

***PARISH NEWSLETTER***  
***March 2025***



**St Winifred's Church,  
Branscombe  
Holyford Mission Community  
[www.holyford.org](http://www.holyford.org)**



## ST WINIFRED'S CHURCH, BRANSCOMBE

### MARCH SERVICES



2 <sup>nd</sup>	11.15am	Holy Communion
5 <sup>th</sup>	14.30pm	Ash Wednesday Holy Communion & Imposition of Ashes
.9 <sup>th</sup>	11.15am	No Service due to Grizzly race
16 <sup>th</sup>	11.15am	Holy Communion
23 <sup>rd</sup>	11.15am	Morning Prayer
25 <sup>th</sup>	19.30pm	Compline
30 <sup>th</sup>	11.15am	Mothering Sunday Holy Communion
5 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm	Mission Community Ash Wednesday service (with choir) St Michael's, Colyford.
7 <sup>th</sup>	2.15pm	World Day of Prayer service St Andrew's Colyton

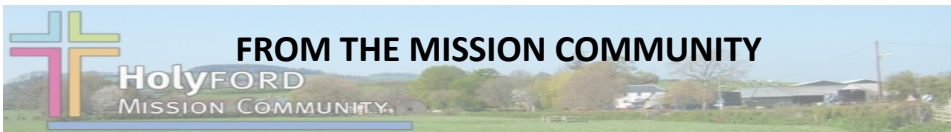
There is no longer Evening Prayer on a Thursday in St Winifred's

For any questions regarding St Winifred's, please contact the  
Churchwarden: Ross Willmington 680264

For the latest information across the Mission Community,  
consult the website [www.holyford.org](http://www.holyford.org) if possible, or see the relevant  
Church Noticeboards

### HOLYFORD MISSION COMMUNITY INFORMATION

<b>Holy Communion</b>	Every Wednesday 10am St Andrew's ,Colyton
<b>Morning Prayer</b>	Weekdays Monday - Friday 8.30am St Andrew's Colyton
<b>Transport to/From Church:</b>	Please contact a churchwarden
<b>Baptisms, Marriages &amp; Funerals:</b>	Call Administrator 01297 552307 or email <a href="mailto:office@holyford.org">office@holyford.org</a>
<b>Holy Communion at Home:</b>	Please call a Minister, Reader or Churchwarden



## FROM THE MISSION COMMUNITY

Easter falls rather late this year. Have you noticed that whenever people talk about when Easter is, it is described as 'late' or 'early'. I've never heard of anyone saying 'oh! Easter is *on time* this year!', have you? Despite attempts by various Christian leaders to set a permanent date for Easter, it has not happened. The Eastern churches differ from the Western Christian denominations, and there is much debate about the advantages and disadvantages of setting a date for Easter. I am not sure it will ever be possible to settle on a date that suits everyone.

Personally, I don't consider this a big problem. In fact, I rather like the movable nature of the feast. Christmas Day is always fixed on 25<sup>th</sup> December, which is convenient in a number of ways...I am not against that, not least because it helps count the number of shopping days (although I always end up doing it all on Christmas Eve!), and it is useful to know roughly when to plan a carol service, and so on. Not so with Easter. The flexible date keeps us vicars on our toes, which is no bad thing.

A date of birth can be more-or-less predicted with some degree of accuracy. It is fitting that Christmas falls on the same date, although not the same *day* each year. A date of death cannot usually be predicted with similar accuracy.

In Christ God came to life a full, human life and suffered a human death. We cannot know exactly when our death will happen. The different date of Easter reflects the nature of the timing of death and the wonderful mystery of eternal life: both are in the hands of God. We cannot control the date of Easter—the moon in nature dictates it—and it will be different each year, even if it is inconvenient or falls at the wrong end of the school holidays. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ teaches us that whenever our death occurs (and it will occur—despite medical advances, the ultimate mortality rate for every human being is 100%) we shall be safe in God's hands who wills for us new life in his kingdom. Easter's message is that God's love is stronger than our death, and his mercy and compassion extend far beyond our unpredictable moments or wavering faith.

This is why the date of Easter is probably about 'on time' every year. The challenge for us is to be ready for it. This year it is on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April. Prepare for it. Join us for our Lent Course and services during Lent, Holy Week and Easter. They offer a chance to grow and consider the big questions accompanied by the author of life, who helps us with the difficult truth about death and the wonderful fulfilment of hope and faith.

There will be pancake parties on **Shrove Tuesday** (for children, St Andrew's, Colyton after school, and an **evening party at Southleigh Village Hall at 7.30pm**). Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday**, and we have **services at St Andrew's, Colyton (10am), St Winifred's, Branscombe (2.30pm) and St Michael's, Colyford (7.30pm)**. All are welcome.

