



# THE GOSSIP TREE

News & Views from the Parish of FONTMELL MAGNA

*This issue is kindly sponsored by  
The Fangens of Bedchester*

Christmas &  
January 2019

Issue 299

## Lionel John Christopher (17/12/1936-26/11/2018)

On Wednesday 12th December, a packed church, including representatives of the Devonshire & Dorset Regiment, bid farewell to Lionel, for so long a feature of the village. No longer will we see him cycling, or pushing a lawnmower, along West Street, or sitting at the bar in the Fontmell.

Lionel was the son of Lionel Albert Christopher (1906-1969) and Beatrice, née Toomer (1904-1984), a midwife. He had a brother, Peter, and a sister Dorothy (known as Fred). They lived in 42 'Smiths Hole' (Church Street), now a part of Holbrook. After attending St Andrew's School, and the Shaftesbury School, he became a motor mechanic at the Crown Garage opposite the Crown Inn.

He was called up aged 18 and joined the Dorset Regiment, serving from 1955 to 1958, most of the time in Germany. Here he became the driver for the Colonel of the battalion. At the end of his National Service he returned to Fontmell. He married Jean in 1959 and they went on to have a son, Michael, a daughter, Nicola, who later married Clive Carter, and a grandson, George. The family first lived at 19 Lurmer Street, and then in 6 Marshlands, Bedchester. After 10 years there, they moved into Orchard Close.

Lionel continued to work at the Crown Garage under Ted Barrett, and then Bill Watkins, and was put in charge of the recovery truck. He later worked for a number of local garages, and did work on the cars of a number of celebrities, including Dandy Kim (Michael Caborn-Waterfield who lived at Woodbridge Mill) and Christine Keeler.

He could turn his hand to anything mechanical and built up a collection of motorised machines, his pride being 'the old cow', his Royal Enfield motorcycle registration 'COW 315'. He exhibited at the Dorset Steam Fair every year with only a couple of exceptions. When he took 'the old cow' to the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu he was delighted to discover that it was one of only four in the country that was still roadworthy.



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## Christmas Fayre gets Playground Fundraising off to a Flying Start!

The Christmas Fayre held in the Village Hall on Saturday 1st December raised a very impressive £1,740, getting the appeal off to a wonderful start. The organisers would like to thank everybody who contributed to that success; the volunteer helpers, the bakers and makers of good things, Father Christmas and his elves, and indeed, everyone who donated time and goodies. And **special thanks to you** the customers who came and spent so generously! The raffle was very popular and raised a stunning £949! The lucky winners were:

1st Prize: Luxury Hamper – Alison Main

2nd Prize: Christmas Tree with Decorations – donated by the winner to a family in the village with young children

3rd Prize: The Pamper Hamper – Annie Morgan

4th Prize: Virginia Hayward Hamper – Kirstie Brodie

**Now .... Watch out for the next exciting event!**



**Christmas Greetings** and best wishes for a very **Happy New Year** to all our readers from the Editor, Committee and Distributors of The Gossip Tree. And a big thank you to Barbara Humphreys for compiling the Christmas Chimes which accompanies this issue.

## Notices – January 2019

### St. Andrew's Church

Sun	6th	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.00am	Sunday Breakfast (Village Hall - see over)
Sun	13th	9.30am	Morning Worship
Sun	20th	9.30am	Holy Communion with choir
Sun	27th	9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)

Prayers each Monday at 9.00am

### Parish Council Meeting

Mon 14th at 7.00pm in St. Andrew's School. The meeting is open to all members of the public and starts with Public Questions. Parish Clerk: Marianne Wheatley [clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk](mailto:clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk)

### The Surgery

Mon - Thu 8.00am - 12 noon. Enquiries 856700

### Village Shop & Post Office

Mon - Fri 8.00am to 6.00pm  
Sat 9.00am to 1.00pm; Sun 9.00am to 12.00 noon  
Closed 1st January.  
Enquiries 811201

