

St Bees Priory Church

Rev'd Becky Gibbs, Priest in Charge

01946 822279 or 07460 990631

revbgibbs@outlook.com

Retired Clergy with the Bishop's Permission to Officiate:

The Rev'd Jim Marshall (01946 64259)

Rev'd Canon Jim Baker MBE and Rev'd Anne Baker (01946 822498)

The Rev'd David Cox

The Rev'd Canon Dr Trevor Park MBE

The Rev'd Richard Lee - 07841 398088

Sunday Services

10.30 a.m. every Sunday

On livestream only

Live Streamed via YouTube

See www.stbeespriory.org.uk for details

For weddings, baptisms, funerals and other religious occasions, please contact

01946 822279 or email enquiries@stbeespriory.org.uk

Priory Web Site - <http://www.stbeespriory.org.uk>

Hire of Priory & Halls

The church, Old College and New College halls are all available for hire for meetings, functions, lectures, concerts and recitals, etc. Contact booking officers for details.

Booking Officers

Ian & Rosalie McAndrew - 01946 822326 or imcandrew@stbees.org.uk

Priory Secretary - enquiries@stbeespriory.org.uk

Magazine production & distribution

This magazine is free but production costs are about 50p per copy. Contributions from the Parish Council and our advertisers, to whom we are most grateful, pay much of the costs. However this leaves the balance to be paid by the PCC. Donations to the Treasurer or your Magazine Distributor are most welcome.*

Circulation - 900 households in St Bees, Sandwith, Rottington, Linethwaite, Coulderton,



St Bees Parish A B C

Area Visitor / Good Neighbour Scheme	The parish is divided into 30 small areas each with an official Church Visitor whose task is to welcome and help people in the name of the Priory. Co-ordinator - M Westhead (822674).
Arts Society	meets every two months on the last Wednesday of the month at 8.00 p.m. Venue to be arranged. Details from Dilys Brownrigg (822584) or Chris Robson 822468.
Bellringing	The Priory has a ring of 8 bells. Those interested in ringing or learning to ring, contact D Sim, 31 Main Street. Practice Wednesdays, 8.00 pm. Sundays, ring at 10.00 a.m.
Brownies	Brownies meet on Tuesdays. Further details can be obtained from Leanne Cherry, contact 07805154408.
Cubs, Scouts, Beavers	Cubs for children aged 8 - 10, meet on Thursdays, 6.30 - 8pm. Beavers meet on Thursdays (term time) from 5.00 - 6.00 pm. Details from Graham Young. They meet in CCF Hut, St Bees School. Scouts meet at Egremont.
Choir	rehearses on Sundays at 9.30 a.m. Details from Frank Bowler, the Organist (Tel. 825307).
Churchwardens	are leading lay Church members who will be pleased to help and advise on church matters. Rosalie McAndrew (822326), Malcolm Lightfoot, Wendy Mellor, & Derek McGee
Councillors	Copeland - Cllr Jeffrey Hailes- 01946 814819, 7.00 to 9.00 p.m Monday to Friday. Cumbria - Cllr Chris Whiteside, 01946 67575 or 07798667678. E-mail chris.whiteside@cumbria.gov.uk
Electoral Roll	is the list of all church members qualified to vote at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting. E.R. forms are available in church
Fair Trade	Fair trade food and craft items and catalogues available from Deb Lee, who can deliver. Tel 823470 - lee535877@aol.com
Finance	The Church Treasurer is Norman Killip, Honeybee House, Seamill Lane, St Bees, who will explain our Christian Giving system.
First Responders	provide Basic Life Support in association with the Ambulance Service. Contact Andy Brock 823497
Football Association	Contacts - Seniors Tony Barnett 590640. Juniors (U-12) - Alec Morton 823992 & Alastair Billson.
Freemasons	St Bega Lodge meet 7:00 p.m. On 2nd Wed of each month, Village Hall. Details: 01946 64275 or www.cumbwestmasons.co.uk .
Friends of the Priory	assists in the conservation of the Priory and encourages interest in its historical and architectural heritage. Contact Philip Barratt or Tom Rice, Treasurer, Green Ghyll, Greendykes, Egremont.
Garden Society	Dtails from Mark Hewertson, (Tel. 01946 825468). Flower Show is held on the 3rd Saturday in August.

