

Comberbach Village News

Community updates and events - July 2020



Parish Council

An informal update from your parish council chairman

Notes from the Chair

Tea in the front garden

Hopefully we are now seeing a relaxation of the restrictions and life back to some normality. It was pleasing to see the vast majority of households having tea on the lawn to celebrate VE days and also make an effort in dressing up for the occasion. I am sure that a similar effort will have been made for the Front Garden Fete and the crowning of this year's rose queen Jessica Poulson. Many thanks to Steve Howard and his committee for organising the revised event.

The PC goes Zoom

Details of Parish Council meetings are listed on the notice board at the Post Office and on the web site. Under current rules, in-person meetings cannot be held so the Parish Council has been using virtual technology (Zoom) for meetings of Finance Committee and the Parish Council. These meetings will deal with financial items

including cheque payments and any other matters that can't be delayed. The public are welcome to listen or view meetings and take part during the Open Forum subject to contacting the Clerk in advance for the meeting codes.

Improvements to the Rec

During this lockdown the Parish Council have purchased new furniture for the recreation area. New picnic tables and benches have been installed, and many thanks to Dave Meakin for his

help and assistance in installing the new colourful picnic tables and benches. Additional work has been undertaken in strengthening the decking boards on the multi play unit, as well as a lick of paint.

The area is now open with detailed signage for entry and exiting as well as details of what is expected of parents and children using the area and equipment taking into consideration social distancing and hygiene.

Be Alert there's phishing about

Cheshire Police have advised that Fraudsters continue to prey on people to try and obtain either personal information or bank details. If in doubt delete it or report it via the action fraud hotline.

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/reporting-phishing>

John Ryder, Chair,
Comberbach Parish Council



Just a few words from your local PCSO Diana Wiggins

I hope this newsletter finds you all safe and well. The last few months have been understandably a strange time for most people.

I trust that residents in Comberbach have been looking after each other and making sure that the elderly in particular have been reassured whilst having to stick to the restrictions put in place. I have patrolled the area on a regular basis, and I am glad to say that we have had no trouble to be concerned about.

The play area has also been checked after reports of youths playing on the equipment: when

I have checked the location there has been no one present.

Speed monitoring has been conducted in the area. This will continue to take place on a regular basis.

Hopefully in the next few months we will start to see some sort of normality starting to take place. Look after each other and stay safe.

Regards
Diana Wiggins

Cheshire West Council

Free Support

A quick reminder that we are offering the following Free Supporting Communities Support Services

- Well-being
- Family Support
- Befriending
- Counselling and Support
- Mentoring

Well-being Services

Our Well-being team is available to call Monday - Wednesday 9am - 5pm to help you with any concerns in regards to your health during the crisis. This includes:

- Body MOT
- Fitness advice
- Exercise plans
- Nutrition advice

Tel: 07955 710715

Family Support Services

Our family support team will be available to talk to Wednesday 9am - 5pm. They will provide emotional and online support to help and advice to families who are experiencing long- or short-term difficulties. This will include also a family food voucher support scheme but funds to this will be limited.

- Career advisor
- Support plan and support guidance

Tel: 07955 710719

Befriending Services

Feel like you need someone to talk to? We have our phone and Zoom befriending service available Tuesday's 9am - 5pm and Thursday's 9am - 5pm

Tel: 07562430391

Counselling Services and Support Services

If you need some support or just someone who can listen to you contact our support team to arrange your free counselling sessions.

Staff will be available Wednesday's 9am - 5pm

Tel: 07955798809 / 07955798811

Mentoring and Support Services

Are you are a young person who is worried about future opportunities? Or you need someone to talk to?

Staff will be here to help with personal developments to support you out of the COVID-19 crisis.

Staff will be available Wednesday's 9am - 5pm

Tel: 07955798809 / 07955798811

Email - info@supportingcommunitiescic.org for more information



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Memorial Hall Report

Green shoots

The Hall has obviously been closed since March and, before we see green shoots of a reopening, we have lots of advice to follow, risk assessments to write and many hoops to jump through before it is safe to do so. We're receiving lots of invaluable help, advice and guidance from Cheshire Community Action and the wider group ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England).

We're also in the process of contacting our regular hirers ready to work with them in order for their activities to start again. Things may not be back to how they were for some time and will probably look very different, but we'll get there, step by step, making sure the Hall is safe for hirers, users and everyone involved.

Huge thanks

Things at the Hall will not only work very different practically going forward, but the biggest change we have ever seen since the hall opened in 2002 is the recent retirement of Rena & Jim Bradley from the committee. This is huge! Their completely voluntary contribution to the building, running,

upkeep and administering of the hall can never be underestimated. Between them they have taken all the bookings, run the accounts, organised all maintenance, and undertaken 1001 jobs from unblocking toilets to applying for thousands of pounds worth of grants, from hanging curtains to turning out at midnight to lock-up. All current and past members of the committee know exactly how much they have contributed, how much they will be missed, and what a debt of gratitude is owed to them by the village as a whole, for devoting many years to making sure we have a practical, attractive, and well-kept memorial hall, which is a fantastic resource for the village and the surrounding area.

Bear with us

Liz Cook and I have bravely (and I don't use this word lightly!) taken over the running and we will do our best to build on what we have and take the Hall forward. We were also delighted to have a positive response to a recent request on the village community Facebook page for volunteers to join the committee; we hope to have a meeting, either face to face, or virtually, very soon. We

plan to build the online presence to market the hall, build a Facebook page, increase email bookings, and have an online calendar. This all takes time and some trial and error, so please bear with us. Liz has been working so hard during lockdown to secure funding and move things forward online for us, and I am immensely grateful to her.

