

# **The Villager**

**Minsterworth News**



**Summer!**

By Dawn Ricketts

**August - September 2020**

Price 30p  
Edition 214

**Dear readers,**

A Villager that covers two months as the usual clubs are not meeting at the moment, courtesy of Covid. I've taken the opportunity to write a piece on Mars (all will become clear on p14...) and Nicky Milligan shares the amazing story of Eugene Bullard with us (p4) - I had to get it in, doesn't he look a fine young man!

Terry Moore-Scott has come up with more of his snippets (p12) and more information on his churchyard recording project (p7). So lots of interest in this edition.

A reminder that the Village Hall and fields remain **CLOSED AND THE PICNIC on 16<sup>th</sup> AUGUST IS CANCELLED.**

**Paula**

Closing copy date for the October-November edition is Tuesday 15th September 2020.

*But earlier is even better!*

All items for consideration to:-  
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*Responsibility is not accepted for the accuracy of submitted items nor the content of advertisements.*

## **KERBSIDE RECYCLING**

### **AUGUST**

**GREEN & BROWN bin & caddy**  
(landfill) (garden)

Tuesday 4 August

Tuesday 18 August

**BLUE bin & caddy**  
(recycling)

Tuesday 11 August

Tuesday 25 August

### **SEPTEMBER**

Wednesday 2 Sept

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> Sept

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> Sept

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> Sept

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept

Please put your recycling bin & caddy out by 7am.

# Minsterworth Neighbourhood Watch

Have you signed up?

By now, most people in the Village should now have received their Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) registration forms. The response has been excellent, with over 60 households joining the scheme so far.

Following sign up you should have received your membership pack and your UV marker pen to invisibly mark your more valuable items. If you have not received your pack then please let us know at the email address below.

Thefts and scams alerts for Minsterworth and neighbouring parishes will be reported via Facebook; Minsterworth NHW and Minsterworth Matters, Mailchimp and the email address you have supplied when you signed up. For those not on social media, we are encouraging a buddy system via neighbours and friends to ensure everyone is kept informed.

if you have an issue, eg a burglary, theft, or suspicious activity, please report it directly to the police, but do let the NHW know. NHW cannot report the events to the police for you because that would be 'second hand' information, and of course hearsay events are not admissible evidence should the case proceeded to court.

The value of the NHW scheme and Minsterworth residents helping each other came into sharp focus a few weeks ago.

A Minsterworth resident found car keys and a driving licence on a footpath. The owner - another Minsterworth resident - was alerted, and a message was sent out on via social media and email. Over the next few days this led to reports of further burglaries and thefts from cars, as well as the finding of two sets of discarded false number plates in the hedgerow which were reported to the police. Fortunately, someone had recorded a vehicle displaying these false plates as a record of the suspicious vehicle.

Thefts and scams from neighbouring parishes will also be reported via email alerts  
If you have not yet completed your form, please do so and send to [64lettie@gmail.com](mailto:64lettie@gmail.com)<<mailto:64lettie@gmail.com>>, or if you prefer, phone 750260 and I can arrange collection of the form.

Despite recent events it is important to remember that Minsterworth is a safe place to live but, following the relaxation of lock down restrictions, it has been targeted like many other villages in the county. Being vigilant and working together we will all help to keep our village safe.

Thank you so much for supporting this initiative.

The Neighbourhood Watch Team



This sign is at the entrance to Watery Lane. There will be two signs on the A48, one at each end of the Village and one at the entrance to Church lane

## Black lives matter

Do you know who this is a photo of? Chances are you don't, but don't feel bad because probably not one American in a million does and that is a national tragedy.



His name is Eugene Jacques Bullard, and he was the first (only? Ed.) African-American fighter pilot. But he is also much more than that: He's also a national hero, and his story is so incredible that I bet if you wrote a movie script based on it Hollywood would reject it as being too far-fetched.

Bullard was a US expat living in France, and when World War 1 broke out he joined the French Infantry. He was seriously wounded, and France awarded him the Croix de Guerre and Medaille Militaire. In 1916 he joined the French air service and he first trained as a gunner but later he trained as a pilot. When American pilots volunteered to help France and formed the famous Lafayette Escadrille, he asked to join but by the time he became a qualified pilot they were no longer accepting new recruits, so he joined the Lafayette Flying Corps instead. He served with French flying units and completed 20 combat missions.

When the United States finally joined the war, Bullard was the only member of the Escadrille or the French Flying Corps who was NOT invited to join the US Air Service. The reason? At that time the Air Service only accepted white men.