### Coffee in the Café

Tue at 10.00am

### The Tea Room Crafters

Wed 9th and 23rd at 2.30pm. Details Barbara Humphreys [blueletterbox@btinternet.com](mailto:blueletterbox@btinternet.com)

### The Fontmell

Enquiries 811441

### St Andrew's School

Mon 7th - Spring Term starts  
Fri 15th February - Break up for Half Term

### Fontmell Magna Toddler Group

Details Kelly Oakley 07792 425609

### Fontmell Magna Under 5's Breakfast Club

Every morning for St. Andrew's pupils from 7.45am at the Under 5's.  
Details 812773

### 'In Home' Coffee Morning

Fri 4th 10.30am to 12 noon at Maltings, Church Street (Jennie & Dick Jones). Please do come and join us!

### Iwerne Valley Walking Group

Sat 19th at 10.00am starting from the Moreton Tearooms nr. Dorchester DT2 8RJ.  
Leaders: Neil & Jane Davies on 811627

### Bell-ringing

Tue 15th - Practice 7.30 to 8.30pm  
Details Chris Bellers 811734

### Bin Collection Dates

W/C \*7th & 21st - Recycling & Food  
W/C 14th & 28th - Rubbish & Food  
\*Collections in W/C 31st December (Rubbish & Food), 2 days later than usual;  
Collections in W/C 7th January, 1 day later than usual.

**Village Hall events - see over**

**Events in the Village Hall****Sunday Breakfast**

Sun 6th at 9.00am. Run by St. Andrew's Church. All welcome. Details Janet Smith 811904

**Fontmell Films**

Wed 9th - 'Mamma Mia! Here we go again!' (PG).  
Doors open 7.00pm  
Details Libby Gendall 811551

**North Dorset Wildlife Trust**

Wed 16th 'It Shouldn't Happen to a Vet' - a day-to-day account of life of a Dorset vet by Martin Fielding.  
Details Anna Davies 01258 880699

**Garden Club**

Thu 17th at 7.30pm. 'Preparing entries for the Annual Show'.  
Details Briony Long 812513

**Archive Society**

Thu 17th 4.00 to 5.30pm.  
Details Roger Hillman 811878

**Fontmell Magna Art Club**

Tue 2.00 to 4.00pm.  
Details Sandra Jelbart 812468

**Carpet Bowls Club**

Thu 3rd, 10th, 24th and 31st, and Fri 18th at 7.30pm.  
Details Gerry Bone 811814

**Dru Yoga**

Fri 9.30 to 11.00am.  
Details Kirsty Elliot 07783 780128

**Pilates**

Mon 5.30-6.30pm, 6.30-7.30pm.  
STOTT Pilates Matwork & props.  
Details Vicci Gillett 07940 961221  
[www.stable-bodies.co.uk](http://www.stable-bodies.co.uk)  
Tue 9.15-10.15am, 10.30-11.30am.  
Details Lyn O'Neill 07989 192424

**Taekwon-do**

Tue 8.00-9.00pm, Fri 6.00-7.00pm.  
Details Sam Donohoo 07584 039351

**Zumba**

Mon 7.30-8.30pm, Thu 9.30-10.30am.  
Details Abby Down 850867  
[zumbawithabbyd@gmail.com](mailto:zumbawithabbyd@gmail.com)

To book the Hall, call Catherine Allard on 812047 or email [catherineallard1980@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:catherineallard1980@hotmail.co.uk)

**The Fontmell Magna Directory**

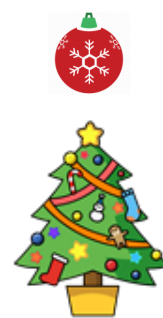
The Directory is currently being updated.

If you have an entry which needs altering or adding to, or you no longer want it included, please contact Gay Mole by Sunday 6th January by emailing [alice.mole@btinternet.com](mailto:alice.mole@btinternet.com), calling 811669 or writing to Gay Mole, The Old Malthouse, South Street, Fontmell Magna.

It is hoped that the new directories will be delivered with the February issue of The Gossip Tree.



Inside the Village Hall for the Christmas Fayre on Saturday 1st December.

