



Good News



Produced by
BAKEWELL CHURCHES TOGETHER

Dear Friends

We had hoped to issue this copy of the Good News coordinated by The Parish Church at the end of October but our Guest Editor has sadly had some health issues for which we pray for her continuing recovery and thank Sue for gathering the articles contained in this issue.

The Good News is just that, trying to reflect what and who we appreciate contributing to the life of this community of Bakewell, especially within still uncertain times for businesses, hospitality, schools, shops, market traders and residents. The strength of care and concern for others in Bakewell has been highlighted since March 2020 and this not only reminds us of the blessing we feel by living and working here, but welcoming the many visitors who need and enjoy the space and time to enjoy what we could be tempted to take for granted.

We receive and welcome this edition in a Season of preparation for Christmas and whilst there is some concern as to how this might be spent this year, it is a time to say thank you for the gift of life, relationship, how people bless and strengthen us and how we are called to make room for those less fortunate than ourselves.

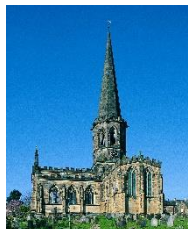
The future of Good News is uncertain due to funding and logistics and if this is to be the last one, thank you for everyone who has contributed to this and other editions.

Wishing you a happy, peaceful, healthy, and blessed Christmas and New Year.

Canon Tony and Sue Marsh.

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Where have the last 15 years gone?

It was a cold March morning in 2006 when I received an email from George Challenger (at 4am in the morning) offering me the post of Museum Manager at the very lovely Old House Museum.

I was to start on the 27th March which gave me two days to settle in before the famous coffee morning on the 29th March 'when you can meet many of our helpers'.

I was astonished at the number of enthusiastic, dedicated volunteers who gave their free time to help with the running of the museum and it was a treat to meet everyone.

Bronwen was the manager at the time and had replaced Nicky Crewe who I soon became close friends with. I was introduced to various elements of museum life and quickly realised how important it was to get to know everyone and learn what part they played in helping. How lucky to have so many volunteers, at that time around one hundred! Good times.

I was made to feel very welcome and relished the opportunity to be part of the team.



The duties were various, as they still are, the biggie being maintaining the rota. Pam Crump, and committee members were key supportive figures during those first few weeks of finding my feet. The textile/catering team were so warm and friendly I soon began to feel at home.

It was in 2006 that the museum committee were successful in gaining Heritage Lottery Funding for improvements to the museum and outside areas. The project would take place over three winters as we could not afford loss of income by closing the museum. I worked alongside George in project managing the extensive works that were to take place. I will never forget the piles being driven into the land (now the courtyard) at the side of the building in order to support our neighbours garden walls and build the gallery, no water supply other than from the outside tap, no flushing toilet, the kitchen moved to the Houseplace and the upstairs office became a refuge away from all the works.

The following spring, we shoed out the builders had a massive clean-up and opened to the public. I was challenged with starting an events programme and it was around the time that UK museums were encouraged to take part in 'A Night at the Museum'. Events could take any shape or form. I was so proud that we were one of the first museums in Derbyshire to take part. We received a small grant from MDEM (Museums Development East Midlands) to organise the very successful 'Beer & Skittles – Cheese & Pickles', a sing a long folk evening with traditional games. That very same year the textile team displayed a stunning collection of wedding dresses. MDEM were recognising work achieved by local museum by creating the Renaissance Heritage Awards. MDEMs Anita Hollinhead sent us a congratulatory email as we scooped Best Event, Best Exhibition and Museum of the Year 2007, *'A tremendous achievement and a tribute to all the wonderful and inspiring work undertaken by you and your marvellous team of volunteers'*.



The events over the years ably supported by volunteers who made them all possible. Poetry evenings, choirs, Blues, Jazz

continued

and Folk events, Victorian tea parties, open days, Marians DP Battery event, Trevor's Quiz Night, 1940s day, Prohibition Party, Codebreakers Ghost stories plus the catering team excellent 'Salmon and Strawberries' evening. A summer celebration and a real favourite with Society members.



Impossible also to forget our beloved friend Keith How who along with George Challenger sadly passed away this year. Keith organised many art exhibitions and music events and it was an honour to support him in his endeavours. His vision along with photographer Billy Bye brought a new audience to us who also came to love the museum.



