

# LOPEN *Life*

DECEMBER 2022 - JANUARY 2023


Local events  
& *Diary*

Tweets,  
Songs &  
Hampers

A.N.D  
*another  
thing*

ISSUE 02



 hewins  
OAK



# Edit this...



Welcome to the second LOPEN Life, all good so far and keep your feedback and comments coming in - I am sure we can do more. This is your village soapbox, please use it!

In this issue we look at the two festive months of the year, and what an extra ordinary year. On the cusp of kicking off a new year, we have a new monarch and a new prime minister, so maybe one resolution will be no repeat of 2022!

I always think December and January can be great fun, exciting and hopeful as we celebrate, reflect and plan. To support that train of thought we have some reflections on festive music and song, together with a traditional yet oft forgotten approach to personalised giving - the hamper, aided and abetted with some very local farm shopping.


There is a diary full of local happenings, with of course the 'A.N.D another thing' perspective on a piece of Lopen Life. And in our 'Always Look On the Bright Side' feature, an update on wildlife around the Churchyard and some traditional 'tweeting'.

So Merry Christmas everyone, have a great holiday however and wherever you are celebrating it, and here is to a great 'in with the new' for 2023. See you again in February, to blow away some winter blues - remember to let us know any musings you wish to share.

Chris Marsh - *Editor*

## Contact Details:

Email: [chrismarshlpc@gmail.com](mailto:chrismarshlpc@gmail.com)

 /Lopen-Events-277018432630673/

Visit our village website: [www.lopenvillage.org](http://www.lopenvillage.org)



## PUBLICATION FOOTNOTE:

- **COPY Deadline** – for articles and photographs – aim for January 6th if you can, 4 weeks prior to next issue, but January 11th - final deadline.
- Adverts need to be submitted in PDF format – details on sizes and rates are available from the Editor
- All comments and views expressed are the responsibility of the writer and are not those necessarily held by Lopen Parish Council and its members.

# Lopen Parish Council

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## MONTHLY MEETING ROUND-UP

Not a lot to report this period. The SSDC are still trying to get themselves organised ahead of the Unified County Council. Along with the rest of the country, they are also reporting financial challenges and looking to see what needs to be cut to support the main services, all in addition to the cost of living issues.

There was some response to the Local Community Network (LCN) survey, results of which are due sometime in the new year.

## PLANNING

No major planning reviews underway at the moment, other than the Council have yet to approve their own application for the Lopenhead Roundabout advertising boards, which may have to be reduced in size.

As we go to print a new application consultation regarding the Mill House on Merriott Road has been submitted.

## DEFIBRILLATOR

A second defibrillator is going to be placed in the village, on the west side of the village, (the one we have is in the Church porch) but we need suggestions for suitable siting PLEASE! Any ideas contact a Parish Councillor.

## SSID

Village Speed Camera - ongoing reporting and tracking, to try and get further enforcement signage and actions in the village.

On the subject of speeding, the fact that the unclassified roads generally have a default speed to the National Speed limit, means that down your typical country single track the actual speed limit is classified as 60mph. A local instance being Broomhill Lane and Higgins Grave Lane - which makes them faster than the Watergore/Lopenhead main road, which is 40mph. This means that anyone with their Sat Nav set to find the fastest possible route (as most delivery drivers do), will divert themselves on to roads that are a challenge at 20-30mph. Highways can offer no solution to this, saying its the Sat Nav companies that need to sort this out.

## GENERAL

Hedges, dog poo bins and more - continuing issues about the regularity of hedge and verge cutting round our narrow lanes are being raised to the Council, along with emptying the dog-poo bin in Kitchen Lane more frequently. Also taking this up with the Ranger.