Farewells

As well as our farewell to Jim & Rena, Hilary Totten has also retired as our Secretary. Hilary joined the committee years ago as the WI representative, before taking on the role of secretary. We send our love and thanks to Hilary for her significant contribution to the running of the hall.

If you contact comberbachmemorialhallbookings@gmail.com, either Liz or I will pick up your email and respond ASAP. (And in case you were wondering, as many have, 'comberbachmemorialhall@gmail.com' had already been taken, so we had to go for the longer version!)

*Nikki Lord
Hall Chair
07721 501181*

Comberbach Clean Team

Many thanks to the residents who regularly pick up litter from the area in and around the village. Liz Cook and others also helped to clear away litter from Marbury Park after the warm weather had attracted many visitors; unfortunately a few irresponsible gatherings resulted in litter hotspots. Eas-

ing of lockdown has caused an increase in the usual roadside litter, MacDonald's and KFC take away packaging being evident again.

I like to think the people who throw this litter from their cars live outside the village, so it was disappointing to find some

litter on Budworth Lane which had been left by a resident and not blown out of the recycle box. The litter included a delivery note and birthday card envelopes amongst other items which easily identified a young female.

Comberbach Methodist Chapel



We are sorry that the Chapel doors remain closed and it looks as if it will be September before they are once again open for Worship. Several of our Members have continued to join in with the Mid-Cheshire Circuit Zoom Service each Sunday Morning at 10.30am, along with approximately seventy others from the Northwich and Winsford area. Also there is a Service on the Chapel Facebook page, led by Rev Tim, which is again followed by several people. It includes weekly reflections and prayers (<https://www.facebook.com/comberbachmethodistchurch/>).

Alan held a Zoom Choir Practice on 17 May, which would have been the Sunday School Anniversary. Several favourite songs were sung, albeit a little bit out of sync with the split second time delay, but good fun just singing together. *"You raise me up"* and *"Swing Down Chariot"* were both included of course! Alan has continued to play the Organ each week, usually on a Sunday, making sure that no dust is clogging up the pipes. Before he begins, he plays all the notes individually, on each of the ten Stops, including the pedal notes, before he launches into his varying Voluntaries, making the most of all the different sounds.

We would like to congratulate the Fete Committee on their determination to still hold the Village Fete, although in a different format and we send our very best wishes to Queen Jessica and hope she enjoys her year representing Comberbach. We were all very pleased that the frontage of the Chapel was chosen for the Crowning Ceremony.

Messy Church

Lockdown began just before our Easter Messy Church celebration. Having already prepared all the activities, we set about reinventing Messy! Just before Holy Week, we delivered packs to our Messy families with activities all about the events leading up to Easter from Palm Sunday to that glorious Easter morning. Rev Tim recorded a special Easter message for all to see on our Facebook page. Since then, we've prepared and delivered a second pack showing us that Jesus.... is our best friend, is an example to follow, changes lives, gives us hope and connects us to a worldwide family. There's a possibility we'll be preparing something else for the summer months. If you'd be interested in this, find out the latest on our Facebook page - *'Messy Church Comberbach'* or email us at cmcmessy@gmail.com. We hope and pray we can meet together again soon and have our fabulous messy family meal! Until then, stay safe and God bless. From the Messy church team.

Vestibule Improvements

After all the talk, fund raising and generous giving over the last few years, we are now in a position to start the vestibule improvements on 13 July and it will take approximately 4 weeks. As reported the Church won't be open due to the coronavirus till the beginning of September, but fingers crossed the improvements will be finished. Then watch this space!

Robert, Senior Steward.

"Ian Barron would like to thank all friends from the WI and the Chapel who showed their support on the day of Margaret's Funeral. It was much appreciated."

Comberbach WI

the WI

INSPIRING WOMEN

Presidential Ponderings.

It is nice to be able to address our WI members again, During the lockdown we have put together a monthly publication called WI Ramblings which is a means of sharing stories of what members have been up to during this very strange and challenging time. I hope that it has been enjoyed by all members. Sian really has got this newsletter production down to a fine art.

Jean Harding, Federation Chairman, has sent out a personal address to all members in what seems to be a replacement for the Cheshire News. There are some pointers towards what will happen as regards subs, since we have all had to stay at home within her missive.

It was touching to see so many of our WI members in the Village for Margaret Barron's funeral and it was an inspired suggestion by Lindsay for us all to sing "Jerusalem" as the cortege drove past. The family was very appreciative of that gesture and put the car windows down in order to hear it properly, so that must have been a comfort for them. We have received the following thank you from Ian.

"On behalf of my family and myself, I wish to thank all of you concerned in the gathering outside the Church and taking part in the Hymn singing.



It was all so appreciated and was reflective of Margaret's involvements, and, therefore became a fitting conclusion to her life. My family were able to see what it had all meant to her.

Thank you all for the way in which we were supported." Ian

We are now well into June, and normally we would be running round, getting things finalised for the Cheshire Show. Margery is still in Show mode, with a freezer full of cakes, scones etc. I have managed to source her baking ingredients whilst doing my on-line order, along with flour from the paper shop in Barnton. Nothing stops Margery from baking!! I have cautiously given our WI Groups the go-ahead to meet up again, adhering to distancing rules, of course! It all depends on the weather.

Sara has held one Book Group meeting in her garden, but the group cannot be bigger than 6. Even if there isn't too much "Group" in the meeting, it is still a nice opportunity for those who may have felt isolated to venture out for a chat and a cuppa. I suggest taking your own mug along, and having biscuits in wrappers,



to keep things easy and to avoid washing up - the mugs can be held out at arm's length to be filled at arm's length!

