



# LOPEN *Life*

DECEMBER 2023 - JANUARY 2024



Local  
Events &  
Diary

Lopen  
Christmas  
Customs

ISSUE 08





# Edit this...

**We all blinked and December is here - so making this a short edit.**

A big thank you to the photographic contributors and seasonal inputs from advertisers and our growing content suppliers - I have moved my piece to here to give you all more space in the main publication for this issue.

Lots of diary action in December - and a peaceful January looks to be welcome! The **Village WhatsApp group** continues to grow in terms of the group numbers and the content scope. So those that haven't joined, please do. Send the Editor (email below) your mobile number and name, and we will add you to the Group.

**On that note - please enjoy the issue and have a wonderful festive time.**

**Best wishes**

**Chris Marsh - Editor**

**Next issue deadline for diary dates, articles and stories is January 10th 2024.**

**Contact Details:**

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

 [/Lopen-Events-277018432630673/](https://www.facebook.com/Lopen-Events-277018432630673/)

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



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**- 01460 240506**

SEASONS GREETINGS



FROM





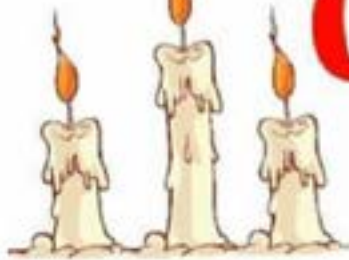


# All Saints Church Lopen

Church Street, Lopen TA13 5JX

*Present a*

# Candlelit Medieval Christmas



*An evening of festive music-making  
In a beautiful candlelit atmosphere  
with the early music consort:*



Sine Psalteries  
Sh Lyre Crumhorns  
Lomine Gemshorns

*Saturday 2 December, 7.30pm*

Booking in advance is essential as seating is limited.

Tickets are £10 from [info@jonathandelbridge.com](mailto:info@jonathandelbridge.com) or 01460 240025.

A bar will be open before the concert from 7pm selling mulled wine and soft drink.

Proceeds to be divided equally between Lopen church funds and





# All Saints Church

## SERVICE DATES:

Every Wednesday at 08.30

Morning Prayers lasting about 30 minutes is said for the people of Lopen.

## DECEMBER Services:

Sunday 3rd - Benefice Communion for Advent at 10.30

Thursday 21st - Christmas Carol Service at 18.00

Monday 25th - Christmas Day Communion at 09.30

## JANUARY Service:

Sunday 21st - Holy Communion at 10.30

Rev Bob and Julia Hicks 01460 76406  
bobhicks66@gmail.com

juliahicks1@gmail.com

Jonathan Delbridge 01460 240025  
info@jonathandelbridge.com.

# Carols BY CANDLELIGHT

At All Saints Church, Lopen

Please join us to celebrate the good news of Christmas with traditional carols and readings, followed by mince pies and mulled wine.

Thursday 21st December  
at 6pm



# Christmas Day Communion

MONDAY  
25TH DECEMBER

All Saints Church  
Lopen

09:30





# CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

IS COMING, PEOPLE!

AND IT'S GOING TO BE EPIC!

Lopen Sunday School Room

Saturday 9 December 2023 - 7pm

Christmas Jumper required for entry

Bring your own drinks -

- Nibbles provided by the elf!



All in aid of:



**Save the  
Children**



# Lopen Parish Council

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## MEETINGS ROUND-UP

Somerset County update is available on the Village website. Local issues include:

- Planning at Manor Farm, Kitchens Lane appears to have 'prior-approval', without any local input or say opportunity. Being monitored closely for signs of wider development actions.
- 'Asset and Service Devolution' by Somerset Council is likely to have a marked effect on villages the size of Lopen, without sufficient funds or people to fill gaps in service needs.
- Attendees welcomed to represent Lopen at the Crewkerne & Ilminster Local Community Network (LCN) meetings - check out website: [www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk)
- Village policing saw a new face at the November Parish Council Meeting - Barry.Gould (@avonandsomerset.police.uk).
- Going forward we hope Barry and the team will help support our vigilant community in keeping us safe.
- **New Patient Transport Service:** A new service to pick up/drop off patients to medical service centres has been started in Seavington - covering Lopen and the local community, with cleared volunteer drivers. Those requiring the service or additional volunteers please contact **Stephen Morris - 01460 242058.**

## NEXT MEETINGS:

**Monday December 18th & Monday January 29th at 7.00 PM**

in the Sunday School Room. Everyone welcome.