Now here is the part that almost sounds like a sequel to 'Casablanca': After WWI Bullard became a jazz musician in Paris and he eventually owned a nightclub called 'L'Escadrille'. When the Germans invaded France and conquered it in WW2, his Club, and Bullard, became hugely popular with German officers, but what they DIDN'T know was that Bullard, who spoke fluent German, was actually working for the Free French as a spy. He eventually joined a French infantry unit, but he was badly wounded and had to leave the service.

By the end of the war, Bullard had become a national hero in France, but he later moved back to the U.S. where he was of course completely unknown. Practically no one in the United States was aware of it when, in 1959, the French government named him a national Chevalier, or Knight.

In 1960, the President of France, Charles DeGaulle, paid a state visit to the United States and when he arrived he said that one of the first things he wanted to do was to meet Bullard. That sent the White House staff scrambling because most of them, of course, had never even heard of him. They finally located him in New York City and DeGaulle travelled there to meet him personally. At the time, Eugene Bullard was working as ... An elevator operator.

Not long after Eugene Bullard met with the President of France he passed away and today very few Americans, and especially African Americans, even know who he was. But now YOU do. And I hope you'll be able to find opportunities to let other people know about this great American hero who probably only 1 American in 1 million has ever heard of.

NM

*Eugene Bullard's story is worth telling because it opens the way to a more informed discussion of still-unresolved American race issues. It's a reminder that great springs of potential are everywhere, waiting for a change in the environment. And finally, on August 23, 1994, Eugene Bullard was posthumously commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Air Force. This promotion came exactly 77 years to the day after he had first attempted to serve his beloved country of birth.*

Good spot Nicky! Paula

## Some riddles...

- I'm always on the dinner table, but you don't get to eat me. What am I?  
A PLATE
- Grandpa went out for a walk & it started to rain. He didn't bring an umbrella or a hat. His clothes got soaked, but not a hair on his head was wet. How was this possible?  
GRANDPA WAS BALD
- What's really easy to get into, and hard to get out of?  
TROUBLE
- What word contains 26 letters, but only has three syllables?  
ALPHABET
- What can you hear, but not see or touch, even though you control it?  
YOUR VOICE
- A girl fell off a 20-foot ladder. She wasn't hurt. Why?  
SHE FELL OFF THE BOTTOM STEP
- What can you break, even if you never pick it up or touch it?  
A PROMISE



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*Claire Morris*

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REVITALIZE YOUR SOUL

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APPOINTMENT

## **CHURCHYARD RECORDING IN MINSTERWORTH: WE HAVE ‘LIFT-OFF’!**

Some of you will remember that in the March issue of *The Villager* I wrote about a plan to produce a recording of all the burials in Minsterworth’s churchyard, bringing up-to-date the last recording of this sort compiled over half a century ago. I also called for volunteers to form a community working group of ‘recorders’.

All this was just before Corvid19 dealt a blow to community activities of this sort but we never stopped preparatory work on the project and now, with restrictions on life easing slightly, we have been able to move forward. And the great thing is that volunteers came forward so that we now have a baker’s dozen strong enthusiastic working group and have already held two meetings together, one on Zoom, the other an out-door gathering in the churchyard. A work plan has been produced and everyone has been given a working kit enabling them to carry out the type of detailed recording of each grave that is needed. There is no deadline but the aim is to complete the recording during the remaining summer and autumn months.

Once all the data has been compiled, the next phase of work will involve the production of comprehensive digitised plans and listings which will permanently reside in the church and be available to visiting family historians for whom grave memorials and the information they provide are a valuable, primary, source of information.

My thanks to everyone in the team for being so eager to see this project go forward, not least to Bob and Andrea for their help in putting together our plan of work. There may still be room for one or two more on the team; if you are interested give me a ring (Terry Moore-Scott, 750160).

TM-S

### **Fall leaves, fall**

Emily Bronte

Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;  
Lengthen night and shorten day;  
Every leaf speaks bliss to me  
Fluttering from the autumn tree.  
I shall smile when wreaths of snow  
Blossom where the rose should grow;  
I shall sing when night’s decay  
Ushers in a drearier day.



## Minsterworth District Royal British Legion

As we are all too well aware many meetings and celebrations have had to be cancelled or postponed and due to this ongoing situation our annual day trip, which this year was to the Iron Bridge, has been cancelled. We had a tremendous amount of interest shown for this event so if all is well we would hope to re-arrange it for spring 2021.