## NEXT MEETINGS

**December 19th & January 30th at 7.00 PM**  
in the Sunday School Room - Everyone welcome, please come and be heard.

## PARISH COUNCILLORS:

**Chairman - Stephen Crane** - [Scrane1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Scrane1@hotmail.co.uk) - 01460 241412

**Nick Jones** - [nick.jones.lopenpc@outlook.com](mailto:nick.jones.lopenpc@outlook.com) - 01460 241643

**Jenny Feeney** - [jfeeneylopenpc@gmail.com](mailto:jfeeneylopenpc@gmail.com) - 1460 419569

**Chris Marsh** - [chrismarshlpc@gmail.com](mailto:chrismarshlpc@gmail.com) - 07951 239110

**Caroline McKendrick** - [caroline.mckendrick.lopenpc@outlook.com](mailto:caroline.mckendrick.lopenpc@outlook.com) - 01460 359201

**Parish Clerk** - Jane Collins - [lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com](mailto:lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com) - 07967 218478



# All Saints Church

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## SERVICE DATES DECEMBER AND JANUARY:

### Every Monday at 9.00am

Morning Prayers lasting about 30 minutes is said for the people of Lopen. All are welcome to join-in.

### Sunday December 4th at 9.00am

Holy Communion - Advent 2

### Sunday December 11th at 10:00am

Advent Reflection - Advent 3

### Sunday December 18th at 10.00 am

Advent Reflection - Advent 4

### Tuesday December 20th at 6.00pm

Christmas Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies

### Sunday December 25th at 10.30am

Christmas Day Communion Service

## 2023

### Sunday 1st January at 9.00am

### Sunday 15th January at 10.30 am

## Lopen Remembers...

This year villagers and anyone passing through would have noticed a marked increase in the Remembrance Day visibility. In addition to the two 'Tommies' at either end of the village, large poppies were very much in evidence (thank you Trevor), and due to the research of WW1 historian Peter Forrester and the diligence of Lopen villager and RAF veteran Trevor Power, details of each of the Lopen fallen, with a military and family profile were put together. These were laid out seven days prior and seven days after Remembrance Day in All Saints Church. In addition to which the same history was displayed as close as possible to their place of residence of the time. A fitting tribute. Thank you.



# NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL Festive Music



There has always been a strong connection between Christmas and music, whether that is the traditional carols sung in candlelit churches or pop songs played on loud speakers as mulled wine is drunk at Christmas markets.

The first music associated with Christmas is thought to have originated in the 4th century with Latin hymns. Carols in the English language appeared in 1426 when an English chaplain named John Awdlay listed twenty five "Caroles of Cristemas" sung by groups of wassailers who travelled from house to house. Indeed some of today's most popular carols including "The Twelve Days of Christmas" and "God rest ye merry gentlemen" originate from the 16th century.

Being surrounded by background festive music in shops, on the radio and in Christmas Fayres can mean that we don't take time to truly appreciate the beauty and meaning of these songs. The classical composer Igor Stravinsky once said of music "To listen is an effort and just to hear is no merit. Even ducks can hear music".

This Christmas, let us take time to enjoy and truly listen to music, whether that be singing along to carols at a church service or jiving to the beat of "Rocking around the Christmas Tree".

In our own village there are various opportunities to raise our voices in seasonal songs, including the 'Lopen Lights-On' on 4 December and the candlelit carol service at All Saints on 20 December, following which you will be rewarded for your efforts with mulled wine and mince pies.

So look forward to seeing - and hearing - you there!

Jonathan Delbridge

PLEASE JOIN US FOR SOME  
CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGING  
ON SUNDAY 4TH DECEMBER  
AFTER THE LOPEN 'LIGHT UP'  
IN **CHURCH STREET** - 17:30  
(OUTSIDE LOPEN FARMHOUSE)



*Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la!*



# December - Diary Dates



DATE	EVENT	NOTES
4th Sunday	LOPEN LIGHT-UP & Carol Singing - 5.30pm outside Lopen Farmhouse	Everyone Welcome
6th Tuesday	THE COMING - Reflections for Advent 6-7.00pm All saints Church, Lopen	Images, Readings, Music and Quiet, led by Rev. Annie Gurner
9th Friday	CHRISTMAS BINGO NIGHT- 7.00pm Sunday School Room	Eyes Down 7.30 - see Posters around the village
13th Tuesday	JUST WOMEN Meeting - 7.30pm Sunday School Room 'A Journey Through Chocolate' Steve Chapman Contact Pauline Rook on 01460 240644	Steve tells us about this 4000 year old 'food of the gods', from Cadburys and Quakers to ethics and of course tasting
14th Wednesday	COFFEE STOP - 10.30am Sunday School Room All Welcome	Tea, coffee, cake and catch up - all for a good cause.
17th Saturday	Lopen Lads - 12.00pm Sunday School Room	Destination - The Royal Oak, Over Stratton
19th Monday	LOPEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 7.00pm Sunday School Room	All Welcome
20th Tuesday	Christmas Carol Service - 6.00pm All Saints Church	Followed by mulled wine & mince pies
25th Sunday	Christmas Day Service - 10.30am All Saints Church	Family Communion Service



REMINDER

**February & March Diary Dates**  
Deadline - January 11th



# Happy New Year 2023 January - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
1st Sunday	<b>New Years Resolution</b>	go on be brave!
10th Tuesday	Just Women Meeting - 7.30pm Sunday School Room Evening Meal Contact Pauline Rook - 01460 240664	Sue Foreman of 'The Cook House' prepares an interesting menu
11th Wednesday	Coffee Stop - 10.30 am Sunday School Room New Volunteers Welcomed	Tea, coffee, cake and a catch-up, all for a good cause
Next Issue	Blowing away the winter blues, well being and warm thoughts	Editorial contributions welcomed
21st Saturday	Lopen Lads - 12.00pm Sunday School Room	Destination to be advised
25th Wednesday	Coffee Stop - 10.30 am Sunday School Room All Welcome	Tea, coffee, cake and a catch-up, all for a good cause
27th Friday	L'Open Arms - 8.00pm Pop-Up-Pub Sunday School Room	Look out for posters and flyers for details
30th Monday	Lopen Parish Council Meeting - 7.00pm Sunday School Room All Welcome	Local Parish Issues



REMINDER

**February & March Diary Dates**  
Deadline - January 11th

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# Always look on the bright side...

*A local story from the community about a subject we can all get involved in.*

About 3 years ago following a national initiative called 'Eco-Church', Lopen set up a Churchyard Eco-Group. Under the guidance of Mary Chapman, volunteers - often up to 18 at a time - have been involved in developing the ecology around the Churchyard. This has covered as diverse things as reduced mowing, bird boxes, planting, bug hotels and CCTV of animal movements - and anything else appearing in the Churchyard!

The team of strimmers who cut the wildflower meadow area in August all had to keep a safe distance, which brought to mind the origins of songs like 'One Man went to Mow', which apparently were designed to keep mowers a safe distance apart with their scythes - at the start of each new verse the next mower would start, by which time the previous mower was a safe distance away. I was informed of this by an 80 year old neighbour. He also reported that the 'dog' in the song refers actually to a stick used to lift up fallen hay.

This same neighbour also referred to the Green Woodpecker - which can be heard and seen in the Churchyard as a 'Yaffle' - so called due to its call. And Blackbirds were called 'ouzel-birds, robins and wrens are just the male and female of the same species and hence the names Cock Robin and Jenny Wren.

All these birds, together with three fledging Sparrow hawks have all come to inhabit our little Churchyard, bringing song and joy to an otherwise understandably quiet place.

Finally, an interesting sighting at the end of summer was a humming-bird hawk moth. This migrant visitor from mainland Europe is quite rare, and was spotted using its improbably long tongue to feed on flowers left at a graveside.



Volunteers are always welcome - please get in touch with Mary on 01460 249549, and we hope to see more friends and wildlife in 2023. We will keep you updated.

Philip Harper.