Guides	meet on Tuesdays from 7.00 – 8.30 p.m. Further details can be obtained from Amanda Smith or email stbeesguides@yahoo.com
History Group	works towards improving knowledge of local history. Lectures arranged periodically. Details from Chris Robson 822468.
Over 60's Club	meets in Hodgett's Club on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month: 2.00 - 4.00 p.m. Details - Gill Richardson Tel. 822394.
Parish Council	The Clerk to the Council is Mrs Jane Donaldson, East House, Couderton. Tel. (01946) 822560, e.mail pc-clerk@stbees.org.uk , who will answer queries on civil parish matters.
Parochial Church Council	meets 10 times a year. Elections for 20 members are held in March at the A.P.C.M. Its task is to spearhead the mission and ministry of the church in the Parish. PCC Secretary - Jon Mellor, jonmell@hotmail.co.uk
Playgroup (Toddler Group)	meets every Wednesday in term time only, from 9.30 - 11.30 a.m. in New College Hall, St Bees Priory. Details from Amy Linton - Email - amylinton1983@gmail.com
Pop-in Cafe	Every Thursday from 10.30 a.m. to 12.00 noon - Pop-in Cafe in New College Hall. Everyone welcome - Coffee and homemade cakes.
Pre-School	meets in the new building next to the Village School, All day, 5 days a week. For children of 2 years upwards. Contact on 823880.
Prayer Group	meets on Thursdays from 1.45 - 3.15 p.m. in New College Hall . All denominations welcome.
Priory Singers	rehearse in Old College Hall, Mondays at 8.00 p.m. Details from Frank Bowler. (Temp). (01946) 825307. <i>Not meeting at present.</i>
Priory Web Site	The Priory web site has up to date information on the ministry team, church services and activities. See http://www.stbeespriory.org.uk
Seagalls	meets first Tuesday of month at 7.30pm in the Seacote Hotel. Contact Lynne Smith - Tel. 822285 - or Judith 07772523742
St Bees Triers	Friendly running club for all abilities. Every Thursday 6pm & 7pm. Email running@triers.uk Tel. 823497 Web www.triers.co.uk
St Bees Youth Group	meets 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month at 7.00 p.m. in New College Hall. All youngsters of secondary school age are welcome. Contact organisers on 07518 394297.
Village School Association	exists to raise funds for the school and to foster links between school and community. Secretary - via School - Tel. 822392.
Village Hall	Management Committee administers Hodgett's Club. For details and booking contact Phil or Valerie Turpin (Tel 823772).
Village in Bloom	Details from Eileen B Todd, 14 Main Street. St.Bees. (Tel 822522).
Village Web Site	Information for inclusion should be sent to Ian McAndrew (822326) or imcandrew@stbees.org.uk Address is http://www.stbees.org.uk
Women's Institute	meets 2nd Monday of month at 7.30 p.m. usually in New College Hall (see program). Contact Roxanne Benson Tel 823137.

Calendar for April 2021

April

1	Maundy Thursday	5.30 p.m.	All-Age Holy Week service (Zoom)
2	Good Friday	12 noon – 1.00 p.m.	One Hour at the Cross (Live-streamed)
4	Easter Sunday	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion service at Priory
		4.00 p.m.	All Age Easter Party via Zoom
8	Thursday		Magazine copy date - Editor Anthony Payne
11	Sunday	9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
13	Tuesday	7.30 p.m.	PCC Meeting via Zoom
18	Sunday	10.30 a.m.	Holy Communion
19	Monday	6.30 p.m.	Parish Council Meeting (Cisco Webex)
23	Friday		Deadline for PCC Reports for APCM to Jon Mellor
25	Sunday	9.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
2—18			VSA Easter Competition for Community (see page 14)

From the Priory Registers

Christian Funerals at the Crematorium

8 March	Kenneth Bruce	Lakeland View, Nethertown
9 March	Fergus Stanley Kennedy (Gus)	4 Finkle Street, St Bees

Editor - May 2021 Magazine

The May 2021 issue of St Bees News will be edited by **Anthony Payne, Croeso, 83A Main Street, St Bees** who would appreciate all contributions not later than **Thursday 8 April** please.

