



THE VILLAGE MAGAZINE OF LANGRISH  
& RAMSDEAN IN HAMPSHIRE



# The Squeaker

*June 2026*

EDITION 172



# Useful Information



Website: [www.squeaker.org.uk](http://www.squeaker.org.uk)



FORTHCOMING ISSUES: SEPTEMBER 2026



Deadline for major copy: 2 weeks before issue. Please send cop/photos to [langrishramsdeanfriends@gmail.com](mailto:langrishramsdeanfriends@gmail.com)



Information for websites: <https://squeaker.org.uk/>  
Please contact: [ian.c.wesley@gmail.com](mailto:ian.c.wesley@gmail.com)



Langrish Parish Council news: Please contact [langrishparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:langrishparishcouncil@gmail.com)



Church news: Please contact: [iblackwell1@outlook.com](mailto:iblackwell1@outlook.com)



St John the Evangelist website:  
<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/16874/>

EDITOR: LANGRISH AND RAMSDEAN FRIENDS

Thanks to the following contributors: David Mowlam / Debbie Luff / Pippa lee / Luke Hodgkinson / Charlotte Hetherington / Julie Blackwell / Ian and Betty Wesley / Petersfield Museum / Jean Kelly / Joy Sang / Spitfire Makers

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# Editorial

So the pot holes in the road through Langrish continue to get worse but it finally looks as if something will be done. Several vehicles have sustained blow-outs and punctures, particularly to those who are unfamiliar with the road.



On the plus side, however, the village greens are kept in order and the daffodils bloomed in early spring, thanks to those volunteers who do this. The adage “if you want something doing then do it yourself” comes to mind, this probably wouldn’t happen if it was left to the Council...



The blossoms have been beautiful recently and the churchyard looked a picture, now the wild flowers are sprouting on the bank we can always enjoy this despite the demise of the church, more of which later.

Recent elections have made a change to our local political face and Lib Dem David

Podger now represents Petersfield Butser which encompasses our area.

We hope you enjoy this current issue and hope to receive more interesting articles as time goes on. This issue will be printed and distributed to homes in Ramsdean and Langrish. Surplus copies will be left in St John’s church. We are grateful to Chris Hayward for formatting the June Squeaker design.

Electronic copies of The Squeaker are available online since 2000

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/10HGuvGX1kK2PsNrRyNKcA9boP1IygHOO>

There is also a library of flyers produced to advertise Friends events

<https://squeaker.org.uk/friends-meeting-archive/>

***Editor - Langrish and Ramsdean Friends***



# Langrish & Ramsdean Friends

## AGM

The Friends AGM took place by Zoom on Tuesday 24 March at 7.30pm. The business was covered quickly with a few familiar faces from the villages. We maintain the request for donations for event subsidies and donations at £5 per person. With a busy spring over there is now one further Friends event organised.

Maybe next time there will be more visitors to the AGM. Luke Hodgkinson was also in attendance but unfortunately not on this image with the committee.

*Julie Blackwell on behalf  
of The Friends  
Committee*



## COFFEE MORNING

The coffee morning hosted by Marjorie Day on 26<sup>th</sup> March was a cosy enjoyable affair and well attended in the spring sunshine.

We hope to arrange more in the latter months of the year.





## Litter Pick

On 11 April the annual litter pick for the villages took place. Ramsdean even included a vintage car rally through the village...



There was a good turnout at Langrish Green in the morning and several bags collected before welcome refreshments at Langrish House for everyone, with thanks to Nigel and Robina Talbot-Ponsonby. Thanks to Roger Hetherington for taking the bags to the tip.



**FRIENDS EVENTS CALENDAR 2026** – updates will be sent by email

**Sunday 13 September** – BBQ on Church Field, Langrish, more details later and the pathway along the A272 will be cut back to allow better access

**Sunday 18 October** – Flo and Joan at the Theatre Royal Portsmouth

**Thursday 10 December** – Christmas dinner at The Olde George, East Meon



# Village People

## Langrish and Ramsdean get out and about and other events

Congratulations to Roger and Charlotte Hetherington who celebrated their Golden Wedding in March with family in a Landmark Trust property called Wortham Manor in Devon 12 in all and 2 dogs where they spent a very happy four days culminating in a Golden Dinner on the last night.



