

St John's Church

serving Stanborough, Lemsford, Cromer Hyde



August / September 2024

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Photos from St John's School



Time to be a bit more Mary?

I can't believe that I'm sitting down to write this reflection for our August/September edition of the Magazine. Where has the time gone?! It seems to have flown by since the beginning of the year. This is partly because there has been so much going on at St. John's – Christingles, Connect@4 informal worship gatherings, All Together services, Sunday Club, strawberry teas, charity fundraisers, Garden of Remembrance services, school visits, the fete, discipleship groups, and much more.

This is fantastic news because it shows life and growth, bringing us so much hope for the future. Time flies when you're having fun, as they say... My prayer for this month is that you will indeed have fun during August, and feel rested and restored come September.

It's rest that I want to focus on in this edition, as this has recently been



a recurring theme in my times of prayer and study. Probably because I'm so awful at it! One of my favourite Gospel readings on this subject is that of Mary and Martha. Jesus turns up at their home with his disciples, en route to Jerusalem where he will face his passion and crucifixion. He knows what will happen to him, but on the way, he takes time out to see his friends.

Martha goes into full-blown hospitality mode, busy with the pots and pans. Mary, on the other hand,

(Continued on page 3)

Photos

Top left: Our year 6, enjoying a leavers' trip to the Hollywood Bowl

Top right: The leaders of our winning House in the House Cup competition

Middle: Classes 2 and 3 at the STEM centre in Stevenage

Bottom Left: Den building during our Outdoor learning week.

Bottom Right: Looking for fish at Lemsford Springs during Outdoor Learning week



*Sunday Club is on holiday in
August, but we're back in
September!*



**SUNDAY CLUB
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Join us on the second Sunday of the month
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During the 11am service on

**8th September
13th October
10th November
8th December**



This term we'll be reading and learning about
some amazing heroes of our faith from the Old
Testament

**And don't forget our All-together worship
is on the 1st Sunday each month at 11 am.**

(Continued from page 1)

sits by Jesus to listen to him as he talks; she's happy to just be in his presence. Martha, understandably, is a bit peeved by this - after all, she is doing all the work of providing a meal. But Jesus gently rebukes her by saying, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:41-42). Martha is unable to focus on Jesus and stillness; she is letting other priorities get in the way of spending quality time with him, while Mary has managed to let the

'to-do list' go for a while and give all her attention to what matters.

Of course, we all need to be both Martha and Mary; having one without the other would mean that either no tasks get done or we would not be spending time in prayer or stillness. It is not either/or, but both/and. However, if we've recently been busy being a frantic Martha, perhaps August could be a time to take a leaf out of Mary's book, pause from all that doing, and just stop, be still, and rest in whatever ways work best for us. Have a wonderful, safe, and restful summer.

With love,

Rev'd Kathryn

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News and People

Strawberry Tea Party - this took place on Saturday 13th July

What can we say about this amazing event? Take a look at Gina Butler's article and photos in this edition. Read how England's strong Euros run nearly scuppered the whole event. Also read Nature Notes

Bill and Jean Dance

In Andy Chapman's Lemsford Local History Group article towards the end of this edition there is a fantastic exposition of Bill and Jean's huge contribution to the Parish. Based partly on their granddaughter Georgia's eulogy as well as other sources it's a fascinating read.

100 CLUB - JUNE RESULTS

The June '100 Club' draw took place on the 28th June in the presence of two PCC members. 113 numbers were in the draw.

1st: Number 115 (winning £101.70)
2nd: Number 82 (winning £61.02)
3rd: Number 40 (winning £40.68)

The winning numbers were:

Thanks to everyone, parishioners and friends, who are supporting the '100 Club'.

Macmillan Tea, Coffee and Cake Afternoon

St John's Church is holding a Tea, Coffee and Cake Afternoon on Friday 20th September (2-4pm) in support of Macmillan Cancer Research. It's like the Macmillan big coffee morning, but in the afternoon instead!



With current statistics showing that 1 in 2 of us will be affected by cancer in our lifetimes this is a cause well worth supporting.