Each Tuesday in Lent we have a talk and discussion about the Parables of Jesus. These are illustrations that Jesus told to help us discern our spiritual life and teach us about the kingdom of God. The parables are mysterious, encouraging and challenging all at once. Come and discover what they might mean for you.

During Holy Week this year (Holy Week is from Palm Sunday to Easter Day) we will be joined by a visiting preacher, the Reverend Lucy Gardner, an eminent theologian who is a lecturer at the University of Oxford at tutor in doctrine at St Stephen's House. Do come and hear her speak as we journey with Christ in his passion, death and resurrection. The details of our Lent Course and services can be found in the following pages.

With every good wish and blessing,  
Fr Steven.

office@holyford.org  
holyford.org



# The Parables of Jesus

Holyford Mission Community  
Lent Talks 2025

- |                         |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Tuesday 11 March</b> | St Michael's COLYFORD    |
| <b>Tuesday 18 March</b> | St Michael's MUSBURY     |
| <b>Tuesday 25 March</b> | St Winifred's BRANSCOMBE |
| <b>Tuesday 1 April</b>  | Northleigh Village Hall  |
| <b>Tuesday 8 April</b>  | St Lawrence's SOUTHLEIGH |

MATTHEW 11:15

*Let anyone with ears to hear, listen!*

**7.30pm** for discussion, refreshments & a short time of worship





## **Church Floodlighting**

*If you would like to sponsor the lights, perhaps in memory of someone or to mark a special occasion, please contact Pat Ayles (680328). The suggested donation to church funds for a week of floodlighting is £15.00*

9th-15th February

*In loving memory of Gillian Hunt who loved Branscombe and our little piece of paradise 11th July 1946 to 3rd January 2025. Forever in our hearts Ivor, Becci, Daniel, Sarah and Ben.*

16th February-1st March

*Remembering Connie Crossley - 27th February 1920. Hazel and all the family.*

2nd- 8th March

*In memory of Pat, one year on, and Howard which would have been his birthday on 27th February. Always loved never forgotten. Sue, George, Nic, Can, Jake and Izzy.*

23rd to 29th March

*In loving memory of Tony (Pops) from Win, Nicola, Andrew and Jay.*

## **CAN YOU HELP ?**

**Would you like to try your hand at flower arranging ?**

**We need people with a love of flowers to join our teams to decorate St Winifred's. You do not need to be experienced as help will always be at hand**

**If interested please contact Sallie Herniman tel. 01297 553482**



## **DONATIONS NEEDED**

The Food Bank needs non perishable food, toiletries, washing powder or liquid etc. They particularly need: cold meat (eg ham/corned beef/Spam) \*tinned/ jars of hot dogs\* chilli con carne\*long-life whole milk\*baby wipes\* toilet rolls\*toiletries.

We are still happy to pick up any items from your house if that is easier. For financial gifts the bank details are available on the Mission Community website

Thanks again!!

Jill & Tony Johnson

## ST. WINIFRED'S CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL

This year our Church electoral roll needs to be renewed. Everyone currently on the roll as well as anyone who wishes to join needs to fill in a form and give it to me as electoral roll officer or to Ross Willmington. Forms are available at the back of the Church or on line ([office@holyford.org](mailto:office@holyford.org)) to send to Caz in the Church office.

This is a way of keeping in touch with Church matters and voting for Church Council members at the Annual Church Meeting **April 2nd** where you can hear all about what went on last year. New members on the PCC are always welcome!

Sallie Herniman (Electoral Roll Officer) tel: 01297 553482



### **REMEMBERING CHRIS CANNON**

I loved the way Dee put, in the last newsletter, about the death of Chris; no surname, because everyone knew Chris!

So many have said what a lovely, helpful friendly man he was and such a character! A true legend of Branscombe. Having come to this village in 1978, from near Heathrow, he hated village life and the fact that we all knew each other's business.

So we tried to shock the villagers with our slightly risqué lifestyle.

At the end he hated how there was little village life or community (please read "gossip"!)

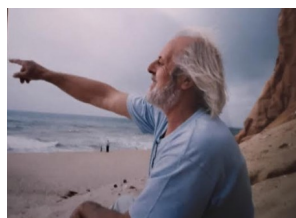
In later years he threw himself into various village activities, mainly starting firework night with Mike Fielden and Ian Barlow- he loved them! Many people will remember his lighting fireworks with a blow torch!

He arranged concerts, race nights etc. for the church, village hall and new pavilion. Usually riding roughshod over any objections! He started the BITS Christmas lunch, which went on for many years, due to his organising.

Many will remember him sat in his open garage, so that he could chat to passers-by, or sell them something they didn't know they wanted!

He will be very much missed, I feel, by this community, but we will all remember him with a smile on our face!