**FRIENDS BBQ**

**SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER**  
**BBQ 12-3PM**  
**AT CHURCH FIELD, LANGRISH**  
**CASH BAR**  
**PARKING**

TICKET PRICE £10, KIDS 12 AND UNDER FREE  
 PAYMENT TO FRIENDS ACCOUNT  
 SORT 09-01-29 A/C 67426980

TICKETS WON'T BE ISSUED BUT PLEASE CONFIRM TO  
 langrishramsdeanfriends@gmail.com

**Save the Children**

HELP CHILDREN CHANGE THEIR FUTURE FOR GOOD

**POP-UP SHOP**

**Saturday 13th June 2026 9.30am -5pm**  
**Sunday 14th June 2026 10am- 4pm**

**Winton House, High Street, Petersfield**

**Good as New**

Registered charity in England and Wales (213890), Scotland (SC039075), Isle of Man (No. 199). Registered with the Fundraising Regulator.



## Vox Caelistis

A small group of five voices (Lucy, Wendy, Leo, Ian and Julien) formed from the choir Vox Humana & Gregoriana, directed by Julien Chilcott-Monk, gave a short recital of sacred music at St John the Evangelist, Langrish. Pieces ranged from the first millennium to the music of Hildegard of Bingen, with settings of poems by G M Hopkins and St John Henry Newman.



Wendy Allen, of Langrish said, "It was really good to see so many in the church, for the singing and for refreshments and chat afterwards." There are no plans for future concerts.

## Alresford Watercress Festival

At the Alresford Watercress Festival on 17 May Chris and Mark Hayward were seen in the Ukelele band, Dampneys liqueurs were down Food and Drink



Alley and Sue Ricketts found herself with a Morris dancer. Bags of watercress were being sold for charity and the little town was heaving.

*Julie Blackwell for Friends Committee*



# Support Hounds for Heroes

Becoming a regular giver to Hounds for Heroes is one of the most effective ways to help change lives. Regular donations provide reliable support that allows the charity to plan ahead and continue training specially trained assistance dogs for serving and ex-serving, injured and disabled Armed Forces and Emergency Services personnel.

Each dog undergoes around two years of specialist training before being partnered with a beneficiary, learning practical tasks such as opening doors, retrieving items and providing day to day support and friendship,



Even a small monthly donation can make a real difference. Regular giving helps towards puppy training, specialist equipment, veterinary care and ongoing support for each partnership. By becoming a regular giver, you are helping provide independence, confidence and companionship to those who need it most.

To find out more about becoming a regular supporter, please visit [www.houndsforheroes.com/support-us/donate/regular-donation](http://www.houndsforheroes.com/support-us/donate/regular-donation) or contact [fundraising@houndsforheroes.com](mailto:fundraising@houndsforheroes.com) for further information.

*Jean Kelly*

## **A special Friends event to see some very special people**

Flo and Joan – With Feeling Tour 2026

The Friends are delighted to confirm that a contingent of 17 residents from Langrish and Ramsdean will be attending this concert.

# Lamb Sunday

The 26th of April was a glorious sunny day for the Lamb Cream Tea, very kindly hosted by Huw and Jane again at Lower Farm in Ramsdean. This was the second year the event has taken place, and it was once again very well attended by neighbours from Langrish and Ramsdean.



The day would not have been such a success without the wonderful shepherd, George. He made sure that everyone who wanted to feed the sheep had plenty of food in their buckets, which also resulted in some very happy sheep!

The children especially enjoyed feeding the lambs. Last year's most popular sheep, Muffin, was there again — this time with her lamb, Crumpet, who proved just as charming.



It was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon and a wonderful opportunity for the local community to come together in the sunshine.

*Luke Hodgkinson / Jame Smith*

# Bank Holiday Village Walk



After last year's village walk was cancelled due to extraordinary hot weather, we found ourselves in the same predicament



this year but much better prepared. Although there weren't many taking part, it was a happy band which set off over the fields on 25<sup>th</sup> May.



There were two very hot dogs by the end of it but that doesn't mean they didn't enjoy it. There were frequent water stops along the way and intermittent shade which was very



pleasant. Passing through Rothercombe Farm in the post-natal sheep field. Philip Stoneman alerted the farmer to a sheep in distress which was quickly attended to.



It was a delight to see the lambs with their sheep and also the cattle.

Refreshing drinks all round were very welcome at the Seven Stars Public House for walkers and dogs.