Events brought a new love into my life with the arrival of beer, courtesy of Thornbridge Brewery. Dear Richard and I flirted outrageously over a barrel of Lord Marples and the rest is history! Richard (seen below as Richard Arkwright) has supported me enormously over the years and kept the museums events well supplied with Bakewell's famous tippie.



Not only events have thrived but school visits, guided tours, ghost hunting groups, WI, U3A, University, visits, and what an achievement by the late John Cooper, Michael Hillam, Susan Hillam and Denise Wills for persevering with establishing the towns guided walk 'Secrets and Legends'. The education team worked hard to bring school visits to life with hands on activities, laundry days and Tudor dancing. All of these events have brought the building to life, and it has all been made possible by the museum community of Bakewell.



Now with enthusiastic new trustees working along time served trustees, members, and museum committee it is time for me to slip away knowing that the museum is in very good hands. It is impossible for me to mention everyone, but you are all in my thoughts especially those quiet souls who achieve so much with so little fuss. Behind the scenes but so important, maintenance, emergencies, cleaning, leaflet delivery, shop, finance, gardening, admin, newsletters, articles etc, etc, etc..... I could go on and on.

I do hope you will all support the new manager of the museum (interviews early Sept) in exciting times to come. Bless you all.

Please do come and see me at Thornbridge Hall where I will be nurturing a variety of plants in the new plant nursery.

Anita Spencer – Museum Manager 2006 – 2021.



U3A History group

Are you a member of Bakewell U3A? Are you interested in history? Then why not join the Bakewell U3A History group?

We are a small, select group who meet in the lounge of Bakewell Methodist Church between 10am and 12 noon on the first Tuesday of the month. Of course, we have not been able to meet for some considerable time, but are hoping to get up and running again at the beginning of November. Our meetings tend to be “member led”, with one of our group leading the session, or a particular topic, but with plenty of opportunity for discussion and contribution.

We are a keen and friendly group and would welcome new members.

For more information, please contact the group co-ordinator – Richard Thurlow - 01629 636944.

We live in Bakewell, multi-blessed
To give a lot of happiness,
Parading through her market stalls,
Or wandering past ancient walls
To see what's what
Worth savouring ... or not.

Approaching dusk, last lingering
With fish and chips beside the weir;
Reluctancy to go; fond memories to bear.
“It's been a lovely day. Until next year”.

Quiet hills around bear witness to
Enduring peace, but few
Will go. Enough to view -
And turn, to kick a ball around
Ice-cream on recreation ground.

By six o'clock when car parks close
The crowd must go. It's always so.
They've eaten, shopped and had their fun;
It's time for local dogs to run;
The mess to clear – and be disposed.

Last sunshine warms pavilion seat;
Familiar acquaintance meet
As noises fade; old men can nod,
And church bells call who will to God.

John Butler

Returning to Ringing 2021

The last 'normal' ringing was for the Civic Service on the afternoon of Sunday 15th March 2020. On Monday 16th March 2020 bell ringing was halted due to Coronavirus -19 and the country went into total lockdown from Monday 23rd March 2020.

During the next 16 months ringers had to follow guidelines from the Central Council of Church

Bell ringers in accordance with the Church of England guidance. This involved very little ringing on church bells - 15 minutes for ringing for service keeping 2m apart. We were looking forward to the lifting of restrictions on 21st June 2021 but this was delayed to 19th July 2021 following the rise of the new variant.

The ringers discussed what they wanted to do from the 19th July since restrictions had been lifted and concluded that there would be 8 ringers for both service rings and practice nights on a rota. This would allow plenty of room when ringing. The service ring is 30 mins and we would restrict the practice night to 1 hour.

The ringing chamber is large (21' x 21' x 16.5' = 7,275 cu ft) and we leave the door open all the time - air flows in from the spiral staircase slit windows - they have no glass in them.

Just as you enter the ringing room there is a large fan which is used during each ringing session to help circulate the air, and the window is pushed and fastened wide open.

You can feel the air flow through the chamber. We do not wear masks as they would be restrictive when ringing the bells. Hand sanitiser is still used on entering the staircase and before touching the ropes. Sanitiser is used during the ringing session when the ringers change ropes.

At the moment I haven't opened up the ringing to local visiting ringers on practice nights, although I have had a couple of requests. I feel we need to wait perhaps until mid/end August and see how we go. This means keeping 8 ringers on a rota system and incorporating the visitors in the rota system when I feel it is safe to do so.