**Garden Club**

**AGM.** The Garden Club held its AGM on Thursday 22nd November. 34 members were present.

The Chairman reported on another successful year with a wide selection of talks and a very enjoyable outing to Longstock Gardens in Hampshire. The Annual show was a success and was well supported by the village. The member's Annual Lunch in September was enjoyable as always. The Chairman thanked the committee for all their work this year and a special thank you was extended to Roy Foster who put up the notices each month.

After four years' service the Chairman, Robert McCurrach, stood down as did the Secretary Sue Keen and committee members Gay Mole and Carol Hillman (the expert outing organisers). Robert presented Sue Keen with a bouquet of flowers and in appreciation of his service to the club Sue East made a presentation to Robert. Lorna was given a small gift in recognition of all the cups of coffee and biscuits at the committee meetings.

Sue East was duly elected Chairman and Sara Jane Glanville as Treasurer. No nominations were received on the night for the position of Secretary. Sue East asked the members present if anyone was prepared to help in the short term. Jane Wallace was elected onto the committee. After the AGM a buffet and quiz was enjoyed by all present.

Post AGM note – Briony Long offered her assistance.

**Meeting Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December.**

Many thanks to all who attended. Our speaker, Claire Hart, was due to talk about 'Giant Vegetables.' However, after a delayed start, we had a talk instead on 'Square metre Gardening', which was very interesting.

We were advised on what kind and how many plants to grow in a limited area and how to extend the growing season by what we could be planting in late Autumn. Companion planting was covered too and we were given suggestions on plants to grow with vegetables to cut down on the bugs. We also had a short slide show on some rather quirky recycling containers ranging from pallets to plastic supermarket bags. Classic case here of where there is a will there is a way!

Claire was a very good speaker, showing her passion and knowledge in a clear and relaxed manner which was certainly appreciated by all present. On club matters Briony Long was duly co-opted on to the committee as Secretary, and we are pleased to have her on board.

Next month's meeting on Thursday 17th January is 'Preparing entries for the Annual Show'. Visitors welcome. Sue East

**Displaying temporary signs or adverts**

After a long silence from The Gossip Tree Legal Department (apparently, they have been very busy with something called Brexit), we are delighted to publish their latest missive, which should appeal to anyone who sees posters plastered over every telegraph pole.

Signs or adverts come within the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. These regulations are intended to: make motorists safer without distractions at the roadside; protect the environment from the display of inappropriate signs which may be detrimental to the visual appearance of an area; protect pedestrians who may trip over or have their path blocked by a pavement sign; and protect the public from signs that may not be securely fixed.

Temporary signs **may** be displayed for religious, educational, cultural, political, social or recreational events, but **not** for commercial purposes. Signs **may not**: be larger than 0.60 square metres (which is about the size of the house 'for sale' sign); be illuminated; be more than 4.60 metres above ground level; more than 28 days before the event. All signs must be taken down within 14 days of the event ending.

Signs **may** be put up: on private land (with the landowner's permission), on village noticeboards, on official advertisement sites; on shop and public hall noticeboards; in free papers and village news sheets; on town and village web sites. They **may not** be put up: on public highways, including pavements; on verges; on road or traffic signs; near road junctions; or on street furniture, such as telegraph poles, benches or walls.

Inappropriate signs may be reported online on the [www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk](http://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk) website.



**Fontmell Film Night**

We thought we would start 2019 with a bang so, on Wednesday 9th January, get ready for plenty of singing, dancing and laughing in our first film 'Mamma Mia! Here we go again!' (PG).

Starring Lily James, Meryl Streep, Julie Walters, Cher, Pierce Brosnan and a host of others, the storyline from the original film continues as the past and present intertwine with a pregnant Sophie busy re-launching her mother's taverna.

Tickets £6 from Fontmell Village Shop in advance or £6.50 on the door. Doors and the bar open at 7.00pm with the film starting at 7.30pm. We look forward to seeing you and don't forget your cushions! For more information please call Libby on 01747 811551.