# Flight of the Spitfire

The 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first flight of the Vickers Supermarine Spitfire aeroplane in March 1936 was an occasion marked by the unveiling of a Blue Plaque at Langrish House by the Trustees of the Spitfire Makers Charitable Trust, where the then Mayor of Petersfield Cllr Chris Paige was also in attendance with Nigel Talbot-Ponsonby. The Chairman of the Trust,



Alan Matlock, in his speech recited Winston Churchill's words in July 1940; "there are vast numbers, not only in this island but in every land, who will render faithful service in this war, but whose names will never be known, whose deeds will never be recorded. This is a war of the Unknown Warriors". He added that this was a special occasion to "commemorate the vital role played by the men and women of the parish of Langrish and beyond recording their part in the nation's

history". It was they who kept the production workshops going throughout the war. Aching to go to the front to 'do their bit', theirs was a 'Restricted Profession' forcing them to do what their nation required in its "hour of peril".

The small precision steel die and mould making business based in former stable buildings, Talbot-Ponsonby & Co Limited, had been transformed into an armaments factory for the war effort with up to 160 men and women working 8 hour shifts 24 hours a day manufacturing parts for the Spitfire after the bombing of the main production factory in Southampton.

Winston Churchill again. "The front line runs through the factories; the workmen are soldiers with different weapons but the same courage."

And we know, according to Joan Snow in 'Stroud Interviews', that there was "a raid on the Talbot-Ponsonby armaments factory in Langrish". If this had set off the explosives and ammunition and gelignite stored in the vaults running beneath Langrish House then the damage would have been a lot more significant than that inflicted on the house by the occupying New Zealand troops whose number their Prime Minister had come to inspect one day in 1940!

A further witness to this bombing was one Dosh Stoneman (née Deadman) of nearby Home Farm recounted by her son Philip who farms there today.

In the 1960's this same small factory had gone on to make the precision steel moulds for the iconic nose cone of the Concorde

aircraft. Today, quietly, it continues to produce precision tools, inter alia, for the aerospace, automotive and defence industries; the latter a growth sector again.



Further celebrations were held in Langrish House after the unveiling.

Petersfield's Shine Radio

The secret wartime story of Langrish House

03:57 / 08:59

Alan Matlock

The blue plaque

Nigel Talbot-Ponsonby, with Clr Chris Paige, Mayor of Petersfield

<https://spitfiremakers.org.uk/>

You can hear Alan Matlock's interview on Petersfield's Shine Radio ***Spittfire Makers***

# Froxfield Entrenchments

We moved to Langrish in June 2007 but it wasn't until the spring of 2008 that we discovered "The Avenue", the footpath that goes up to Froxfield Green from Bordean Lane. We were bowled over by finding yet another lovely footpath so close to our new home but were fascinated by the earth banks on either side of the path.



Froxfield Entrenchments 1930 & present day

From Evelyn Hickox's book "Some Aspects of Langrish Life" we learnt that there are several of these banks in the area and that they are called "Entrenchments". She speculated that that they were probably defensive in nature and marked the boundary between the West and South Saxons in the 7th Century. Further Internet research and reading various reference books revealed very little additional information on the subject.

Then in July 2014, we went on a guided archaeological walk on Old Winchester Hill led by David Hopkins, Hampshire County Archaeologist. During the walk he said that the entrenchments are a bit of a mystery as they have never been properly excavated. He told us that many archaeologists now believe that even such large features as the banks and ditches of the Iron Age fort at Old Winchester Hill were created to warn people migrating from west to east that the area of land they were approaching was occupied and owned. The banks would have been kept free from vegetation making their chalk white surfaces very visible from a considerable distance asserting proof of historical ownership of the surrounding area.

Ater meeting David, we redoubled our research activities and managed to come up with two important sources of archaeological research into the entrenchments which we list on the "references" page. The first, published exactly 100 years ago, is a charming book on Hampshire archaeology and contains detailed maps and elevations of the Froxfield Entrenchments.

The second is a paper published in 1976 which includes maps of not just the Froxfield Entrenchments but also those in East/West Meon and East Tistead.

The entrenchments that start in Langrish north of Bordean Manor are called the “Froxfield Long Entrenchments” and run northwards for some 3 miles through Froxfield Green finishing up at the Froxfield Stud Farm straddling the Basing Dean Road. There are some interruptions where they have been built upon or ploughed out but it is fairly clear that when built they were one continuous feature. The second of our local entrenchments is called the “Froxfield Short Entrenchments” and is in the Slade Valley at High Cross. Both sets of entrenchments are extremely large, being 16 feet from the top of the bank to the bottom of the ditch next to them on the west side, and they are of very similar construction; so it is tempting to conclude that they were built at the same time.

A second set of entrenchments straddle the A32 from East Tistead to Colemore. A third set runs along the top of the hill between West Meon and West Meon Hut; going from west to east, they start at Marlands Farm, cross the A32 and continue eastwards all the way to Peak Farm.