Email: payne.croeso@btinternet.com Tel: 01946 822637

St Bees News

April 2021

Last September we adopted Benji, a Beagle cross puppy. Six months on Benji is doing well; he's survived two nights alone on the fells after escaping on a walk in December and he's recovered from a trip to the vets and two weeks wearing the "cone of shame". But Benji is a scent hound, and his nose will always lead him into all kinds of trouble.

We often walk on the beach and I let Benji off the lead, he loves to run and play with other dogs, and he always comes back. Unfortunately, when the tide's in, and we walk closer to the cliffs there's always a possibility he'll make a run for it, scramble up the crumbling slope and disappear over the top. And then, in my imagination, an enjoyable walk immediately becomes a more frightening experience. If I stay put will he ever come back? What if Benji leaps up excitedly on an unsuspecting elderly golfer and knocks him flying? Will I ever be able to safely let him off the lead again?

The feeling of fear and uncertainty in these moments is a familiar one, not just on walks on the beach. Benji disappearing over a cliff top sums up for me how much of this past year has felt – I can't see the road ahead, the future seems hidden from me, I am searching for hope but none can be found.

The Bible tells us that when Mary went to Jesus' tomb on the Sunday after he was crucified, she found it empty. Seeing two angels sitting there she said, "They have taken away my Lord and I don't know where they have laid him". Mary sounds confused, disorientated, grief stricken. Feelings that may be familiar to us this Easter after months of lockdown and loss.

A couple of times Benji has frightened the life out of me by disappearing up the cliff like a doggy Houdini. Resisting the urge to panic and chase after him, I've stayed put, whistle in one hand and treats in the other. Trusting that he will return. Eventually, he reappears, I spot the white tip of his tail first, then, before you can say "gravy bones", he's back at my feet looking up at me, pleadingly, with his big brown eyes.

In the moments of waiting, between the disappearance and the return, I am learning to breathe and believe all will be well. And again, I'm reminded that a life of faith is just like that. Waiting between the disappearance and the return. The disappointment and the answered prayer. The grief and the joy.

The author of the letter to the Hebrews writes "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen". I find these verses encouraging. Today I can't quite see Easter, and this has felt like a very long season of Lent, but even though I can't see it, I believe it's coming.

With prayers for a hope filled Happy Easter,

Love from Becky

Priory News

Church services for Holy Week & Easter - Priory open for Worship!

Holy Week services will be on livestream or zoom - but Easter Sunday service will be at the Priory when the church will be open again. Easter Joy! We hope to hear Frank on the organ but no singing as yet. Also the usual precautions of mask-wearing, distancing and sanitising will continue as long as necessary. Services will be as follows:-

- 28 March Palm Sunday 10.30 a.m. Online service
- 1 April Maundy Thursday 5.30 p.m.
All-Age Holy Week service - 'Preparing the Table' on Zoom
- 2 April Good Friday 12 noon to 1.00 p.m.
One Hour at the Cross - livestreamed
- 4 April Easter Sunday 10.30 am
Holy Communion service at Priory - also live streamed

Sunday services will be at alternate times –

1st and 3rd Sundays at 10.30 a.m. (4th and 18th April)

2nd and 4th Sundays at 9.00 a.m. (11th and 25th April)

Sunday Evening Prayer will continue on zoom at 6.00 pm.

Funerals at the Priory

As from 29 March the PCC has agreed to resume funerals in the Priory, but still restricted to 30 attendees. Social distancing and spaced seating will be required.

Private Prayer

The church will not be open for private prayer during the week, at this stage, and will be discussed at the next PCC meeting in April. A gradual approach to re-opening is preferred.

Annual Parochial Church meeting (APCM)

The APCM will be held on Sunday 23 May this year as the Diocese aims to return to its normal schedule.

Despite having submitted reports for the deferred 2020 APCM in October, secretaries of Priory organisations are asked to start writing their reports for the last 12 months. You may have little to report, but it is important for church documents to include a record of the pandemic year and of its impact on our society and parish. Whether your group or society had online meetings or phone conversations, or none, it is worth recording.