I have rung at Tideswell for a service ring and at Ashford for a wedding as they needed ringers. Before doing this I checked that I had a negative lateral flow test and again before ringing back in Bakewell.

This has been the first venture out into other towers since March 2020!!

I want to take this opportunity to thank all the ringers for their support, perseverance and tenacity during these troubled times. Whether it was ringing hand bells in woolly hats and gloves, ringing tower bells for only 15 mins, meeting up outside in a public place, in freezing weather, for a take away coffee as the only means of gathering allowed, or weeding the paths. It has been a pleasure.

If anyone would like to learn the art of bell ringing please contact me and I will arrange a suitable time to visit. 01629 814521 - there is an answer machine, 07831 596884 - I am on what's app

pauline.boyle@gmail.com

Pauline

Do you have difficulty in hearing ?

Many of us may find that when our hearing deteriorates we can feel left out of the conversation or may misunderstand a question or request, but are not aware of how you could benefit from learning to 'Lip-read' and 'Finger-spell'.

When the teacher retired and not replaced from an Adult Education class in Matlock, a small friendly group of six of us continued to meet on a self-help basis, and we have stayed connected with the help of Zoom, all through 'lock-down', until the summer.

With the new term approaching we would like to extend a welcome to anyone who would like to join us, continuing on Zoom until a suitable venue can be found in the Matlock/ Bakewell area.

We hope to continue to meet on a Tuesday at 1.30pm for a couple of hours, to learn and practice Lip-reading skills and Finger-spelling, with simple everyday exercises. We share experiences and ways to improve the ability to 'stay connected' and to help both those **with** hearing loss and those **living** with people with hearing disabilities.

Please let us know if you would be interested in joining us on Zoom or if a weekly Lip Reading Class was to become available in the Matlock/ Bakewell Area?

Contact Carol Wicksteed with your name and contact e-mail, so we can keep in touch :

email- carol.wicksteed@gmail.com

All Saints' Organ Appeal

The pipe organ in All Saint's Parish Church, Bakewell is used, not only in church services, but also in very many community activities. It is an impressive and historically significant instrument, but it is in need of substantial repair and a complete overhaul. The PCC is seeking to raise a total of £135,000 to cover the cost.

CAN YOU HELP?

By sponsoring a pipe, perhaps to remember a loved one or to commemorate an important occasion. Names and any dedication will be recorded in the book of donors, but can be anonymous if you prefer. Any amount would be welcome: there is no minimum and no maximum. Payment should be made by bank transfer to Bakewell PCC, sort code 60-01-33, account number 80656048, using 'PIPE' and your name as a reference or by cheque made payable to Bakewell PCC and sent to Joyce Glencross, 1, The Meadows, Grisedale Road, Great Longstone, DE45 1TP. If you are a tax payer and would be happy for us to reclaim the tax you have paid by way of gift aid please let Joyce know.



By joining the newly formed '100 club'. Tickets are £1 per week per number, with half of the receipts going into the organ fund and half into the prize fund, administrative expenses being donated. Payment can be made by bank transfer, standing order or cheque, for whatever period suits you. A monthly draw will be taken on the first Sunday of the month, with prize money being paid on the day, normally by bank transfer. If you wish to join, please contact Joyce by e mail jglencross@btinternet.com or by 'phone 01629 640134.

Various fund raising initiatives will be taking place over the coming months. Please support them!

Weddings, funerals, baptisms, civic occasions, school services, concerts etc would not be the same without the organ. Please support its restoration.

Dot Bushen

In 2004 my wife and I established our own management consultancy, aimed almost entirely at the charity sector. With 30 years' experience it was a market we knew and there seemed to be a considerable demand for people to troubleshoot a range of problems in fields as diverse as governance, fundraising, strategy and project assessment and evaluation.

We spent 15 years building a reputation for great work delivered on time and on budget. Almost all of our work was gained through word of mouth recommendation. And then Covid hit. This had the predictable effect of charities finding it very difficult to keep going which in turn, caused an almost overnight ending of all consultancy work.

By pure chance I was undertaking some consultancy work for Ashgate Hospicecare, in Chesterfield, and they were at the point when they wanted to appoint a single Director to be responsible for all of their income generation activity. I was fortunate enough to secure the position and now am privileged to head a team of 20 staff working in fundraising and 95 working in our 13 shops and 3 coffee shops. Together my team generates around £7.5m needed to provide compassionate, specialist palliative and end of life care, free of charge, to patients with a life-limiting illness and their families across North Derbyshire.