There has been speculation that both sets of these entrenchments once linked up to the Froxfield Entrenchments. However after extensive walking in the area examining possible routes and studying of recent geophysical data, we think this is unlikely.

Our current view (and we have changed our minds several times already!) is that the Froxfield Entrenchments are not defensive but were built to control access from west to east. They are very substantial in size but it is difficult to imagine how the 3 mile long “Long Entrenchment” could be successfully manned. We further believe that the other 2 sets of entrenchments, which run east/west rather than north/south and are much smaller, were built for a different purpose, most likely as boundaries.

## **When were the Entrenchments created?**

We know that the entrenchments existed in late Saxon times because they are mentioned in the Saxon Charters. There are 3 possibilities for when the Entrenchments were built: Iron Age, Romano British or Saxon times.

There least likely is the Romano British period as there are no other examples of such structures built at that time and this area was peaceful.

There is a reasonable case for them being of Iron Age origin. The building of hill forts suggests this was a volatile period of history. The Old Winchester Hill hill fort is of definite Iron Age origin and controlled passage along the South Hampshire Ridgeway. The entrenchments could have been built at this time to control the through routes in this area of Bordean Gorge, Basing Dean and Ridge Top Lane.

However, the most likely answer is the seventh century AD. This area, east of the Meon Valley and west of the modern Sussex border was the subject of frequent rivalries between the West Saxons and the South Saxons. In 616 AD the South Saxons were granted the Hundred of Meon and Meonstoke (Langrish was part of the Hundred of Meon.) In 674 AD the West Saxons regained their settlements. Perhaps at this point the South Saxons retreated and created the Entrenchments to keep an eye on their West Saxon rivals and deter them from encroaching further east.

## What Next?

We plan to carry on with our research to try and tie down when the entrenchments were built. We have been using LIDAR (Light Detecting and Ranging) data to try to trace the true extent of the entrenchments. However, there is only one way to really establish their origin and that is an archaeological dig. Interestingly David Hopkins suggests that you wouldn't dig into a bank but rather the ditch where there would be far more interesting material. He is also keen that that it should be done at the edge of the existing entrenchments to protect what's left; they are after all listed National Monuments.

Hopefully Liss Archaeology can be persuaded to take an interest in the project.

## References

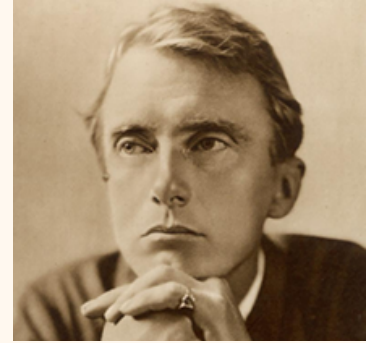
An Introduction to Field Archaeology as Illustrated by Hampshire – J.P. Williams-Freeman 1915

Linear Earthworks in Froxfield ... – S Coffin 1975 (Proceedings of Hampshire Field Club)

*Ian and Betty Wesley*

# Edward Thomas

It is 109 years ago this year that Edward Thomas was killed manning a forward observation post on Easter Monday 9 April 1917, during the opening phase of the battle of Arras. His pocket watch recorded the fateful moment as 07.36. He was 39 years old.



Edward was that rare man, an artillery officer who used his observation post to look beyond the battle to the life around him, and in one of his last letters wrote of the buildings and birds around him. He is widely regarded as a major poet and his posthumous influence on English poetry has been considerable. Although born in Lambeth, he took much inspiration from the natural beauty of the South Downs countryside, especially around his home in Steep, near Petersfield.

His poetry was all written during the last few years of his life and his later pieces relate to his experience after enlisting. This remarkable flowering of genius was cut short in 1917. For most of his adult life Edward Thomas lived by writing prose. He wrote topographical works, biographies, critical studies, one novel, some experimental pieces about nature and the countryside, and a vast number of book reviews.



The poems remain as much alive now as when they were first written, quietly capturing the essence of the English countryside, modestly sharing his experiences with his readers until we too can hear almost hear 'all the birds of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.' Early admirers of his poetry included Walter de la Mare and leading contemporary poets such as Ted Hughes and Jeremy Hooker.

Edward Thomas is commemorated in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey and by pictorial windows in two parish churches, and by a sarsen boulder memorial on the hillside above Steep in Hampshire.

The Edward Thomas Fellowship was founded in 1980 to perpetuate his memory and writings. The Edward Thomas Study Centre is in Petersfield Museum where members of the public can consult works about and by him. [Follow the link](#) from Petersfield Museum.

