

CRATFIELD NEWS

January 2025



IN MEMORIAM

As most people know, very sadly we lost Caroline Marfleet, a much loved and admired member of our village, on 5th December. Since Caroline and Paul came to the village, not very many years ago they joined whole heartedly in all our activities, becoming members of committees and contributing in so many different ways.

**Caroline's funeral will take place in St. Mary's Church at 1pm
on Thursday 16th January 2025.**

Refreshments afterwards at Laxfield Village Hall

I am sure very many people will wish to pay their respects to Caroline and support Paul and his family in their loss.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Quiz Night at the Village Hall

(with Ian Thompson as our Quiz Master)

Friday 21st March 2025

In aid of the Indian Charity

'Brighter future Development Trust'

(Graham & Susan Nixey)

HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Cratfield News team would like to wish all our readers a very happy and healthy New Year.

I would like to thank our regular contributors Jeremy Blackham and Andrew Weight for the most interesting articles they have submitted over many years now. Also, very many thanks to our loyal deliverers Julie & Andy, Andy & Richard, Robert & Rebecca, Dan & Linzi, Andrew, Maisie and Mary (and of course Mel until very recently). Without them we would find it very difficult to provide the village with news, updates and other interesting items.

AND another big thank you to our own little 'Cratfield Elf', who once again came creeping, whilst all of us were sleeping, around the village in the dead of night. The little parcels which were left for us to find come morning brought smiles and proved another delight. How she does it we'll never know, hours of work that's for sure and much appreciated by all.

I use the pronoun 'she', as to me as an elf is a female sprite and to use the gender-neutral pronoun 'they', does not work for me, it's a plural!

Sue (Ed.)

Loft Insulation Offer gives Suffolk residents 50% off eco-friendly insulation



According to The Energy Saving Trust, an uninsulated home loses a quarter of its heat through its roof. For the second year in a row, help to afford eco-friendly loft insulation is now available for Suffolk residents. The Suffolk Climate Change Partnership has teamed up with an insulation provider to help Suffolk residents make their homes warmer and save money on their energy bills.

Residents will receive a 50% discount off their purchase of 200mm or 370mm wide insulation rolls (up to £200) with free delivery, from High Loft, the UK's leading eco loft insulation brand.

The offer is open to anyone in Suffolk and will close once the allocated funding has been spent. Simply go to www.bit.ly/suffloft and fill in the form to receive your personalised link to order, or call High Loft's insulation experts on 01706 248203 (Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm).

Or, to find out more visit www.greensuffolk.org/at-home/funding.

A Christmas Mystery!

We were very grateful to, and would like to thank, the anonymous donor of the 6ft Christmas Tree for the Church. We were looking forward to decorating it ready for the Christmas service. However....

We are less grateful to the person who took the Christmas tree without asking – we can only assume their need was great.

No 55 - Off on Live Operations with an Exciting Start

We were just getting over our Christmas excesses in January 1993, when I was ordered to sail within three weeks, taking three frigates under command, together with a tanker, a stores ship and a large auxiliary ship, adapted for the occasion to carry an Army artillery regiment and a casualty receiving centre, to the Adriatic. The Bosnian War was heating up and British troops and charity organisations were trying to deliver relief supplies where needed in what had become a vicious and bloody conflict. We were to “poise” in the Adriatic, ready to offer whatever help should be needed.

We had rapidly to change our plans and prepare for something more real and threatening and for a deployment of unknown length and tasking and with no established support base. I started to put together a “battle staff”, borrowing the necessary skilled people from an Admiral who thought that it should be he, and not I, who was commanding this Task Force – he was, to say the least, somewhat miffed! I invited the Captains of the other ships from Portsmouth, Plymouth and Rosyth to a series of planning meetings with their teams, and we had a complicated joint communications system installed, allowing us to command forces from all three services as necessary.

In no time at all it seemed, on 25th January, we sailed from Portsmouth in a very strong gale which meant that I had to use a speed well above the port speed limit to counter the wind¹ and we “popped out” of the harbour rather fast, apparently looking eager to get on with it or so the TV news said. We were too busy to worry about that. Overnight we sailed to Portland to assemble our small force at sea and start operating together, to embark our enhanced squadrons of Sea Harriers and helicopters (including commando helicopters as well as anti-submarine aircraft), all the more exciting because we were taking them aboard in strong gale force winds. Importantly we were also instructed to check our degaussing. This is a system of electric cables running round the ship and generating a strong enough current to cancel out the ship’s own magnetic signature, thus giving protection against magnetic mines. It required us to steam over measuring sensors laid in Portland harbour’s southern entrance between heavy stone harbour walls at just six knots on a course of due south magnetic, turn inside the harbour and steam out over similar sensors in the northern entrance on a course of due east magnetic, also at six knots.² I knew that in the prevailing winds this was a highly risky maneuver.