**Annie**





It has been a busy term so far here at Branscombe CE Primary!

The children have just begun a new non-fiction focus in English using a book called Everest, which charts the story of Edmund Hillary and Tenzig Norgay. In maths, the younger children are trying to get their heads around the relationship between mm, cm, m and km, whilst the older children are developing their confidence with multiplying fractions. In DT, the children are learning about mechanisms, and we are having great fun building our own models using cams which will help us design and build our own machines. We have been continuing to learn a dance routine in PE and explored the reproductive parts of a flower during a dissection session in science. It was lovely to see Father Steven today for Collective Worship and he shared a story to help us consider how importance it is to be generous with each other, not with money but our times and our thoughts.

On 15th January our school went Wassailing- thank you to everyone who came to support! It is a long-standing tradition of our school and one that we are very proud to uphold. The children sang and spoke beautifully, blessing the fruit trees for the coming year. The children scared away the evil spirits by making lots of noise and then blessed the trees with bread dipped in apple juice. Our school community then returned to school for mulled apple juice- delicious!





Our local Police officers visited the school to meet the children and explain their role in the community. The children held some of the equipment such as the handcuffs and their baton. They were allowed to sit in the police car and try on Police jackets and helmets.



Our new baby and toddler group started very successfully. It will continue to run every other Thursday from 9:30am-11am. Thank you to everyone who supported and spread the word about our group.

On a personal note, this will be my last contribution for the Parish Newsletter as I am going on Maternity Leave at February half term. It has been wonderful to contribute to Branscombe's Parish News and share with the community all the hard work and events we do at the school. I appreciate the support we get from the community. Sam Butler will be replacing me and will continue to write on behalf of the school. I will, of course, be back for baby group but as a participant!

Best wishes and God bless.  
Mrs Tubbs  
Academy Headteacher





# Naked Larder

Love food but hate plastic waste??

Naked Larder Sidmouth, based in Weston, is a unique plastic and packaging-free grocery service offering re-fillable dry food goods, eco-friendly cleaning & personal care products ethically, and sustainably sourced at affordable prices. Simple to use - order online & collect using your own containers once per month.

**Get 10% off your first order with GIVEUSATRY**

[www.nakedlardersidmouth.co.uk](http://www.nakedlardersidmouth.co.uk)

## DEVON'S FINEST GALLERIES



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**Open all year**

[www.marinehouseatbeer.co.uk](http://www.marinehouseatbeer.co.uk)

## RACE THE SUN JURASSIC COAST OFF ROAD EVENT FOR ACTION MEDICAL RESEARCH

Over recent months you may have seen us out and about looking rather red in the face and slightly out of breath scrambling over the cliffs in the wind, rain, snow and occasionally sun as part of our attempt to get fit. Why are we doing this? Well it's part of our attempt to get fit as we prepare for our 'triathlon' in June when we will be setting off at sunrise to bike, hike and paddle around a challenging course in a race against the sun all in aid of a charity close to our hearts ❤️❤️ ACTION MEDICAL RESEARCH.

Over the last 70 years this fantastic charity has improved the lives of millions of people around the world. They are the leading UK-wide charity dedicated to finding vital research to help sick and disabled babies, children and young people and their families. The charity was founded in 1952 by Duncan Guthrie as he sought to find a cure and vaccine for polio. Since then the charity has funded research into a number of life threatening and debilitating conditions including premature birth, brain cancers, heart conditions, epilepsy, asthma, cerebral palsy to name just a few. In addition, their groundbreaking work has improved ultrasound scanning as well as helped to reduce the risk of still births. To find out more about their vital work please visit <https://action.org.uk/about-us>

We are determined to raise at least £1000 before our race in June. If you would like to sponsor us please visit our Just Giving Page via this link or QR code.

[https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/davidmiller2024?utm\\_medium=proxy\\_fundraising&utm\\_content=davidmiller2024&utm\\_source=copyLink&utm\\_campaign=pfp-share](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/davidmiller2024?utm_medium=proxy_fundraising&utm_content=davidmiller2024&utm_source=copyLink&utm_campaign=pfp-share)



David  
Miller's  
JustGiving  
Page





## CAKE AND CHAT

**Wednesday 19th March 2025,  
2pm-4pm in Branoc Hall.**

All are welcome for a cuppa, a chat and of course a slice of cake.

Come along and meet with friends, and even make new ones.

v

We look forward to you joining us



### HOME HELP AVAILABLE

Companionship  
Shopping  
Meal Preparation  
Welfare Checks  
Medication Assistance  
Cleaning  
Trips out  
Taking to appointments  
FAA Level 3 First Aid Certificate  
Valid DBS Certificate  
and Insurance

Please telephone  
**07944 611125**  
for more  
information and/or to  
discuss a tailor made  
in home care plan



### Camps International Cambodia 2026

As part of my fundraising, I will be continuing to make Fudge  
Below are this month's flavours.