# Langrish PCC APCM

The PCC AGM was held on 16 April in St Johns church Langrish. It was encouraging to see a few parishioners there and refreshments were held after the event. In all it was a sombre affair due to the nature of the church future, however the duties were dealt with in good order and the PCC will ensure Diocesan procedure is adhered to going forward as you will see.

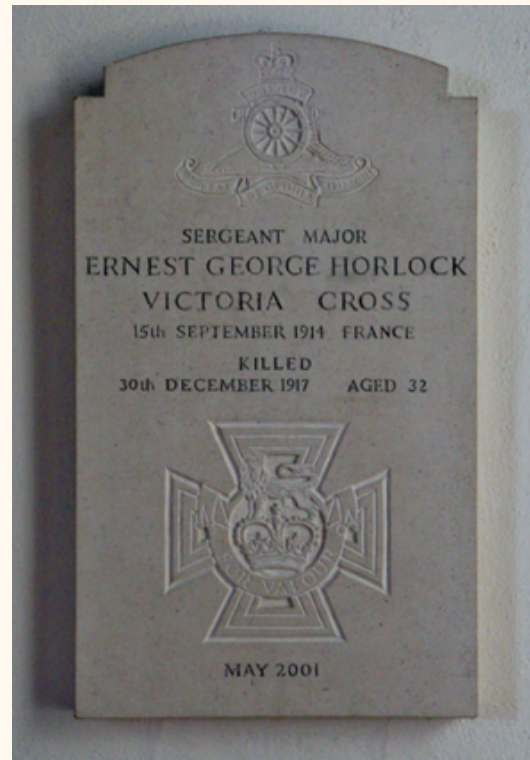


## Church News

In the January Squeaker, I explained that the legal process for granting permission to close Langrish Church had, after 3 years, finally finished. I also explained that a date for closure could not be set until the faculty (Ecclesiastical equivalent of listed building consent) for removing the war memorials had been approved and the work to remove them completed, I predicted July for closure but, yet again, my prediction was overly optimistic!

As, I'm afraid, was my belief that the diocese would agree to our plan to remove the war memorials to storage with a view to re-installing them in East Meon church at a later date and place the stone plaque commemorating Sgt Major Horlock in the churchyard alongside our other VC, Admiral Eric Robinson.

I won't go into the process of approving a faculty but suffice to say that the appropriate diocesan body that advises the Chancellor (the diocesan legal beagle who sits in judgement) said that they would not advise approval until there was an equivalent faculty submission for reinstatement of the war memorials in East Meon Church. It transpired that, in law, nothing can be erected in a churchyard except gravestones, so our plan for the Horlock plaque was flawed from the outset. The PCC has therefore withdrawn the faculty request and the memorials are condemned to remain in a closed church building with no public access until the future of the building has been determined – at least 2 years but quite possibly a lot longer.



However, at least this decision has cleared the way to set a certain timetable for closure. The PCC want to have a final celebratory service in the church (I hope everyone does!) and are keen that the Bishop of Portsmouth, the Right Reverend Dr. Jonathan Frost, come and officiate at this service. Fr Tony has duly negotiated with the bishop's staff and he will come on Sunday 6 September. The church will be locked after this service and cease to be used for worship but will not officially close until 1 October when the re-amalgamation of Langrish and East Meon Parishes will occur.

As we approach this sad moment it is worth recording some history. In 1869, John and George Waddington (the Talbot-Ponsonbys' ancestors) living in Langrish House set about creating a community in Langrish by building a church, a vicarage and a school. George, the more pious of the two, particularly wanted to save the people of Langrish from having to trek into East Meon of a Sunday to attend church and put much of his own money into the project so it was sad that he died in January 1870 a year before the building was completed and consecrated in January 1871. The school, now Flints, became too small and, in 1914, it was moved to a new building in Stroud – in those days Stroud was a part of Langrish



Parish. Langrish remained a completely independent ecclesiastical parish with its own incumbent priest until the end of 1973 – just over 100 years – when it was decided that the vicar of East Meon would serve both parishes. As part of this realignment, Stroud was joined to Steep Parish and the Langrish vicarage was sold off in 1974. The Church of Saint John the Evangelist soon became the last community building left in the parish with the pub long gone and shop and post office closing in 1977.

