

# The Villager

Minsterworth News



Early Evening on the River Sever

by Sarah McHale

**Dear readers,**

Hello from Dawn, your temporary editor for just one month. Paula is taking a well earned time away but will be back for the bumper December Edition. Thank you Paula for your hard work and dedication to keeping our local magazine in colourful print.

Please do tell us what you would like to see in your local magazine. We try to keep it local, relevant and varied. Always good to have new input and new ideas. The weather has changed and Autumn is here. This edition is full of things to do and places to go. Two articles on Moths, apple recipes and a wide range of activities within the local community.

All items for consideration to: -

Paula Ruffley, Editor The Villager E-mail:

Tel: 07905 694612

thevillagerminsterworth@gmail.com

**Deadline is ALWAYS 10th of the month before the magazine is published,** so for December it's Friday 10th November.

*Responsibility is not accepted for the accuracy of submitted items  
nor the content of advertisements.*



### KERBSIDE RECYCLING November 2023

GREEN & BROWN bin & caddy (landfill) (garden)		BLUE bin & caddy (recycling)	
Tuesday	7th	Tuesday	14th
Tuesday	21st	Tuesday	28th

Please put your recycling bin & caddy out  
the night before, where possible. Small electrical items now collected alongside your blue bin in a standard carrier bag (not a bag for life) and please don't tie it up.



**07976896255**

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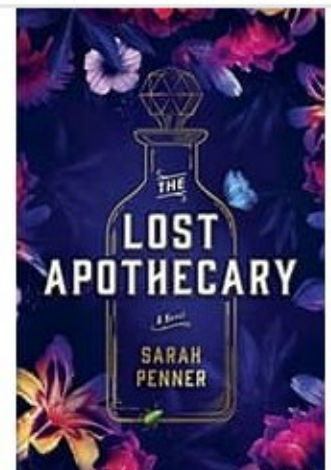
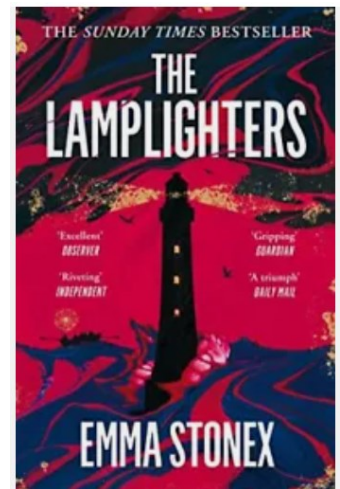
### **Minsterworth Reading Group**

Ruth Thomas

This month the book club reviewed *The Lamplighters* by Emma Stonex, a book based on the true story of the mystery disappearance of three lighthouse keepers in the 1900's. Everyone agreed that the book contained some wonderfully atmospheric descriptions of the sea and it's constantly changing colours and sounds; as well as describing the lives of the lighthouse keepers themselves, including vivid descriptions of the harsh realities of coping with life on a lighthouse as well as some of the difficulties of adapting to time spent with their families when ashore.

There were, however, some of us who were less keen on the writing style, and although the ending provided an explanation of what might have happened to the three men, it was felt by many of the group to be a bit of an anti-climax. So although many people enjoyed the book (and in fact some really liked it) many of us felt we wouldn't necessarily be intending to read it again.

Next month we'll be reviewing *Lost Apothecary* by Sarah Penner



## Minsterworth 200 Club

The result of the October draw was as follows:-

**£50** No. 077 Rita King    **£20** No. 133 Terry Bourne    **£10** No. 147 Ken Wood

## WHIST DRIVE

Thank you to all who supported the whist drive in October. There was an attendance of just under 7 tables, with a result of £75 for church funds. Now the darker evenings are here how about coming along and enjoying a friendly evening of cards? The next whist drive will be on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> November, starting at 7.30pm.

### Church service times and flower rota

Date	Time	Service	Flowers
5 <sup>th</sup> November	11am	The 11 o'clock	Jo Stait
12 <sup>th</sup> November	10.45am	*Remembrance Service*	Julie Fisher
19 <sup>th</sup> November	5pm	Evening Worship	Julie Fisher
26 <sup>th</sup> November	10am	Benefice Holy Communion**	No flowers – Season of Advent


\* The Remembrance Service is at Westbury on Severn followed by a Commemoration around the War Memorial at Minsterworth around 11.45am to Noon.

\*\*The Benefice Holy Communion service is at Taynton.

# M.B

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# CRAFTERNOONS

continue at the Harvey Centre this November

Share a fun filled afternoon where you get to find out about a craft you may never have tried, maybe discover something which will become a long-life passion. Spend some quality time with new and old friends, time to chat, time to learn and always time for tea and delicious home-made cake.