**After Eight Mint Fudge £3.50**  
**Terry's Chocolate Orange Fudge £3.50**  
**Mini Egg Fudge £3.50**  
**Rum & Raisin Fudge £3.50**  
Available for delivery

***Soup & Pud in Branoc Hall, Saturday  
March 15th, 12pm – 2pm. £8***

*Thank you for your support & watch this  
space for further events*

E-Mail: [gracecamps2026@gmail.com](mailto:gracecamps2026@gmail.com)

Tel: 01297 680447 Easy

GoFundMe

Fundraising



**Grace Bass**





## **Branscombe Parish Council**

**For further information please visit:**

<http://www.branscombe-pc.org.uk/>

Clerk to the council: Nicky Ingarfield

[clerk@branscombe-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@branscombe-pc.gov.uk) Tel: 07814 521538

### **Next Meeting: Thurs 6th March – Branoc Hall Social Room 7pm**

Many congratulations to our Clerk, Nicky, who has achieved the national qualification for local council clerks – Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA). Having a clerk with this qualification gives us more freedoms to serve and support the community, which we'll work towards taking advantage of in the future.

#### **Council Tax**

At our Parish Council meeting in January, we set our budget for 2024/25. In recent years, we've been able to make use of a high level of reserves that have previously been accumulated, enabling us to keep our precept rise low whilst setting a budget where spending has exceeded income as below:

2022-23 £1234 from reserves

2023-24 £2400 from reserves

2024-25 £3600 from reserves (budgeted)

Our reserves have now reduced to the level that is considered prudent, so the first decision we took was to set a balanced budget for the coming year – income matching expenditure.

You'll doubtless be aware of the imposition of "double council tax" on second homes. This has the effect of increasing our income by 25% with no increase in the precept for non-second homes.

We, therefore, took the opportunity to consider whether to employ a workman for one day a week, taking advantage of the additional "headroom" this delivered to our budget. Their role would be to help keep the village tidy and attend to minor maintenance issues, as well as reporting and expediting other highway repairs. However, although the funding for this would require an additional £1 per month per band 'D' property, this would represent a 40% increase in the parish element of council tax, and members felt this would be excessive in the current climate. We did resolve to organise 3-4 volunteer working parties this year instead.

We set a balanced budget of £13,844 for 2025/6, which is 34.91 pa for a band 'D' property—an increase of 50p per month.

Mike Pellatt  
Chair, BPC

#### **Planned Road Closures/Delays**

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| 27 Feb—3 Mar         | Road from The Square to Great Seaside Farm nr Glebe Cottage—closure, South West Water. Note this is duration of permit, road will reopen as soon as works are completed. |
| 19 May, up to 5 days | Road from Higher Barn to the Old Cider House—closure. Location—outside telephone exchange. Replacement of pole   |

### **PLANNING**

One new planning application received and two previous applications approved since the last newsletter. For completeness, all outstanding applications are listed on the next page as well.



Date	App ref	Description	BPC Response	EDDC Decision
28/03/23  08/01/24 to 27/03/24	23/0557/ MRES	Land Adjacent The Fountain Head Berry Hill Branscombe Reserved matters application for Details of layout, scale, appearance, access and landscaping for a residential development of 10 dwellings.  Design changes – 54 total new/ revised documents submitted along communications submitted	Noted conformance with outline permission, expressed various concerns  No objection to detailed design, expressed concerns re: affordable housing viability, volume of updates and bat flyways	Awaiting decision
27/06/23  09/01/24 08/04/24	23/1375/V106	Land Adjacent The Fountain Head Berry Hill Branscombe Application for the modification of S106 agreement relating to outline permission 15/1291/MOUT (Construction of 10 no. dwellings (6 affordable, 4 open market) and associated works with all matters reserved) to allow changes to a) the approved ecological mitigation requirements, and b) the timing of the reserved matters viability assessment  4 total amended/additional plans and surveys submitted	Supported ecological mitigation. Unable to comment on timing of reserved matters viability assessment due to complexity of S106 legal agreement  See final response to 23/0557/MRES	Awaiting decision
21/05/24	24/0901/FUL	Yard Rear Of The Leighs Weston New welfare building and 3no temporary buildings at the Donkey Sanctuary maintenance yard (retrospective)	Object – no impact study on increased traffic generated by development	Approved 31/01/25
13/9/24	24/1912/FUL	Maycoes Branscombe EX12 3DN Erection of Replacement Gabion Retaining Structure	Objection maintained after new submissions dated 28/11/24	Awaiting decision
04/11/24	24/2147/FUL	Annexe Higher House Farm Branscombe EX12 3BH Replacement conservatory	Support	Awaiting decision
15/11/24	24/2403/FUL	Willow Barn Church Row Branscombe EX12 3AU Retrospective planning application for new storage outbuilding	Support	Approved 14/02/25
09/01/25	25/0045/FUL	12 Hillside Branscombe Seaton EX12 3BQ Proposed single storey wrap around extension, extended parking, addition of cladding and alteration to fenestration	Support	Awaiting decision

## BRANOC HALL – BOOKINGS OFFICER VACANCY



After 4 years as the Branoc Hall Bookings Officer, Catherine Newman has decided it is time to give someone else the opportunity.