Well, the wind was from the north at about 30-35 knots, so steering due south at slow speed was manageable. Turning at rest was difficult and steaming out at slow speed with so strong a wind on our beam was extremely hazardous. As we approached the gap we were being pushed hard to starboard by the wind. Gradually I increased speed to try to counter the wind, and used a lot of helm, knowing that it would invalidate the magnetic readings but I was much more interested in avoiding finishing our deployment as a permanent part of the harbour wall.

These things seem to happen very slowly. I stood on the bridge, coffee cup in hand, trying to give an impression of calm confidence with my heart

thumping as I eventually ordered full ahead³ and used full helm to turn the ship around the end of the wall, then straighten to avoid thumping the stern into the opposite wall. We escaped from the harbour safely although without a full degaussing and I breathed again.

Everyone on the bridge seemed to regard the whole thing as normal (or felt it wise to keep quiet, assuming that I knew what I was doing) but, as luck would have it, the Admiral in command of the Fleet Surface Flotilla, and a very old friend, had dropped in to say farewell and was standing quietly at the back of the bridge. He offered no comment at the time, except to say to me quietly and with a smile, "I have never seen whiter knuckles holding a coffee cup."

Thereafter, even a phone call from Candy to tell me that our London house had been burgled the previous night didn't seem quite so bad as we set off down the Channel towards Bosnia.

Jeremy Blackham

1. See the story '*A Damn Close RunThing*' published in the Cratmag of November 2024 about taking the ship into Nassau in a strong wind.
2. The magnetic north pole lies to the west of the true north pole so magnetic courses are different from true courses. To complicate matters further, magnetic north moves constantly over time and is different in different parts of the world. The ship is steered by true courses in a gyroscopic compass so an allowance has to be made when ordering magnetic courses.
3. Traditionally, when a Captain orders Full Ahead or Astern, the engine room was expected to react immediately, accepting the risk of damage to the machinery, if necessary. The Captain was expected to buy the Engineer Officer a drink for saving his bacon, and I honoured that tradition.
4. This was one of three occasions in my career when I ordered emergency full power, but easily the most alarming!

Mobile Library Dates 2025
Silverleys Green 14.00 – 14.20
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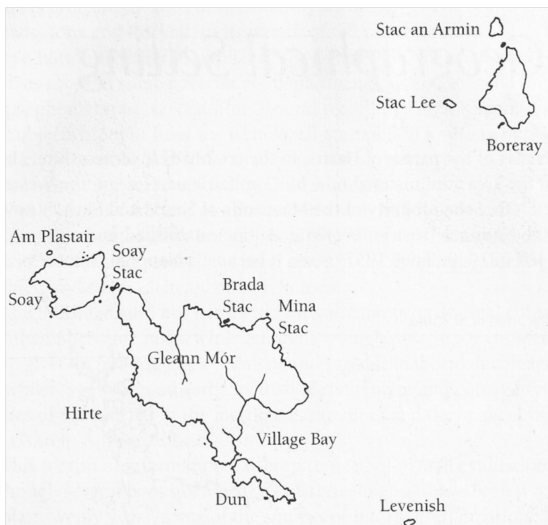
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ICS

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Exploring the Scottish Islands – with a collapsible bike!
St Kilda (Population: 0 – last inhabitants evacuated in 1930)
Part 3: The St Kildan Way of Life (I)



In 1697, 180 people were living on Hirta, in the St Kildan archipelago. They lived in 25 blackhouses, of dry-stone wall construction; walls were double-skinned, with a layer of insulating earth in between. With rounded corners to tone down the howling wind, a lashed down turf and hay roof, and with a peat fire on the go, these rudimentary dwellings were quite effective at providing a relatively warm shelter from the vicious elements. There were no windows and no chimneys: the peat fire smouldered in the middle of the floor, smoke escaping through the door. Everything was blackened with soot, though this was a precious commodity, as it was a good

fertiliser. For lighting, they used oil, extracted from the stomachs of fulmars (a harvested seabird): poured into a hollowed out stone, with a crude wick, this was all they had for illumination. The St Kildans shared their houses with their cattle: this ensured that the cattle survived the extreme winter weather, but also the increased body-heat was appreciated by the inhabitants! Not only that, but the dung from the cattle was allowed to build up on the floor and only cleared out the following April to be used, along with soot-coated straw, as highly-prized fertiliser for their essential crops. Furniture was sparse: the islanders slept and ate on the floor. Little wonder that their unhygienic living conditions caused alarm and concern to any visitors.