### Military History

1798 Aug 1 <sup>st</sup>	Battle of the Nile
1942 Aug 15 <sup>th</sup>	Malta survives the axis siege
1981 Aug 15 <sup>th</sup>	H.M.S. Dauntless, WRVS Training Establishment closes
1942 Aug 19 <sup>th</sup>	Dieppe Raid
1914 Aug 28 <sup>th</sup>	Battle of the Heligoland Bight
1943 Sept 9 <sup>th</sup>	Invasion of Italian mainland in Salerno
1759 Sept 13 <sup>th</sup>	Capture of Quebec
1976 Sept 15 <sup>th</sup>	Wren officers training moves to Dartmouth
1758 Sept 29 <sup>th</sup>	Admiral Nelson born

Good wishes to everyone and stay safe.

Terry Bourne  
President Minsterworth R.B.L.

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall  
The structure of the wall was incorrect  
So he won ten grand with Claims Direct

It's raining, it's pouring  
Of course, it's global warming

Jack and Jill went into town  
To fetch some chips & sweeties  
Now he can't keep his heart rate down  
And she's got diabetes

## A few one-liners...

Just bought the blacksmith's dog off him. As soon as we got it home, it made a bolt for the door.

If you think nobody cares if you're alive, try missing a couple of payments.

Did you hear about the restaurant on the moon? Great food, no atmosphere.

I just watched a program about beavers. It was the best dam program I've ever seen.

Did you hear about the baguette at the zoo? It was bread in captivity.

My friend has designed an invisible aeroplane but I can't see it taking off.

The shovel was a ground-breaking invention.

I wouldn't buy anything with Velcro on. It's a total rip-off.

Two goldfish are in a tank. One says to the other, "Do you know how to drive this thing?"

Passed on by RB

## 'Hope' is the Thing with Feathers'

Emily Dickinson

'Hope' is the thing with feathers –  
That perches in the soul –  
And sings the tune without the words –  
And never stops – at all –

And sweetest – in the Gale – is heard –  
And sore must be the storm –  
That could abash the little Bird  
That kept so many warm –

I've heard it in the chillest land –  
And on the strangest Sea –  
Yet, never, in Extremity,  
It asked a crumb – of Me.

Taken from *She is Fierce: Brave, Bold and Beautiful Poems by Women*

## The Catholic Hair Dryer

In Catholic schools, students are taught that lying is a sin. Instructors are also advised that using a bit of imagination is OK to express the truth differently, without lying. This is a perfect example of this teaching: Getting a hairdryer through Customs.....

An attractive young woman on a flight from Ireland asked the priest beside her, 'Father, may I ask a favour?'

'Of course my child. What can I do for you?'

'I bought my mother an expensive hair dryer for her birthday. It is unopened but well over the customs limits and I'm afraid they'll confiscate it. Is there any way you could carry it through customs for me?'

Could you possibly hide it under your robes for me?'

'I would love to help you my dear but, I must warn you, I will not tell a lie.'

'With your honest face, Father, I'm sure that no one will question you.'

When they got to Customs, she let the priest go first.

The official asked, 'Father, do you have anything to declare?'

'From the top of my head down to my waist I have nothing to declare.'

The official thought this answer a little strange, so he asked,  
And what do you have to declare from your waist to the floor?'

'I have a marvelous instrument that has been designed for use on women, but which, to date, remains unused.'

Roaring with laughter, the official said, 'Go on... next'

## Severn Bores August-September 2020

There are no large bores in August but there are several decent weekend ones in September but **REMEMBER to keep your distance from others at all times.**

### September

Date	Time	Prospect
Fri 18/09/20	21:44	4*
Sat 19	10:09	3*
	22:26	4*
Sun 20	10:49	3*
	23:05	3*

# MINSTERWORTH VILLAGE HALL - UPDATE ON REOPENING

We are now in a position to be able to update you all regarding the reopening of the village hall. You may be aware that the government supported the reopening of community buildings from July 4th. Realising this is not without considerable planning and the implementation of risk assessments to ensure all who use the hall are kept safe from any risk of Covid 19. The hall needs to introduce robust cleaning regimes as well as manage access to kitchen and toilet facilities. You may also recall that we are still supporting the NHS by giving them access to the hall to undertake vital staff training. This is due to continue throughout the month of August. For these reasons (preparing the hall for reopening and continued support of the NHS) the Village Hall Committee have taken the decision to delay the reopening until around September or October time, taking all guidelines into consideration. We will continue to take 'a watching brief' on any government changes while drawing up a risk assessment for hirers. There is a lot to consider.