Catherine has done an absolutely superb job, as so many of our customers over the period will testify. She will be sorely missed by both our hirers and the Committee. We are therefore eager to find someone who can take on this interesting and important role.

It is a voluntary position which requires the ability to get on with people, both hirers and other committee members. It requires access to a computer, email and phone and requires a reasonable level of IT skills. The amount of time it takes up obviously varies from week to week depending on the number of bookings but is normally a maximum of just a few hours over the week. It is a matter of taking initial enquiries, confirming bookings, keeping an accurate diary, and producing an invoice to the customer. It is also necessary to liaise with both the bar management and cleaners.

Full information, help and advice, and a thorough and complete handover process will be provided, and Catherine will be on hand for further guidance should it be required at any time.

Branoc Hall remains a fundamental part of life in Branscombe and taking on this role, and joining the Management Committee, will enable you to be involved in ensuring that remains in place going forward.

If you think this position would be of interest to either yourself or a friend or acquaintance, please give me a ring and I would be delighted to meet up and discuss what is involved in more detail.

David Lamb. Chairman. 01297 680777 - [chairbranochoall@gmail.com](mailto:chairbranochoall@gmail.com)

SIX NATIONS



RUGBY

# BRANOC HALL

## SIX NATIONS 2025

### England Six Nations 2025 Fixtures



#### Ireland v England

Aviva Stadium, Dublin  
Saturday 1st February 2025  
Kick-off: 4:45pm



#### England v France

Allianz Stadium, Twickenham  
Saturday 8th February 2025  
Kick-off: 4:45pm



#### England v Scotland

Allianz Stadium, Twickenham  
Saturday 22nd February 2025  
Kick-off: 4:45pm



#### England v Italy

Allianz Stadium, Twickenham  
Sunday 9th March 2025  
Kick-off: 3:00pm



#### Wales v England

Principality Stadium, Cardiff  
Saturday 15th March 2025  
Kick-off: 4:45pm



**BRANOC HALL SOCIAL BAR WILL BE OPEN  
30 MINUTES BEFORE THE GAMES START**

Date		Branoc Hall bookings – March 2025
S	1 <sup>st</sup>	Private hire – main hall – all day
Su	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Private hire – main hall – all day
M	3 <sup>rd</sup>	
Tu	4 <sup>th</sup>	Private hire – main hall – all day
W	5 <sup>th</sup>	Post Office – foyer – 2pm-3pm Private hire – snooker room - evening
Th	6 <sup>th</sup>	Parish Council meeting – social room – 7pm
F	7 <sup>th</sup>	
S	8 <sup>th</sup>	
Su	9 <sup>th</sup>	Six Nations rugby – England v Italy – social room from 2.30pm (ko @ 15.00) All welcome. Bar open.
M	10 <sup>th</sup>	
Tu	11 <sup>th</sup>	
W	12 <sup>th</sup>	Post Office – foyer – 2pm-3pm Private hire – snooker room - afternoon Private hire – snooker room - evening
T	13 <sup>th</sup>	
F	14 <sup>th</sup>	
S	15 <sup>th</sup>	Soup and Pudding – main hall & kitchen – afternoon Six Nations rugby – Wales v England – social room from 4pm (ko @ 16.45) All welcome. Bar open.
Su	16 <sup>th</sup>	
M	17 <sup>th</sup>	
Tu	18 <sup>th</sup>	
W	19 <sup>th</sup>	Post Office – foyer – 2pm-3pm Cake and Chat – main hall & kitchen – 2pm – 4pm Private hire – snooker room - evening
Th	20 <sup>th</sup>	
F	21 <sup>st</sup>	
S	22 <sup>nd</sup>	
Su	23 <sup>rd</sup>	
M	24 <sup>th</sup>	Branscombe Project – main hall & kitchen - evening
Tu	25 <sup>th</sup>	
W	26 <sup>th</sup>	Post Office – foyer – 2pm-3pm Branoc Hall Committee meeting – social room 7pm Private hire – snooker room - evening
Th	27 <sup>th</sup>	
F	28 <sup>th</sup>	
S	29 <sup>th</sup>	Private hire – main hall – all day
Su	30 <sup>th</sup>	Private hire – main hall – all day
M	31 <sup>st</sup>	Private hire – main hall - morning

**To book the hall please contact Catherine Newman 01395 579317**



## BRANSCOMBE PROJECT WINTER TALKS

**Monday – February 24 - 7:30**

**Dr Rowe & Branscombe's Bastard Fauna  
Stratigraphy, paleoecology  
& field study of local Cretaceous chalk  
*Rob Beard***

Fossil hunting in the Branscombe area is not nearly as well regarded as in the famous Jurassic exposures of West Dorset. Fossils are fewer in East Devon and harder to find.