We hope to see you there, but if you can't make it your donations are equally welcome using this QR code or this link: <https://givealittle.co/c/7Syg5apeI6hTq2AzxWqfNC>

More Photos from St John's School



Above: Class 1 during Outdoor Learning week



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We give grants for conservation, restoration, development, and offer tours, talks and events.

St John's Church members and Friends have been supporting this cause for many years and again this year we're inviting you to join in with us or contribute. Want to know more - here's the trusts website:
bedshertshct.org.uk

This year the annual Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust Bike 'n Hike will take place on **Saturday 14th September**.

We are planning to repeat the hybrid event we did last year, which allows for participation by both cyclists and walkers. We are planning to cycle from Lemsford to Hertingfordbury church, then walk to Hertford to visit all the churches there and walk back to Hertingfordbury before cycling back to Lemsford. Participants are welcome to do all of the above or, if preferred, just the walk from Hertingfordbury to Hertford and back, which we can do as a group. If you are free and would like to take part please contact Kevin and Lucy Earl at kevinearl670@btinternet.com, or call 01707 390497. A sponsor form for "Team Lemsford" will appear at the back of the church during August in case you are able to sponsor us. If you don't normally attend church but would like to sponsor us, please email me. Half of the money raised comes back to St John's and the rest supports the work of the charity.

Many thanks

Kevin Earl

Services

August 2024

- 4th Trinity 10**
8 am HC (BCP) 11 am 'All Together' Service *
- 11th Trinity 11**
8 am MP (BCP) 11 am HC
- 18th Trinity 12**
8 am HC (BCP) 11 am Reflective Worship
- 25th Trinity 13**
8 am HC (BCP) 11 am HC

September 2024

- 1st Trinity 14**
8 am HC (BCP) 11 am 'All Together' Service *
- 8th Trinity 15**
8 am HC (BCP) 11 am HC with Sunday Club
- 15th Trinity 16**
8 am HC (BCP) 11 am Reflective Worship
- 22nd Trinity 17**
8 am MP (BCP) 11 am HC
4 pm Connect@4 - see opposite
- 29th Trinity 18**
8 am HC (BCP) 11 am HC

*** Services especially suitable for children, and all other ages!**

HC Holy Communion; MP Morning Prayer (Matins); BCP Book of Common Prayer; NB Kathryn's day off is Friday each week



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Friday 20th September



2.00 – 4.00 pm

EVERYONE WELCOME!

Thank you for your support

Connect@4 informal all age worship gathering

22nd September, 4pm

We'd love to see you at this **relaxed, interactive worship gathering designed for all ages**. Come join us for a time of faith, fun, and friendship. What to Expect:

- **Engaging Worship** - Enjoy lively music and singing that everyone can join in.
- **Interactive Activities** - Participate in creative activities that bring faith to life.
- **Message for the Day** - Explore a message that speaks to all generations.
- **Community Connection** - Spend time with friends, family, and make new connections in a welcoming environment.
- **Refreshments** - Enjoy light refreshments, often involving delicious cake!

Whether this is your first time at St John's or you're a regular attendee at other services, we look forward to welcoming you!



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St John's Church Strawberry Tea event - Saturday 13th July

Following a recent PCC meeting we thought it would be nice to have a Strawberry Teas event in the village. We hadn't had one since before Covid, when we held it at Lemsford Mill. Rev Kathryn said that Edna who lives in the village might be willing to let us use her garden. She has a beautiful house and garden next door to Lemsford Springs where she regularly holds the *Jazz on the Island* event.



After speaking to Edna it was agreed to go ahead and Nigel was put in charge of the organising, a job that he took on with gusto.

I helped a little with the posters/flyers as my daughter Daisy designed them, obtaining raffle prizes, delivering flyers, money matters of course, making scones and being a friendly sounding board for Nigel. It was as part of that last job when Nigel asked "Do you know anybody with a van?" that my work truly began.

I was delivering the flyers to the neighbourhood when the very person I hoped I would see appeared. "Could we borrow you and your van to collect tables, chairs and gazebo's and take them to the venue?" Yes, he said, as long as he could get to the Euro's final in Germany on the Sunday 14th should England make it into the final. That should be fine I thought, I mean I'd watched the first few matches and there seemed little chance of England making it to the final..... (Oh ye of little faith.)