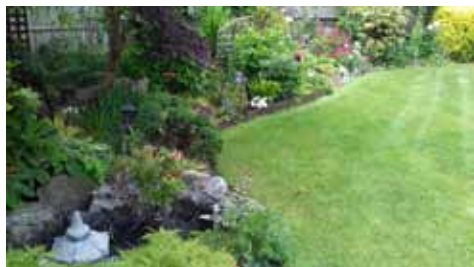
Ursula informed me that walks around Marbury have been exhausted...and pubs don't re-open until July either!! I'll leave all that to Ursula.... Not sure if the crafters have re-convened yet... it's all a few small steps towards getting our WI back. I am still crafting and made some apricot jam last week - it has a lovely flavour, albeit a little soft, so not up to Cheshire Show standard!

I am taking a big step into the unknown next week - I have called a Committee meeting on Zoom. I hope it goes well - on the other hand, it might just be an epic fail! I'll keep you posted.... Lastly, we all wish Margery Hall a very Happy Very Important Big Birthday on the 21st!

I enclose a few photos of member's gardens - one of the benefits of lockdown! May and June are exquisite months in the garden!

Sian
Communication, Press and
Media Officer.

Great Budworth Garden Club



Garden Club is still in Lockdown.

The continual wonderful weather has made this pandemic at least bearable, especially if you have a garden and are not ill of course.

We garden club members have been busy doing what we do best, sowing and mowing, planting and harvesting. We will all have a tidy garden, but sadly no one will see it.

All meetings and visits have been cancelled up until and including July, and the next months will be considered by committee nearer the time. The biggest problem to overcome is the social distancing.

The parish hall is unable to accommodate our large numbers of members attending meetings, if we still have to be 2 metres apart. There is a lot to discuss as we go along. The year is basically cancelled for most events now, but we will see what happens.

The garden club holiday to Dorset in June/July, planned by Henri and Lynda Giller, has been postponed until next

year. We know that they have worked very hard to come to the best conclusion, but it is impossible to go ahead in 2020. At least we have something to look forward to again at a different time.

Our local nurseries have helped us through this time, offering to deliver compost and anything else we need. Now we are into Stage 3 of this Covid 19, meaning we can now go out in the car to garden centres, distancing of course, to buy whatever we like.

We are getting through this ordeal, and at the beginning of June, there is another update of rules, and if all has gone well, there will be more easing of the lockdown.

We send all our sympathy to Jane Fairclough, on the sad loss of her husband Peter, who has been a member since the beginning.

We wish you all good health and all being well, we will get through this, and meet again soon.

Jean and Peter Davies.

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The Early History of Comberbach.

In recent editions we have included articles written about Comberbach in the last century, this month we go back much further in time. Many thanks to Robert Steele for writing this interesting article based on his research into local history.

A jigsaw puzzle

The problem with local history is that it's like trying to do a jigsaw puzzle with most of the pieces missing and having only a vague idea of the picture.

The early history of Comberbach illustrates the point nicely with evidence from a handful of documents but no archaeology and no ancient buildings.

However, with careful thought and appraisal of what we do know and educated guesswork (any professional historian has now just run screaming from the room!!) we can get a good understanding of the early village.

The village was not included in the Domesday survey of 1086 when William the Conqueror arranged a valuation of his new country so he could assess his income.

Some villages were missed or too small to bother about. It has been estimated that the whole of Cheshire at this time had a population of less than ten thousand people of which over half lived in towns like Chester (three thousand) and the large market towns such as Northwich, Middlewich, Nantwich and Macclesfield. So there were lots of small places that did not get an entry.

Anglo Saxons

However, we do know that our area was settled by the Anglo Saxons in the years before William because we are surrounded by place names which are Anglo Saxon such as Comberbach, Budworth, Marbury, Cogshall, etc. so the area was settled and almost certainly farmed.

Land and farming were the thing at this time. To own land and farm gave an annual income that went on forever. Money just lasted until spent!! Great Budworth was in the Domesday Book with a small population of 20-30, but the survey lists their ploughs and ox teams as the key factors of interest.

We can assume that the same kind of farming applied in Comberbach. (*Interestingly, one of the meadows running down to the mere at the Comberbach end is called ox pasture.*)

Comberbach enters written history

Now our first document arrives dated around 1185 and Comberbach enters written history.

The document is a land deed transferring the township of Comberbach, about 400 acres, to new owners (incidentally the township is still about 400 acres.)

You will remember William the Conqueror took ownership of the whole country after the Battle of Hastings; legally every acre was his and if you farmed it you owed him rent and were a tenant at his will.

Now in order to control the country and pay his followers he gave huge tracts of the country and their rents to his most powerful followers in return for keeping the peace, dealing with rebels and being always available if he needed an army. These lords delegated portions of their land to support lesser soldiers and so on.

The key thing is that these Norman soldiers got the land and the tenants paid them. The occasional Anglo Saxon lord kept land and we can only assume that they were collaborators who pleased the new regime.

In this deed Roger, Constable of Cheshire and Baron of Halton, the second most important Norman lord in Cheshire, gives Comberbach to two different religious groups.

Firstly, half of the township goes to "The Brothers serving the poor at the holy Hospital of Jerusalem." These monks are better known as the Knights of St John, a military order dedicated to defending the holy places in Palestine as well as running hospitals there for poor pilgrims.

The other half he gave to the Augustinian Canons of Norton Priory near Runcorn. (In normal times the remains of their monastery at Norton is well worth a visit.)

Remember Roger is giving not only the land and its income but the very people who lived and worked the land.

William de Comberbach

Both of these orders wanted the income to support their institutions but had different ways of doing it. The knights of St John wanted the money as cash so an annual rent suited them and Roger arranged it for them by making one William de Comberbach paramount tenant so he was in charge and collected the rents and sent the knights their rent. In all but name he and his family after him would be lords of the manor.

