

# **The Villager**

## **Minsterworth News**



### **Kelpies**

By Paul McHale

**July 2020**

Price 30p  
**Edition 213**

**Dear readers,**

An e-Villager rather than paper I'm afraid. This may continue for a while, given the Coronavirus restrictions.

I am in need of a volunteer **Advertising Manager** for The Villager please. Contact Paula Ruffley on [paularuffley@gmail.com](mailto:paularuffley@gmail.com) if you can help.

I am indebted to Roger Blowey for collecting the majority of the lockdown content from many others this month.

See p5 for a suggestion to share July's Villager with others close by if you can.

My article on another victim of Coronavirus - NASA's 2020 mission to land 'the first woman and the next man' on the Moon. Ooh how patronising NASA shame on you. And not one of them black. Interestingly the picture has been taken down now. I would have so liked to share it & its implications with you but wasn't quick enough.

**Paula**

Closing copy date for the August edition is Wednesday 15th July 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 JULY**

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

Tuesday 7 July

Tuesday 21 July

**BLUE bin & caddy**  
**(recycling)**

Tuesday 14 July

Tuesday 28 July

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

# LIFE UNDER LOCKDOWN

It is thought that the first Covid 19 case occurred in the UK in late January 2020. In February the strategy was '*contain, delay, research and mitigate*', hoping that the virus would slowly pass through the population. The numbers of cases were increasing however, and on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 the government announced 'pandemic status' and said everyone should avoid all non-essential travel and contact with others, and work from home if possible. On 20 March, the government shut all schools, restaurants, pubs, etc, but it was not until 23 March, that a total lockdown was imposed on the whole population, banning all "non-essential" travel and contact with people outside one's home and shutting almost all businesses. Some degree of relaxation was announced on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020. So that was 38 days of total lockdown, but 60 days for many of us in the over 70's group who started on 11<sup>th</sup> March, whilst a small minority of those classed as 'vulnerable' were requested to stay at home for 12 weeks.

## **Stay at home; Protect the NHS; Save lives**

How did we manage in Minsterworth?

The answer must surely be 'remarkably well'!

The Minsterworth Self Help WhatsApp Group set up by Roger and Sharon Ingham was superb. At the time of writing there were close to 50 people on the group, and certainly anyone using it could never be lonely!

Although the initial idea was that it should run as a medium to help those in total lockdown to access supplies of groceries, prescriptions etc, it soon developed into a social forum, exchanging ideas, jokes, recipes, gardening tips and the like.

We were blessed with superb weather during the lockdown, so plenty of us were able to enjoy our gardens and post pictures on WhatsApp of plants old and new - and some just weird! There were lots for offers of shopping deliveries, people who found Supermarket delivery slots available, and top tips as to where you could buy flour! We knew – from pictures posted – what new recipes were being tried, and how to cook asparagus and celeriac. If you wanted prescription meds collecting, just put it on WhatsApp and it would do it for you. Papers and milk were delivered for those not venturing out at all – usually with a friendly socially distanced chat at the time of the delivery! We paid by BACS to avoid handling cash, and we went to great lengths to disinfect all goods entering the house, including the post. Fortunately 'Posties' Tony and Damien stuck with us, so we could have our usual post plus anything needed – or maybe just fancied! – from Amazon and the like.

I suspect that several of us quickly learnt how to shop on line for the first time, either for click and collect, or for home delivery, and this in itself was a novel experience, although I never did really establish a standard protocol for disinfecting the shopping. How on earth do you sterilise fresh broccoli on arrival!

A 'swop table' was set up at the corner of Street end Cottage for surplus plants, books, DVD's etc, so there would always be plenty of things we could do, although it was a pity that

eventually someone thought the 'free, please help yourself' notice applied to the table and not the strawberry plants that Sam had left on the table!

We learnt more about local footpaths, where we could walk safely, and what to do if approached by a herd of inquisitive cattle! We 'met' lots of people on-line that we did not even know lived in the Village, new names and often found out where they lived. The message posted from Caroline in Watery lane was typical *'I have lived here for nearly 3 years and its only now that I am getting to know this lovely place and its people..... we work full time so it has always been hard to feel as though we are part of the community. It is only since I have been taking a walk around the village this last week or so that I have got to chat to a couple of people ..... I have completely fallen in love with this little piece of paradise.'*

The roads have been much quieter, making walking and cycling much more pleasant, and of course because we have less to do, we can stand and have a chat – at 2 metres apart of course! Even our language has changed. We now talk about lockdown, social distancing, herd immunity, BAME, and Zoom, words that were totally unknown to us a few weeks ago.