Everything progressed well and Nigel was on top of everything and the weather was looking fair for the day.

Until..... England beat the Netherlands to make it to the Euro's final.

I texted my van man, "great result tonight is everything still ok for Saturday though?". Then the bombshell. "Ah! Sorry, I've driven to Germany for the semi's and now plan on staying here until the

(Continued on page 12)

Strawberry Teas Report - Continued

(Continued from page 11)

Monday following the final.”

D Day -3 and I had to tell Nigel we did not have a VAN or a van man.

We both started asking everybody we could think of who had a van, could they help on that day. By pure luck I was out on a run and met a friend, I explained the problem and she suggested Jenny Tarry, the Proprietor of TashesnTails, opposite the church and who is all-round wonderful person. How could I have forgotten Jenny! She readily agreed and crisis was averted. Not only did she provide the van but came with a small army of helpers and as many hands make light work the task was completed very speedily before and after the event.

The day finally arrived and with Nigel's meticulous timings everything went extremely smoothly.



Edna's is already an amazing garden, which we soon decked with tables and gingham check tablecloths, cups, saucers, sugar pots and milk jugs and ready for people to arrive.



Around 60 adults arrived and were served endless cups of tea and ate an afternoon tea of 2 scones, jam & cream, a piece of cake and a little pot of strawberries. The food was delicious, well the scones I ate were, I hope that anybody who got my scones felt the same.



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On arrival everybody had the chance to purchase a duck (well a plastic one) with a chance to see it race down the river.



small and large.



We also had a visit from a baby kingfisher, which Barry Trevis from Lemsford Springs was releasing back into the wild but more of that later in the issue from Geoffrey Hollis and his “nature notes” [see also cover page].

When the allotted time came they were thrown into the river and Charlie and Nick were stood 50 metres down the river to catch the quickest duck.



It was a wonderful, relaxed and friendly afternoon such that one person said they had had such a good time please can we do it every week.

The ducks proceeded down the river to a chorus of duck whistles that were handed out to the children,

Huge thanks go of course to Nigel without whom it would not be possible, Edna for allowing us into

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Strawberry Teas Report - Concluded

(Continued from page 13)

her beautiful garden, Jenny and her van, Nigel's wife Priscilla who spent all day in the kitchen and was left with the whole of the washing up. Then there were the strawberry choppers, gazebo Erectors, car park attenders, tea pourers, scone makers, duck catchers, clearer uppers and anybody I may have missed off the list.

I think we should do this again next year but maybe check the date next time to make sure it doesn't clash with a football final.



A few more photos from the event:



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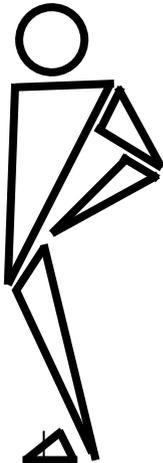
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Hello Everyone

As I write this article the end of term is just a day and a half away. Once again what a busy half term we have had with so many lovely activities and events taking place for all the children.

This last week we enjoyed performances of The Jungle Book given by the children in classes 3 and 4. Their story telling was gripping as they entertained us with their singing and their acting. The audience for each performance was full of very proud families. Many thanks go to Miss Ng, Mrs Youngs, Miss Noonan, Mrs Kay, Miss Burgon, Mrs Meola, Mrs Redmond, Mrs Beart and Mrs Gorelli-Simone who took so much time preparing costumes, scenery, props and, of course, the children!

Classes 2 and 3 visited the STEM centre in Stevenage as their trip this term. The Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Centre gave them an opportunity to explore their fascination with Space. They took part in a range of activities with a particular focus on the planet Mars.

We had a fantastic Sports Day on one of the few days this half term that hasn't been wet! The children took part in a carousel of activities in their house teams and were supported by Sports Leaders from Stanborough School. The event ended with races including the traditional toddler race, parent race



and slowest cycling! It was a lot of fun!