When good specimens are recovered, they are often beautifully preserved and find rates are sufficient to support a small group of collectors from the local Cretaceous strata.

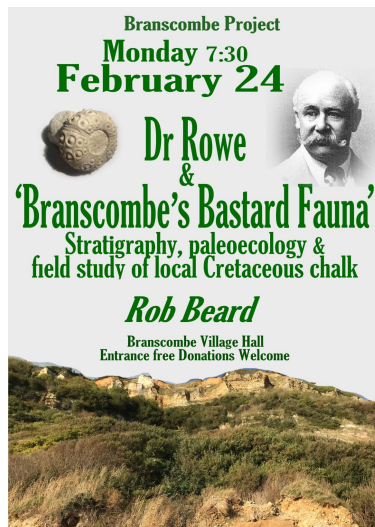
This talk will look at the unique lithology and beautiful fossils of the Cretaceous Chalk between Branscombe West Cliff and Salcombe Regis.

We will revisit the work of Edwardian geologist Arthur Rowe whose field study provides the only reference for the fossil assemblage highly anomalous lower Turonian chalk deposits area that he termed "the bastard fauna of Branscombe".

These unique marine fossil communities have received scant academic attention ever since.

**Monday – March 24 - 7:30  
Bog Burials  
Face to Face with the Past  
*Mel Giles***

New work from the author of  
'Bog Bodies: Face to Face with the Past'



## THE BRANSCOMBE PROJECT – HISTORY SNIPS

Barbara Farquharson: Things arrive on the Project website and often they're interesting. ...

Angus Winchester wrote saying: My mother wrote some brief memories of her wartime experiences, including her time in Branscombe (in 1941-2, I think). ... My mother's name was Marion R. Hall (later Winchester); born 1921; died 2016.

Marion was stationed at the radar station at Oakdown. Here's what she wrote:

I was posted south to Branscombe in Devon. Sheila Rice (later Copeland) and I were posted together. We had not been long there before my 21 st birthday. Sheila and I celebrated this by going to the pub at the bottom of the hill, just outside Sidmouth for Cider. She and I cycled everywhere and I had quite a cycle ride in order to reach the nearest railway station to get home on leave, along very lonely narrow roads, cycling quickly past Hangman's corner where a gibbet used to be! This was ... a hutted camp about a mile from the operations block, camouflaged and mostly underground with the pylons nearby. Receivers were 240 feet high pylons and transmitters, 360 feet high pylons and the cliffs nearby. We used to find wonderful fresh mushrooms on the cliff tops after night watch.

The 24-hour day was normally divided into four watches. Later on, with a shortage of operators there were three watches. This system was very difficult to cope with and bad for one's health. One night in three to sleep and one very short one. I remember being so cold coming off duty at 11.00 pm and even my stone hot water bottle couldn't warm my feet and I'd get cramp. The barrack room held about a dozen of us with a stove in the centre of the room. Iron bedsteads with mattresses in three parts called "biscuits" – and as hard! I also remember buckets of cocoa given to us at that time. I've loathed cocoa ever since ...

We had a bomb drop near us on a night when Bristol was bombed and this one was jettisoned as the bomber went home. Our air raid warning went off and our sergeant came through from her room to tell us to get out of bed and go to the shelter. I remember searching sleepily for my shoes, unsuccessfully, and getting back into bed. Everyone did the same. We were good at disobeying orders if we thought them silly! There was the time with a new Commanding Officer (a very young man) who gave out that we must do some drill after night watch and before going to bed. We all refused but were not put on a 252 (a charge) – too many of us (?) and our WAAF Officer Supervisor talked him out of it.

The Radar site was administered by clerical RAF types, the guard rooms and general security people were RAF, ... drivers were RAF, Radar mechanics were RAF (some had been telephone engineers) and the Radio Operators, cooks, caterers and some clerks were WAAF. I became a LCW – Leading Aircraft Woman – at Branscombe where I was for ten months and was made a corporal just before going on the Officers' Training ...



## **THE SEA SHANTY BEACH CAFÉ**

The Café is open 9.00am to 4.00pm everyday

The shop is open from 8.30am

Breakfast menu is served from 09:00am Last Order - 11:30am

Lunch menu is served from 12:00pm– 2.30pm

Breakfasts, lunches, and **daily specials**.