In 1986, in her book *Some Aspects of Langrish Life* Evelyn Hickox wrote, 'We know that despite our efforts, we may probably lose the church building within the next ten years.' Well, it took another 40 years before the will to administer a church in a parish of under 300 souls and pay for both expenses and the building's upkeep finally faltered and the PCC decided to embark on an orderly closure. The church built with vision and faith by the Waddington brothers to the Glory of God, used for worship and a feature of village life for 155 years will shortly be no more. We have motor cars now and can easily go back to what was, before 1871, our parish church, All Saints, East Meon. St John's job is done but those in the worshipping congregation will mourn its passing and I hope the memory of its value to the community as a whole will live on with those who were baptised or married in it or have family members buried in the churchyard.

The churchyard will remain open and in the ownership of the combined Parish of East Meon and Langrish. As a Langrish community we will need to continue to maintain it with a mowing rota and an annual churchyard clear-up in autumn.



**Please note the date of the final celebratory service in St John the Evangelist Church, Langrish will be on Sunday 6 September at 10.30am**

***David Mowlam***



# Church Community Events

On 3 April Father Anthony Forrest led the Good Friday Walk this year departing from Langrish church.



A good crowd of about twenty gathered in the rain where Fr Tony read the chosen station of the cross passage before we set off, cross held high, towards East Meon. There were some steep hills on



the route, so the hot cross buns and coffee were very welcome at All Saints in East Meon.

At East Meon some of the Langrish walkers dropped out but many new walkers joined for the second leg to West Meon with Phil carrying the cross



Once again a few dropped out and a few joined but a small band made the whole journey from Langrish to Warnford. It truly felt like a pilgrimage and we had made good time! This enabled us to enjoy the fabulous cakes and tea and also an extra hymn during the moving service at Warnford which finished on the dot of three with silence.

for this section. The rain had also stopped, and walking conditions were good.

We were met with a choice of three excellent home-made soups at West Meon for sustenance and then on for the final stretch to Warnford.



*Pippa Lee*

## Commemorative mugs/coasters of St John's church are available

St John the Evangelist mug and  
Commemorative glass coaster



Mug @ £3 or 6 @ £15

Coaster (10cm) @ £5 or 6 @ £25

1 mug and 1 coaster @ £7

Contact Julie Blackwell on 07796 146882 or [iblackwell1@outlook.com](mailto:iblackwell1@outlook.com)

BACS to Langrish PCC 30-96-26 A/c 80924560

# Church service rota

## JUNE

**2nd Sunday** 14th 10.30 Service of the Word Music Sunday  
17th 09.00 MP  
24th 09.00 MP  
28th 10.30 Benefice Eucharist Langrish (St Peter & St Paul)

## JULY

1st 09.00 MP  
7th 18.00 Compline  
8th 09.00 MP  
**2nd Sunday** 12th 09.00 Service of the Word Langrish  
15th 09.00 MP  
22nd 09.00 MP Mary Magdalene  
**4th Sunday** 26th 10.30 Benefice Eucharist Langrish  
29th 09.00 MP

## AUGUST

4th 18.00 Compline  
5th 09.00 MP  
**2nd Sunday** 9th 09.00 Service of the Word  
12th 09.00 MP  
19th 09.00 MP  
**4th Sunday 23rd** 10.30 Benefice Eucharist Langrish  
26th 09.00 MP

If you are planning to come to Morning Prayer, please ring to see whether it is taking place (01730 261991)

All services in East Meon, West Meon & Warnford are listed in the weekly Pew News

*Joy Sang*

# East Meon Flower Festival

The Flower Festival was held over the Pentecostal Bank Holiday weekend and All Saints church was a flurry of fragrance and excitement for a few days beforehand as those with a creative eye made the church into a floral delight. Who needs Chelsea you might say!

Langrish, West Meon and Warnford were included in providing a display for the Benefice and this took up the whole of the main altar in the church. The church was set for a fabulous 3 day event and refreshments with cake, tea and coffee were available in the church hall.



There were some very imaginative ideas and many local businesses and clubs took part. With a ticket price of £10 and refreshments income it is hoped that funds will be raised to cover the repair costs for the church.





# Book Review – Langrish Bookends

## February – Death in the Arctic by Tom Hindle

A frozen wilderness...a killer in the skies...This was an easy read and a bit predictable so it is a good quick book. An interesting premise as the action takes place in a modern day airship, but as usual there is a back story which you can only guess at in the first instance but becomes more apparent as the story unfolds. We enjoyed it but didn't provoke much discussion, the characters are drawn with all their faults so you can see where the tensions lie.