The closure of the hall and the longer term impact of the virus inevitably has hit our finances. We are fortunate to gain income from the NHS, while a government grant of £10,000 will help us implement necessary changes in preparation to reopen. Much of our Summer income is derived from wedding bookings and these have been rescheduled for 2021. However, with the implementation of social distancing we need to consider future capacity of the hall; reduced numbers will be a major consideration to hirers planning functions, though hopefully we will be able to manage the small events many of our villagers' support - whist, craft, photography etc. Meanwhile, we can restart the renovation work with some small but essential maintenance; this will be carried out around the NHS bookings.

As the hall remains closed, sadly this also includes the fields. Therefore the VJ Day Village Picnic scheduled for Sunday 16th August cannot go ahead. We must also discourage anyone from gathering on the field at any future fish and chip van visits. Perhaps we can meet with neighbours, socially distant of course, as we did for VE Day in May? This is a blow as we were looking forward to meeting once again as a village after the challenge of the past months.

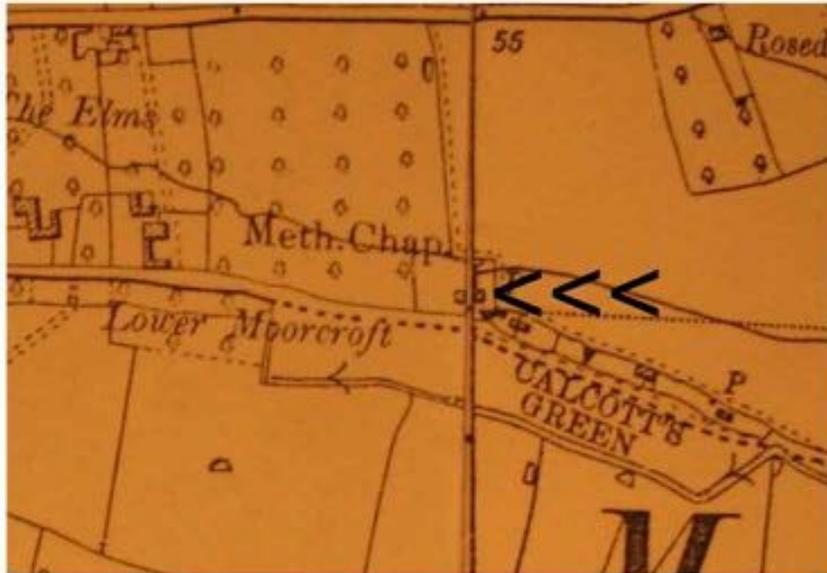
With good wishes

Cathy Thomas

Village Hall Committee Chair

## HISTORICAL SNIPPETS AROUND MINSTERWORTH

If, a century or more ago, you had been walking along the lower road in Calcott's Green at a certain time on a Sunday, it is quite likely that you would have heard the sounds of lusty hymn singing. It would have come of course from the Wesleyan Methodist chapel which for over a hundred years stood on the rising ground above Chapel Cottage. Yet today there is nothing obvious to the passer-by that it ever existed ('Meth. Chapel' is shown on the accompanying map from around 1940).



Its story goes back to 1838 when William Viner Ellis, a churchwarden of Minsterworth parish church, submitted a certificate to the bishops of Gloucester and Bristol to the effect that "a dwelling house in the occupation of Mary Hawkins in Minsterworth is to be used as a place of worship by protestant dissenters" (the 'dwelling house' is now known as Chapel Cottage). Things moved on quite quickly because a later note dated 1845 refers to a "recently erected chapel in the parish". We know that the chapel was a sturdy-looking plain brick building with its entrance facing north towards the main road. Inside there was a main floor with a gallery above and a door at the far end leading to a separate schoolroom; an undercroft contained room for tables, chairs and a kitchen. It was here that generations of non-conformist families worshipped every Sunday, sent their children to Sunday school and held social events.



For much of its existence the only access to the chapel was by footpaths: one from the main road, another up from Calcott's Green and the third that ran from the eastern end of the Green along behind the cottages there. In 1928 though a proper road from the main road to the chapel was laid. For many years the Hurcombe family served as caretakers of the chapel and tended the small graveyard there, and Mrs Hurcombe also played the organ. By virtue of their work for the chapel the family occupied Chapel Cottage (then known as Chapel House – see picture taken around 1900 which also shows the rear elevation of the chapel behind it). Other local families attending the chapel included the Moggs, Hawkins, Vaux, Stephens, Cliffords and Butts.