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# Christmas Concert

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16TH DECEMBER @ 7:30PM

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music and favourite Christmas carols

St Peter and St Paul's Church  
Hele Lane, South Petherton

Tickets - £5  
Available from: Jonathan Delbridge  
info@jonathandelbridge.com  
01460 240025



# LET'S GET HAMPERED!

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This time of year is often a challenge - that combination of expectation and gratification, with all the present buying and giving, taking things to events and gatherings and just the good ol' 'what should we get for so and so...' And then there is all that food!

One of the most appreciated and flexible thoughts is creating and giving a hamper. Once one focuses on the recipient and the receptacle, (typically a basket but frankly anything that 'holds' items can suffice). It can be of any size, budget and content - food, drinks, sweets, toys, reading matter, clothing - the list is endless and all personalised as far as you wish. Even better a mix of everything - the ultimate pick and mix, all dressed with a bauble, lights, and festive greenery.

What is more, to source everything you don't need to travel far to find hamper goodies, as we are surrounded by the



farm shops selling all manner of treats with which to build a hamper, or cheat and buy a ready made one!

As Kate from the Trading Post said - *If you are looking for something spectacular to go in your Christmas hampers or on your festive table, pop along to The Trading Post. Our Christmas Marquee is packed full of amazing treats from Christmas puddings and baklava to savoury snacks and a huge range of West Country cheeses. We have beautifully made local pottery and fused glass gifts, chocolates, Turkish Delight and marzipan sweets. In addition to stocking fillers there is an extensive selection of West Country gins and spirits. Look out on social media for tasting events and late night shopping dates.*

So whether it's food and/or drink, games, books, clothes or delicacies, get 'hampered' this Christmas and New Year!



# The Coming: Reflections for Advent



An Anthology of Images, Readings and Quiet  
led by Revd Annie, with music by Jonathan Delbridge

All Saints Church, Lopen  
Tuesday December 6th, 6-7pm  
Everyone Welcome



# A.N.D another thing...

Misnomers.

The known names of places in this Village and why they were given them can be obvious and clearly descriptive. Frog Street and Water Street leading not unsurprisingly to Water Lane and not too far away from Mill Lane. They are in the lowest area and closest to Lopen Brook and the water draining into it. Holloway is hollowed into its high banks.

School Lane was probably a narrow path until the school was built there. This was when the thatched building next to the church, used as the school at the latter part of the 19th century, was no longer thought to be large enough or a suitable place to educate the children of Lopen. A purpose-built school became necessary and possible with a house built for a teacher at the same time. When the local schools were reorganised and that building was closed, the school became two homes, the school house another, and the space for the play ground another.

Church Street was called Higher Street, so why change it? What was it higher than? And why not always Church Street as it had been shown drawn on a map of 1774.

Mill Lane, appropriately named although the original mill is less obvious as no longer in use, however the existence of Flax Mill Cottage clarifies that one. The second Old Mill was Hinton Mill which no longer has Hinton in the name and is no longer a Mill. It became part of Lopen because of a boundary change from the natural boundary of the brook.

For some reason Mill Farm and the Mill with the last cottages towards Merriott Hill became officially part of Lopen, and a loss for Hinton St George. Snapant or its earlier Strap Ant name on the Fosse Way towards Dinnington, is of unclear origin. And what was the Poulett Arms, a hostelry with stabling at Lopenhead, some further transformation on is equally well-known as the Lopen Raj.

Cross Tree is an obvious name for a junction with a large oak tree of indeterminate age But it is not at a crossroads. It is apparent that not everybody in this Village knows of the existence of the site or the remains of a mediaeval Village Cross.

So, a thousand years further on where are the mediaeval fair or the mediaeval Cross? If you stand to the just to left of the Cross Tree looking towards the main road through the village, the lump of ham hill stone unlike the others standing to protect the notice board and now worn down, is still visible and all that remains above ground. We have to ask ourselves why was that tree planted in a way to conceal possibly the oldest landmark we have. And what else has been hidden within our boundaries old or new?

Angela Naunton Davies





Lopen Raj



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