



Elkstonians Village Newsletter

January 2022

Rob's Rambles

Evenings are drawing out, Power is still on, no more Snow (yet !), and the latest Covid variant looks less severe – prospects for the New Year are looking better if you are an optimist (like me !).

Very sorry that we had to cancel the Carol Service but we felt that it was too much of a risk mixing school children with vulnerable adults in the confined spaces of St. John's just before people were planning to get together with their families for Christmas.

Community life is still very uncertain at present but it is beginning to look as if we shall have to accept Covid as a part of "normal" life like a common cold although it may yet be possible to become seriously ill if the earlier mutations are still circulating around.... It would be nice to start meeting again just as we used to....

Thanks

Thanks very much to Sally and the Girls for decorating the Tree and the Church – lovely to see the lights shining as you drive past (or even call in). We will be taking our lights down on Candlemas (2nd February) when, traditionally, Christians took their candles to Church to be blessed for the rest of the year.

Thanks also to Liz M for organising the Raffle and selling tickets around the Village, and thank you to the people who contributed prizes and donations, and bought tickets. It was drawn on 21st (the day after the should have been Carol Service) and Myrtle's Hamper was won by Roland. The total raised for Church Funds amounted to about £160 including several donations.

And thanks to Margaret for opening our little Church every day, and to Myrtle and Liz M for keeping it clean.

Welcome

Very nice to meet Don and Lynne Sutherland who have moved in to Hill House, and we look forward to meeting Bill and Karen O'Regan who are moving in to "Overdale". Not quite our usual welcome (yet !) but a good excuse for a party as soon as possible ! We very much hope that they will enjoy living here and joining in the Elkstonian Society.



Lengthsman

Very sorry that Roger has resigned and thank you for all your hard work. Welcome to Steve Billings from Leek who has been appointed as our new Lengthsman and is quietly making a very good job of cutting back the verges and cleaning out the drains.

Diary Dates

Church Services – **Sunday, 23rd January**, 11.00 am Holy Communion

Other Events – still thinking about them (and looking for volunteers !) still NONE so far.....

Subscriptions

Only two paid up so far including a very generous donation from Joan Leach who used to live in Hill House a great many years ago – have a look at some of the photos Joan and her family (the Pointons) have contributed to the Archive.

Still £5.00 per house to pay for all the bits and pieces which the Elkstonians provide around the Village (or £11.60 if you want your Newsletter posted).

Ring Margaret 300 358 or Rob 300 509 to arrange payment

Digi Project

No further contributions yet.... It's a bit like trying to squeeze blood out of stones !

Have you looked at it yet ? <https://archives.elkstones.org/elk/index.cgi>

Did you find it interesting ? Can you add more photos, notes, memories....

Contact Rob on rob@titanic.co.uk

Nature notes - thank you Dominic

After the brutal storm that changed our landscape, downing Ashes, Hollies and Hawthorns without bias, it was nice to see a glimmer of sunlight after the fog. I bumped into Margaret today and as we were lamenting the lack of Fieldfares a small group of them flew serendipitously over us.

If you've noticed a lack of birdlife you can largely blame it on an unprecedented wet, cold May, which increased fledgling mortality hugely. The BTO and RSPB have reported this from many parts of the UK too. However, on the bright side our winter migrants are here, with Redwings littering the fields and hawthorn draws, and the occasional Brambling calling from the bigger trees that are left standing. Siskins in



the larches and spruces and other remaining conifers on Well Lane and below Hill House are a winter speciality to look for, and we have a pure white Ermine at Underhill which changed its coat a little early.

Listen out also for the rattling calls of Mistle Thrushes as they move between the village and Breech Farm. If they find a good supply of Hawthorn berries they'll aggressively defend them until March. And in a few weeks

the Ravens will begin nesting and winter will be in the rear view mirror!

If we are lucky enough to get any more clear high-pressure days (and you wake up earlier than I do) then there are some nice cloud inversions to be seen as the colder air sinks to the valley floor. This is the perfect time of year for that spectacle, as this pre-fog photo shows!

Thoughts for This Month

- I had my patience tested – I came out Negative....
- Actions prove who someone is, words just prove who they pretend to be
- If April showers bring May flowers, what do May flowers bring? (Pilgrims)

Contact Us

If you have any stories (rumours and gossip welcome !) or pictures you would like to share, please email Rob@titanic.co.uk