The PCC secretary Jon Mellor wishes to receive your reports by Sunday 23 April. Send to jonmell@hotmail.co.uk

Thank You

A huge thank you to everyone who has given money to the Priory, especially in these last twelve months. Sadly when we closed our doors to keep people safe last March our income stream reduced dramatically. We were concerned about how we would manage without the income from visitors, the collection plate and fundraising activities. Amazingly, we have managed to balance the books and this is in large part due to the incredible support of the congregation and wider village community. Thank you x

Parish Council News

Gus Kennedy – At its meeting on 15 March the Parish Council paid tribute to Gus Kennedy who had died in February. Gus had been an active member of the Parish Council since 2007 and had been Chairman of the Allotments Committee as well as being a member of the Finance Advisory Group and playing a part in many of the council's community events. He had been present at the February meeting and had been enthusiastic about plans for future projects. The common theme in the tributes from his fellow councillors was that Gus was 'a true gentleman' who will be much missed.

Planning Issues – The Parish Council was disappointed to hear that CBC had given outline approval for 3 new houses on Nethertown Rd despite the Parish Council's objections to developments outside the settlement boundary. The Parish Council would be seeking an urgent meeting with senior officers at CBC to understand the reasons for the decision and its implications.

Anti-social behaviour – There have been a number of reports recently of anti-social behaviour around the village. Not only are the incidents causing inconvenience and disturbance to residents but property has been damaged and people's safety put at risk. The Parish Council is working with the police to deal with the problems and we are asking everyone to be alert and report any incidents of anti-social behaviour to the police so that they have a full picture of the problem.

Beach Clean Station – The new beach clean station has been installed on the side wall of the toilets and has litter pickers and reusable bags, so anyone walking on the beach can do a '2 minute clean' as they walk and deposit any litter collected in one of the bins around the beach area.

Local Government Re-organisation – the government has launched a consultation on the various proposals for the future shape of local government in Cumbria. A number of different proposals have been put forward for one or two unitary authorities in the county to replace the current structure of Cumbria County Council and six district authorities. The consultation runs until 19 April. Details can be found at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposals-for-locally-led-reorganisation-of-local-government-in-cumbria-north-yorkshire-and-somerset

CBC Waste Calendars - CBC will not be delivering the usual printed waste calendars to every home this year. The calendar showing collection dates for all areas will be available on the CBC website (copeland.gov.uk) and can be printed off. Anyone who doesn't have internet access can ring 01946 598300 to request a printed copy.

Meetings – The Parish Council will be continuing to hold its monthly meeting remotely via Cisco Webex in April. The Annual Parish Meeting (a meeting of electors of the civil parish rather than a Parish Council meeting) will be held immediately before the monthly Parish Council meeting on Monday 19 April at 6.30pm. The details of how to join both meetings will be posted on the noticeboards and web-site nearer the time.

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In Memoriam

Gladys Lawler

It is with sadness we remember and give thanks for the life of Gladys Lawler of Seacroft Drive who died on 23 February after some weeks of illness. Her funeral service took place at St Mary's RC church Cleator on 10 March. A remarkable lady of great faith and fortitude, Gladys was well-known and much loved in the village who enjoyed being involved in the community. She was a devoted member of the church Prayer Group and supported many concerts and events at the Priory; and loved to attend Pop-In café weekly for a social chat. She continued delivering parish magazines in Seacroft Drive until she reluctantly retired. Gladys was a wise and wonderful lady with a store of delightful stories of her Primary school teaching years, related with her lovely Irish humour.

Our thoughts and prayers are with her daughter Anna and Dick, and their family Eve and Joe, and all her friends who mourn and miss her.

Pam Barnes

Friends of Pam Barnes formerly of St Bees will be saddened to hear of her death recently. She loved her home at the Chalet Park, and enjoyed hand-painting her lovely floral cards sold for charity and at Pop-In café. She was a skilled calligrapher for the Priory Book of Remembrance and a keen historian who transcribed the Census Archives in the Priory Heritage aisle. Lovingly remembered.

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An American Dies on Tomlin

March 27th, 1941. Thursday, and a dull, almost windless day, with low cloud and a thickening mist from the sea. As daylight faded on Tomlin, George Hayton finished his day's hedge-laying and set out for home. He was aware of a light plane nearby, glimpsing it briefly through the gloom. Flying inland, he thought, almost hedge-hopping. Such planes were not unusual here at that stage of the War.