When aspiring travel writer Chloé Campbell is invited aboard a luxury airship flying to the North Pole, she thinks she's bagged the opportunity of a lifetime. But she hasn't had long to admire the dazzling icy views before a fellow passenger is found dead in their cabin. Trapped at the top of the world, the group agrees a tragic accident has occurred. But as the hours tick by, fear turns to doubt.

It seems everyone's a suspect; and it isn't long before the passengers begin to turn on each other.

## March – A Fine Balance by Rohinton Mistry

Where to start with this one, it took us a while to get to the end of what was a truly momentous story. Taking place after Partition during India's State of Emergency in 1975, no action was too small to be punished and horribly so. The caste system is clear, and those who try to move upwards are held back. The plot draws together a widowed seamstress, two tailors fleeing caste violence, and a student from the mountains. In a cramped flat by the sea, they forge a fragile kinship while the city outside seethes with poverty and political menace.

As the characters move from distrust to friendship and from friendship to love, *A Fine Balance* creates an enduring panorama of the human spirit in an inhuman state. Discussion was based on the inhumanity at this time, along with fixed elections and the state of people. It is hard to imagine what these people lived through, especially after the horrors of WWII.

The book for June is *The Glassmaker* by Tracy Chevalier

*Julie Blackwell*



### **April – The Dressmaker’s Gift by Fiona Valpy**

A gripping story of three young women faced with impossible choices. Paris, 1940. With the city occupied by the Nazis, three young seamstresses go about their normal lives as best they can. But all three are hiding secrets. War-scarred Mireille is fighting with the Resistance; Claire has been seduced by a German officer; and Vivienne’s involvement is something she can’t reveal to either of them. In wartime, the three seamstresses face impossible choices when their secret activities put them in grave danger. Brought together by loyalty, threatened by betrayal, can they survive history’s darkest era without being torn apart?

Two generations later, Claire’s English granddaughter Harriet arrives in Paris, rootless and adrift, desperate to find a connection with her past. Living and working in the same building on the Rue Cardinale, she learns the truth about her grandmother—and herself—and unravels a family history that is darker and more painful than she ever imagined.

An interesting background of wartime Paris and Nazi occupation. Another story of unprecedented punishments with no respite. We enjoyed the read as it was identifiable with Harriet wanting to find out more about her grandmother’s background during those years and the subsequent suicide of her mother. You wonder if you’re better not knowing...a good page turner to find the answers.

### **May - The Names by Florence Knapp**

In the wake of a catastrophic storm, Cora sets off with her nine-year-old daughter, Maia, to register the birth of her son. Her husband, Gordon, respected in the community but a controlling presence at home, intends for her to follow a long-standing family tradition and name the baby after him. But when faced with the decision, Cora hesitates....

Spanning thirty-five years, what follows are three alternate and alternating versions of their lives, shaped by Cora's last-minute choice of name. In richly layered prose, *The Names* explores the painful ripple effects of domestic abuse, the messy ties of family, and the possibilities for autonomy and healing.

Readers found it a little confusing at times, as the story works in 7 yearly time spans and although the characters remain the same, they each have a different life revolving around the central character.

An extraordinary novel that asks: Can a name change the course of a life?

*If anyone would like to join the Langrish Book Club, we meet at 7.30pm on the last Wednesday of the month at one of the members’ homes with wine and nibbles.*

*Please email [langrishramsdeanfriends@gmail.com](mailto:langrishramsdeanfriends@gmail.com) if you are interested.*



# Langrish/Ramsdean Parish Council

Much of the Parish Council's focus over the past few years has been on the severe deterioration of Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs), particularly those going up to Butser and Fiveways in Ramsdean.

Hampshire County Council (HCC) has spent significant amounts of public money on repairing these BOATs, only for them to be quickly damaged again by motorised vehicles such as Trail Bikes and 4X4s, exposing the BOATs to further damage by exceptionally heavy rainfall. HCC now propose to trial a permanent BOAT closure by using Traffic Regulation Orders, the first of which will be BuΣons Lane in Priors Dean. This decision is expected to be strongly opposed by the Trail Riders Fellowship and inevitably HCC expect the closure to be challenged in Court. HCC are preparing significant legal work to prepare for this.

Following reports from Parishioners, the Parish Council are concerned about the safety of the junction where the C28 meets the A272 on The Old Hop Kiln side of the Green at Langrish. Accidents and damage have been caused by large Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) taking the smaller road alongside The Green, where the narrow exit onto the A272 is clearly not suitable for HGVs. Both Cllr Blackwell and HCC Cllr Mocatta have asked HCC to consider finding ways of making the slip road safer for all users either by imposing a weight restriction or making a no right turn restriction from the Hop kiln junction to the A272. LPC are still waiting for a response. The Parish Council has also approved the purchase of a new Speed Camera to replace a very old existing camera on the A272. This decision arose following a speeding vehicle trying to overtake a tractor causing an accident and damage to one of the houses on the A272 at Langrish.