The Canons on the other hand had a huge stake in the area: a mill in Cogshall, salt houses in Northwich, Great Budworth and other local churches which gave them a good steady income and other land. In fact within a few years they would be gifted a third of the township of Great Budworth. They would be one of the biggest business enterprises in the area. We know from latter evidence from Great Budworth that they preferred their own agent to run things in order to maximise their income.

Gifts to religious orders

Why did Roger make these gifts? Well his family had been founders of Norton Priory and he himself accompanied the Earl of Chester on the crusade of King Richard the Lionheart in 1190, fighting so bravely at the siege of Acre in 1192 that he won the King's approval and friendship. At the end of the crusade he continued to fight for King Richard in France and was rewarded with land and titles.

It could be that before setting off on crusade he wanted to put his spiritual life in order and win God's favour by gifts to religious orders.

Regarding the land of which William de Comberbach was paramount tenant our second document is most important.

John de Comberbach sells up

About 150 years later, in 1335, John de Comberbach decides to sell his paramount tenancy of the township to Adam and Robert, sons of William de Litleleghe (of Little Leigh).

The great thing about this deed is that it spells out in detail what Comberbach is selling, each tenant

and the value of their holding is listed so there can be no misunderstandings about the deal.

To us it gives the first names and in some cases the jobs of residents of Comberbach.

John de Comberbach outlines in the deed that he is selling his hall and all the properties. Each tenant is named and the rent they pay recorded.

This half of the village in 1335 has 16 or so families. Most of the tenants are identified by a first name and then either a geographical place such as William de Wyrall or by an occupation such as Robert the Baker, Richard Shepherd, Richard Smith and most interestingly William Fisher, presumably licensed to fish the mere (we have a set of the rules from about 1550 imposed at the Budworth end of the mere that you needed to follow if you bought one of the limited number of fishing licences.)

Two women and the Bakers

Two of the tenants are women: Christine the wife of Randolph and Margaret wife of Henry, both farming about 8 acres, presumably widows or women raising the family alone while their men were away on military service. Whatever their circumstances they were the tenant of choice. The Baker family seem to dominate, they hold three of the tenancies. The biggest tenant was Richard Herredun with about 38 acres, but his name means nothing to me!

We can work out the size of holdings from the rent being paid.

But, of course this is only half the township.

Our third document throws light on the other half. Nearly two hundred years later, Henry VIII decided to close the monasteries throughout his kingdom partly because of political and religious reasons but, also for economic reasons. The monasteries were closed but all their property was nationalised, everything from decorations, furniture, the very stone the buildings were made of, but also all the monastic property, maybe as much as a quarter of the land in England including the Canons' half of Comberbach.

Valuation document survives

Fortunately for us it was done very professionally and a valuation of the property was made to make sure the proper sum was raised from the sales and this valuation for Comberbach has survived.

Once again all the tenants are listed, this time only ten of them and their rent is recorded.

I think that these represent farmers. They have about the same acreage as the other half of the township in the 1335 valuation.

So we have a tentative view of medieval Comberbach: about 400 acres, 140 or so people, (the 1801 population of the village was 142, so not

much growth) with all the trades to support a farming life not forgetting watermills in Marbury Halls and at Cogshall.

Completing the jigsaw?

It is to be hoped that more documents will be found and at some point an archaeological survey will give us a context for our ideas and provide more pieces of the "jigsaw".

Robert Steele

Great Budworth Parish Church

Coronavirus update

By the time the magazine is distributed, electronically and/or physically, things may have changed and any changes will be available on the Great Budworth Church website (www.greatbudworthchurch.co.uk) and via the weekly Sunday Sheets for Great Budworth and Antrobus, which continue to be distributed electronically and physically in some cases.

At the time of writing (21 June) churches are able to be open once again for individual private prayer and funerals - though

with restricted numbers and on fewer days and with social distancing measures in place.

Public worship is still not possible and weddings and baptisms are still unable to take place in church - but please watch out for announcements in this regard! Please be assured that we are doing our best to keep up with the changes as they are announced and that, in different ways, we are holding everyone in our thoughts and prayers as we ease gradually and cautiously out of lockdown.
The Revd Alec Brown.

Open Churches

From Sunday 28 June the church in Great Budworth will be open for individual private prayer on Wednesdays 11am - 4pm and Sundays 11.30am - 4pm, and in Antrobus on Sundays only from 11.30am - 4pm.

Please read the various notices and comply with the hygiene and social distancing requirements - thank you. These periods of opening will be reviewed in the coming month.

Lockdown Poem (Alec Brown)

The lifting/easing of lockdown

It's not that the lifting of lockdown bothers me,
but it's just that I expected to be happier than I am
at the prospect of returning to normal life,
well, returning to a new-normal life as it's being called,
where all kinds of shops, and even the zoos, are open again,
and masks are now mandatory on tubes and buses and on the train,
and is it still two metres or one that we're being asked to keep apart?
It's all a bit much to take in and seems to have come in a rush
so, if it's all the same with you, I'll probably try and avoid the crush
of shoppers for now, and when I do venture out I'll be masked and gloved
and will look at the clothes and the shoes but will not touch;
though the books might be my undoing,
so, against my better judgement, I'll just have to try and get over
the fact that for now, perhaps, a book can be judged by its cover.