Following the visit of a clergyman in 1829, and with the help of a benefactor, a new village of blackhouses was built in Village Bay, between 1836-38 – this time with the ‘modern’ building materials of wood, and glass for small windows. However, the St Kildans continued to share their houses with the cattle. In the 1850s, another clergyman, concerned at the lack of hygiene, decided to present the islanders with some crockery. There were no lavatories on the island, so he gifted each household with a chamber pot; the islanders had no idea what they were for and used them to eat porridge!

In the early 1860s, the proprietor, John Macpherson MacLeod, built 16 modern cottages using stone and mortar. These were slotted in between the old blackhouses, the ‘High Street’ of which followed the curve of the bay. Though modern for their time, the new cottages had earth floors until the end of the century, when, finally, timber floors were laid in the bedrooms. Despite being surrounded by feathers, St Kildans slept on mattresses stuffed with straw and they simply rolled up discarded clothing to

use as pillows. Life was basic – and cramped; many families numbered eight or more, and the weather frequently confined them to long periods of indoor living in their two-roomed cottages. Each cottage had roughly 2 acres of land allocated to it in a long strip which reached up behind the cottage, and down to the shore: in April, much effort, with crude tools, was put into preparing the soil where they grew potatoes, barley, oats and a few cabbages and turnips – but the work was hard and the yields were dismal: owing to constant seaspray, potatoes were soft and tasteless. The subsistence agriculture for the St Kildan was better at producing meat than it was vegetables: however, once the crops were in the ground, they could focus on their livestock. Behind the main island of Hirta lies another island called Soay, which, translated from Old Norse, means ‘Island of Sheep’. Comprising 244 acres with sheer sides, it’s a perfect sheep-pen, and it’s where the rare breed of Soay Sheep originate from. These were introduced by neolithic farmers in around 5,000 B.C.! Of brown colour and more closely resembling goats, Soay sheep are direct descendants of the moufflon, the ancestor of all domesticated sheep. Soay sheep weren’t kept for their meat, but for their soft wool, which would be plucked. From this, the islanders knitted items like socks, and they also wove tweed – and, handed over to the factor on his annual visit, this would be accepted as ‘rent’, together with other produce from the islands such as fulmar oil and feathers.



St Kildans outside their cottages, with the old blackhouses, end on, in between

Next month: Part 4 - More on the St Kildan way of life

Andrew Weight

Cratfield Allotment to Rent



CPC has a large allotment available from the 1st October for Cratfield residents.

For further details contact the Parish Clerk:

Tel: 07774 734411 or Email: clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk



Plough Sunday Service & Blessing of the Plough

Sunday 12th January at 10.30am

St Mary's Church, Cratfield

with Ven. Sally Gaze, Archdeacon for Rural Mission

followed by soup and bread lunch

(if possible, please bring your own mug for soup)

**The service will be held outside, so please dress appropriately
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VILLAGE HALL UPDATE – JANUARY

Many thanks to everyone who has helped at the Village Hall in the past year, whether you did endless rounds of washing up at an event, helped set chairs and tables out – or ran all the empties to the bottle bank after the pop-up pub. We really appreciate all the help (and many hours!) behind the scenes to keep providing all these events for the whole community.

POP UP PUB – FRIDAY 3rd JANUARY / 7th FEBRUARY 6 – 9pm

Now a firm fixture in everyone's diary – come along for a bite to eat and a catch up with friends old and new over a drink. The menu is posted up on the village Facebook page the Monday before – just search Cratfield Village on Facebook.

RURAL COFFEE CARAVAN – FRIDAY 14th MARCH 10am – 12noon

Come along for some company and a catch up with your neighbours over a cup of tea or coffee – with biscuits and cake too! There will be a wide range of information available on local services and opportunities should you need it, along with the free refreshments.

VILLAGE HALL TALK – SATURDAY 12TH APRIL – 7 FOR 7.30 / £6 on the door

St Kilda: beautiful, remote, dangerous – and its lost civilisation

Andrew Weight's stories about his trips to the Scottish islands have been featuring in our magazine for some time now and we have reached the point in his adventures where he spends several days on the hard-to-reach and unforgettable St Kilda.