LPC have also been in contact with HCC about tree subsidence on the A272 on the approach to Langrish Village on the left coming from Stroud. Again, no reply has been received from HCC.

Potholes continue to be reported for repair, especially on the C80 and on Ramsdean Lane near Harrow Way Farm. Again, no reply from HCC.



The Community Orchard at Langrish Meadow has suffered the loss of several trees after last year's severe drought. New trees have been purchased and will be nurtured until the roots are sufficiently rigorous to withstand another drought.

Both the Old Telephone Box and the Seat on Langrish Green were restored and repainted last summer and residents have kindly volunteered to mow Langrish Green on a regular basis. The Green now looks very smart.

Concern about what will happen to the War Memorial in St John's has been raised by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to the Parish Council. Unfortunately, a decision has been taken by the Church Commissioners that the Memorial should not be moved until a suitable new venue is established by St John's PCC before the Church is to be closed. After the closure of the Church it will be more difficult.

to obtain permission for the Memorial to be moved. LPC has supported an application by the PCC to remove the Memorial to storage before the Church is closed, but this option was refused. It has also been established by Cllr Heatherington, that the LPC are legally not allowed to fully fund a new War Memorial, but can support fund raising by Parishioners by donating towards any costs in the building of a new Memorial.

Sadly, Cllr Nigel Talbot Ponsonby has decided to retire after 28 years' service on the LPC. His local knowledge and especially his expertise on trees will be very much missed. Nigel will be extremely hard to replace, and I would like to thank him on behalf of the Parish for the huge contribution he has made to the Parish after so many years.

***Debbie Luff***



# Useful Telephone Numbers

## Police

101 (non 999 emergencies) or 01962 841534 (faster!)

## East Meon Care Group

Provides transport to surgeries and hospital outpatients for the elderly and disabled. Call 03300434823

## Citizens Advice Bureau

03444 111306 / 0300 3300650

Emergency planning for events such as flooding/extended power cuts. Here are attached details of warm spaces in the local area.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/costofliving/warm-spaces>

## Petersfield Library

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/librariesandarchives/library/libraryfinder/petersfield-library>

**Winton House Community Cafe** <https://wintonhousecentre.org.uk/winton-community-cafe/>

Winton House welcomes older people and especially solo people. An affordable place to relax and meet other people. The information desk holds details about resources and services in the local area.



## Parish Council

Mrs Debbie Luff (Chair)

[chair@langrish-pc.gov.uk](mailto:chair@langrish-pc.gov.uk)

Mr Roger Hetherington (Vice Chair/Planning)

[rogerhetherington@langrish-pc.gov.uk](mailto:rogerhetherington@langrish-pc.gov.uk)

Mr Ian Blackwell (Roads)

[ianblackwell@langrish-pc.gov.uk](mailto:ianblackwell@langrish-pc.gov.uk)

Mr Robert Bewes (Footpaths)

[robertbewes@langrish-pc.gov.uk](mailto:robertbewes@langrish-pc.gov.uk)

Mrs Cheryl Walder

[cherylwalder@langrish-pc.gov.uk](mailto:cherylwalder@langrish-pc.gov.uk)

Sam Merchant (Clerk)

[clerk@langrish-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@langrish-pc.gov.uk)

Cllr David Podger  
County & District Councillor

[david.podger@easthants.gov.uk](mailto:david.podger@easthants.gov.uk)



### Parochial Church Council

Cdre David Mowlam (Secretary & Electoral Roll Officer, Open/Close Rota, Mowing Rota, Sub Treasurer)

Mrs Joy Sang (Deanery Synod Rep, Verger and Sidesman/Reader Rota)

Mrs Susan Ricketts (Deanery Synod Rep)

Mr Nigel Talbot-Ponsonby (Chair)

Mrs Julie Blackwell / Mr Jon Allen / Mrs Robina Talbot-Ponsonby / Mr Nick Roe

### Helpers

Cheryl Walder - Altar Frontal Care and Changing

Susan Ricketts - Refreshments

Betty Wesley - Cleaning Rota

Emily Rich - Secretary to the United Benefice (Langrish, E & W Meon and Warnford) [beneficeuppermeon@gmail.com](mailto:beneficeuppermeon@gmail.com)