Thanks to Emma for setting up Zoom Village chats on a Friday evening.

Home schooling - how lovely it's been seeing educational activities going on, from nature walks, to maths exercises chalked on the lanes, to beautiful rainbows of hope decorating windows. If this is our record of how Minsterworth managed then I think it's a worthwhile addition.

Thursday evenings at 8pm (or 7pm prior to the clocks changing) we came out and clapped or hooted or rang our bells for the NHS, and tried to get as many passing cars, lorries and ambulances as possible to wave back to us. In the early days this was then followed by a flurry of posts on WhatsApp to say what we had been doing!

Then came the 75 year VE Day Celebrations on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020. Another event that we had to cancel, but many made up for it in other ways as you will see from another article in this edition of The Villager. On 10<sup>th</sup> May there was some relaxation, and we could go to meet one parent – but not both! – in a park somewhere. Even the slogan changed.

### **STAY ALERT – CONTROL THE VIRUS – SAVE LIVES**

It did seem a bit bizarre that we could travel as far as we wished across the country, but then only meet up with one other person!

What will be the outcome of all of this?

Well let's hope that it brings the Village together more. Let's hope that when this is all over we will continue to look out for our neighbours and join in with Village activities. I have met lots of new residents 'on line', and by a bit of surreptitious planning, met them in reality as well by asking them to drop off shopping when they offer to help on the WhatsApp group!

There is nearly always some good that comes out of a difficult situation, and I think that we can pride ourselves that that has certainly been the case in the Minsterworth lockdown.

RB

## **Please Give a Copy to your Neighbour**

Because of social distancing protocols making distribution, this edition of The Villager will be electronic only, and will not be distributed in hard copy.

So if you have a neighbour who is not on email, it would be nice if you would be kind enough to print a copy and give it to them.

## **CV 19 Update from the Village Hall**

The building renovations stopped in mid-March due to the CV situation, although we still have lots of repair work to complete. We did have a water leak in early May and we were grateful to have that repaired. Almost all of our bookings, weddings etc, were cancelled during the lockdown, so initially our income dropped to zero. We were then very fortunate to be able to hire out the hall to an NHS training group, organised through Ruth Thomas and Ian Brookes. In addition to producing some income, it was nice to be able to help the NHS in some small way.

We are extremely grateful to Adrian Goode, our liaison officer from TBC, who encouraged us to apply and guided us through grant applications, so that we were able to obtain a £10K grant to keep the hall going. That is almost enough to pay the costs of running the hall for a year. So we will be one of the lucky ones who will survive the lockdown, and still have some funds to be able to continue with our renovation work.

Things will be different when the Hall eventually re-opens. We will have to be careful with cleaning between bookings, although many of the procedures suggested, such as disinfecting taps and door handles, were already part of the cleaning routine at the hall anyway.

At the time of writing, we do not know precisely what the new protocols on use of the hall will be, but in such a rapidly changing situation, it's probable that even if we did specify them they would be out of date within a few weeks.

One thing is certain - we look forward to celebrating with you at the hall when it's all over!

## Lockdown for a Working Mummy!

Picture a building with rooms all abound,  
A corridor binds them, and from each comes a sound,  
The first is a classroom for someone Year 4,  
A student Year 1, studies hard next door,  
The noise from the next is shrieks from a baby,  
Whilst further on down, is an office or maybe.....  
The building is my kitchen and I am a lady,  
Who's grown lots more arms and is now very able,  
An octopus it seems, far reaching and stable,  
An anchor for the kids, yes, this is no fable!



**Archie (9), Lorna (6) and Daniel (1) Watkins home schooling**

Now very adept in using Teams, Skype and Zoom,  
3 kids, 3 meals a day, gosh, what they consume!  
From number bonds to how plants grow,  
To Jack and the Beanstalk and junk models to show,  
School day's over, time to walk, play and scoot,  
Talking to neighbours, whilst kids speed on their route,  
Bored of my chatter, they go on ahead,  
I hope this wears them out, so they're ready for bed!  
People are coming, quick jump to the side,  
Ooh, what have I found, some bugs I have spied!

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Continued from p6

Essential workers from all walks of life,  
My husband included, comes home to his wife,  
The calm he was hoping, is nothing but chaos,  
The kids have been baking, there's so much to wash!  
The goods have been sampled, the verdict is yummy,  
The shops have been shut, so we've not spent much money,  
Grateful that the weather has been so sunny,  
We are all busy, like bees making honey,  
The stress in my body, the kids take from me,  
'We know you're our teacher, but we love you as Mummy'.