Designed as a companion to these articles, Andrew will be giving a talk and also showing excerpts from the film he made of his travels there; this also includes archive footage of the St Kildans making perilous rock climbs to harvest seabirds and eggs, and their dangerous seafaring exploits. In St Kilda, death was always around the corner from the moment you were born: in addition, Victorian visitors brought germs to which the St Kildans had no immunity, having lived in total isolation for 1,000s of years. Their numbers decimated, the remaining 36 islanders sadly evacuated in 1930, unable to continue with their unique way of life. Fine Scottish fayre and a dram of whisky (or two!) available during the interval!

BOOK NOW VIA cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com

INDOOR BOWLS – ALTERNATE TUESDAYS – ! UPDATED DATES BELOW FOR 2025 !

Dates for 2025 = January 7 + 21 / February 4 + 18 / March 4 + 18 / April 1 + 15 + 29 / May 20 / June 3 + 17 / July 1 + 15 + 29 / August 19 / September 2 + 16 + 30 / October 14 + 28 / November 25/ December 9. Do come along and have a go – no experience required – all good fun! Tea & Coffee available and there is a suggested donation of £2 to play. Any queries please contact Nigel 07445351861 or Elliott 07963676207.

CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB – JANUARY WINNERS

And the winners for January are.....1st (£15) number 52 - Tim Ackerley / 2nd (£10) number 48 - Rebecca Sannick and 3rd (£5) number 70 - Richard Turbeville. Draw by D Britton. New Year congratulations to the winners!

CRATFIELD DOG SHOW – SUNDAY 4TH MAY

MURDER MYSTERY & FOOD NIGHT – SATURDAY 19TH JULY

CLASSIC CAR EVENT – SUNDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER

CRATFIELD VILLAGE HALL MEETINGS – 7.00pm

Thursday 13th February / 15th May / 14th August / 13th November + Open Forum/AGM/Committee Meeting

VILLAGE HALL FOR HIRE!

Don't forget our hall is for hire – with a discounted rate for villagers. So, if you are looking for a bit of extra space for a party, family get together or event then contact the booking secretary to find out more – cratfieldvillagehall@gmail.com

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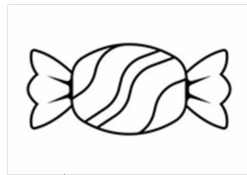
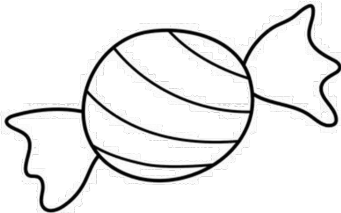
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A New Year Quiz

(All the answers are sweets or chocolates, as if you haven't had enough!)

1. Wobbly infants.....
2. Wise guys.....
3. Where refined people live.....
4. For a job well done.....
5. Fallen fruits.....
6. Carrier for dairy produce.....
7. Mum's local.....
8. All sorts of girls.....
9. Royal herb.....
10. Belly dancer perhaps.....
11. Sport for royals.....
12. Home for alcoholic teeth.....
13. Speak quietly.....
14. Tartan granite.....
15. Aromatic spheres.....
16. Feline gear.....
17. Occult perhaps.....
18. Corks for mouths.....
19. Lake District herbal confection.....
20. Punishment for nuts.....

Answers on next page.



History Corner

‘Oliver Cromwell and Iconoclasm in 17th Century East Anglia’

Oliver Cromwell actually spent only a few days in Suffolk, in Lowestoft and then Newmarket area, but Suffolk churches suffered more damage than anywhere else in England in the mid 1600s when William Dowsing undertook the destruction of symbols of Catholicism, on the orders of Cromwell. The detailed diaries left by Dowsing mean that research into the period is greatly helped. Dowsing, his deputies and his soldiers removed the inscriptions on tombs, (that asked the Saints to pray for the deceased's soul, although the name was left intact), the steps up to the chancel, the communion rails and any descriptions of saints and angels on bosses, pew ends stained glass etc. Some excessive destruction was done when the soldiers ran amuck. Some items were spared because of lack of time. The diaries show that sometimes five churches were visited in a day. Chiselling took longer than smashing stained glass, and wall painting such as Doom paintings were just whitewashed over – to be rediscovered in more recent times (e.g. Wenhaston). Church wardens would sometimes 'lose' the key to the church and would promise to make the changes demanded. Some waited to see what others did before obeying instructions.

In Suffolk, Dowsing was responsible for breaking windows in 92% of churches, 41% of requests for prayers for the dead, 39% of chancel steps and 21% of crosses and images of crucifixions. Organs were destroyed and pew ends were removed.