This will be the last craft session for this autumn. Kiln fired enameling is an ancient craft with magical results. You will be amazed at what can be achieved in a short time. Katie will introduce you to enameling, covering several techniques then support you to make your own pendant or small picture.

Ready to wear or frame the same day. No previous experience is required. Photo above left shows students results on previous workshops with Katie. Cost is £30.00 per person.

**WORKSHOP FULL**

**Please let us know if you want another session arranged for 2024**

**NEW FOR JANUARY - CROCHET - more details to follow....**

## HELPFUL COMMUNITY LINKS

Minsterworth Neighbourhood Watch – join by e-mailing [64lettie@gmail.com](mailto:64lettie@gmail.com)

[www.minsterworthparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.minsterworthparishcouncil.org.uk)

[www.minsterworthvillagehall.org](http://www.minsterworthvillagehall.org) – booking, recent events

[www.facebook.com/MinsterworthGlos/](https://www.facebook.com/MinsterworthGlos/)

St. Peter's church – [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/14101/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/14101/) services, etc

Minsterworth Matters WhatsApp – join by texting Roger Ingham on 07525330364 immediate village interests

Harvey Centre – [www.minsterworthvillagehall.org/the-harvey-centre](http://www.minsterworthvillagehall.org/the-harvey-centre)

# 'A GLOUCESTERSHIRE ODYSSEY'

Village Hall

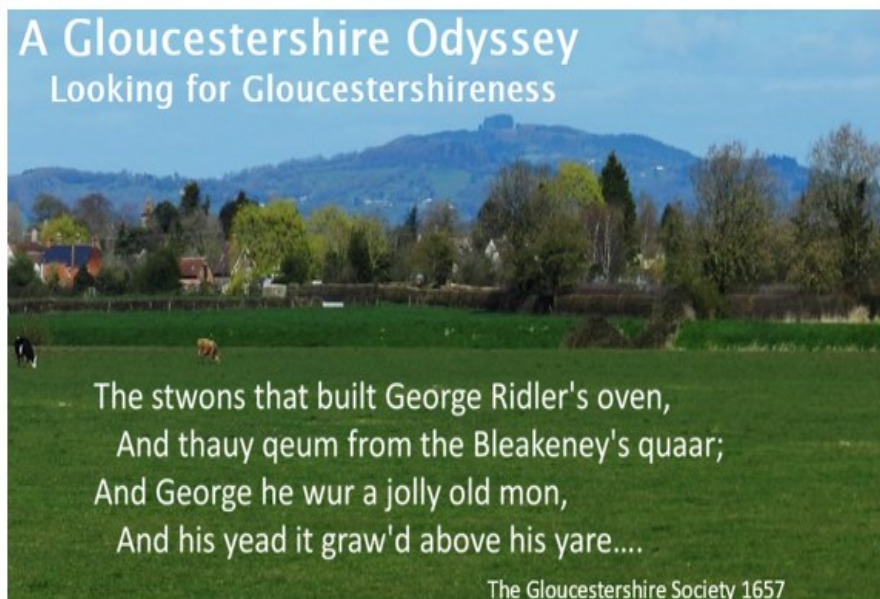
**An illustrated talk by Tony Conder**

**Friday 24<sup>TH</sup> November 2023**

**7-00pm at Minsterworth Village Hall**

This is the third talk by Tony Conder, following his excellent presentations on Gloucester Docks in January and The Severn Bore in April.

**A Gloucestershire Odyssey** looks back over 5000 years of the history of our county, how it first came into being, its history and traditions, and its landscapes and quirks. The talk involves all aspects of the county, both geographically and socially, with lots of folk tales. As in previous talks, it will be well illustrated, and presented with Tony's relaxed and light-hearted style.



Tickets (£5) are available online at <https://www.minsterworthvillagehall.org/events-coming-soon.html> or from [rogerblowey@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rogerblowey@hotmail.co.uk), or text 07768 451071.

**PLEASE purchase your tickets in advance**, preferably on-line, because we need to know how many are coming. We had to decline further tickets sales in September.

**Wine, soft drinks and snacks available, so let's make it another nice social evening!**



  
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WEDNESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER  
AT 7.00 P.M. IN  
MINSTERWORTH VILLAGE HALL  
AND ST PETERS CHURCH

BRING YOUR OWN FOLIAGE, SCISSORS AND DECORATIONS  
(A SUGGESTION LIST OF ITEMS TO BRING WILL BE PROVIDED  
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TO BOOK CONTACT:  
JULIE FISHER 01452 750562





# BOX TREE MOTHS

ROGER B



Has anyone else in the Village had their lovely box hedge change from green to brown?