© *The Revd Alec Brown, Great Budworth, 15th June, 2020.*

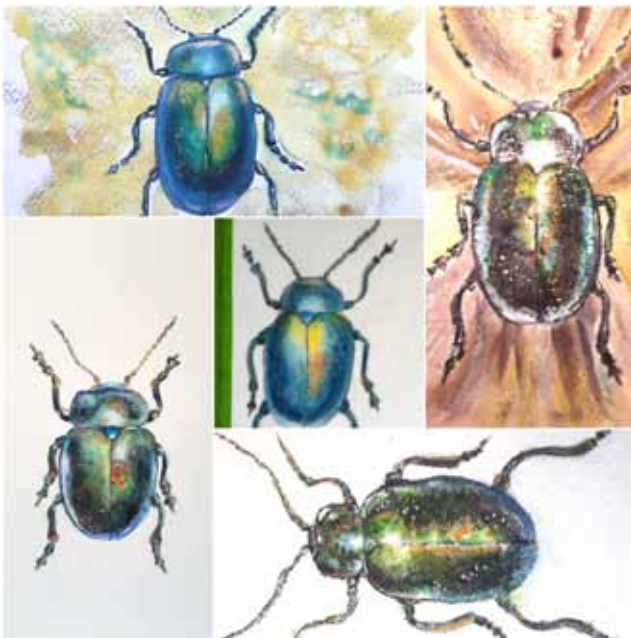
Comberbach Art Group

This spring has been a very strange time for the Art Group. We have not had a meeting since March and we are all missing the company and inspiration of seeing each other's work, however some of us

have been doing an on-line art course with local tutor Rebecca Yoxall and sharing our results via the internet.

Here are some of the results. We have tackled many varied

subjects using media which we may not usually consider and it has been a very rewarding experience. One member has even been tempted to try oil painting for the first time in many years.





A Fete Day with a Difference

Tradition kept alive

I love fete day. I love the pageantry, the pomp, the spectacle, the stalls, and the knowledge that we are keeping an age-old tradition alive.

This year, there was no big procession, no bottle tombola, no crockery smashing, no circus or gymnastic displays. But I still loved it. In a way, I loved it all the more for its sparsity and simplicity.

I write this not just as a member of the fete committee, but as a resident of the village for the last 14 years. Never before have I witnessed the strength of community spirit that I felt this weekend.

When the fete committee hooked up via Zoom six weeks ago, never did we imagine that the socially-distanced version of the fete we were planning would turn out to be such a full, fun-packed day. What started off as a half-hearted suggestion to hold a scarecrow competition, front garden picnic and pared down pavement procession took on a life of its own as local residents embraced the opportunity to make the best of a less than ideal situation.

All time record

The first inkling we got that people might be engaging with the "all creatures great and small" theme was when the scarecrow entry forms started coming in. First there were a just a few, then, a few days before the fete, the trickle turned into a torrent. By Friday lunchtime over 50 entries had been submitted. This is an all-time record.

I didn't envy Claire Powlson, the Rose Queen's mum, who had the daunting task of judging the scarecrows, knowing the weeks of papier-mâché, sewing, sticking and stuffing that had gone into these clever creations. But this is a woman who thinks nothing of conducting a 100-piece orchestra and by the following morning, the winners were announced.

Back to the day itself...

The weather forecast did nothing to reassure us that the event would be a success. Nor did the horizontal rain that morning. Nor did it do anything to deter local residents from turning out to line the pavements on Senna Lane and Cogshall Lane to watch the crowning of the Rose Queen. Then, by some, miracle, the storms cleared and the sun appeared as the brass quintet struck up and the retinue took their places in front of the chapel. Jessica Powlson, the incoming Rose Queen, was flanked by retiring Rose Queen Leia Hubbard, Rose Princess Emily Newton and Flower Girls Esme Ashford, Ruby Bigmore and Evie Waton. Jessica delivered a confident speech in which she pledged to raise as much money as possible for her chosen cause, The Brain Tumour Charity, during her reign. Her dedication and strength of character shone through - a reminder that the role of Rose Queen is about much more than wearing a pretty dress for the day.

The ceremony felt different than usual; more informal, more simple and more emotional -

perhaps given its context in the midst of the pandemic. Even the cars that usually whizz through the village slowed to a respectful crawl.

Festival atmosphere

The solemnity and serenity of the crowning ceremony gave way to an exuberant festival atmosphere as the procession wove its way round the village, accompanied by tunes such as 'Delilah' and 'Sweet Caroline' performed by the talented brass quintet. Fronted by a gorilla (Steve Howard), committee members dressed in animal costumes led the way, swinging buckets to collect donations for Chester Zoo. We were overwhelmed by the generosity of local residents, who collectively raised £600 for this fitting cause. We were particularly touched by the kindness of the Soliman family on Senna Lane who raised £28.50 selling home-made jam from their driveway.

Bunting and yet more bunting

Residents had gone to tremendous efforts with their house decorations and front garden picnics. Front window art displays, abundant bunting, gazebos and beautifully laid tables all added to the party atmosphere. Whilst people were enjoying their picnics, Jessica toured the village in a decorated car boot, covering streets that weren't reached by the on-foot procession.

By this point in the afternoon, the wind was starting to build and the skies were clouding over, but this did nothing to

dampen people's determination to show their support. The 'pop-up' musical acts in the late afternoon were literally singing in the rain. My covers band, Platform3, played a set of pop/rock numbers in front of the school gates, sheltered by a rather flimsy gazebo, and John Brighouse performed valiantly from under an umbrella as the weather worsened.