Why was so much destroyed? The destruction was undertaken to complete what began in the Reformation. A letter from 1643 explains the thinking was that success by Parliamentarians in the Civil War was assured if they carried out 'God's work' and pleased Him by removing the remaining symbols of Catholicism. Proof? Victory at the battle of Nantwich was credited to the same day's destruction in churches in Orford, Snape and Sternfield!

Quiz answers

1. Jelly Babies 2. Smarties 3. Quality Street 4. Reward 5. Pear Drops 6. Milk Tray 7. Mars Bar 8. Dolly Mixtures 9. Mint Imperial 10. Turkish Delight 11. Polo 12. Wine Gums 13. Whisper 14. Edinburgh Rock 15. Aniseed Balls 16. Kit Kat 17. Black Magic 18. Gob Stopper 19. Kendal Mint Cake 20. Walnut Whip

Cratfield Parish Council

Meeting Dates 2025

All meetings are held in The Village Hall, Manse Lane, Cratfield, IP19 0DJ

- Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 7.30 pm
– Annual Parish Meeting & Annual Parish Council Meeting
- Tuesday 8th July 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 9th September 2025 at 7.30 pm
- Tuesday 11th November 2025 at 7.30 pm

The agenda is displayed on village noticeboards and on CPC's website (<https://cratfield-pc.gov.uk>) three days before the meeting. Planning meetings and additional meetings may be arranged as needed.

~ Members of the Public are Welcome to Attend all Meetings ~

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Email: clerk@cratfield-pc.gov.uk or Tel: 07774 734411

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Mace

Letter from the Vicar

Dear Friends,

I have been overwhelmed by the many people across our benefice and beyond who have supported me through a very difficult end to 2024. I have a feeling that I will be having a gathering at the Vicarage in February 2025 to say thank you properly so do make sure that you know, in your parishes, who I must invite and don't forget to tell me! And a huge thank you to those who came to Michelle's funeral at St Nicholas Church which was led by Reverends Burrell and Orams. She would have been very humbled by the whole event.

Well, I am now well and truly licensed to the Four Rivers Benefice following a wonderful evening at All Saints in Laxfield. I had hoped to have been licensed at St Mary's in Worlingworth but the good folks of the PCC there advised me of the difficulties of access on a dark night in the winter, so I am busy thinking about which service we might hold there as a Benefice in 2025. There is to be a special Harvest Festival at St Lawrence Brundish in September at which Archdeacon Sally will be preaching. Cratfield St Mary's will be celebrating Plough Sunday in January 2025, so perhaps we should have Rogation service from St Mary's Worlingworth and Lammas could be celebrated from where? St Peter's, Monk Soham? St Ethelbert's Tannington? St Mary's Wilby? Oh! and St Nicholas Bedfield... I haven't forgotten you... just watch this space!

On 25th January 2025, all PCCs and the Ministry Team are invited to an Awayday at the Coronation Hall in Wilby which will be led by Archdeacon Rich where we will be able to explore our benefice plan for the future. Then the ministry team will be meeting in early February to agree on the service rota across the benefice for 2025.

So, if you have any ideas on how we might grow our community in 2025 either let me or your PCC representative know what they are!

Prayers and blessings for a happy, healthy and prosperous 2025.

Reverend Chrissie, Priest in Charge, Four Rivers Benefice, tel 07803 134301 or email rev.chrissiesmart@gmail.com

JANUARY CRATFIELD CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 5th	Sunday 26th
9.30am Holy Communion 10.30am Benefice Plough Sunday	9.00am Holy communion
Jer 31:7-14 Eph 1:3-14 John 1:(1-9) 10-18	Neh 8;1-3, 5-6, 8-10 1 Cor 12:12 31a Luke 4:14-21

JANUARY BENEFICE SERVICES

January	5th	12th	19th	26th
Bedfield	10.30am Holy Communion			10.30am Morning Prayer
Brundish			10.30am Holy Communion	
Laxfield	10.30am Celtic Service		10.30am Holy Communion	6.00pm Hartismere House
Monk Soham	11.00am Family Service		11.00am Holy Communion	
Tannington	11.00am Holy Communion			
Wilby	10.30am Village Worship		10.30am Village Worship	10.30am Holy Communion
Worlingworth	11.00am Let's Celebrate Epiphany		11.00am Morning Prayer	11.00am Morning Prayer

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Rev'd Chrissie Smart rev.chrissiesmart@gmail.com 07803 134301

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Parish Clerk Sally Chapman
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Vice Chair Jo Cerullo 01986 798656

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All information must arrive at the latest by 20th of the month
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