Well OK – my ‘good’ box hedge is not particularly good, but that’s because it was quite badly affected last year. Interesting that this hedge is not affected at all this year, and the hedges that were unaffected last year are really bad this year. They all look dead – but I’m going to leave them for 12 – 18 months to see if there are any signs of recovery.

The cause is the box tree moth. Its quite a pretty thing, but what its done to my hedge is annoying! The adult lays its eggs on the underside of the box hedge leaf, and the subse-



quent larvae (= caterpillars) that hatch eat the small shoots. The Box tree caterpillar goes through 3 cycles each season, so its not surprising that my hedge is so badly affected.



In terms of control, some people spend ages picking the caterpillars off the box hedge by hand (not my idea of fun!), or the hedge can be sprayed with products which destroy the caterpillars. One such product is Xen Tari, which claims to have no adverse effect on bees or other pollinators.

Google tells me that the box leaves will actually resprout after 8 weeks, once the infestation has been dealt with. I’m afraid that I did not ‘deal’ with the infestation, so I’m now just waiting to see what is going to happen.

You can apparently try a ‘pheromone trap’. Adult male moths are hopefully attracted to the scent and fly inside the trap through the holes on the side, drop down, and become trapped. I will let you know how I get on with my hedge!

## **St Peters Church**

### **Cathy Thomas**

*Thank you to everyone who helped with the fundraising Severn Bore BBQ on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September, in aid of St Peters Church, and many thanks to all those who supported it. We raised £261.50 (which included some donations).*

*Thank you*

### **SAVE THE DATE:**

***We have some very excited Donkeys who can't wait to meet everyone again this year for the now ANNUAL DONKEY WALK!***

***Save the date on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December – more details next month***



OPEN 9am - 5pm



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## The Harvey Centre Calendar – November 2023

MON	<p><b>Tan House Choir</b> Weekly from 7:00 to 9:00pm Telephone <b>01452 750128</b> to join or find out more.....</p>
TUES	<p><b>Memory Café</b> every 4th week on a Tuesday 11:00am – 1:30pm. No Charge Next Café Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November</p> <p>Safe space for dementia patients, their partners, families or carers to enjoy coffee, crafts and lunch. For further info call <b>01452 750128</b></p> <p><b>Crafternoons</b> Tuesday 21st November- Enamelling - £30.00 per person Sold out. To add your name to reserve list- contact <a href="mailto:roger.ingham@btinternet.com">roger.ingham@btinternet.com</a></p>
WED	<p><b>Community Café @ The Harvey Centre</b></p> <p>The drop-in community café open from 10:30 am to 12:30pm <b>Lifts can be arranged if you are unable to make it under your own steam</b> Tel 01452 751283 or <a href="mailto:roger.ingham@btinternet.com">roger.ingham@btinternet.com</a> and someone will get back to you.</p> <p><b>Main Hall: Strength, Balance and Mobility Class</b> Weekly from 10:30 to 11:30am (Note new time) Telephone 01452 234005 or email <a href="mailto:info@farrphysio.co.uk">info@farrphysio.co.uk</a> Leave telephone number / email address and a member of the team will then contact you to arrange.</p> <p><b>FREE -Book/DVD/ Audio Books exchange available 11:30am to 12:30pm</b></p>
FRI	<p><b>Art for Wellbeing</b> Weekly from 10:00 to 12:noon – 6 week course, with Paul Fisher From Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov until Friday 8<sup>th</sup> Dec £72 for a 6 week bloc (£12.00 per session or £15.59 adhoc sessions) <i>Please pop along or Telephone 07525 330364 to book a place</i></p> <p><b>FREE -Book/DVD/ Audio Books exchange available 10:00am to 12:30pm</b></p>

**The Harvey Centre, Main Road, Minsterworth Gloucester GL2 8JH**



**free books**



## **Minsterworth Parish Council—October 2023**

The council currently has a casual vacancy following the resignation of Councillor Sharon Ingham. The council would like to thank Sharon for her contribution to the council business and her work in the village.

Any resident interested in becoming a Councillor can contact Tewkesbury Borough Council with a letter of interest. Residents have until 26<sup>th</sup> October to request an Election, this requires 10 requests from residents. If the Borough does not receive 10 residents requesting an election the post will be dealt with by the council following Co-option procedures.

Borough Councillor Jill Smith provided her report at the meeting and provided an update from the Borough.