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### **Senior Specials**

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## At a Glance Dates for your Diary

### February

Saturday 22nd	4.00pm	Six Nations rugby – England v Scotland – social room <b>(ko @ 16.45)</b> All welcome. Bar open.
Monday 24th	7.30pm	Branscombe Project-Branoc Hall

### March

Thursday 6th	7.00pm	Parish Council meeting, Branoc Hall social room
Sunday 9th	2.45pm	Six Nations rugby – England v Scotland – social room <b>(ko @ 15.00)</b> All welcome. Bar open.
Saturday 15th	12-2pm	Soup & Pud, £8.00p Branoc Hall
	4.00pm	Six Nations rugby – Wales v England – social room <b>(ko @ 16.45)</b> All welcome. Bar open.
Weds 19th	2-4pm	Cake and Chat, Branoc Hall
Mon 24th	7.30pm	Branscombe Project, Branoc Hall
Tues 25th	7.30pm	Lent Talk, St Winifreds
Weds 26th	7.00pm	Branoc Hall Committee, Social Room
Sun 30th		Mothering Sunday

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## THE PACHA POSSE

January is never a good month as far as I am concerned, too wet, too dark, too cold which is why I felt the need to disappear to the sun for a few weeks leaving my very kind neighbour to care for the woollies. I would like to say that whilst away I did meet the president of the South African Alpaca Breeders Association who gave me a tour of her alpacas and fibre workshop. Alison was the recipient of the very first alpacas to arrive in South Africa from Chile and its quite interesting to see the difference between hers and mine, my lot being generally bigger, with a squarer face. I think the main reason for the difference is the grass – we have lots, even in winter and in South Africa the paddocks were dust bowls so during their summer the alpacas basically survive off hay and even in the winter the grass there is much tougher. She was also saying that they have very few professionals that work with alpacas, the vets treat them as exotics, which is not only expensive they also don't have any specialist vets. They also need to shear themselves due to limited access to professional shearers – but she seemed to know so many people from the UK alpaca world we seemed to have quite an overlap of people we both knew. That said she was producing some beautiful products and I was extremely jealous of her workshop, all self-taught which gives me some sort of hope. So whilst I was off enjoying myself in the sun my lovely neighbour was trudging through mud each morning but my woollies seem to have the same effect on her as they do on me and I will leave you with her experience:

***“I've had the great enjoyment of caring for the woollies this month and getting to know their different characters. The January rain has caused the alpacas to shelter in the shed a lot and I've had the pleasure of their company as I filled the hay nets (alpacas eating from them as I did so) and whilst mucking out. On the rare occasion we saw the sunshine, they were out sunbathing in the field or playing with the christmas trees.***

***Most days Lucha followed me around and tried to accompany me into the food shed. She also muscled her way past the older alpacas for carrots. Lucha does like her food!***

***Cusco always bolted towards me whenever I brought carrots and apples. Both boys (Jester and Cusco) often quarrelled over these treats, especially Cusco who usually tried to snatch away the treat I was trying to give to Jester.***

***Inti has gradually become used to me catching and cuddling him. He's also been getting comfortable with head scratches.***

***I very much loved my time with the woollies and caring for them.”***



As you can see the Christmas trees are now decimated, but still good for scratching – and after a week back my woollies are starting to like me again – I think I have been relegated to second favourite human!

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## National Trust Countryside Update

### Wild about flowers

We've been busy cutting and raking the top field near the school that looks down over the valley, with the invaluable assistance of our fabulous volunteers. This is a hugely important task, as the area is designated as priority habitat and a county wildlife site (lowland calcareous grassland, since you ask). One of the main reasons for this is the wealth of wildflowers that thrive in this spot. However, they wouldn't do all this thriving without assistance, which is where the cutting and raking comes in. These activities allow light and space to reach the wildflowers, some of which are fairly near to the ground hence can all too easily end up covered over. So, it's blooming vital.

Wildflowers can deliver specific benefits both to the environment and to us, so we'll go through some of them and see what's what. Please note that should you read this and decide that you'd like to bring some home with you, it is of course against the law to pick wildflowers in this country. One or two of them can be quite harmful too, causing irritation to skin. So, hands off and let's proceed.

Species recorded on the site include the following:

**Pyramidal orchids**, a hugely eye-catching pink-purple petally pyramid-shaped preponderance, springing into luscious life from April through until early July. These lovely specimens are not just a treat for the eyes, but they have a scent described as 'foxy'. We can't offer any further advice on this, never having got close enough to check. Safe to say though that we're more likely to be in *vulpes vulpes* territory than a scent that might have been dabbed on by a young Diana Dors, say. Should any readers be able to give elucidation on what nasal notes are delivered by flora exhibiting foxy-ness, please contact us below.



