



# July 2023

## Elkstonians Village Newsletter

### Margaret's Meanderings...

I returned at the end of May from three weeks away, to the hawthorn in full bloom & the cow parsley frothing along the roadsides, making our little valley as glorious a sight as you will see anywhere.



<u>Diary Dates</u>	<u>St John's Church &amp; Village Events</u>
Sunday 16th July	Holy Communion 3.00pm
Cleaning & flowers for July	Hazel Bailey

By the middle of June, our church was looking wonderful for the **Flower Festival**. Thanks to everybody who contributed an arrangement for the 'Lyrics in Bloom' theme. There were some really ingenious & beautiful displays of flowers mentioned in song lyrics or titles (see over), aptly summed up by an actual tree along the balcony railing! 'I see trees of green, red roses too, I see them bloom, for me and you... I hear babies cry, I see them grow, they'll learn much more, than I'll ever know. And I think to myself, what a wonderful world'



Many thanks to those who mowed & strimmed the churchyard & especially to the lady who made a brilliant job of weeding the church path on her hands and knees! Also to those who erected gazebos & bunting, baked cakes & not forgetting the washers up... Thanks also to the seemingly tireless people who stayed during all three days of the Festival, manning the Tombola, Raffle & Refreshments, and the providers of beef baps, trifle & drinks at the Band Concert, plus those who cleaned it all up the next day. If we have missed anybody out, please count yourself well & truly thanked. The Festival raised a very welcome £1,500+ towards church funds, helping to keep this wonderful old building open.



The very entertaining talk on Cheesemaking given by Alan Salt on the opening evening, focusing on Elkstones farmhouses which had cheese presses in former days, was greatly enjoyed by all who attended, along with the delicious cheese & wine which was there to sample & purchase afterwards. Alan promises us Part 2 next year...



Daisy Daisy  
by Suzanne Horwell



Supermarket Flowers  
by Katy Parkinson

The Rose &  
Coronation by  
Myrtle Alcock



Flower of  
Scotland  
by Lyn Hill



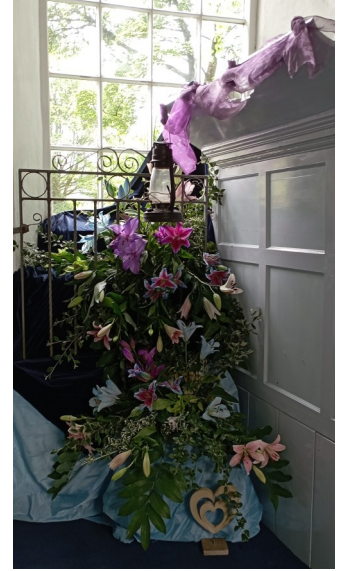
Poison Ivy & Ring-a-Ring-a-Roses  
by Liz Meakin



I Wish I was a Punk Rocker  
by Claire Pitcher



Mama Liked the Roses  
by Sally Faulkner



Lili Marlene  
by Myrtle Alcock



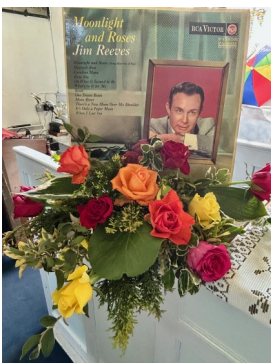
Lavender's Blue by Karen O'Regan  
(her embroideries were of a Monarch Butterfly & a Queen Bee!)



San Francisco  
by Hazel Bailey



Flowers in the Rain  
by Liz Buxton



Moonlight & Roses  
by Cora Etches



Yellow Rose of Texas  
by Myrtle Alcock



Scarborough Fair  
by Jane Prince



Where Have all the Flowers  
Gone? by Emma Thoennis

***Following receipt of her last BT bill, containing a sneaky little message that her phone will be switched to a 'digital service' in the not too distant future, Margaret decided to investigate. Here is her feedback. If you live in the Elkstones area please read it!***



I felt alarmed at the proposed loss of my regular phone line—we are one of many remote places in the UK who do not have a reliable internet connection, who are often the first to have a power cut in stormy weather & have no mobile phone signal. I rang BT to find out more. Customer Services knew nothing about it & went off to get information, coming back to tell me that I would not have to switch if I had no mobile signal. I was not re-assured & wrote to BT asking them to put this in writing.

The points in my letter were as follows:

1. My small village community is in a remote upland valley with no mobile signal & no fibre-optic broadband. Other villages have been connected to that service, but BT has not offered it to us or to outlying farms.
2. In the storm of November 2021 we were snowed in for 3 days without electricity. The old analogue landlines still work without power, meaning the Careline which I had for my late disabled husband was ok & I was able to talk to people if I needed help. Without a landline I would have been completely cut off & helpless. With a digital system the Careline would not have worked once the electricity went off.
3. My efforts to connect my 'smart' phone to a mobile signal via WiFi Calling are hit & miss & totally unreliable.
4. I feel that we are due to lose a reliable system of communication, which will be replaced with something that is not suitable because of the place in which we live. This is not progress, but a backward step for people like us. It's as if we are being abandoned by BT.
5. I asked BT to reply to me in writing with a statement that as I had no mobile signal & no fibre broadband connection, I would not be switched to a digital system.

A couple of days later a charming man from BT rang me to talk about the problem (so they would not have to put anything in writing!). The basis of his message was that the information that I had been given on my recent phone call to them was incorrect. By 2025, 99% - 100% of phones will have been moved over to the new 'digital service'. There will no longer be a service provided over the old copper line because this is reaching the end of its life and is not economical to repair. If the electricity goes off, we will be provided with a battery back-up which will supply power for 1 hour so we can contact emergency services if necessary. After that's run down, there's no communication possible with Careline or anybody else. He 'sympathises with my problem regarding the WiFi calling etc but BT cannot do anything about it'.

In other words, tough luck—this is going ahead whether you are able to use it or not.

If you are going to be badly affected by this change, please write to BT and our MP, at the addresses below

BT plc, PO Box 334, SHEFFIELD, S98 1BT

Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, House of Commons, LONDON, SW1A 0AA

Find out more at [www.bt.com/broadband/digital-voice](http://www.bt.com/broadband/digital-voice)