Future film dates for your diary:

Wednesday 13th February 'Peterloo' (12A)

Wednesday 13th March 'The Children Act' (12A)

Wednesday 10th April 'King of Thieves' (15)

**Fontmell Magna and District Society**

Friday 7th December – Lt. Colonel Crispin Black – “Soldiers and Sleuths”

Crime fiction often paints a vivid picture of everyday life in the era in which the novel is set. Crispin's emphasis in this talk was on the way war, especially the two World Wars, has brought its influence to bear both on wider society and more particularly on crime and thriller writing.

Crispin had a distinguished military career and has now himself had two espionage thrillers published with more in the pipeline. Starting with the golden age of crime writing, he described how the different authors' experience of war affected their novels. For example, Lord Peter Wimsey and Philip Marlowe both fought and suffered on the Western Front and James Bond was a naval officer in World War II.

This was the last talk of 2018. It was very entertaining and informative and gave us plenty to reflect upon as we choose our reading for the Christmas holidays. Our first talk in 2019 will be on Friday 1st February when Margaret Marande will talk about 'The Hardy Way Challenge' and her retracing of the whole of the Hardy Way to raise funds in memory of her partner Harry Holberry.

Michael Golberg

**Dorset Trading Standards - New nuisance calls measures**

Rogue companies making unsolicited calls related to personal injury claims could now be fined up to £500,000. New powers which came into force on 8th September give consumers the choice to 'opt-in' to receive these calls, and people being harassed by nuisance calls now have new powers to stop them. Cold calls offering to help claim compensation for mis-sold payment protection insurance (PPI) will be banned if the claimant has not chosen to 'opt-in' to receive them.

Previously people had to 'opt-out' of receiving such calls by registering with the free Telephone Preference Service or withdraw their consent while on the call. However, the new powers will force the caller to make the necessary checks to make sure they have the recipient's consent before calling. Those offering unwanted claims management services could be fined as much as half a million pounds by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) if they breach the rules.

The Financial Conduct Authority highlighted that in the last 12 months, approximately 2.7 billion unsolicited calls, texts and emails were made to the UK's adult population offering to help them make a claim. This includes calls about recent accidents or mis-sold PPI. This is equivalent to approximately 50 calls, texts or emails being made to every member of the adult population. Individuals can opt-in to receiving these calls by consenting to be contacted by claims companies when enquiring about settling a claim, or when seeking claims advice.

These new measures together with the strengthened Data Protection Act, will curb the number of nuisance calls received by consumers. If you receive nuisance calls you can report it to the ICO who may investigate and take action against those responsible. The Government has already made it easier for regulators to fine those breaching direct marketing rules, by forcing companies to display their number when calling customers and there are increased fines for wrongdoers.

If you think you have been the victim of a scam, or would like advice about your consumer rights, then please contact the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 03454 040506.

**Shaftesbury Car Link**

Shaftesbury Car Link scheme is a 'not-for-profit' organisation set up to provide transport to assist people in Shaftesbury and surrounding villages. The service is provided by a team of volunteer drivers who use their own cars to take you where you want to go whether for medical trips (such as the hospital, surgery, dentist, optician etc.) or for social occasions or shopping trips.

There is a one-off fee of £5 to join the scheme, and a 'donation' for each trip to cover travel expenses at 50p per mile. To book, or to become a volunteer, contact Martin or June Hull on 07763 426664.

**Village weather for November 2018**

An unsettled month with competition between high and low pressure systems. A drier, colder, third week, then Atlantic storms won the battle. Lots of rainbows during the showery spells.

20 rain days. 7 ground frosts. 3 air frosts. 2 gales. No thunder or hail.

