



Happy New Year Monyash!

Here at The Byways, from our front window, we look out onto the East end of the churchyard, across Church St. (In the Winter, that is, once the Limes have shed their golden leaves). Prominent in the view from November onwards is a fine Norway Spruce – the traditional ‘Christmas Tree’ – forming a deep green background to our view of the East window and its gable end. Over recent years this wonderful specimen had grown way higher than the church roof. A little too high for its own good, perhaps, as on the 22nd December the ferocious storm – name now forgotten – snapped off the top fifteen or twenty feet of it. Miraculously, it did not seem to damage any of the gravestones there, as it fell between them, narrowly missing that Victorian, urn-topped, pink marble one you will probably be familiar with. Tom Scoggins rode to the rescue with his chainsaw and cleared the footpath, (happily finding no one underneath the sizeable trunk of the tree’s top) and his thoughts echoed mine – *A shame it had not happened in one of the earlier storms, as it would have made a perfect tree for the village green.* Does anyone know when this Christmas tree got ‘planted out’ – as I presume it must have been? Was it a rooted one that featured in the church display? If only the weather would improve, I might be inclined to pop over and count the rings, which would give us some clue – at least as far as the age of the top section.

Other significant trees brought down included a very ancient Hawthorn behind Sheldon House (miraculously, again, sparing their chickens). This magnificent tree I can remember photographing and including in my series on venerable trees in the old ‘Contact’ magazine. I’d be interested to hear from Sheldon House if there are any spooky goings on in the New Year. I was hearing over Christmas how Hawthorns were regarded as gateways to the *faery world*, which is why isolated ones were frequently left standing in the landscape; it might bring on very bad luck to take an axe to one. The feature I was listening to was talking about Ireland, but I can remember a while back telling poet/farmer Philip F. Holland about a batch of firewood newly delivered to our drive and how it contained a fair few Thorn logs of a good size...at which his expression grew dark and he drew in his breath with an ominous, ‘Oooooo...’ I did not like to question him further then, but there must be similar superstitious traditions with Hawthorn in the Peak District; I know it is considered unlucky to bring the ‘May’ blossom into a house, anywhere in England.

On a very positive note, it was really heart-warming to be at the Carol Service in Saint Leonard’s. The Rev. Sue Bamping thought she was being a little optimistic in printing fifty service sheets... We were all delighted to be sharing one-between-two-or-three, such was the enthusiasm for the carols from across the village. It felt like the event could happily merge with the spirit of ‘Monyash Christmas’ as we remember it, including as it did contributions from the school and plenty of lusty singing.

On sadder note, we lost a true ‘village stalwart’ during December, **Bill Gee**. Many of you will have known Bill for a great many more years than I can remember, but the one defining detail about Bill that stands out for me was his skill in recent years at winding the church clock. That may not sound so impressive, but I can recall the days before Bill took on the role, when the ‘bongs’ were often a good twenty minutes past the hour. During Bill’s tenure, I would often, no, *normally*, stand in our front doorway and hear the pips from our kitchen radio overlapping with the chimes from over the road. This is a clock built in 1870-something, (without running to check the Monyash history book) and, as I was shown in great detail by the late Jim Slater many years ago, has to be corrected by balancing Victorian pennies on a thing like the arm from some old-fashioned kitchen scales. Bill’s funeral is at one o’clock, (no pressure on the current winder to get the ‘bong’ to the correct second) on Tuesday 2nd. Informal dress, please and you are very welcome at the Bull’s Head afterwards. Family flowers only, but donations can be made to **Blythe House** and/or **Dignity in Dying**. Let’s do so generously, in Bill’s memory.

Village New Year Quiz – Saturday 13th January - (Postponed from Friday 8th December)

No ticket required. Starts at 7:30pm. Please make up your own tables of six; bring your drinks, glasses and nibbles for an evening of light-hearted quizzing and friendship.

EVENTS *this month of January:-*

Wednesday 3rd – Monyash WI - 7.30 - 10.00 pm. Regular monthly meetings in the Village Hall, on the first Wednesday of each month (except August), with guest Speaker and competition. A small, friendly group and new members always welcome.

Thursday 4th – Quiz Night – The Bull’s Head. Starts around 9pm.

Friday 5th – No Tea and Tots – starts again on 12th January.

– **Crafternoon.** 2pm – 3.30pm, in the Village Hall. Bring along a craft project – or not! Tea and natter is fine!