In his field behind Rottington, Billy Cottam had been carting mangolds. He too heard the plane, though he did not actually see it. A minute or two later his horse – normally docile enough – began to behave strangely. She stopped in her tracks, head straining towards the top of the hill, and for a while refused to go on. She knew they were heading for home, but home seemed to lack its usual attraction.

Friday dawned clear and bright. Farmer William Jackson was out checking his stock. Around mid-morning something on Billy Cottam's distant field caught his eye: was it the Cottam lorry, bogged down? Approaching, he saw not a lorry but a crashed plane. He called Mr. Cottam from a lower field and together they rushed up the hill. But there was nothing to be done: the pilot was still in his seat but was very clearly dead. He would have died instantaneously from head injuries as the aircraft ploughed into the ground.

An inquest followed, and then interment in Whitehaven Cemetery. The pilot had been George Washington Holcomb, a 32 year old American from Miami. Having been a clerk in civilian life, and then a seed-salesman, he had joined the Air Transport Auxiliary, and was stationed now at the Ferry Pilots' Pool at White Waltham. On the day in question he was delivering a Miles Master 1, Serial No. T8822, from Reading to Prestwick.

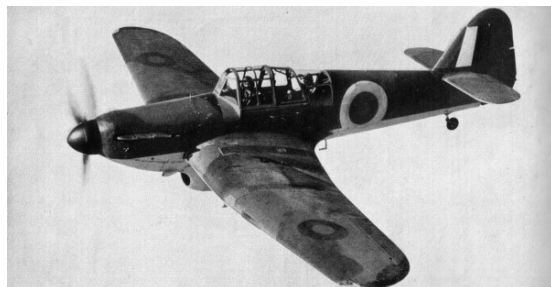
It so happened that George Holcomb's grave was close to that of the Cook family of Whitehaven.

Before long the Cooks began to tend the Holcomb grave as well as their own. This went on for several decades, Mrs. Cook's thoughtful act being continued by the next generation. Eventually a correspondence began between the Whitehaven and Miami families, culminating in George's brother Mark and his wife coming to Cumbria in 1987. They placed flowers on both graves, had a very happy meeting with the Cooks (who by then had been tending George's grave for forty-six years), and finally Billy Cottam took them to the very spot where George had died.

It has been suggested that some sort of commemorative marker be placed at the scene of the crash. But does anyone now know exactly where that is? The official record says merely "Tomlin, St. Bees Head", and there are some who think that it was somewhere along the cliff path. But that does not tally with the farmers' accounts above, and poor visibility on the higher ground seems the likeliest cause of the crash.. I wonder whether there is anyone around who could point out the spot for sure?

Bob Jopling, Village History Group

I am grateful to Mr.Keith Wheeler for the information on George Holcomb.



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Councillor Jeffrey Hailes

Telephone 01946 814819

Jeffrey.Hailes@copeland.gov.uk

County Councillor

Councillor Chris Whiteside

Telephone: 01946 67575 (home) or 07798 667678 (mobile)

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Remembering Edith Brennan (26.08.1931 - 08.02.2021)

My sister Edith, who died on 8th February, was always a farmer at heart. On leaving school she did a year's work experience on a farm in Ennerdale, before going to Newton Rigg Farm Institute at Penrith. She then had a series of jobs working on farms, before deciding in the mid-1950s that she would like to go to University.

She went to Kings College, Newcastle-on-Tyne (then part of Durham University), where she obtained a BSc in Agriculture. That led on to a post in the University Agricultural Department, which she held until her marriage in 1960. She and her husband Paul lived in Monmouthshire (where their daughters Jane and Sarah were born) and Leicestershire, before returning to Cumbria to farm near Carlisle. In more recent years, Edith farmed in Middletown, where she had a small flock of sheep, ponies, dogs (mostly Collies and Jack Russells) and cats. She continued there as long as she could, before arthritis and failing health forced her to retire.

Edith's funeral was held at Lamplugh Church as she wished, followed by burial in the family grave. She will be much missed by family and friends.