As the day came to a close, there was much to reflect on and much to celebrate. What could have been yet another cancelled event, yet another disappointment, was, in fact, a special, memorable, uplifting day from start to finish. I love fete day - in all its incarnations.
Lynda Bigmore

Your thoughts and comments on fete day

"Well done everyone! I think we're all winners for being ready to make a fun day out of the gap left by fete day. Thanks to everyone for organising and encouraging us to get going."
Rebecca Duckhouse

"We had a great day! Such a lovely village event...thanks to all who organised."
Louise White

"Well done fete committee. It was a great (if slightly unusual) retinue, crowning and procession."
Ann Barr

"Great community effort - lovely to see lots of the village out enjoying the Rose Queen, live music and scarecrows. We are so lucky to live in such a lovely village with great community spirit."
Claire Sutton

Comberbach Village News
"A lovely village day and thanks to all the organisers and performers. We really enjoyed ourselves."
Anna Cooper

"Thank you to John and Lynda and her group for the music and continuing to play despite the rain."
June Searle

"Really appreciate the effort of everyone involved in organising it. Very much enjoyed the day, meeting and talking to people around the village; plus of course the scarecrows."
John Brighouse

"Well done to all involved. A lovely day and the village looked lovely. A great amount raised for the zoo too."
Claire Hornby

"Yesterday was really wonderful. Thank you to everyone who organised it. The effort everyone put in to scarecrows and decorations was amazing! So many villages have just ditched celebrations this year - really lovely to see us keeping up these events. Thank you."
Sophie Fallon

"Well done Comberbach fete committee for making the most of the fete during social distancing."
Catharine Walmsley

Front Garden Fete competition results

Best Scarecrow
'Vet on call' -
Crows Nest House

Funniest Scarecrow:
'The mouse's revenge' -
Glaslyn, Marbury Road

Highly Commended Scarecrow:
'Lion's head' -
1 Barrymore Crescent

Highly Commended Scarecrow: '
Cow / farm scene' -
14 Broadacre

Highly Commended Scarecrow:
'The bees' -
Elm Cottage, Marbury/War-rington Road

Best Lock-down Art Display:
2 Freshfields

Highly Commended Lock-down Art Display:
25 Bergamot Lane

Highly Commended Lock-down Art Display:
11 Barrymore Crescent

Highly Commended Lock-down Art Display:
24 Bergamot Lane

Best Decorated House:
9 Brookfield Road (hedgehog, bunting, picnic and handmade decorations)

Best Fancy Dress:
1 Barrymore Crescent (winged bird with cap)

Congratulations and thanks to everybody who took part and helped to make the village look so vibrant on fete day - we should all be very proud.



VE Day

For VE day on 8 May Comberbach residents decorated their houses and then held front garden afternoon tea or bbq events during the afternoon.

The warm, sunny weather and the atmosphere created by all the bunting helped to make this a very enjoyable day.



Photographs by Ann Barr

The deadline for the next Comberbach Village News is 21 August

Comberbach Nursery and Primary School

A re-opening plan

We are pleased to have been able to welcome some of our children back into school. As you are aware, we have continued to provide places for children of key workers, and our most vulnerable children. We have undertaken a comprehensive risk assessment, developed a 're-opening plan' and introduced new rules and routines. This will be new for all children, even those who have already been in school and are critical in us ensuring the safest approach for all.

We find ourselves in the strangest of times. We are currently working to the guidance that has been released by the Department of Education. The guidance is changing frequently, and we are adapting the provision in school.

The most important thing

The most important thing to us is that our children are happy and settled, as we realise that this is an uncertain time, with lots of change. We have been able to prepare the children for change, and help them to understand how they can stay safe, but still have fun with their friends.

Feedback and support

We have had fabulous feedback and support from our families, life is strange and not easy for any of us, but parents are doing an amazing job at home with the children. In weekly calls, teachers are reporting that we have children who are happy, engaging and enjoying some additional family time.

Google Classroom

We have launched Google classroom with our Year 6 children and hope to expand this provision across the school. We have dusted off our PE kits and took part in School Sports Week (at home). Daily challenges were available to the children to join in with and medals were on offer for those that participated.

We are looking forward to sharing Comberbach 'Front Garden Fete' on our social media platforms for those parents who are outside of the village and being able to welcome all children into school for the Autumn term.

Follow us on our social media platforms; the first social media platform is twitter and the second one is Facebook
[@ComberbachNPS](#)
[@comberbachps](#)



Comberbach Guides and Senior Section

Virtual Guiding

Our virtual meetings on zoom are keeping us together. Thank you to all our leaders for the different ideas and the chance to chat. We don't want to wish summer away, but it will be nice to meet properly again. Hopefully, this will happen in September; until then we can have a go at the many 'Guiding' activities available.

We had a lovely surprise from Anne. She wrote a letter to each of us and sent it in the post; a welcome change from email. Inside the letter we found a rainbow to give to someone who has made the lockdown more bearable e.g. parent, key worker or to someone who needed cheering up.

As expected our camp was cancelled, so no camp for two

years running. Unheard of for Comberbach Guides. However, with the lockdown restrictions easing, we may get the chance to meet in Marbury Park where we can easily social distance. Then we can practise our camp skills and perhaps do some outdoor cooking.

Stay safe and well everybody.

2nd Comberbach Brownies

Well, a pandemic wasn't going to stop 2nd Comberbach Guiders and the Brownies being in touch!! We have a closed Facebook page for them and every week we sent out a challenge, a craft or some activity to do together with useful updates for the parents. Feedback from the girls were photos or comments. All these are private to just our group. At a Mum's request, we celebrated a young Brownie's birthday by each Guider making a video message standing at our doorstep - it was a small gesture which took away some of the brownie's disappointment of not having a party.

We also celebrated Tawny Owl's significant numbered birthday by asking the girls to make and send her cards. She also received a large helium balloon - can't imagine who sent that!? We received a message from Pettypool that our birdboxes were all in place and some were being used!



Virtual holiday

This term's idea has got everybody excited. Usually in the summer, we go to Pettypool a number of times and might have arranged a Pack Holiday there, but that's not to be this year. Instead we have used a Cheshire Girlguiding Sponsor activity for Chester Zoo and combined it with 'an animal themed virtual pack holiday'.