- TBC have had a recalculation of their 5 year land supply. This looks at houses built, those with planning permission but not yet built and those in the pipeline. At present it is said that TBC only have just over 3 years land supply, and not the 5 years that they are supposed to have. As a result they have withdrawn their support for 3 appeals, as this fact is said to trump any other planning reasons for refusing a planning application.
- There is currently a Polling Station Review, where all Parishes are being asked if their Polling stations are fit for purpose.
- A motion to spread the word about Fostering children was passed at Full Council, and all Councillors are asked to encourage anyone within our communities to please look into doing this vital work, if they have the interest, motivation and capacity.

The parish council applied for funding and was successful in securing £500 for two picnic benches. These will be located in the Childrens Park

The council discussed the maintenance of Calcot and Ham Green. A Sub-Committee will be elected and propose a plan for going forward for full council.

### **Planning Applications**

No planning application for consideration.

**The next meeting of the Council takes place Monday November 2023 @ 7pm in Minsterworth Village Hall**

As always, all residents are very welcome to attend.

Parish Clerk: Jo Badham (07889 379024) [clerk@minsterworthparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@minsterworthparishcouncil.org.uk)

## Adapting to the Winter Season

If you read my last couple of articles, you will recall the body reacts to the environment we live and work in, which means it should adapt to the changes in seasons between summer and winter. I will go into how we can be optimal compared to what we usually do, in this month's article.

### **Differences in seasons in nature:**

Summer

- Longer days, more infra-red, intense sunlight, vitamin D, photosynthesis, warmer, more food available naturally.

Winter

- Shorter days, more melatonin, less sunlight, no vitamin D and less infra-red from sun, infra-red from fires\hot water, no photosynthesis, cold, less food available naturally.

### **Ideally our bodies behave differently in the following ways.**

Summer

- Growth, active, hot, slight insulin resistance due to fruits and tubers (autumn).

Winter

- Optimising energy, efficiency, programmed cell death, anti-inflammatory, damage repair, rejuvenation, cold, fasting, more sleep, lose weight.

The sun is main driver between the differences, so we need to be able to shift with the reduction of light and heat to dark and cold, this is an extended form of night time and effectively our hibernation opportunity.

Late summer and autumn give us plenty of fruit, this allows animals and us to fatten up for the winter, by creating insulin resistance. So, trying to lose weight in time for Christmas will be harder (I've tried ...). Also, we should be winding down our intensive fitness routines in winter to allow us to recover, by adding more walking and any other restorative activities.

Our ancestors (pre civilisation approx. 15,000+ years ago) were believed to have lived something like the following way in the winter. Bearing in mind we have pretty much the same physiology as those who lived approximately 100,000 years ago, we might be able to learn a few things from them.

### **Ancestral day**

- Rise with the sunrise (Infra-Red light),
- Hunt, gather, play and rest, less gathering in Northern Europe during cold, so meat and fat would be main part of diet. Only as active as necessary to conserve energy.
- Eat whenever they can, includes fasting periods due to food scarcity.
- Fires lit when dark (Infra-red light)
- Sleep

### **Modern winter day**

- Wake up to loud alarm clock\radio\phone (stress).
- Look at phone (stress).
- Turn on bright lights, heating is on (stress).
- Turn on TV (stress).
- Maybe make a sugar-based breakfast, just coffee or nothing at all.
- Daytime activities i.e. work\school\watch TV\snacking.
- Home for a large meal, often late in the evening. (Affects sleep quality)
- Possibly some gym or other activity to make up for sitting all day (stress).
- Watch TV\YouTube with bright lights on, maybe in bed (stress, TV light increases fat).
- Hopefully sleep.
- For most people going outside is minimal and as you know from previous articles, this means your circadian cycles become disrupted and you end up with symptoms like jet lag.

### **Possible alternative modern winters day**

- Wake up naturally as body clock is aligned or to a non-stressful alarm or a dim light.
- Turn on dim red\amber lights or put on some blue light blocking glasses.
- Make higher fat\protein breakfast just before or after sun rise if possible. (Highly satiating, proven to be a secondary signal for the body clock, we don't know whether breakfast was common ancestrally).
- See sunrise for 5 minutes if sunny or 10 if cloudy, every day, consistency is key.
- Find an opportunity to walk between breakfast and work or have car window open.
- Get as many light breaks during the day as possible.
- If possible, have a large seasonally and locally sourced lunch and a smaller tea or no tea at all.
- If it's dark when home, then use red\orange, low level lighting or wear blue light blocking glasses.
- If watching TV or devices, use filters, blue blocking glasses until you turn the lights out or read. It's best not to watch any device just before bed as it can be stimulating.
- Melatonin replaces the need for Vitamin D in the winter, so the more darkness and sleep you have the more melatonin is produced and can reduce inflammation and repair where necessary.