**Archie & Lorna budding chefs**

Amid all this madness,  
It's not just all sadness,  
Hubby working 7 days a week,  
Getting my own work done, spare time I seek,  
But more time with the family has been a privilege,  
More footpaths we have walked throughout our village,  
Covid-19, it's time you passed,  
So do one now, and make it fast!

GW

## THE FATE OF THE FETE

As you all know, it was decided to cancel this year's fete, planned for Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2020. We could not be sure that the coronavirus lockdown would be over by then, and we did not want to incur costs of organising only to find them wasted.

We are grateful to Liz Savage for supplying the following extracts from early editions of Minsterworth Parish Magazine, i.e. before The Villager, to show that the fete has a long tradition.

The first fete – a fruit and vegetable show - was organised by Felicity Karger's grandmother, Mrs Vyner-Ellis (who lived at Minsterworth Court) on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1921, and was intended to raise funds for the Church. Fund raising from subsequent fetes would eventually fund the construction of the Village Hall, built as a commemoration of those Minsterworth residents lost in WW1.

An extract from the August 1921 magazine states *“Our Fruit and Vegetable Show and Garden Fete came off as a great success on July 28<sup>th</sup>, and was patronized by a large and appreciative number of villagers and visitors from a distance. .... deep appreciation of the various services rendered by the Committee and many helpers but firstly and chiefly to Mrs Vyner-Ellis who threw open her field and delightful garden for the entertainment of the people and who herself with Miss Vyner-Ellis bore the burden and heat of the day. The receipts of the day are not yet fully known, but we are able to say that we shall have enough in hand to pay off all debts upon the Church, and with a balance to go on with. Such a result justifies our anticipations of better success next time, and we may congratulate Mrs Vyner-Ellis, and ourselves for this first attempt.”*

**So that means that next year (2021), all being well, it will be 100 years since Minsterworth had its first fete!**

But they also had pandemic health issues to contend with 97 years ago. An entry in the July 1923 Village magazine states:

*“A meeting of the committee of the Flower Show and Fete was held at the Court on July 4<sup>th</sup> to consider the advisability of withholding the Show on account of the prevalence of smallpox in Gloucester. After discussion it was agreed that it would be advisable to postpone the Show, originally fixed for August 2<sup>nd</sup>, till Thursday September 13<sup>th</sup> provisionally upon the epidemic in Gloucester having so far abated as to lessen the risk of infection.”*

So nothing is new in this life! A 6 week delay doesn't seem a lot though.

Smallpox has now been totally eradicated worldwide of course. Let's hope we can say the same about coronavirus this time next year when we are celebrating 100 years of the Village Fete.

LS and RB



A Horticultural Show and Fete was held in the grounds of Minsterworth Court on Thursday last with the object of raising funds for the ex-Servicemen's Vill Hall. (1) A group of the stall-holders and other helpers. (2) Mrs. Vyner Ellis (Hon. Secretary and Treasurer). (3) Mr. A. R. Littleton and Mr. N. Pugh. (4) Mr. A. R. Lulham, Mr. J. Stephens and Mr. J. Bennett. (5) The Sweet Stall, in charge of the Rev. C. O. Bartlett and his niece. (7) and (8) Miss Ethel St and Mrs. Ross, prize-winners in the Fancy Dress Competition. (9) The Rev. Prince (Elmore).

Minsterworth Old Photographs Archive  
Terry Moore-Scott

## Minsterworth Reading Group – Chasing Men by Edwina Currie

I enjoyed this book; it was entertaining and gave us an insight into the life of a woman whose whole life changed suddenly in middle age. The attitude of everyone around her, friends and family, seemed to be that she had to find another man as soon as possible. It was interesting to see her realisation that she didn't want a new man to take her back to a life of cooking, cleaning and being the subservient one in a partnership that she had lived through once already. It was a novel of its time, and in using a block of flats, it allowed Edwina to have Hetty meet a wide variety of people with lifestyles very different to anything she had come across before. The attitudes portrayed seem dated now, and hopefully we have moved on since then – but recent events regarding racial prejudice do make me despair.

The book showed that Hetty lived a much fuller and more outgoing life once she was on her own, making very different friends who opened her eyes to more possibilities for the future. I hope that her relationship with her children also became closer. Hetty's optimism for a different kind of future ended the book on a positive note.

I found Nicky's information on Edwina's own life shocking and feel more understanding for her as a person now, but on reading the book I thought it was as racy as Edwina herself seemed to be in her public life at the time!