Many of you will know the fantastic work which Ashgate provides, and it is an honour to help ensure that as many people as possible can access that care, even in these difficult times. Ashgate's vision is 'that everyone in North Derbyshire with a life-limiting illness, and the people important to them, can make the most of every moment together and that they can die with dignity and comfort.' The demand for our services has never been greater - last year, we looked after 1,680 patients at home, 414 patients on our ward and supported 476 bereaved family members.

As well as just running the department which generates most of Ashgate's turnover, in 2020 I decided to try and raise some funds on my own. As a keen runner, I decided to try and run 12 marathons in 12 months and started in October last year. It has not been easy, and I have 'enjoyed' rain, sleet, mud and snow – as well as the odd good day. At the time of writing, I have completed 11 of the 12 and raised almost £6,000 including Gift Aid – more donations are very welcome at www.justgiving.com/peterstoneag

Wish me luck on the last one!

Peter Stone

Reflections on the Covid Crisis

A crisis is an opportunity for reflection. As we look back on the last 18 months, what reflections might we have about what has happened?

Does the crisis, for example, suggest new patterns of worship? We may not much like Zoom but it has become part of our lives. Worship on Zoom can include people who could not get to a place of worship. It can be more inclusive. Does this suggest a future of blended worship – simultaneously face to face and on Zoom?

What about other meetings? Quakers continued with evening meetings where various Friends told of their spiritual journeys. If these sessions had been at the Meeting House a dozen people might have attended. On Zoom there were often 20 or 25. Where does that point us?

The pandemic promotes wider reflections too. Five are on my mind.

1. For any of us to be safe, the whole world must be vaccinated. This is not altruism but self interest. We cannot just look after our immediate circle or indeed just our country if we want to protect ourselves. The crisis gives new answers to the old question 'Who is my neighbour?'
2. We are indeed members one of another. We are linked in patterns of dependency with all kinds of people in all kinds of places - people we have till now pretty much taken for granted. We cannot any longer do that.
3. Economic and social inequality has massive costs for all of us. The pattern of deaths from Covid reflects, and emphasises, the inequalities of our society. If you are poor or black and live in certain areas you are – quite simply – more likely to die from Covid. This is a stark illustration of the costs of inequality –but there are many more.
4. The pandemic has shone a light into various dark and shameful corners of our society - most obviously, perhaps, the many years of underfunding of the NHS and the cinderella status of the social care system for our most vulnerable fellow citizens. We need as a society to grasp the implications of what has been exposed.
5. The vulnerability of our world. A virus can, in a few weeks, disrupt and undermine the established economic and social order which most of us assumed was for ever stable. We now know it is inherently fragile and not to be taken for granted.

What are **your** reflections on the lessons we have learned or could and should have learned?

Paul Wilding (Bakewell Quaker Meeting).



Bakewell Quakers

Quakers affirm that every person has 'that of God' within them; that every person can directly experience God in their own way; that in our silent worship and in living in community we discover together what truth and love mean for us.

Our Meeting for Worship creates a space of gathered stillness. We come together where we can listen to the promptings of truth and love in our hearts, which we understand as rising from God. The silence may be broken by anyone who feels compelled to speak, pray or read.

While the Meeting House was closed, Bakewell Quakers met for Worship by Zoom every Sunday at 10.30 am. Over the summer we have continued to meet on Zoom each week but on second and fourth Sundays there has been a face-to-face meeting in the Meeting House in Bakewell. We have asked those attending to continue to wear face coverings.

From October we will return to face to face Meeting for Worship at the Meeting House each Sunday at 10.30 am. We will ask those attending to wear face coverings while moving around the building and will retain an element of social distancing. We are using the autumn to experiment with the best way of continuing to allow remote access to Meeting for Worship for those who are not able to attend the Meeting House in person.

If you would be interested in joining our Meeting for Worship remotely please use the contact form on our website for further information.

Gareth & Louise, Moorhall General Stores

We already knew Gareth and Louise as they had been delivering our daily newspaper for some time, in fair weather and foul, always on time. Then lockdown struck. Gareth called to tell us that they had closed down their very well stocked shop and were now serving customers from their front door. They would also be starting deliveries to customers living further afield. In the beginning we placed an order twice a week and we have not found anything they could not supply. Gareth did most of the deliveries at first – and it will be delivered always with a smile and a kind word or the odd joke and any local bits of news.