Comp. Figures	2018	2017
Rain (most 28.6 mm on 9th)	140.8 mm	77.1 mm
Sunshine	85.7 hr (av. 2.95)	68.8 hr
Max mean temp. (highest 15.7 °C on 5th)	11.61 °C	9.4 °C
Min mean temp. (lowest - 2.8 °C on 2nd)	5.53 °C	1.98 °C

This year, Remembrance Sunday was also Martlemas or St Martin's Day. According to weather lore, whatever the direction of the wind at noon on that day, the wind will continue in that quarter for the next three months. This did not quite work out this year. The first half of the month was dominated by southerly winds, blowing in mild but wet air. The winds then changed to cold easterlies for a few days, then south westerlies with more mild and damp conditions which carried on into December. Another old saying is that "If the leaves of the trees do not fall before Martin's Day, a cold winter may be expected." Most of the leaves had indeed fallen by 11th November, but not all – so what does it all mean?

**Full Moon - Monday 21st January**

2019 promises to be an exciting year for star-gazers. It will start with a rare 'Super Blood Wolf Moon' eclipse. First, the January Full Moon is known as the Full Wolf Moon, or the Old Moon or the Moon After Yule. Second, the Full Moon is a 'Supermoon' when the Moon is at its closest approach to the Earth; it should look slightly larger than normal (though this is not always the case). It should be a pale orange as it rises at dusk. This is the first Supermoon of 2019 – the Full Moons in February and March are also Supermoons. Keen readers will remember that there were two Supermoons in 2018 and one in 2017 (see Issue 287, January 2018).

Third, the Full Moon coincides with a Total Lunar Eclipse. This takes place between about 4.40am and 5.45am on the morning of Monday 21st January and the Moon should turn a red-orange-copper colour. Unfortunately, weather records since 2000 reveal that, at this time and date, there is an 82% chance of cloud.

The following day, Tuesday 22nd January, it will be possible (weather permitting) to see a conjunction (close pairing) of Venus and Jupiter. The two bright planets should be visible close together in the east just before sunrise.



### Christmas Quiz

1. 'Ice Follies' is one variety of daffodil - how many varieties are there altogether? About: (a) 520; (b) 2,300; (c) 1,700; (d) 13,000; (e) 25,000.
2. Traditionally one of the following was fed to cows and sheep: (a) bay leaves; (b) holly leaves; (c) box; (d) mistletoe.
3. Which is our most common bird? (a) robin; (b) blackbird; (c) wren; (d) chaffinch.
4. Poinsettias are members of which plant family? (a) Euonymous; (b) Euphorbia; (c) Eleagnus; (d) Escallonia.
5. Tenbury has a Christmas festival which features: (a) Holly Prince; (b) Ivy King; (c) Mistletoe Queen; (d) Helebre Princess.
6. Holly was once considered as a symbol of: (a) bad luck; (b) prosperity; (c) good luck; (d) fertility; (e) protection.
7. The leaves of Christmas trees (Picea abies) are edible - they are particularly high in which vitamin: (a) vitamin K; (b) vitamin D; (c) vitamin A; (d) vitamin C.
8. Mistletoe is the state emblem of which U.S. State? (a) Vermont; (b) Alaska; (c) Montana; (d) Oklahoma.

Alison Main

### Answers below

#### Welcome

We welcome to the village:

- Howard and Janet Wilmot-Banks who have moved into No. 2 Orchard Close from Shaftesbury;
- Malcolm and Joyce Hill who have moved into Penleas from West Dean, Chichester, West Sussex;
- Danny and Lesley Ayres who have moved into No. 3 Collyers Rise from Odiham, Hampshire; and
- Dorothy Hayward, an Holistic Energy Practitioner with 25 years' experience, who has moved into Brookland Cottage, Lurmer Street.

We hope they will be very happy here as they enter into the different aspects of village life.

### Answers!

- |               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| (p) 8         | (q) 4 |
| (p) L         | (c) 3 |
| (a) pua (p) 9 | (q) 7 |
| (c) 5         | (a) 1 |

### Evacuees at the Rectory

On 6th October this year, Fontmell Magna was visited by 13 members (encompassing three generations) of the Hillier family. They had a particular interest in seeing Fontmell House, as it was here (when it was the Rectory) that the Hilliers were eventually evacuated during the Second World War. Alix Austen very kindly allowed them to explore the grounds and some of the rooms.