## PARISH COUNCILLORS:

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

**Stephen Crane** - [scrane1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:scrane1@hotmail.co.uk) - 01460 241412

**Jenny Feeney** - [jfeeneylopenpc@gmail.com](mailto:jfeeneylopenpc@gmail.com) - 01460 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** - [lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com](mailto:lopenpc.clerk@gmail.com) - Lisa Wilson - 07587 211150

## OTHER CONTACTS:

**District Council:** Cllr Adam Dance - 07767 224213 - [adam.dance@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:adam.dance@somerset.gov.uk)

Cllr Jo Roundell Greene - 07341 560016 - [jo.roundellgreene@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:jo.roundellgreene@somerset.gov.uk)

**Member of Parliament** - Marcus Fysh - [marcus.fysh.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:marcus.fysh.mp@parliament.uk)

**Just Women** - Pauline Rook - 240644 - [prook12@gmail.com](mailto:prook12@gmail.com)

**Lopen Lads** - Trevor Power - 07878 185537 - [trevorpowermbe1967@gmail.com](mailto:trevorpowermbe1967@gmail.com)

**Neighbourhood Watch** - Carron Richards - 242640 - [carronrichards@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:carronrichards@yahoo.co.uk)

Caroline McKendrick - 359201 - [carolinemckendrick@outlook.com](mailto:carolinemckendrick@outlook.com)

**Police CSO** - Mike Bell - Dial 101 and ask for PCSO 7954 - [mike.bell@avonsomerset.police.UK](mailto:mike.bell@avonsomerset.police.UK)

# DECEMBER Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
Name that date...	Look out for the Lopen Lads Whats App messages for events and get togethers	To join up contact Trevor 07878 185537
Saturday 2nd	Candlelit Medieval Christmas Sine Nominee 7.30pm - All Saints Church Mulled wine from 7.00pm	Tickets £10 from Jonathan Delbridge 01460 240025
Saturday 9th	Christmas Jumper Day time to show off! 7.00pm BYI drinks and fun Sunday School Room	Proceeds to Save the Children Fund
Tuesday 12th	Just Women Christmas Get-Together 7.30 pm Sunday School Room	Games, Quizzes and Refreshments Contact Jean Morton
Wednesday 13th	Coffee Stop 10.30am Sunday School Room	Tea, coffee, and mince pies - all for a good cause and £1 !
Monday 18th	Parish Council Meeting 7.00pm Sunday School Room	Hope to see you there
Thursday 21st	Carols By Candlelight All Saints Church 6.00pm	Followed by Mulled Wine & Mince Pies
Monday 25th	Christmas Day Communion 9.30am All saints Church	Everyone Welcome



# JANUARY 2024 - Diary Dates

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
<p>SUNDAY 31st into MONDAY 1st</p>	<p>HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>
<p>Monday 1st</p>	<p>BANK HOLIDAY</p>	<p>Chill, Resolutions, &amp; Recovery</p>
<p>Wednesday 10th</p>	<p>Coffee Stop 10.30am Sunday School Room</p>	<p>Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1 !</p>
<p>Tuesday 23rd</p>	<p>Just Women Sue Foreman - The Cook House will be doing supper 7.30pm Sunday School Room</p>	<p>For details Contact Jean Morton</p>
<p>Wednesday 24th</p>	<p>Coffee Stop 10.30am Sunday School Room</p>	<p>Tea, coffee, cake and a chat, all for a good cause and a £1 !</p>
<p>Name that date</p>	<p>Lopen Lads - Whats App and lets get out there!</p>	<p>Contact Trevor 07878 185537</p>
<p>Monday 29th</p>	<p>Parish Council Meeting - 7.00pm</p>	<p>Sunday School Room</p>





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May 30 2021

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for The Best Farm Shop/Deli in  
Somerset & Dorset 2021*





# What you may have missed...



11.00 - 11/11

## Remembrance Day

A good turnout to remember the 7 WW1 fallen Lopeners and all those we need to remember.

29th September - Abba Tribute  
Not the illusion of the London Abba Voyage event, just the interpretation of some crazy Abba-esque looks by our local Lopen Ladies!



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# Always look on the bright side...

