I posted her a letter with a photograph of her son (who bears an uncanny resemblance to her brother). She phoned me the day she received my letter and my story has a happy ending, as her husband had always known about Alistair. My cousin and her husband cried with happiness at the news.

They have since met up on a few occasions when Alistair has been over from New York and my cousin now talks about her son and her granddaughter with such pride.

I have to say that when I sent off my DNA I was a little skeptical, but I am not any more. Three people across three continents have brought a Mother and Son together – how brilliant is that?

Pam Nuttall

Church Electoral Roll

Normally I would try and talk with everyone who is already on the Electoral Roll, or is new to the village, or might be interested, but as I cannot meet up in person at the moment I hope you can help please.

Every 6 years (i.e. this year) the church Electoral Roll is renewed and it is necessary for Parishioners to complete a new Application Form if they would like to be on it. Members have to be over 16 years of age, have been baptized, be a member of the Church of England, and are either resident in the village or have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the six months prior to enrolment. We appreciate that this has not been easy recently, or even possible, but an interest in our church will suffice.

If you are on the Electoral Roll you are eligible to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Council meeting, and also to join the PCC.

If you know of anyone who would like to be on the Roll please let me know, preferably by email, and I will send a form for completion. Otherwise telephone on the number below, or put a note through our door. I look forward to hearing from you.

Susannah Goodbody

The Old Rectory

01787 269250

gdby@goodbodys.net

And Finally

I hope you have enjoyed reading Wickham's pages this month. It would be lovely if it could inspire you to produce something interesting / entertaining for others to read in future editions – so please continue to put your 'thinking caps' on, and let me have your contribution.

Could I have any articles that you would like me to include in the April edition by Monday 8th March please. Thank you.

Susannah



Shopping List February/March 2021

Thank you for your continuing support during the Coronavirus crisis.

Foodbanks within the Trussell Trust network have seen unprecedented increases across our network and by continuing to support us with your donations you are continuing to support those most in need.

We are very thankful for any donations you can give.

We currently need:

Food Items:

- UHT long life milk

Other Essentials:

- Hair conditioner
- Shampoo

Our food parcels are made up of specific food groups so that those in need have enough food for at least nine meals. The list above shows what we are in need of as we currently have good stocks of pasta, pasta sauce, biscuits, rice, fish, soup, baby food and cereals.

We also ask for small packs of food as larger packs do not fit in our parcels, making it difficult for our clients to carry home.

Thank you

We are grateful for your donations to the Braintree Area foodbank. However, we can only accept donations of freshly-bought, unopened and undamaged goods which are still well within their "use by" date (no less than 6 months). We cannot use items which do not meet these requirements, and the donation is wasted.



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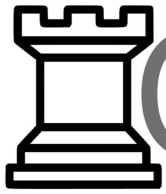
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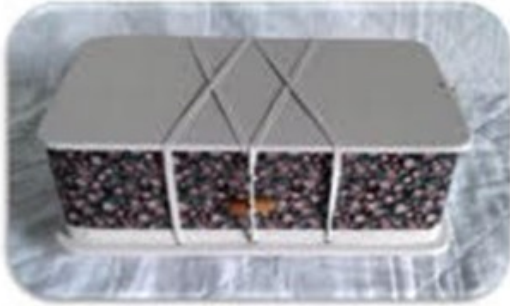
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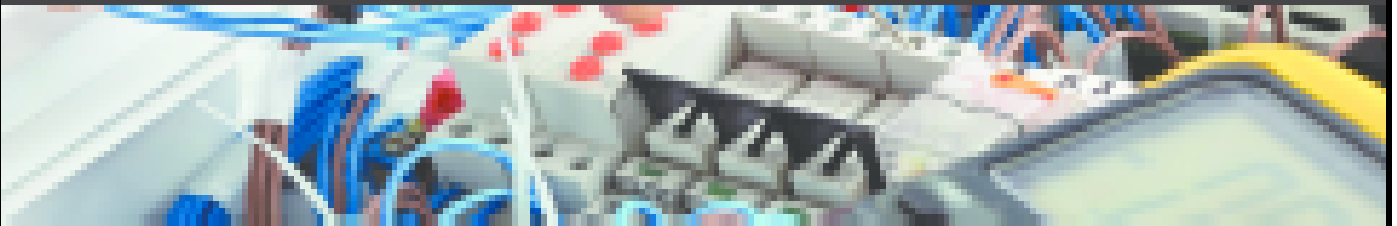
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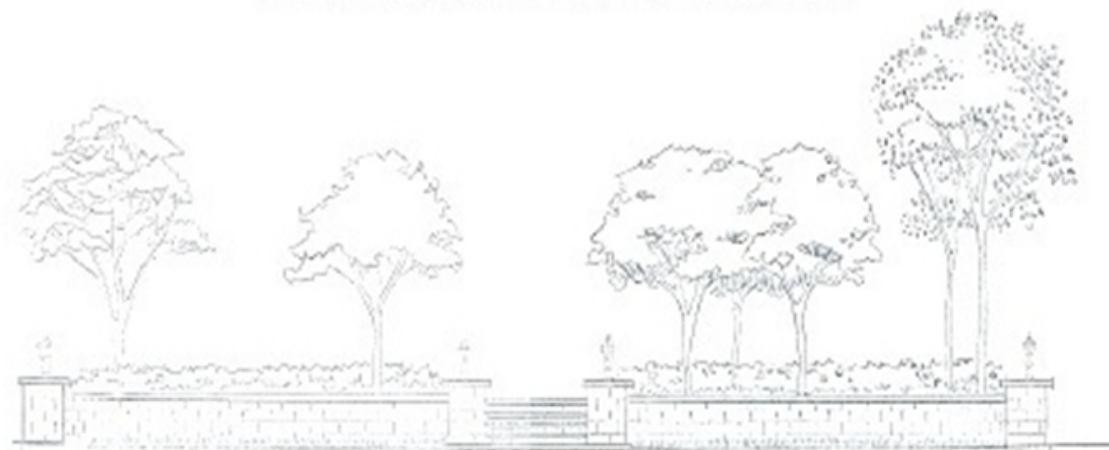
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