We ring in our order and deliveries are soon at our door. We are so lucky to have this sort of service and we will continue to use Gareth, Louise and the Moorhall store as long as possible. These are the type of people that the residents of Bakewell should continue to be supporting.

Tony & Betty Hird

When Lockdown hit us in March 2020 Gareth and Louise had to close their shop to protect Louise's father who lives with them. Gareth is a fireman so is classified as a front line essential worker - unable to claim any benefits but also unable to attend callouts because they were shielding Louise's Dad. They then decided that they could help others in isolation by doing home deliveries. This proved very successful and a lifeline for others who were also shielding. Not only were groceries delivered but always accompanied by a cheerful, friendly Gareth - nothing was too much trouble! Just as they seemed to be getting back on to an even keel they heard that their electricity bill is about to rise by £600 per month – they lurch from one disaster to another! How unfair that those who so willingly put others first find themselves fighting for survival. We have been so lucky to have had the support of the likes of Gareth during recent months – now it is our turn to support them to show our appreciation!



St Anne's church Over Haddon

St Anne's church celebrated Harvest Festival last Sunday. As you walk into our village church you are met by the glorious blaze of early Autumn colour from the flowers, fruit and foliage which decorate the windows, the font and the screen, and also, more subtly, the sweet, fruity, earthy scent of the season which they exude. It is a special festival for a special time of the year.

The Church's festival of Harvest – the celebration of the gifts of the earth, God's creation – has always been popular, especially in rural areas, because it resonated closely with the work, the lives and the everyday experiences, of local people. It is also a celebration of nature and as such has always been the “greenest” of the Church's festivals. This is one reason for its enduring popularity, and it has taken on a new and more urgent meaning recently as the reality, the intensity and the rapidity of global climate change has taken hold amongst the majority of the population, most especially amongst the young.

The facts about global warming have been known for more than 30 years, but powerful vested interests have fought to keep the status quo – usually for reasons of short-term financial gain – and too many people have simply been in denial, because it was much more comfortable than facing up to the need for drastic changes in lifestyle. But at last the evidence is too strong to resist, and practically all world leaders, and certainly all Church leaders, are calling for the changes that need to happen. Let us hope that we have time – and the necessary will – to carry them out.

The Cop26 Summit, to be held in Glasgow this November, will be one of the most important events of our lifetime and we should all pray, for the sake, especially, of our young, but also for the sake of God's Earth, that it is successful.

Roger Truscott

This year across the nation we were encouraged to mark 4th July was a day of thanksgiving – a day when we could say thank you to those who had helped us through the pandemic. Bakewell Churches together had planned to hold an event in Bakewell Park where community groups and local people could get together, acknowledge the sacrifices that had been made and also say thank you to those who had made a difference to us during the pandemic. The continuing need for social distancing meant that such a gathering could not be held but the opportunity to say thank you was not lost. Around Bakewell there were places where people could write a thank you for someone or something that they had been touched by during the pandemic. At Bath Gardens, Water Street, Moorhall Shop, the Methodist Church, Hassop Church and in the churchyard at All Saints many people wrote their thanks on brightly coloured cards, ribbons or luggage labels.

The thanks that were given were wide-ranging, there are too many to list them all individually. There were thanks for “front-line workers in Bakewell” and some local businesses were named: many people thanked Mark and Sharon at Bakewell Pet Supplies, one thank you said “your friendliness and community spirit is an inspiration to us all especially during 2020 and 2021”. Other thanks were offered for Gareth and Louise at Moorhall Shop, the staff at the Co-op, Matthew at Relish, Rico’s Pizza, the ladies at the Pudding Shop, Granby Café and Child 1st Nursery; thanks too for post, newspaper and milk deliveries. Many people thanked the NHS and specifically mentioned the paramedics, the porters and cleaners in hospitals, the local surgery, care home staff, St John’s ambulance workers and local pharmacies. “The brave, selfless police officers”, the fire service and members of the armed forces were included; the contributions of the rubbish collectors and the Green Team were gratefully recognised too. There were thanks for our schools and the teachers and for “truck drivers, cleaners, check out staff and the multitude of staff who carried on regardless.”