Other events have included class 4 visiting St Alban's Cathedral. The children took part in activities which explored spirituality and their relationships with others, they also learnt about Saint Alban and Amphibalus. The class also had their residential trip to Grantham for a week of outdoor activities including archery, survival skills, trapeze and climbing Jacob's Ladder!

Class 1 has also been busy. They enjoyed a trip to Mill Green Museum. They took part in a Farm to Fork workshop, they found out about the journey of wheat to bread, made their own bread roll which they enjoyed eating back at school!

This time of year gives us an opportunity to reflect as well as to prepare. We are looking forward to welcoming our new group of

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reception children in September. They have spent a morning with us and our staff have visited them in their homes and nursery settings. In preparing for the journey through our school that our newest children will make we can also reflect with those children who are about to complete that journey, our year 6, as they prepare to move onto secondary school. They are a great group of children, each one unique and special. We have appreciated their brilliant

contribution to life at St John's. Our school vision is based, as you know, on John 10:10 'I came that they may have life, life in all its fullness.' We wish them all the very best in their future and pray that it is indeed a life of fullness; fullness of opportunity, hope and love.

Best wishes,

Michelle Boylan

- for photos see inside front cover

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Since the last Parish Magazine, we have celebrated the 165-year anniversary of St John's, given Bill Dance a wonderful send off and enjoyed a Church fundraiser at one of the loveliest houses in the village when Edna hosted 'The Strawberry Teas'.

The 'Strawberry Teas' is an annual event for the parish to raise funds for the church and, like the anniversary celebration, was a great success due to all the hard work by volunteers, too many to mention.

Our host at the 'Strawberry Teas' was Edna. Edna's house is known historically as 'Cress Cottage' and has a long and interesting history. Similar in a way to Edna herself who is another unsung hero in the parish. She has spent over 30 years providing her time and her house for hundreds of events to raise money for various causes such as 'Jazz on the Island' and Easter egg hunts, which I fondly remember. Edna is also involved in a special charity. She helps raise funds for the girls of the Altevette Project in Nepal. They provide warm clothing for the girls and their teachers. There are 53 girls and 9 teachers and they visit the school and deliver clean warm clothes such as leggings, tracksuit trousers, joggers, hats, scarfs and gloves. If you wish to donate, go to www.lemsfordhistorynews.co.uk/EdnasNews.html. More about Edna and Cress Cottage in the next edition.



As promised in the last edition, the story of Bill and Jean Dance. As expected Bill's send off was standing room only. The funeral and wake were perfect, and his family would have made him proud. The eulogy was read by his grand daughter Georgia, who has kindly sent the transcript which I have used to write the article combined with the

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research done by Carol and Doreen from which Doreen produced an excellent article about Jean Dance.

‘Bill Dance was born in London in 1932 and moved to Surrey, before moving to the Brocket Estate in Hertfordshire where his father had taken up work. His work ethic was instilled in him at an early age, and he recounted to me how he used to wake up early in the morning to help bring the cows in from the fields and milk them. He said at this point in his life he was running at least 10 miles a day. When I asked him why he ran, he said simply ‘It’s quicker than walking!’



The next part of Granddad’s story is perhaps the most significant and life altering for him, and indeed for us, his family. And it happened one night in the Lemsford Village Hall where, as a young man, our Granddad met our

Nanny – Jean Dance. Their introduction was brief, but the leader of the group asked Granddad to walk Nanny back home. As a true gentleman, he did so and as many of us know, Nanny and Granddad were married for over 65 years, until her passing in 2017.

They were inseparable, and you’d rarely find one without the other. Bill and Jean Dance had two sons – Chris and Dave, followed by 5 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

Jean was born on 18th June 1932 in Cromer Hyde and baptised at St John’s Church Lemsford on 9th October 1932. Her parents were James Saunders a Farm Labourer and Maggie Hawthorne, they also had a son James Sydney Saunders born 26th July 1921 and baptised 1st July 1921 at St John’s Church Lemsford.

Jean was admitted to St. John’s School on 1st September 1937. Miss Lines a teacher at the school had a lot to do with the church choir and

(Continued from page 20)

encouraged Jean to join when she was 8 years, Jean remained in the choir for many years.