### **Cold exposure also has its benefits:**

In water it's called Cold Thermogenesis: Fat loss, improved hormone balancing, immune system, sleep, pain reduction, muscle recovery. Cold bedrooms are optimum too.

So, to summarise winter is an opportunity to heal and recover as opposed to get S.A.D. and come down with the usual bugs. It's obviously a lot harder in this modern life, but making small changes may allow us to forget Dry January and Fed-up February etc.

Cheers, Nigel

NB, this article is for information only and should not be taken as health advice.



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# TEAMS4U - SHOEBOX APPEAL

Elaine Incher

We are again supporting the charity 'Teams4U' who run this Christmas appeal in relation to a long-term commitment to children the world over, including financing pre-school programmes to support their education and development.

If you would like to take part in this year's appeal, leaflets will be available in due course, to collect from St. Peter's Church, Minsterworth; or I can pop one over to you - please do not hesitate to contact me. I will be thrilled to accept filled boxes, items to put in them or money to help with transportation.

Here are a few suggestions for children: hygiene items, school writing equipment/paper, soft toy, game/puzzle, jewellery, sweets, hat, scarf, gloves, new socks/underwear.

Or for a family box: candles, tea-towels, plastic utensils, bowls/cups, soap, washing up cloths, pegs.

Collection of boxes will again be in November; please give me a ring and I will happily collect them. Mary Cooper has once again said that you may leave them in the front porch at her house. If you prefer to leave them in the drive, could we ask you to put them in a plastic bag please, just in case of bad weather.

Thank you in anticipation

**Our phone numbers are: Elaine Incher 01452 750140 Mary Cooper 01452 750764**



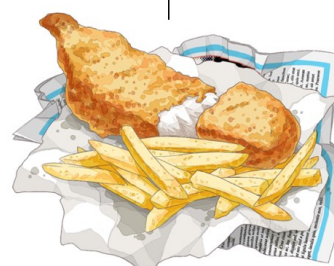
Fish, chips and a mystery film  
Evening on THURSDAY

**16th November at 7pm £15**

Minsterworth Village Hall

Bring your own DRINKS

PLEASE BOOK YOUR FISH  
AND CHIPS BY PHONING  
RITA ON 750128  
**BY TUESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> NOV.**





# Minsterworth & District Royal British Legion

Our meeting in October was held with a number of issues being raised.

- ⇒ Appointment of Officers for the Minsterworth Branch
- ⇒ The membership numbers. Please note you do not have to have served in the military services to join R.B.L.
- ⇒ The Remembrance Service will be held on Sunday 12th November. Starting at Westbury-on-Severn. Followed by wreath laying at Minsterworth Church.

## MILITARY HISTORY

Nov. 1st 1914—Battle of Coronel

Nov. 1st 1944—Assault of Walcheren

Nov. 6th 1956—Assault of Portsaid (40 Commando Rim)

Nov. 8th 1942—Invasion of North Africa

Nov. 11th 1940—Battle of Taranto

Nov. 20th 1759—Battle of Quiberon Bay

Nov. 20th 1920—Association of WRENS formed

Nov. 21st 1918—Der tag & Surrender of German High Seas Fleet

Nov. 25th 1899—Battle of Graspan

Nov. 29th 1917—The WRNS Formed

**Terry Bourne—President**

**Minsterworth & District Royal British Legion**

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Minsterworth Village Hall

# CHRISTMAS FAYRE AND FARMERS' MARKET

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December

10:00am to 2pm

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...and much more.

Contact Gordon Taylor for more info

[gordon@minsterworth.co](mailto:gordon@minsterworth.co)

07786 446334

# Gardening by the Severn by Dawn Ricketts

**When did your love of gardening start?** I was about six when I started helping my mother in her garden. On holiday we always worked on any garden by the caravan, cottage or hotel. My mother also taught me vertical gardening. Limited ground space so go up and three dimensional.

**Which part of your garden do you enjoy the most?** I have a very small garden. 9.6m x 7.5m. Smallest garden I have ever had. I enjoy all of it as there is so little of it! :-)



**My tiny garden, rough grass , three fences, a hedgerow, steep bank and some patio stones.**



**Plan for paths, raised beds, seating and planting completed so construction in progress ....**



**Climbers up the fence and three large pots with posts, rope and Jasmin give height to my vertical garden**



**The bank has hessian matting to stop erosion, next summer this will be seeded with wild flowers. Lights along the sheep hurdles to keep the dogs in also give vertical height and definition**

**How do you decide what to grow?** I like ferns, mosses, shrubs, climbing plants, trees, stones, wood lights and running water. My little garden has all of these.