Mary Todd

Fergus Kennedy

Gus Kennedy, who sadly passed away on February 23rd at the West Cumberland Hospital, was an educator, parish councillor, village school governor, playwright, director, musician, quiz setter, book lover, and, above all, a gentleman and a good friend. He and Lesley moved to St Bees in 2005 and he was speedily involved in many areas of the community.

Gus will be remembered as a tireless Parish Councillor, who transformed the allotments with a carrot and stick policy whereby awards were given for well tended patches, although weeds were a capital offence. He also served on the finance and planning committees, and represented the Council on the village school board of governors. His pronouncements were always authoritative, and reflected his common sense.

He provided much-needed stability at the helm of the village hall committee, scripting and directing a village pantomime and three murder mysteries in the hall –all resounding successes. He led the committee with infectious enthusiasm. Preparation over several BBQs for wine tasting evenings at Hodgetts was always a labour of love, during which his bonhomie flowed as liberally as the vintages being trialled.

In 2010 he directed a memorable revival of the Bracelet of Bega at the Priory and his production of "All the King's Men" in the same venue marked the one hundredth anniversary of the Armistice. His emotionally charged script interwove narrative and plot with extracts from the first world war poets he knew and loved.

Gus made his mark in many other ways - playing guitar and singing at Oddfellows music nights, compiling quizzes for the NSPCC and the Village Hall, and joining other villagers on annual trips to Stratford, when he would reflect with them over a pint or two on that night's performance. A man with a thirst for knowledge and a love of reading, especially crime fiction, he could often be glimpsed devouring books in his chair in the window.

Gus leaves an immense gap in the community and in the lives of all those who were fortunate enough to know him. We extend our deepest sympathy to Lesley and to all his family.

Jon Mellor

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Village School News

It was absolutely wonderful to welcome all children back to school in March. There were lots of smiling faces on the first day back, and some very relieved parents! We've had a great month with everyone getting back into the swing of our Covid routines and ways of working. Children and staff alike have had a lovely time seeing each other again and catching up after what seems like an age. As always, it seemed like we'd never been away from school.

We will be spending this term consolidating learning from lockdown and ensuring the key knowledge and skills children need are embedded ready for the Summer term. This is a first for us all and we are working hard as a team within school and with local schools to ensure we provide our children with a quality education that will help them catch up with any lost learning during lockdown.

We look forward to seeing what the rest of the term brings and hopefully making more use of our outdoor spaces as the Spring weather improves. Fingers crossed!

I also need to convey some very sad news. Gus Kennedy, a very long-standing and treasured member of our Governing Body, recently passed away. Gus has supported school in so many ways over the years not just as a governor but as an advisor and coach to staff, and as an amazing drama teacher to our children. We will miss him hugely and I know you will join us in sending all our thoughts and prayers to his family.

Emma Sharp, Headteacher

St Bees Village School Association

Easter Decoration competition fundraiser. The village community are invited to decorate their window or doorway or make an Easter decoration for their garden. It should be on display over the Easter Break 2 - 18 April. Register your entry with the School office on 822392. A prize will be awarded to the "favourite". Our children are also going to be embarking on an equivalent to the "Coast to Coast" challenge so your displays will encourage them to get out and about and rack up the miles. More info and details on how to help us raise much needed funds will be circulated on posters or flyers to follow shortly.

Any covid restrictions should be adhered to.

Claire Mason, St Bees Village School Association

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92 Main Street

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<https://www.stbeesschool.co.uk/sports-and-facilities/swimming-pool/>

Another Grassroot!

Bob's Jottings - Bob Jopling's stories of traditions, events and characters of St Bees in the 1900s are 'selling like hot cakes' currently, and are being recommended on St Bees News & Views on facebook. Copies are on sale at the Post Office @ £7.00 each – worth every penny, as one reader says. It's a mystery where Bob finds all his information, but he produces a monthly anecdote for St Bees News, without fail, indeed without repetition, hesitation or deviation!.

Polite Notice – to all churchyard visitors and those tending graves – now that grass-cutting has started in the churchyard, could all Christmas wreaths and decorations please be removed? The wire wreaths can cause damage to the mowers (men and machines).