Sadly, by the 1940s, the number of worshippers was dwindling. The chapel continued for a time but about 1970 the point was reached when it was no longer viable. By this time also the building was beginning to show signs of subsidence. The chapel closed shortly afterwards and by 1978 only the shell of the building remained. The land on which it stood and Chapel Cottage itself were sold. The chapel building was demolished and a modern new house built on the site (lately occupied by Mr & Mrs Swindlehurst).

TM-S

## **Litter picking and care of Grass Verges**

VERY many thanks to the many people in Minsterworth who regularly collect rubbish from our roadside verges. It is much appreciated, and certainly helps to keep the Village looking tidier. I would just love to ask those who throw their takeaway boxes and dirty nappies out of the car window as they go past who they expect is going to collect it all!

We will soon be installing more dog bins at different locations around the Village, so PLEASE use them. Remember that it is now a legal requirement to carry a bag with you when out walking your dog. Most owners are very good, but we still have reports of uncollected mess on the verges. Please don't do that. We try hard to keep the Village looking tidy.

Thanks also to the many households who cut the grass along the verges outside of their houses. It's frustrating that Highways now do only one grass cut per year along the A48, and even then it's into August before it's done. Some Villagers have even gone along the edges of the footpaths well beyond their houses and trimmed back the overgrown grass, making the path wider and safer. Many thanks. It makes our Village so much more pleasant. We all have to do our bit, so lets hope we can keep it up!

So how about planting some daffodil bulbs outside of your house this autumn – it will make the spring even more colourful.

Minsterworth Parish Council

## Is there life on Mars?

NASA had planned to go to the moon in 2020 but their latest timing is now to land on the lunar south pole by 2024. Unsurprisingly planned launch dates for all space missions can and often do change.

The Apollo lunar flights ended in 1972 but it seems the whole world now want to go to Mars. In July 2020 Earth & Mars were at their closest since 2003 & they won't be closer until 2035.

Three countries launched Interplanetary missions to Mars in July 2020. United Arab Emirates successfully launched the Hope probe on 19 July 2020, on the Arab world's first space exploration mission. A rocket carrying the unmanned orbiter, known as Al-Amal in Arabic, joins China (Tianwen-1) and the US (Perseverance) in a race to the red planet. All three are expected to reach Mars orbit in February 2021.

Two commercial spacecraft, SpaceX's Crew Dragon and Boeing's Starliner are expected to launch in 2020 too. Crew Dragon will be the first reusable spacecraft and Starliner a reusable crew capsule taking crew to the Space Station. All taking advantage of a period when the Earth and Mars are at their nearest.

The Guardian

Seems really quick to get to Mars! It will be almost as close again in another 2 years when Europe & Russia plan to head to Mars too. Obviously it's all about the taking part not the winning. Makes a change!

Paula

I needed a password eight characters long so I picked Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. Nick Helm

My cat is recovering from a massive stroke. Darren Walsh

A cowboy asked me if I could help him round up 18 cows. I said, 'Yes, of course. - That's 20 cows'" Jake Lambert

## MINSTERWORTH 200 CLUB

Normally the draw takes place at the end of the monthly whist drives, which of course we have not been able to run since the lockdown.

The draw for June and July took place on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July, the results were:-

For the June draw:

£50 117 Norma Blowey  
£20 108 Barbara Arkell  
£10 120 David Curzon

For the July draw:

£50 146 John Bennett  
£20 083 Margaret Cotterell  
£10 049 Liz Duff

For the August draw which took place on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August the results were:-:

£50 155 Neil Forbes  
£20 059 David Clifton  
£10 077 Rita King

## CHURCH FLOWER ROTA

2<sup>nd</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> August Sarah McHale  
16<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> August Joanna Stait  
30<sup>th</sup> August Gill Payne

6<sup>th</sup> Sept Gill Payne  
13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> Sept Kate Oxley



Lawn mowing

Strimming

Chainsawing

Hedge cutting & reduction

Tree pruning

General maintenance

For further information contact Ash:

**07812 077367**

- "I regret rubbing ketchup in my eyes, but that's Heinz sight." Nick Helm
- "Planning meals in advance, now that's some food forethought." Andy Field
- "I'm pleased to be getting a beer belly. I've always wanted a father figure." Cam Spence
- "I bet there's never any workers' strikes at a stress ball factory." Ian Smith
- "I'm not very empathetic, but I have friends who are so I just imagine how they must feel." Ian Smith
- "I knelt to pick a buttercup. Why people leave buttocks lying around I'll never know..." Stephen Fry
- "It's harder being gay than it is being black. I didn't have to come out to my parents as black." Wanda Sykes

# *Minsterworth Village Hall*

*Registered charity 255668*



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*Booking Clerk - Brian Billingham 01452 750492*

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