About 4 ton of stone in my garden, this raised bed has ferns, hostas, gravel, a water trough and evergreen shrubs



A second raised bed made of fence rails has shrubs including Eucalyptus, Cotinus (smoke tree) and Hibiscus. The path and lights then lead to the seating area at the far end of the garden



**Which plant / flower could you not live without?**

That would have to be ferns , moss , water plants and fragrant climbers such as Honeysuckle and Jasmine.

I like running water in my garden so the picture to left is a prototype cascading water garden. Next year I will replace the white and grey plastic guttering with all black. Add something to the top section above the white guttering and add more ferns and water plants.

This currently runs on an electric pump but I plan to change to a solar pump. This water garden has been to Scotland and back as it is fully moveable.

**Which garden open to the public would you recommend?** I like **Highnam Court Garden** as this was the inspiration to use the giant pots and the rope with Jasmin trailing across. It's local, has a great café and the staff are very happy to tell you about their work and ideas.

I would also recommend **Fairview Gardener**, (advert on page 10) special thanks to Paul, Natalie and Glenn who have supported me through the past seven months and the whole project with great ideas, planting suggestions and their time to discuss and review.

Cost to date has been about £4,000 with labour, timber, gravel, electric & lights and of course the plants, turf and seeds.



# The Art of Woodturning

## Bob Holder



For those of you who love tactile things, wood must be one of the most pleasurable; visually stimulating, unique, pleasing to the touch; no two pieces are exactly the same, even those cut from the same piece of timber.

For me, I am the first person to see 'inside the wood' when I create a piece. The wood shows me itself as I remove the bark, and I begin to see how the wood is structured. Does it have a dark heartwood? Is there any spalting? Both of these give colour to the wood; the heartwood is the centre of the trunk/branch. Spalting occurs when the wood dries. A fungus enters the wood and seeps through its 'veins' where it too, eventually dies leaving darker or different colour patches and black lines which add to the 'uniqueness' and beauty of the wood.

All of this shapes my decision of how the piece will look. Whether it will be a candlestick, a bowl, or a clock - that decision is made before I start the shaping; the end result will define the blank from which I start. It is the shape and decoration that the inside of the wood decides what the resulting piece will look like. Different woods have different grains or patterns in their structure, so all of the above will tell me what to make from a piece.

The art of turning wood goes back thousands of years; only the technology of how the wood is turned mechanically, and the grade of tools has changed - the underlying principle remains the same. Wood, when spun at some speed, where shapes created through various types of chisels applied to the spinning wood, result in the shapes and designs of pieces that the turner creates, based upon the structure of the wood and the desired outcome.

The skill of the turner comes from understanding the makeup of the types of wood, and the dexterity and application of the chisels used in the craft. Gouges (spindle and bowl) roughing gouges, skew chisels, parting chisels, scrapers, etc., all make up the basic tool kit required. Tools must be kept extremely sharp, so accurate grinding is an essential skill!



As the wood is turned, different factors affect the cut. Cross-grain, which is where the grain runs across the piece, such as in bowl turning, means that the grain is difficult to cut as it presents an 'end' to the chisel, causing the wood to roughen, and is very difficult to sand smooth. This is where a high speed and very sharp tools come into play to far greater effect. Softer woods are prone to this effect, but all woods will exhibit this to a degree. Spindle turning, where the grain runs along the whole piece, suffer less, making the piece easier to finish to a really fine surface.



Lighten our Darkness in Minsterworth's Lower Lane.

The lighting of our Christmas candles and outside lights along the lower lane, each evening at dusk, has been very successful so please support this for December 2023. More details to follow in the December edition.

Liz Duff, Mermaid Cottage



Our highly qualified team offer veterinary and nursing care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for all companion animals including exotics

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## CRAFTERNOONS De-Coupage Workshop

Eleven ladies met at the Harvey Centre for an enjoyable afternoon learning how to de-coupage. Many thanks must go to Ann the tutor and Sue the organiser for a magical afternoon in which the ladies turned a boring terracotta plant pot into a work of art! The varied designs from lemons, to toucans, rabbits to flowers brought the pots to life. These were then sealed with a waterproof coating of Modge Podge - a white solution which was also used to fix the cut out tissue pictures to the pots. All the ladies were amazed at the professional looking finished products. The afternoon was embellished with refreshments, including lemon drizzle cake and Mary Berry ginger cup cakes made by Sue.