There were many thanks for family members and friends such as “thank you for my beautiful girls for making every day a day with a smile,” and “thank you to my son, daughter-in-law, granddaughter and great-granddaughter for keeping me sane” for “Mum and Dad being there when I needed you most” and for a friend “nagging me and looking after me through these difficult times”.

The thanks that had been given on Thank You Day were taken by the local churches and offered to God in our prayers.

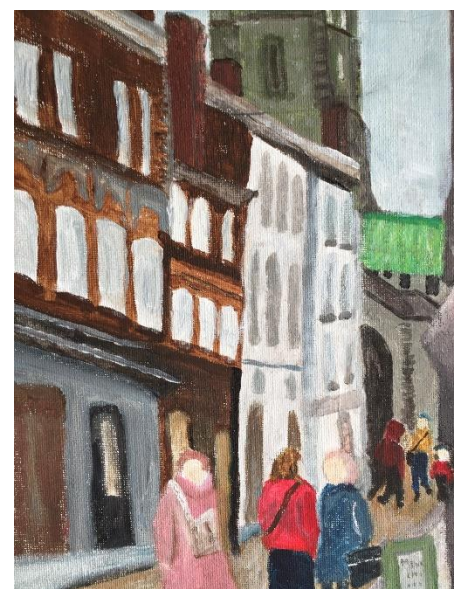
We would not want to re-live the last eighteen months but amidst all the difficulties and negative aspects of the pandemic, light has shone through the darkness and our spirits have been lifted by acts of generosity, kindly neighbours and the wider growth of community spirit. These are some of the things that we don’t want to lose. The pandemic should encourage us to have a new vision for the future, to discern what we really value and move on with hope and positivity.

Rev’d Brenda



The Bakewell Church Art Club

has moved from Monday to Tuesday starting at 10am for two hours. This is to avoid the Monday market and facilitates an opportunity to invite more members. The Art Club offers the opportunity to enjoy being creative, have a nice cuppa and enjoy a peaceful moment in time. In our Art Club there is no such thing as a bad picture. Very informal and helpful assistance is given. Come along and enjoy yourself!



Steve Taylor

All Saints Used Book Stall....Now Open!

As the nights are drawing in and we're spending a bit more time in doors it's maybe time to settle down with a cuppa and a good read? At All Saints Church we have 2 bookcases bursting with great titles ready to be enjoyed. Please come and have a browse. the majority of books are only £1! We have shelves full of fabulous novels plus autobiographies and some books on travel, cookery, gardening, religion and art as well as a small number of vintage classics and children's books. something for everyone! All proceeds are going to the Church Organ Fund.



The Great Realisation

(a poem written by Tom Foolery as a father telling a bedtime story to his young son)

"Tell me the one about the virus again, then I'll go to bed"
"But my boy, you're growing weary, sleepy thought about your head"
"That one's my favourite. Please, I promise, just once more"
"Okay, snuggle down my boy, but I know you all too well.
This story starts before then in a world I once would dwell.
It was a world of waste and wonder, of poverty and plenty,
Back before we understood why hindsight's 2020
You see, the people came up with companies to trade across all lands
But they swelled and got much bigger than we ever could have planned.
We always had our wants, but now, it got so quick
You could have anything you dreamed of, in a day and with a click.
We noticed families had stopped talking, that's not to say they never spoke
But the meaning must have melted and the work life balance broke.
And the children's eyes grew squarer and every toddler had a phone
They filtered out the imperfections, but amidst the noise, they felt alone.
And every day the skies grew thicker, 'til you couldn't see the stars
So, we flew in planes to find them, while down below we filled our cars.
We drove around all day in circles, we'd forgotten how to run
We swapped the grass for tarmac, shrunk the parks 'til there's none.
We filled the sea with plastic because our waste was never capped
Until, each day when you went fishing, you'd pull them out already wrapped.
And while we drank and smoked and gambled, our leaders taught us why
It's best not to upset the lobbies, more convenient to die.
But then in 2020 a new virus came our way
The governments reacted and told us all to hide away
But while we all were hidden, amidst the fear and all the while
The people dusted off their instincts, they remembered how to smile.
They started clapping to say thank you and calling up their mums
And while the car keys gathered dust, they would look forward to their runs
And with the skies less full of voyagers, the earth began to breathe
And the beaches bore new wildlife that scuttled off into the seas.
Some people started dancing, some were singing, some were baking
We'd grown so used to bad news, but some good news was in the making
And so when we found the cure and were allowed to go outside
We all preferred the world we found to the one we'd left behind
Old habits became extinct and they made way for the new
And every simple act of kindness was now given its due"
"But why did it take us so long to bring the people back together?"
"Well, sometimes you've got to get sick, my boy, before you start feeling better
Now lie down and dream of tomorrow and all the things that we can do
And, who knows, if you dream hard enough, maybe some of them will come true.
We now call it The Great Realisation and yes, since then there have been many
But that's the story of how it started and why hindsight's 2020"