Our book choice for next month is Case Histories by Kate Atkinson.

HF

## Placenames

I don't know about you but I have always been intrigued by placenames, especially long-lost placenames and Minsterworth is not without some of its own.

Take **Hampton** for example. In the 12th and 13th centuries, a settlement with this name (it means a farmstead near a water meadow) is recorded as being within the lordship of Minsterworth, and even to have had a church of its own. At one point it seems to have belonged to the neighbouring manor of Highnam but towards the end of the 13th century it was described as a sub-manor of Minsterworth. Among historians there is a view that Hampton was the original centre of Minsterworth possibly until around 1300 by which time a new church was established where St Peter's is today. It can reasonably be assumed that Hampton was located somewhere in the vicinity of Highgrove House. This impressive mansion was built in the 18th century by the then lord of Minsterworth manor Sir Charles Barrow on the site of an older manor house called Hampton House. The site of the long-gone church of Hampton has never been established and all that remains on the map today to remind us of Hampton is the name of a farm in Watery Lane. It may be no coincidence that the area around Watery Lane and the Apple Tree is now known from recent archaeology to have been the location of settlement as far back as Roman times.

Another lost placename is Boyfield, a name thought to have derived from the de Bosco or de Boys family who held estate in Minsterworth in the early period. In the 1200s, a William of Boyfield was associated with Minsterworth and, in the early 14th century, "property in Hampton" was held first by a Roger of Boyfield and then his son Richard of Boyfield. Hampton House may have been the manor house of this Boyfield estate. By the 17th century, Boyfield manor had combined with Morecote to form a single estate. The Boyfields were prominent in Gloucester: in 1327, John Boyfield was a wealthy tanner in Gloucester and also served for a time as Bailiff of the city. In 1377 a John Boyfield, possibly of the same family, was abbot of Gloucester.

Finally, there is Mortune which was traditionally thought to be the original name of Minsterworth. The name (meaning moorland farmstead) is in the Domesday Book (1086) which, under Westbury Hundred refers to lands in "Hamme (i.e. Churcham) and Mortune" belonging to St Peter's abbey Gloucester. Somehow, antiquarians in the 1800s linked the name to Minsterworth and this notion stuck until quite recently. Modern scholars are now confident however that Mortune was an early settlement somewhere in Churcham parish and a 14th century mention of "Mortune next Birdwood" would seem to place it in the western part of Churcham – nowhere near Minsterworth.

Incidentally, we are all familiar with the placename Calcotts Green. It doesn't actually appear in Minsterworth's historical record however until as recently as 1830, and has been variously rendered also as 'Calcuts Green' and 'Calcrofts Green'. 'Cott' is an old word for a 'cottage' and 'croft' a small piece of land with cottages. But who or what was 'Cal'?

TM-S

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“No-one rises so high as he who knows not whither he is going”  
- Oliver Cromwell

“We don't know much about the human conscience except that it's soluble in alcohol”  
- Sir John Mortimer

“I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart of a king and of a king of England too.”  
- Queen Elizabeth I

## LOCKDOWN RECIPE – GYPSY CREAMS

From early January, when I fractured my spine, right through lockdown, Roger has taken over much of the cooking, re-learning (almost!) forgotten skills from his house sharing with other students at Bristol Uni in the 1960's. A few weeks ago he decided to expand his culinary range by making 'gypsy creams', last made with his mother 65 years ago! Fortunately she had passed the recipe on to me, so with me sitting in my chair in the kitchen to supervise, we set to work:

### *Gipsy Creams*

6 oz butter or cooking margarine  
6 oz sugar (I reduced that to 5!)  
8oz self raising flour  
8oz rolled oats  
1 generous tablesp black treacle  
3 tablesp boiling water

### *chocolate filling*

1oz butter  
1 teasp cocoa  
1 generous tableps golden syrup

Soften butter, add sugar, flour and oats and start mixing. Put black treacle in a mug/jug, add the 3 tablesp boiling water, stir to dissolve and then add this to the other ingredients and mix thoroughly.