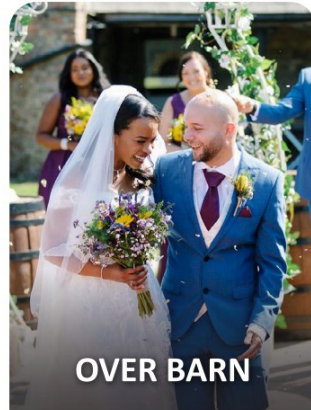
Please let the Harvey Centre know of any other crafts you would like to learn about in 2024.  
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## Riddles for Children

- What gets bigger the more you take away? A hole.
- Which letter of the alphabet has the most water? The letter "C"
- I am easy to lift, but hard to throw. What am I? A feather.
- What's black and white and read all over? A newspaper.
- What has a head and tail but no body? A coin.
- I will fill a room but take up no space. What am I? A Light





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## Apples By Natalie Wang

Apples. Originally found in the mountainous regions of Tian Shan near the border of Kazakhstan and China, but now commonly found in many of our own backyards. With autumn in full swing, apple trees have been flourishing and if you're anything like my family, then you'll have recently had an influx of apples. If you don't know what to do with boxfuls of apples in your garage or just don't want to see them simply rot away in your fruit bowl, then save these next few recipes...

### Toffee Apple Steamed Pudding

**Total cooking time: 2 hrs (30mins preparation)**

**Serves: 8**

#### **Ingredients**

175g softened unsalted butter

4 peeled apples, cored and cut

130g golden caster sugar

50g toasted, chopped walnuts (optional)

3 beaten eggs

150g self raising flour

Toffee sauce (175g muscovado sugar, 125g unsalted butter, 200g crème fraîche)



**Melt 25g of the butter in a frying pan, cook the apple pieces until just tender. Add 1 tbsp sugar, cook until the apples start to caramelize. Cool and add the walnuts.**

**Make the toffee sauce by melting the ingredients in a saucepan. Bring to the boil and simmer for 2 minutes. Tip the apple and walnut mix into a buttered 1.5 litre pudding basin. Pour in  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the toffee sauce.**

**Beat the remaining 150g butter and caster sugar until pale and creamy. Gradually add the beaten eggs. Fold in the flour with a pinch of salt. Spoon the mixture on top of the apples and spread level.**

**Cover with a pleated sheet of baking parchment and foil, tie securely with string. Put the bowl in a large saucepan with boiling water that comes halfway up the sides of the bowl. Cover and steam for 1½ hours, adding more water if needed. Rest for 2 minutes before turning out and serving with the remaining warm toffee sauce.**

**NOTE: YOU CAN USE COOKING APPLES OR EATING APPLES**



## **Apple pie cookies**

**Total cooking time: 30 mins**

**Serves: 15 cookies**

### **Ingredients**

**1 store bought/home made pie crust**

**½ cup unsalted butter**

**½ cup granulated sugar**

**½ cup brown sugar**

**1 egg**

**2tsp vanilla extract**

**1 2/3 cup all purpose flour**

**Pinch of salt**

**¾ tsp baking powder**

**¼ tsp baking soda**

**2tsp cinnamon**

**1 large apple, peeled, cored and chopped**



1. Preheat your oven to 350°F. Roll out the store bough pie crust onto the cookie sheet and bake for 15 minutes or until golden brown and fully cooked. Break into small pieces and set aside.
2. Beat the butter and sugars together until light and airy (stand mixer ideal) for about 2 minutes. Add the egg and vanilla extract and beat for another 2 mins until smooth and fluffy.
3. Add the flour, baking powder, baking soda, spices and salt. Mix until no streaks of flour remain. Fold in the apple pieces and 1 cup of the pie crust pieces, mix to ensure even distribution.
4. Spoon generous amount onto lined baking tray and gently press flat with your hand or base of a cup. Bake the cookies for 12 to 15 minutes or until the edges are set, but the centres are still a little doughy. Allow to cool completely before eating!

**NOTE: YOU CAN USE COOKING APPLES OR EATING APPLES**

## Three Choirs Vineyards Raises a Glass to 50 Year Anniversary

One of England's oldest vineyards is celebrating 50 years since the first vines were planted on the estate. Local wine retailer Alan McKechnie planted just half an acre on the south-facing Gloucestershire slopes in 1973 to see how the vines would grow. His experiment paid off - 50 years later Three Choirs Vineyards boasts 75 acres of vines, growing grape varieties like Pinot Noir, Bacchus, Siegerrebe, Seyval Blanc and Phoenix.

In 1990 the vineyard opened its state-of-the-art winery and visitor attraction, followed a decade later by eight hotel rooms, complete with stunning panoramic views over the vineyard from sun-soaked patios.