Priory Flower Organiser – The Priory is seeking offers for the role of Flower Organiser, since Mary Branford retired from this voluntary role at Christmas. If you would be interested in co-ordinating the rota of flower-arrangers, and wish to know more, please contact Rosalie McAndrew on 01946 822326.

Fergus Kennedy - Lesley, Jonathan and all his family have been touched by the outpouring of love and respect for Gus in recent sad days. The cards, flowers, prayers and practical help continue to be a source of great comfort. Thank you.

Opportunity at St Bees News!

St Bees news is currently recruiting for a monthly editor. This onerous post requires you to work for the community twice a year. We hope you are interested in volunteering.

The role of monthly editor comes round twice a year (when we have our full quota of editors). The editor collates information from various sources - emails, phone messages, etc. and then emails this information to the McAndrews. They do the desktop editing and send it to Printpoint for publishing. Printpoint will then deliver the copies to you. Your role would be to count the magazines out into bundles and distribute these to the door to the 20 or so door-to-door distributors.

For more information contact any of the current editors or Ian McAndrew - imcandrew@stbees.org.uk

St Bees WI News

I hope you are all keeping well and busy. There is plenty of work to do around the garden at the moment, lots of cutting back and clearing all the winter debris allowing the spring flowers and foliage to come through. It is so nice to see colour in the garden after the long winter and it does make you feel better. The Vaccine rollout is going really well now, and it won't be long before we can meet outdoors in small groups, have a much needed haircut and do some shopping other than food, medicines and essentials! However, we still need to follow the Government Guidelines face masks, hand sanitiser and social distance, keep it up everyone and it won't be long before restrictions are lifted and we can return to a 'new normal'. Hope you all have a nice Easter. Further WI details from Roxanne Benson, Tel 823137, or www.facebook.com/St-Bees-WI.

St Bees School

BACK TO THE FUTURE AT ST BEES SCHOOL

So it's back to school life after such a long break, right? Let's see how things are going... how are the students (and the staff) feeling? What is it like to be back? What does it mean for the future?

The past few months have meant a steep learning curve for all as a normal school environment was exchanged for a home school environment. The lonely vigil behind the computer screen with limited social interaction week after week. Getting to grips with the intricacies of a Microsoft Teams virtual platform with its camera and microphone, its break-out rooms and the eagle-eye of the teacher who sees all. Sending classwork and homework via email. The need for rapid and successful adaptation to a completely new framework for learning.

Now that all this has become second nature, everything is once more up in the air. Back to school! Back to the old rhythms we thought we had forgotten. So how are students and staff reacting?

Students were understandably nervous at first. Excited, but nervous. After a short period of adaptation to the old routines (tempered with tight COVID regulations), the sense of relief was tangible. Yes, earlier starts were resuming, and staff needed to work on coaxing the students out of the cosy home-school life they had become used to and back to real life, but the joy of learning was clear to see. The Science department was fired up with conducting all the lab-based experiments to make up for the lack of practical, hands-on experience during lockdown. Open-plan, enquiry-based learning with its quick-fire questioning could resume in a dynamic classroom environment.

What about our international students, still back at home, compromised by travel and quarantine regulations? They are still linked through online learning, but we know for a fact that that they too are "champing at the bit" to return to school at St Bees.

By the end of the first week, it was as if lockdown had never occurred. The new normal has put down its roots. Importantly, do our students actually enjoy being back at school? The answer is a resounding 'yes'. It is as if the intrinsic value of school life – tarnished through years of routine – has somehow been burnished by lockdown, and now shines bright in the early springtime sunshine.

Roger Sinnett - Headmaster

The 100 Word Stories

The request for 100 Word Stories has been very successful with several being submitted - too many to publish this month so more will appear in the May issue. So here are a few picked at random. There is still time to submit them, though we can't guarantee a publishing date! Fortunately no prizes - trying to select the best would be a difficult task!

The Operation

My wife, who is a doctor, has appeared concerned every time she looked at me. Sometimes she started to say something but obviously she was worried about doing so. As each day passed I became more anxious. Finally I plucked up the courage to ask – “What’s wrong? ‘I’m sorry dear, but I’m afraid it has to be dealt with. I will need to remove it’”.