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Images  
Ray Dale

**Eye bright**, a potentially hugely useful herb. 2-8 inches tall and showing small white flowers towards the end of its life, it has modest looks unlikely to set your heart racing. However, it does have some pretty handy abilities up its sleeve, such as keeping more rapacious plants in check by hoovering up some of the nutrients they need to thrive. This then allows more demure wildflowers to establish a foothold, safe from the ravages of possibly unwelcome neighbours. There's also evidence to suggest that eye bright can help with ocular problems, such as inflammation caused by exposure to pollen or dust. Please note however that this effect is associated with a specifically titrated preparation. Just stuffing bunches of eye bright in your eyes is not recommended. At all.



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Images  
Andrew Wright

**Wild marjoram**, an aromatic bushy herb that boasts clusters of small pink flowers that are a huge hit with insects and butterflies. An interesting fact about wild marjoram is that when the same plant grows in the Med it's known as oregano. However, the UK version has a different taste and aroma, being a little more subtle than that of oregano. It's thought that wild marjoram considers itself somewhat superior to its southern counterpart, calling its sun-kissed cousin a little 'full-on' and 'brassy' according to some sources. It may of course be a bit jealous.



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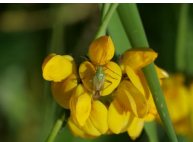
counterpart, calling its sun-kissed cousin a little 'full-on' and 'brassy' according to some sources. It may of course be a bit jealous.

**Ploughman's spikenard**, a strikingly tall (up to around 4' or so) but alas not so easy on the eye perennial, not very common in the southwest. Although it won't ever sport a sash and tiara at any plant beauty contests, ploughman's spikenard has some uses, both to nature and to us. In the former camp, you can count the moths and butterflies that lay their eggs on its leaves, as well pollinators that make a beeline for its nectar. In the latter lot, there's a huge and growing number of reported medicinal benefits that derive from spikenard, including digestive easing, anti-inflammatory properties that can help with some skin conditions, and even some possible utility against some forms of cancer. In medieval times, spikenard was known primarily as a very desirable perfume, but it may be that this was very much an era-specific thing. Reports that Calvin Klein are looking into launching *Spikenard Pour Femme* are as yet unconfirmed.



© Native Flower  
2020-2025  
Adrian Briggs

**Birdsfoot trefoil**, with yellow slipper-like flowers and red-orange buds. It's sometimes known as 'eggs and bacon', 'butter and eggs' and 'hen and chicken' (as well as, slightly less appetisingly 'granny's toenails'). Don't let any food-based epithets fool you – birdsfoot trefoil is not to be eaten, carrying a bit of a toxic punch in its cyanogenic glycosides. It is however, an enormously useful plant – it's often used to stabilise land prone to decay and erosion, is a great weed suppressant and is a terrific source of nectar, together with being a favourite food for many species, including caterpillars, deer and elk. Which is of course great news for Branscombe's burgeoning elk population.



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Images  
Hilary Daniel

So, lots to think about there with wildflowers, and thanks once again to our volunteers for all the work that ensures that these crucial plants continue to do their thing. If you'd like to join in with some of these kinds of activities, do contact us (see below). Same goes if you fancy helping us with our new Branscombe Heritage Walks that we're launching this year.

If you'd like to get involved with our work in the area, please contact us via [branscombe@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:branscombe@nationaltrust.org.uk) or on 01297 680507.

Martin Jennings-Wright  
Volunteering and Community Officer  
NT Branscombe



**National  
Trust**

Along with the rest of the village we were very saddened last year to hear of Ian, Andrew and Nicola's decision to end their tenancy next year and cease farming the land around Branscombe at Manor Mill and Great Seaside. They have been excellent tenants, farmers, neighbours and friends over the last couple of decades and we were hoping to continue working with them for many years to come.

We fully understand and respect their decision however and will do all we can to support them and make things as easy as possible as they make the transition over the coming year.

We will also be planning how best to manage the land in the future to maintain the excellent traditions we have in the village. Happily, the land has been managed in a way that largely concurs with the National Trust's policy of 'Farming for Nature'. Consequently, while there may be some adaptations in how things are done as we look for opportunities to enhance wildlife-friendly methods and increase biodiversity across the valley, there aren't any major changes planned.

Over the next little while, as we look for ways in which we can improve the land for both nature and people, building on the already high biodiversity value of the valley, we hope we can continue to draw on Nicola, Ian and Andrew's advice and expertise. Meanwhile, we wish the Westlakes nothing but well in whatever venture they turn their hands to next.

Reuben Hawkhead  
Countryside Manager, NT Branscombe



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