At the beginning of the war, the family lived in London and consisted of Harry and Ellen Violet Hillier and their two children, Peter (age 5) and Christine (age 3). Peter and Christine were evacuated to Buckfastleigh, Devon on their own, as their mother, Ellen, was still in London awaiting the birth of twins. Sadly, Christine died of diphtheria at Buckfastleigh in November 1940 aged 4 years and 11 months.

In 1941, Ellen Hillier was evacuated with her twins, Rita and Barbara. She had been allocated a home in Bedchester but, when she arrived, she was refused entry (probably because she was accompanied by young twins and also Peter) and had to sleep in a field overnight. Eventually she walked up the drive of the Rectory not believing she would be granted a home for herself and her children, but she was pleasantly surprised with the kindness shown by the Rector, Canon Edmonds, and his wife. Ellen became good friends with them and their daughter, Agatha. Not only did the Hilliers stay at the Rectory for the rest of the war, but they were persuaded to stay on afterwards. Ellen's husband, Harry, stayed in London, driving for the army, and visited as and when he could. In April 1944, Ellen and Harry had a further child at the Rectory, Robert, who was baptised in St Andrew's Church by the Rector.



Rita Hughes and Barbara Colville on Abbey Walk, Shaftesbury in 2006

In 2006, Rita and Barbara, now both married, visited the area and spoke to the Western Gazette. According to the twins: "Our life here was idyllic, although it was very strict growing up in the old rectory. We had to go to church, and we were only allowed in the servant quarters.

Sometimes we were allowed up in the main part of the house for special occasions, like on our birthdays...we had to stand to attention when the royal anthem came on the radio.

The canon's wife was obsessed with hygiene so if we felt a sneeze coming on we had to run out of the house...we used to run down

to the pond at the bottom of the hill to meet Marjorie. We played together all the time, but when we left we didn't even say goodbye. [Marjorie was Marjorie Payne, the sister in law of Margaret Payne "who still lives in the old family home in Mill Street".]

"Their daughter, Agatha, used to make clothes for us so we wouldn't look like evacuees when we went to see other people, and she made clothes for our little brother, Robert, who was born at Fontmell Magna."

The Hilliers stayed at the Rectory until 1949 when Canon Edmonds retired due to ill health and the Rectory was sold. They still have a letter written by the Rector to their mother, Ellen, in December 1949, enclosing a Christmas gift: "If you could see this place now - gaunt, empty rooms and echoing stairs!...On the 'sale' day, I stayed in bed and listened to the tramp of feet up and down, and sometimes to the voice of the auctioneer, rather a ghastly experience - as if one were dead!...Thank you for all your care of us, and your work for us when you were here. We shall never forget your many kindnesses."

The Edmonds family moved to a house in Emberton, Buckinghamshire, which they named 'Fontmell Cottage', while the Hillier family returned to be near London and settled in Bromley. Life there proved a shock to the two girls, as they had become quite used to country life. "At school all the children used to ask us, what country do you come from, because we had strong Dorset accents. It was quite a culture shock."

Ellen stayed in touch with Agatha and the Hillier family visited and stayed with the Edmonds family many times in Emberton. Even after Agatha married and became Mrs Howie, Robert and the twins, Barbara and Rita, can remember having holidays on the Howie's farm in Buckinghamshire which was a real treat for them all.

For more information about Canon Edmonds and his family, see Issue 290, April 2018.

*Fontmell Magna Village Archive Society - the Society needs new members. If you are inspired by this story to find out more about the local history around you, please consider joining.*

The views expressed in this publication by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Committee of The Gossip Tree. Last copy date for the next issue is **Monday 21st January 2019**. Contributions for consideration should be submitted as early as possible to the Editor, Chris Bellers, via e-mail to [chris.bellers@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chris.bellers@hotmail.co.uk) or phone 811734. Please also contact the Editor if, rather than have your Gossip Tree delivered to you, **you would like to be emailed a copy** and benefit from seeing the pictures in colour (while also saving us printing costs), or if you would like to sponsor an issue (cost £30).