Monday 8th – IYENGAR YOGA. 5.30 – 6.45pm, in the Village Hall. £8. Beginners welcome. To book a slot, email Dave: djs.abbotside@gmail.com

Tuesday 9th – Monyash Quilters Group, – **Monyash Quilters Group,** Village Hall, 2 to 4 pm, A friendly group of ladies with a wide range of creative talent who love making beautiful quilts and anything crafty. Drop into one of our weekly meetings to see what we do and if we can tempt you to join.

– **Pilates,** Class with Caroline Webster. 6pm – 7pm in the Village Hall. £7. Suitable for all ages, levels of fitness and flexibility. Caroline is a fully qualified yoga and Pilates instructor. If you would like to reserve a place or find out more about Pilates, contact Caroline on **07831 720810** or email: **carolinewebster2@gmail.com**

Wednesday 10th – Mobile Library 11.15 – 11.45am in The Square.

– **Pilates for Men.** Class with Caroline Webster. 7.30 – 8.30 pm in the Village Hall. Details as for ‘Pilates’.

Thursday 11th – Hatha Yoga, 7.15 – 8.30, Village Hall, with Yoga Nidra mediation. £10. Other details as above for **Pilates.**

– **Quiz Night – The Bull’s Head.** Starts around 9pm.

Friday 12th – Tea and Tots – 9 – 11am Village Hall. **Playgroup.** Tea coffee, snacks and a variety of toys are provided. Sessions are £2 per family and please note that parents are responsible for their children whilst there.

Saturday 13th – Village New Year Quiz, 7:30 in the village hall.

Monday 15th – IYENGAR YOGA. 5.30 – 6.45pm, in the Village Hall. Details as above.

Tuesday 16th – Monyash Quilters Group, Village Hall, 2 to 4 pm. As above.

– **Pilates.** Class with Caroline Webster. 6pm – 7pm in the Village Hall. As above.

Wednesday 17th – Pilates for Men. Class with Caroline Webster. 7.30 – 8.30 pm in the Village Hall. Other details as above.

Thursday 18th – Hatha Yoga, 7.15 – 8.30, Village Hall, with Yoga Nidra mediation. £10. Other details as above.

– **Quiz Night** – The Bull’s Head. As above.

Friday 19th – Crafternoon. 2pm – 3.30pm, in the Village Hall. Bring along a craft project – or not! Tea and natter is fine!

– **Tea and Tots** – 9 – 11am Village Hall. **Playgroup.** Details as above.

Monday 22nd – IYENGAR YOGA. 5.30 – 6.45pm, in the Village Hall. £8. Beginners welcome. Details as above.

Tuesday 23rd – Monyash Quilters Group, Village Hall, 2 to 4 pm. As above.

– **Pilates.** Class with Caroline Webster. 6pm – 7pm in the Village Hall. As above.

Wednesday 24th – Pilates for Men. Class with Caroline Webster. 7.30 – 8.30 pm in the Village Hall. Other details as above.

Thursday 25th – Hatha Yoga, 7.15 – 8.30, Village Hall, with Yoga Nidra mediation. £10. Other details as above.

– **Quiz Night** – The Bull’s Head. As above.

Friday 26th – Tea and Tots – 9 – 11am Village Hall. **Playgroup.** Details as above.

Monday 29th – IYENGAR YOGA. 5.30 – 6.45pm, in the Village Hall. Details as above.

Tuesday 30th – Monyash Quilters Group, Village Hall, 2 to 4 pm. As above.

– **Pilates.** Class with Caroline Webster. 6pm – 7pm in the Village Hall. As above.

Wednesday 31st – Pilates for Men. Class with Caroline Webster. 7.30 – 8.30 pm in the Village Hall. Other details as above.

Tree works and Work at the Toilets

The tree works at the toilets (top of Lathkill Dale in the Car Park) is now complete, so we are safe from Ash trees dropping limbs onto its roof. There should also be less leaf-fall to clog up the surface drains there, which has been an issue in the past. The toilets are being kept open right through the Winter and the PC is contracting someone to refurbish them inside, so they should be a lot more pleasant to visit, with no dripping taps, we hope! by Spring.

Work on trees by Fere Mere (in the little woodland there) should start in the New Year, so expect some restrictions on being able to walk there when the felling of Ash trees is taking place. Work at Rake End Wood will start early Spring.

Monyash Newsletter: Editor, Simon Corble – email **corblesimon@gmail.com**; text **07930 266218**; tel. (01629) **813083**

Masthead drawing by Judy Corble. Printed on 100% recycled paper, at The Byways, Church Street, Monyash.