She also helped at the Sunday School when 11 years old and then became a Sunday School Teacher. Jean left St John's School when 11 years old to go to St. Mary's Secondary School Welwyn, she left when 14 years and went on to learn shorthand and typing.

Her first job was at County Hall Hertford, she cycled every day from Cromer Hyde. She left after 18 months and went to Furamic Industries Hydeway (Enamel works) to work and was there for 35 years.'

Doreen's article confirms Georgia account of their brief encounter that became a lifelong partnership.

'Bill was interested in the farm and encouraging boys with their boxing also he enjoyed running. One night on a run up Lemsford hill past the Youth Club Mr Crafts was coming out of the club, he asked Bill if he would escort Jean to her home along the Wheathampsted Road to Cromer Hyde, she was on her bike and Bill ran. On the Sunday she went to the farm to look at the calves, this was the start of their life together. They were married on 26th January 1952 they were both 19 years old.

Bill left the Farm and went to work at the Box Factory, after a few years Bill became Plant Superintendent, then Production Manager. The company ran a Christmas Party for the 250 employees' children 5 to 12 years olds it was chaos. Jean offered to help and became the Social Secretary and met with the managers, she had the 9 to 12 year olds at a pantomime and the others at a party. She met a rep from a toy company and persuaded him to be the Father Christmas and got the toy company to supply at a special rate presents for the children. Jean became interested in the social side of the factory and made the teas for the Cricket Club.

In 1965 Bill and Jean went to the London Palladium where they were called up on to the stage, Norman Vaughan presented Jean with a dressing table set and Bill with a tie decorated with beat the clock logos.

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Jean encouraged Bill to do training to gain more knowledge in all aspects of his work, he went to Loughborough college. He travelled abroad to buy machinery. The company asked for him to organise a bonus scheme for the employees, Jean helped him, he went to Watford College for a month's training.

When the youth club started up with Stan Horsley, she helped him and was also the treasurer. Bill was asked to run the scout group, he did it for 2 years, Jean sorted the finance when it closed, she handed over the equipment to Hatfield Scout Group. She held on to the money for 2 years then passed it to the Hatfield group.

Jean was a governor at St. John's School as well as Howard Secondary School WGC. Jean was also a governor of this school and helped to get the swimming pool for them.

Jean ran the Old Folks Club Lemsford (Lemsford Old Peoples Welfare Committee) which started in approximately 1947. They had 70 people for the annual Christmas lunch, Jean along with another lady did all the cooking. She liked to always be in the background and never put herself forward to be in photographs. They put a lot of time and effort into raising funds for the social enjoyment of the Club. There was also an annual coach trip to the seaside. She met the Queen twice at Buckingham Palace.

Bill umpired at Lords, umpired the Rest of the World II, Chairman of the league, Senior vice president to Herts Association, he has been associated with this association for 70 years, also Vice president of the Police. Georgia informs us 'Granddad also left a lasting legacy in the world of golf. Granddad was a brilliant golfer, who frequently rose early in the morning to be on the course in time for the first tee time. He played for the county and at one point held a handicap of 12. In the later years of his life, Granddad took on the role of 'Chief Game Collation and Suspension Officer' at the Knebworth Park Shoot. In so many areas of Granddad's life, his quiet, modest efforts were often unseen but were essential for the smooth running of the groups he was involved in.

They did everything together, whatever Bill did Jean always supported him, she was very involved with Cricket and did a course in

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Cricket scoring. There is a plaque to Jean at Knebworth Park Cricket Club.

They were friendly with Lord McLaren (Tesco) and went to his son's wedding. They both liked Old-Time dancing and had an invitation from the Sydney Thompson Orchestra.'

Bill and Jean were a major force in getting Lemsford Parish a village Hall built and then ran it for many years. What becomes apparent with Georgia's and Doreen's articles is how much is owed by the Lemsford community to Jean and Bill and it endorses the comment of editor Frank who reminds us of Rev Kathryn's thoughts on generosity writing on the theme of generosity [June/July Edition] – "***not just financial, but the whole thing***" I think Bill and Jean were the whole nine yards" *

Jean was a member of the Lemsford History Group which was grateful to her for her history of Lemsford, Stanborough and Cromer Hyde. My own personal memory of Jean was a local history subject or question would come up and it would draw a blank. I would ask Jean if she recalled the subject, and she would know everything about it. As Doreen observed 'She liked to always be in the background and never put herself forward '. Many of the photos we have to share with the community are there because of Jean.