## Update from the Lopen Church Eco-Group

At the last committee meeting at the end of October it was decided that the policy for the year ahead would be mainly one of observation rather than action. Over the past three years or so we have achieved a lot. We have put up bird boxes and bug hotels; held group plantings of snowdrops and primroses, all dug from local gardens; put in native daffodil bulbs and planted plugs of native grassland plants in our wildflower area. This now needs time to develop and be nurtured.

We also managed two 'bio blitz' sessions, which proved successful in involving villagers, including many children, and we plan to repeat this in June 2024. The next boxes will be checked and emptied over the winter (they were all used last year) and we will continue our mowing regime, which seems to suit both humans and wildlife. The 2023 vintage compost is now almost full, and the 2022 vintage will be uncovered in the spring to allow villagers access for their own gardens.

The last couple of weeks have seen a pair of blackbirds in the churchyard. They are seen less regularly after the breeding season, reappearing during October/November. This is due to the fact they moult after breeding and whilst they wait for their new feathers to fully come through, they seek shelter in woods and hedges. Coupled with this many of our 'summer' blackbirds migrate to warmer climes like the south of France or Spain - although our very mild autumn has probably confused them as much as it has us! The ones that remain are joined by other migrants from Eastern Europe, often larger than our native species.

**Philip Harper**





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# Lopen Christmas Casebook

## CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

Lopen usually celebrates Christmas with lots of lights round the village, and getting together to sing carols. Houses and the church are decorated, although according to tradition, this should not be done before Christmas Eve. It is a time for Christians to remember the birth of Jesus, but many of the customs which we celebrate now, are hundreds of years old, and date back to our pagan ancestors.

The Celts celebrated the winter solstice on December 21st, with the death of the old year, and beginning of the new. Bonfires were lit to encourage the sun to shine for another year. December 25th was a Roman festival in honour of the god Mithras, and celebrated the birth of the unconquered sun.

To the Norse people, it was Yuletide, and the Yule log was burnt on Christmas Eve. The tradition was carried on in Somerset with the burning of the "ashen faggot". It was made of a bundle of logs fastened with nine bands of ash. The faggot was placed on the fire, and as each band burst, much cider was drunk. The fire was often kept burning for the twelve days of Christmas, and a log may be kept to start the fire in the following year.

Bringing greenery into the house for decoration at the midwinter festival, is a custom of extreme antiquity. Evergreens were regarded as symbols of everlasting life. In Somerset, this was called "Christmassing" or "keeping Christmas". The greenery had to be removed on Twelfth night, and was mostly burnt. Mistletoe was sacred to the druids, and not allowed in churches except York Minster.





# Lopen Christmas Casebook



Carols probably originated from circular dances associated with dramatic performances. The carol of classical times was a major element to mark the passing of the winter solstice. In the 12th century, carols began to be taken up as Christian folk songs. Villages often had their own carols, and these still survive in Odcombe.

There is also a lovely Somerset carol, which we still sing today. **Come all you worthy gentlemen**, is an English folk carol of unknown authorship. It was collected from a Mr. Rapsey, of Bridgwater during the English Folk-song revival at the beginning of the 20th century by Cecil Sharp. It was first published in 1905 in Sharp and Marson's Folk songs from Somerset. It is a variant of the carol God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen.

After carol singing we may go in and have a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie. Mince pies probably date back to Roman times, and were originally "Coffin" shaped. Christians then referred to them as a crib, and sometimes put a baby Jesus in the pastry. They were made of chopped, minced meat, eggs, spices and raisins. Suet in the pie is the only survivor of the meat content today. It was traditional to eat a mince pie on every day for the 12 days of Christmas.

Twelfth night was a big celebration of the end of the Christmas period. It was originally old Christmas Eve, but when the Gregorian calendar came in in 1582, we lost 11 days, but the old customs carried on. We still take the decorations down January 5th.

Here's to a very Happy Christmas ' and as our ancestors said "Wassail"  
(good health) .

JOAN FARRIS





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**PAIN AU CHOCOLATE**  
(145Kcal)  
**PAIN AU RAISIN**  
(132Kcal)  
**CHOCOLATE MUFFIN**  
(172Kcal)  
**BAGEL**  
(254Kcal)  
**CRUMPET**  
(88Kcal)

**BUTTER PANCAKE**  
(116Kcal)  
**INDIAN PARATA**  
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**EGG**

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**FRIED**  
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