So, 'Save our Zoo and Sleepover Summer 2020' is being launched. It's lasting over 4 weeks and Brownies are in groups of giraffes, elephants and lions. Each week our Intrepid Adventuring Zoologist (Tawny Owl) will deliver a pack containing all the details of physical activities, crafts and instructions, some chores to keep the zoo tidy and a form for the Zoo Park Ranger (parent) to sign off when completed.

The final week is a build up to the sleepover which is under



the control of the parents and will be in the Brownie's house or garden. They have to sleep somewhere different from usual and have an animal theme. Maybe a duvet in the bath like a crocodile in a stream, or under a table with paper bars like an animal in a cage, or in a clean dog basket etc., etc. The girls are sure to come up with their own imaginative ideas. On completion, each girl will have earned 3 badges - My First Sleepover badge, a Cheshire Zoo Fundraising badge and an Adventures at Home badge. We adults have had great fun planning all this and our Guiders Zoom meetings are hilarious! We know the girls will enjoy this and thanks to the parents for their support too. We have organised many Pack Holidays before (some of my files go back to 1995) but this is the first virtual one for us.

Lynda Flynn (now to be known as Worldwide Zoo Curator!)



A Bird's Eye View

I realised something had changed during a walk I took through Marbury Park in mid-March. Not many people wanted to say hello, some even actually seemed to be avoiding me by moving to the other side of the path. I thought one person even seemed to be contemplating diving into the mere to evade me. Now I would like to say that this was an unusual occurrence for me, but let us just say it was happening more than normal. Perhaps it had been a mistake to go bird watching in my hazmat suit.... well I say hazmat suit, in the end I had to make do with my old Darth Vader costume. This was last worn way back in 1984 for the Fete fancy dress competition, but it seems like everybody still fears the Sith Lord. In all seriousness though that walk was a subdued and chastening experience. A week later the situation had got a lot more serious and still is. The travel restrictions curtailed spring migration watching. During this period, I also took the difficult but necessary decision to avoid the busy park and it's surrounds. It was probably for the best, not having had a hair cut for months may have led to an increase in Bigfoot sightings had I gone there.

Unbothered Buzzards

I watched two displaying buzzards recently, they flew very low and undoubtedly saw me. What they thought of me I am not sure, threat? food? or to use my hair as a possible nesting site? Whatever the reason was, they soon passed over me lost in their own world again. It reminded me though of nature's

complete ambivalence towards us. I find this partly reassuring, the cycle of life continues whatever our problems. The days get longer, the nights shorter, the grass grows and the flowers bloom. Butterflies and bees appear, and birds nest. It is also a warning though, one hopefully we will take heed of, namely that life can and does go on with or without us. Global warming, plastic pollution, forest fires and viruses are stark reminders that we have only got one planet. We cannot live without it and we all need to do a better job looking after it!

Not Home Alone

Nature may be ambivalent towards us but we can still celebrate it's beauty and benefit from it's therapeutic qualities. Hopefully, our gardens will act as little oases and bring nature to us during this difficult time. We are still in nesting season so keep your bird feeders and bird baths topped up. After last year's excellent conditions this year should see many butterflies on the wing. While you are looking skywards check for any passing birds. It can be a bit hit or miss but you could be surprised what you see flying over your garden. The first time I tried it, sitting on the garden bench with binoculars to hand, I saw my first (seen from home) lapwing fly over. Twenty minutes later a red kite nonchalantly did the same. All these years later that is still the only one I have ever seen in Cheshire.

Subtle Sparrow

If you are paying closer attention to your garden birds you may be lucky and see visit-

ing warblers like chiffchaffs, blackcaps, willow and even garden warblers. The first three I often hear around the garden as they first come into the country, but they often then seem to disappear until the young pass though during the autumn migration. You may be luckier and have them visit more often. You may draw yellowhammers into your garden if you live on the outskirts of the village. The males are particularly striking, with yellow heads and breasts and warm brown striped plumage. Who knows, you could even have marsh/willow tits or even less spotted woodpeckers nearby! It would be interesting to know if anybody in the village still does, it has been decades and counting since our last visits. One bird that might be in clear sight, but often goes unnoticed, is the tree sparrow. They have stronghold in Antrobus, and after the breeding season ends there the young sometimes appear in our garden. They never stay long, and in all probability quickly return to where they were raised to live out their lives. They are like a neater, better marked version of the humble but endearing house sparrow. The main identification feature is the black spot they have on their white cheeks. They are often overlooked, but it did not take many weeks for me to pick one out of our house sparrows when I knew the differences between them; perhaps you will find one as well. Whatever you see, stay safe while doing it and hopefully during the months to come it will not only be the birds flying free again.

JB

Report from Comberbach Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 5 May 2020

Virtual Meeting Regulations

The Parish Council held a virtual meeting on 5 May in accordance with new Regulations. The Regulations also mean that the Council does not have to hold an Annual Meeting in May to elect a new Chairman or make any other appointments. At the virtual May meeting the Council agreed that all appointments will remain until May 2021 and Councillor John Ryder will remain as Chairman with Councillor Steven Hornby as Vice Chairman.

Parish Council Finances...

The Council approved financial documents including the end of year financial statement. The financial position at 31 March was £13,901.75 in the current account with £36,657.55 in Reserves. Payments to be made in the new financial year included the sum of £7,405.26 for the new gateway signs and

£4,902.12 for new furniture in the Recreation Area. The Council's accounts would be boosted by the precept receipt.

... and Annual Audit

Each year the Council must submit its financial records for Internal and External Audit. Members confirmed that there was a sound system of internal control and the accounts were a fair representation of the financial position of the Council. The relevant financial information would be sent to the Internal Auditor who would review and submit a report to the Council. The Council approved the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 to be sent to the External Auditor.