She was a staunch church goer at St John's until her illness prevented her attending on a regular basis. She loved her garden and used her flowers to decorate the church. Jean went to the church 2 – 3 times a week, cleaning and

arranging flowers. Her kindness and strength were very apparent to all who knew her.

(Continued on page 24)

Lemsford Local History Group - *Concluded*

(Continued from page 23)

I will leave the last word to his grand daughter Georgia who gave a heart felt eulogy at Bills funeral.

‘Amongst all of his many accolades, Granddad was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather. We all have our own memories of Granddad, which we will cherish.’

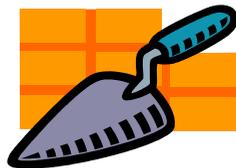
See the Then and Now Feature on the back cover for photos of Jean and Bill

* Where does the expression "the whole nine yards" come from? The bullets for the machine guns used in American combat planes of WW2 and ever since were in chains twenty-seven feet in length. Thus if a pilot was able to fire all his bullets off at one target he was said to have given his adversary 'the full nine yards'. It means “everything” or “the full extent of something” and describes someone or something as having, desiring, or giving their all in a certain situation. That perfectly describes Jean And Bill.

If you have any questions about Lemsford parish History or want to share memories, email us at info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk or go to the website www.lemsfordhistory.co.uk

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A highlight of the Strawberry Teas by the river Lee was the sudden appearance of a young Kingfisher. It arrived without fanfare, carried safely in the hands of Barry Trevis [see cover photo]. He held the bird up and explained to the crowd that had suddenly gathered round him all the details of this wonderful creature.

Kingfishers, like other endangered birds, have special protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Barry has a Licence issued by the British Trust for Ornithology under this Act which allows him to trap them in a special humane mist net in order to ring them. He showed the ring that he had just fitted to this bird, which he estimated had been born in Lemsford Springs around May. Bird ringing enables the monitoring of their populations, particularly their movements and survival rates.

What was impressive was the way that the bird lay impassively in his hand because Barry was holding it correctly. It showed absolutely no fear or alarm. Indeed, when Barry tipped it gently onto its back it even seemed to fall asleep. However, when released it flew off at great speed.

Few if any of we spectators had ever been so close to this amazingly colourful bird. It was cheering to see the many children looking in wonder at this masterpiece of nature, and

drinking in Barry's words about the need to protect them.

Barry has worked voluntarily at the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust's Lemsford Springs reserve since 1977 and has been its honorary Warden since 1981; he is reckoned to be the longest-serving Warden in the county. He and Lyn have lived by the Springs for over 40 years, and one can understand why when visiting this idyllic spot.

Barry catches many species of birds. His colour-ringing of Green Sandpipers at Lemsford Springs started in 1983 and is now the longest running project of its kind on waders in Europe. GPS geolocation technology has made it possible to use tagged birds to establish migration routes and breeding sites in Scandinavia.

In the next issue I plan to write about a rare orchid that has been sighted locally, and the way that Lyn has protected it from mowing by the Council; truly, an inspiring couple.



Photo: Kingfisher at Lemsford Springs by Barry Trevis

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Prayer for God's Inspiration in Nature

Be still and know that I am God.” – Psalm 46:10 Amid the leisurely pace of summer, let us take time to be still in the presence of God; to find a quiet spot in nature, such as a beach or a serene garden, to meditate on His greatness. In these peaceful moments, let our souls align with God's stillness, allowing inspiration and clarity to flow into our prayers.

And finally



Kingfishers are monogamous. Males and females have identical plumage, and ornithologists are looking for ways to tell them apart.



Then:

Jean Dance in 1941 at the opening of the school canteen by Lord and Lady Brocket (small girl with white ribbon in her hair at the front)



Then:

Bill Dance in 1952 Lemsford FC front row RHS



Now:

Bill and Jean Dance with their grand children

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