So the day dawned. She laid out her instruments neatly on the table. I sat down and she applied drapes round the offending area.

Then she started cutting my hair.

Ian McAndrew

A let-down

She arrived slightly early and sat down at the table which had been booked for two, looking expectantly around.

The bunch of red roses was obviously the recognition sign, and she smiled as he handed them over. “How beautiful!” she said, her pleasure clear to see.

However, while they talked, she secretly looked at a photograph in her handbag beneath the table, slightly puzzled.

Eventually she showed him the photo and asked: “Who is this?”

“Ah yes”, he smirked, “I had more hair twenty years ago.”

The roses lay there as the door slammed behind her.

Anthony Payne

Catering

Thank you madam. Yes, we always prefer to leave the best to the end, No, there was no problem, we always keep a reserve supply and yes, it was quite special. Thank you, you are very kind.

Reuben! What the hell is going on? I know where it came from, I just do not believe it. Get him here, pronto. No, I don't want to give him a job. I want to meet this guy and hear what he has to say. On second thoughts, Cana Catering could do with a miracle every now and again.

Chris Robson

The Visitors

She didn't know why someone put these yellow gloves on her hands. She didn't know why someone put this uncomfortable mask over her mouth and nose. She knew something was wrong though, something was desperately wrong.

Nobody came to see her anymore, no coast to coast walkers, no cyclists, no families out for a picnic. She knew people were still here though; she could see them behind the windows of their houses. Everyone looked forlorn. Some wore horrible masks.

Why? she demanded, her sandstone lips crumbling with emotion. In reply, the wind howled around her old friend the Priory.

Kelvin Knight

O Happy Day!

Shaking as he shaved, Roger cut himself with the new blade he'd braved, on this, his wedding day: then he slipped on his new shiny-soled shoes, banging & bruising his head. More shoe trouble: trying to put a higher gloss on them but succeeding only in blacking the white shirt cuffs. 'Must have been that extra double Scotch at the 'stag night' he mumbled, reminding him of his sore head & queasy stomach.

'Is it worth it?' he moaned.

And it took him an age with the neckwear he'd got – simply knotting the tie before tying the knot.

Neville Denson

Shoes

Old shoes in wardrobe had me hop, skip, jumping down memory lane. Clarks sandals for school, and tap shoes for church pantomimes. Sensible ones for a few years until silver dancing slippers worn at local dance halls. Old enough to totter along on stilettos - Dad said would ruin my feet. Memories galore of wearing out boots hiking around Derbyshire and Lake District. Progression from elderly to old, style diminished as comfort became paramount.

Now blissful sedate stroll wearing comfy shoes with frequent pauses to admire snowdrops shivering in the wind and daffodil buds bursting to wave in the breeze.

Doreen Broadbent

Grassroots

Cornerstone Christian Bookshop in Church Street – re-opens from Monday 12 April, Mondays to Saturdays, 10.00 am to 2.00 pm.(to 1.00 pm on Wednesdays). New displays of books and Bibles, cards and gifts, jewellery and journals, CDs and church supplies.

Phone on 01946 695460 or email www.cornerstonecbswhitehaven.co.uk

Elizabeth Cotes has moved to Kirklands Care Home, Sullart Street, Cockermouth.

CA13 OEE. This home will be more suitable for her physical and mental well-being and she very much looks forward to welcoming friends when eventually restrictions are lifted. Her daughters Katy Heap and Sarah Dakin, and her son Marcus, are most grateful to their mother's friends from St Bees and from the church family at the Priory for their love and care over the years.

Elections deferred to May 2022 - Due to local government re-organisation plans, and consultations re Cumbria being divided into 2 unitary authorities, NO county Council elections will be held this year, but postponed until May 2022. However there will be an election of the Police & Crime Commissioner held on Thursday 6 May this year – in New College Hall, following the required Risk Assessment by Copeland officials.

Congratulations to Katy Taylor-Hamilton – she set out to walk 21K. steps to celebrate World Down's Syndrome Day, now aiming to achieve 63K. steps by 21 March and raising £370 so far for Down's Syndrome Association – only 7,400 steps to go to date! And as Katy is shielding, her walking is all done in her home and garden. What an amazing champion!