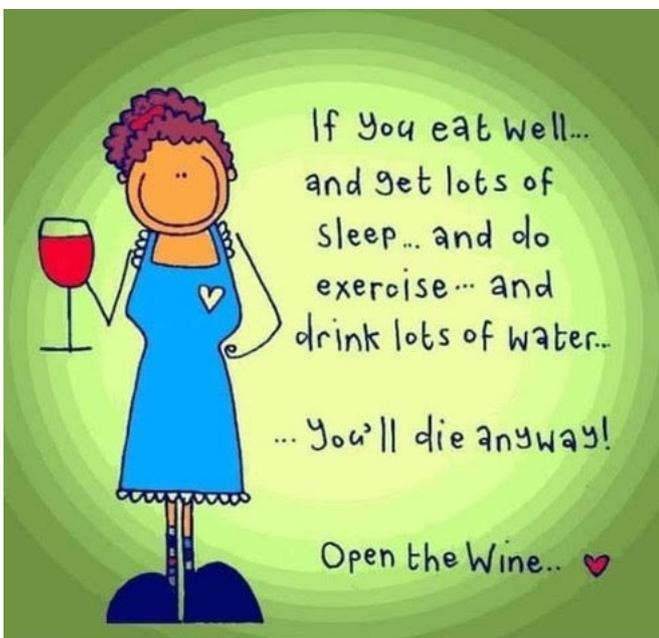
Take walnut sized portions of the mixture, roll into a ball, flatten slightly and space them onto a baking tray (with sufficient social distancing!) to allow them to expand.

Cook at gas 3 to 4 for approx. 20 mins, then check one to see if the underside is brown. Place onto rack to cool.

When cooled, mix the filling ingredients thoroughly, and use this to stick the flat sides of two biscuits together.

It's a very simple, failsafe and easy recipe for children, 'first timers', and even those coming back to the kitchen after 65 years. Happy memories!

NB



The fact that Jellyfish have survived for 650 million years despite not having brains gives hope to many people

## All about 'home school'

Lockdown for me has been very busy with a 5 year old at home all of the time, but also a very rewarding and happy time.

The biggest change has been 'home schooling'. Fortunately the teachers have been able to deliver lessons online and this has provided a similar structure to Sophie's usual school day.



A typical day starts with Sophie reading a book to me and then we listen to the morning message from her Headmistress. Her online lessons follow which are creative and fun but cover the main academic subjects of literacy, numeracy and phonics.

The afternoon is more relaxed with music, dance or a crazy science experiment! At the end of the day there is story time and then I upload Sophie's work for her teachers to see. We do extra fun things like a Zoom meeting for her to chat with her class friends and one week her teachers joined in too.

I have really loved helping Sophie to learn though confess I have found myself saying a few times "you wouldn't do that for Mrs M" or "will you sit on your bottom please!!"



Of course home school teaching has meant juggling the rest of everyday life (household chores, shopping, emails etc) but I must say it has been wonderful to have more family time together, we have certainly made some special family memories.

Alison Raeburn

Hi,

I'd like to introduce myself my name is Claire and I have been a resident in Minsterworth for nearly 10 years. I am a qualified reflexologist of the hands and feet. This is an amazing alternative holistic therapy that can improve your quality of life and wellbeing, from back pain to digestion issues, headaches and sinuses. I am taking bookings for treatments from the beginning of July.

Please contact me on 07826668905 or [Claire.morris3@sky.com](mailto:Claire.morris3@sky.com) you can also find me on Facebook. I will answer any questions you may have about the therapy.

Claire



## Difficult experiences during lockdown

For most of us lockdown has been slightly inconvenient, but we have managed reasonably well. The help we have received from other Minsterworth residents has been superb. For others it has raised some really serious issues. The following is written by a Minsterworth resident.

*Lockdown has affected me very badly. Because I had been hospitalised three times in the past two years with pneumonia, my doctor specifically phoned me and told me to stay at home during the pandemic. I was classified as a 'vulnerable person'. However, I'm also a Deputy Manager at a Nursing Home and at the same time I felt consumed with guilt. I have abandoned my colleagues and residents through no fault of my own. Was it selfish to have put my own health first?*

*There were 52 residents in our care home, all living with severe dementia. Some were as young as late 50's and early 60's. We have lost 18 to Covid 19. It is so tragic .*

*As a result of lockdown and the effect it has had on me I feel unable to go back to work. I would not be able to hold my head up high knowing that the staff have been through such a terrible time without my support. My manager has been superb, but unfortunately I did have unpleasant text messages from one person during their period of stress.*

*I will be resigning from my post this week and have to take early retirement (although 62 isn't that early I guess). I feel heartbroken finishing my 44 year nursing career in this way. I hope you don't mind me telling you this .... it has helped me to share it with a stranger. My daily walk around the village has helped me so much. I have met many lovely people in passing.*

So the next time that you are annoyed because you can't get any flour, think on .....Maybe it's not really that bad.

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