Village Gateway signs

The 5 new gateway signs had been ordered and delivery was imminent. CWAC will install the new signs when the work can be programmed in.

Advertising in the Newsletter

The Council agreed to suspend advertising charges for all existing advertisers in recognition of the pandemic and its impact on many businesses. The Responsible Financial Officer would write to all current advertisers to let them know and wish them well for the future.

Parish Council Minutes are available on the noticeboard by the village store and on Comberbach.com website.

There will be a meeting of Finance Committee on Wednesday 8 July at 4.30pm and the Parish Council will meet on Tuesday 14 July at 7.15pm. During the Coronavirus situation, Parish Council meetings will be held remotely. Members of the public are welcome to listen and/or watch meetings and should contact the Parish Clerk for details:

parishclerk@comberbach.com
or 07759 212449.

Comberbach Open Golf Championship 2020 - Cancelled

I have some sad news for all the golfers out there. We are having to cancel the Comberbach Open Golf Championship due to restrictions resulting from Covid-19.

This major event was to have been held at Antrobus Golf Club on 19 July, but having spoken with the Secretary we feel that this year's competition should be cancelled.

Hopefully we will be able to re-arrange a date when the circumstances eventually settle down.

Ian Philps

Organising Committee, Chairperson

Email: ianphilps987@btinternet.com



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Parish Councillor contact details

Name	Address	Tel numbers	Contact point for
Cllr. John Ryder (Chairman)	26 Burgamot Lane, Comberbach CW9 6BU	01606 891 827	Barrymore Crescent, Burgamot Lane, The Avenue - to Spinner Budworth Lane, Crownest Lane Senna Lane (upper from
Cllr. Jim E Bradley	3 Bracken Way, Comberbach CW9 6QF	01606 891 005 07708 633458	Bracken Way, Kennelwood Road, Fox Lea, Freshfields, Broadacre
Cllr. Rena Bradley	3 Bracken Way, Comberbach CW9 6QF	01606 891005	Bracken Way, Kennelwood Road, Fox Lea, Freshfields, Broadacre
Cllr. Steven Hornby	Sunny Bank, Marbury Road Comberbach CW9 6AU	07970 499227	Cogshall Lane, Outer Cogshall Mather Drive
Cllr. Jill Johnston	6 Barrymore Crescent Comberbach CW9 6PA	01606 892 121	Goosebrook Close, Brookfield Road, Spinner Crescent, Chapel Close, Reedsmere Walk
Cllr. Bob Holt	8 Cogshall Lane Comberbach CW9 6BS	07739 046775	Senna Lane (lower to Mather Drive), Warrington Road (from the Spinner), Marbury Road, The Moss, Meadow Lane
Denise French, Clerk		07759 212449	parishclerk@comberbach.com

Residents can report any highways and street care issues via CWAC website using the details below:
<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/contact-us/report-it/report-it.aspx>

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What's going on...when, and how to contact the right people

Memorial Hall

Brownies (1st Comberbach)	Thursday	6 - 7.25pm	Zoe Jones	783634 07513229863
WI	1st Mon each month	7.30pm	Rosie Rowe	784858
Ladies Club	3rd Mon each month	Different Venues	Ursula Ryder	01606 891827
Love to Dance	Mon, Tues, Wed	4pm		
	Tues, Tots and Seniors		Zoe	07527 514810
Dog Training	Thursday	8pm		
Yoga	Wednesday	6-7pm	Alison Rostron Yogapilatesali@gmail.com	07460 805880
Karate	Sunday Monday	5-6pm 5.45-6.45pm	Andrew Wilson Web site: www.cheshirekarate.co.uk Email: Cheshire.shitoryu@gmail.com	07388 869985

Chapel

Brownies (2nd)	Wednesday	6 - 7.20pm	Lynda Flynn	891571
Guides	Wednesday	7.30 - 9.00pm	Anne O'May	891156
Marbury Senior Section	Monday	8 - 9.30pm	Anne O'May	891156
Sunday School	Sunday	11am - 12.00pm	Ian Woodcock	01606 891218
Art Group	Mondays	10 - 1.pm	Midge Broadhurst	01925 266 798
French Language Lessons	Thursday	7-9pm	Nathalie Poutineau	892741

Comberbach Primary School Hall

Toddler Group	Wednesdays	9 - 11am	Comberbach School	01606 891336
Rainbows	Monday	6 - 7.15pm	Sue Greenwood	76408

Anderton Village Hall

Scouts	Friday	7.30 - 9.00pm	Paul Underwood Rob Doel	07725 150 928 891789 07526 723516
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Antrobus School Hall

Cubs	Tuesday	6.30 - 8.00pm	Rachel Cameron	01606 891023
Beavers	Wednesday	6.15 - 7.15pm	Janet Warburton	854014

Please send contributions to the newsletter to: newsletter@comberbach.com

Articles for the newsletter can also be made to any of the team below either on paper or by e-mail

Kath Wharfe 18 Burgamot Lane 891540 kathwharfe@hotmail.co.uk

Useful contacts:

Village web site	www.comberbach.com			
Marbury Park Rangers				77741
Homewatch				892568
Village Memorial Hall - bookings	07511302081	Between 2pm & 6.30pm Mon - Fri		
Clerk to the Parish Council	parishclerk@comberbach.com			
Pre-school website	https://www.comberbach.cheshire.sch.uk			
Comberbach Methodist Church	Rev Tim Simms			01606 301588
Sunday School Room Hire	Ian Barron			891579
Great Budworth Parish Church	Rev A Brown			891324
Fete Committee	Steve Howard			01606 891316

Colouring page