In 2008, three beautiful oak and cedar lodges were built, nestled amongst the vines, offering guests complete privacy and seclusion. Wildlife thrives in the rows of vines and surrounding ponds, with guests able to enjoy



a relaxing glass of wine on their veranda whilst admiring sparrow hawks, buzzards, foxes, finches, and woodpeckers.

Martin Fowke has been the winemaker at the vineyard since 1989, making this his 34<sup>th</sup> vintage when the harvest gets underway in September. The vineyard currently produces around 250,000 bottles of wine a year. Best sellers include Classic Cuvee, Coleridge Hill, Rose and Bacchus.

According to Managing Director, Thomas Shaw, "Three Choirs Vineyards' focus is the quality of the wines and the visitor experience. In the current climate there's no reason why Three Choirs Vineyards won't continue to sparkle - the English wine industry is buoyant – over 9 million bottles of English wine are sold every year, produced by 195 wineries with grapes from nearly 900 vineyards<sup>1</sup>. The demand for experiential travel is also strong with no shortage of guests keen to eat, drink and stay amongst the rolling Gloucestershire vine-clad valleys.

For more information visit [www.three-choirs-vineyards.co.uk](http://www.three-choirs-vineyards.co.uk)



## MOTH MATTERS By Denis Jackson

I always want to cheer for the things that are a bit less popular – a bit less ‘celeb’ than charismatic creatures like eagles, dolphins, dormice and butterflies.



### December Moth

Moths are a class-leader for the uncharismatic majority. Many people I meet don't like moths. Indeed, quite a few of these folks would say that, more than a dislike, they have a positive fear of them. Mottephobia (yes, really!) is the medical name, and I'm told it's quite well up the league table of personal terrors.

Now, I realise phobias by definition are irrational, and far be it from me to come up with an explanation as to what might lurk in the depths of the mottephobic mind ! But I can't help wondering why, when I enquire of mottephobes how they are with butterflies, most tell me they love them.

What is it about the 60 or so British butterfly species which make them so different to the 2,500 different sorts of moth? The answer is actually very little, even though there are many moth myths that would suggest otherwise. Let's take a look at three of the most commonly offered differences, and see if they stand up to scrutiny.

### Small Elephant Hawk Moth



Our first myth is that moths are dull and butterflies are brightly coloured: This is perhaps true to an extent, but there are many very drab butterflies. The meadow brown

really lives up to its rather dreary name, whereas the garden tiger – a moth, must be one of the most colourful creatures in the British countryside.



The second Moth Myth is that moths only fly at night, and butterflies only during the day. This is far from true. Many moths are day fliers, such as the pretty cinnabar and burnet moths. Equally, there are butterflies which regularly fly at night – the well known, and very impressive, red admiral often flies at night – especially when they are migrating. I bet you never thought of butterflies and moths as migrants either, but tens of thousands of them cross the English Channel each year, and some even arrive on our shores from North America.

And finally, everyone knows that moths are hairy and butterflies aren't. Don't they? Some folks tell me that it's the hairiness of moths which starts off their mottephobia, so I'm probably not going to help anyone by telling you that a lot of butterflies are hairy too.

In truth, there are no 100% reliable differences between moths and butterflies. If you read a biology textbook it will talk about differences in antennae, the way the wings are connected together, and other such minutiae, but if truth be told, there are exceptions to all of these "rules"

What I can say for certain though, is just how important moths are in the British countryside. They are an incredibly important part of the food chain. Without moths, birds like the humble Blue Tit, which feeds its chicks almost exclusively on moth caterpillars, would disappear. We'd probably lose a lot of our bats, and who knows what the effect on our crops and gardens would be, because moths pollinate a wide variety of plants too.

### Lobster Moth

### Garden Tiger Moth



Moths (and butterflies too for that matter) are very sensitive to changes in their environment. The charity, Butterfly Conservation, describes them as the "canaries in the countryside" so we should perhaps be concerned for ourselves, given that more than half of the 2,500 different moths here have declined in number over recent decades.

There you have it. Butterflies and moths are so similar that even the scientists can't agree on a universal definition, but what they do agree on, is that the declining population is not good news. If you've got any kind of garden, or even a window-box, you can help by planting things that benefit both moths and butterflies. There's plenty of advice on what to plant at [www.butterfly-conservation.org](http://www.butterfly-conservation.org)



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### At the heart of the village is Minsterworth Village Hall.

This website is for Minsterworth Village Hall activities, clubs and events.

[www.minsterworthvillagehall.org](http://www.minsterworthvillagehall.org)

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