An honest letter



It's been almost 10 years since **Birdsong** first opened its doors in Bakewell. That very first day is still very vivid in my mind. The journey since, has certainly not been easy but very rich in emotion. Excitement, reward, disappointment, and fatigue; all mixing in a very interesting pot of experiences.

I was asked to write something about me and the shop. I thought that this would be a challenge as well as a great opportunity to express my gratitude to this beautiful town and its people, who supported me and Birdsong all these years.

My connection to Britain and British culture started many years ago during my school and University years. This combined with the fact that my son has lived and worked here for a very long time, meant that Britain has always been a priority for myself and my husband. Family is very valuable to me and making sacrifices for my family has always been easy for me. I chose Bakewell to live in as it is a quintessentially British town with a closely knit and friendly community and people.

I came from a completely different environment, different country, a capital city, and a well-established job as a head interior decorator for two chain companies responsible for shop floor and window dressing across multiple premises. Equipped with this background, I naively believed that transitioning to a small place like Bakewell would be a relatively easy process.

Behind the scenes, running a shop is not at all glamorous as the work does not stop when the shop closes. Sourcing the right products from around the UK and the continent as well as displaying them in a way where every passer-by walking in front of my window can enjoy is not an easy task. Embracing good quality products with an identity and provenance, believing in them, and not turning to mass-produced items is not an easy task either.

But apart from my love for Birdsong there is a more important driving force that keeps me going. It is the people who helped me along the way by supporting me and my shop and sharing that love for unique and unusual quality decorations to bring into theirs and their loved ones' homes.

As such, I want to extend a very special thank you to the people in Bakewell who trusted and believed in me and gave me the belief and inspiration to apply and win multiple awards for my window displays.

Given the circumstances we are all currently experiencing I truly hope to continue this incredible journey with all cherished friends and customers by my side.

Thank all of you who stayed with me all these years.



Sincerely

Martha



HEALING AND WHOLENESS

On October 18th we celebrate the feast day of St Luke, the wrier of both the New Testament Gospel which bears his name and the Acts of the Apostles. By long tradition he is thought to have been a medical man and there is strong evidence for this. This set me thinking about the Christian attitude to healing.

There has been a strong growth in recent years in the ministry of healing and in many places regular services for healing are held. Are-we to-say that-anyone-can-be cured of anything provided that we, or they, believe that they will be and pray fervently enough for this to happen? Some people would say so. They would say that the bible teaching supports that and that there is sufficient evidence to show that sick folk are cured, or extraordinary things happen simply as a result of people believing that they can and will happen. I am bound to say that I cannot see it quite so simply myself.

If someone is suffering from an apparently terminal illness, I do not think it right to encourage them to expect a miraculous cure. There will be those who will disagree with me. They will say, 'surely that is exactly what we should expect and it is because we don't expect it that it doesn't happen'. I have no doubt that-God can cure anybody and that miraculous cures do occur, whether as a reward for faith or not we have no means of knowing. But healing and wholeness are gifts, they are not rewards. Why they come to some people and not to others we cannot tell.

By all means hope for a cure; by all means expect the gift of wholeness; but wholeness and healing are not the same thing. A person who has come to terms with the likelihood of his or her imminent death and who has been freed from its weight, is a more complete person than one carrying the guilt of thinking they have too little faith to effect their own cure.

It is something to do with how God works. The evidence overwhelmingly points to his working mainly through people. It is not that he can't intervene and work miracles or raise up life from the dead - it is just that he almost never does. He normally works through the skill and imagination, the commitment and dedication of ordinary, frail, fallible human beings.

If we are willing to be used to bring comfort and strength to those in need then he will use us. We should not expect him to do what we are: not prepared to help with. He has no hands but our hands.

Peter Bird.

*We wish you
A Happy Christmas and
a healthy, and peaceful New Year*

