

# Stillington News

Issue 208

Website: [www.stillingtonvillage.org](http://www.stillingtonvillage.org)

April 2012

## STILLINGTON CHARITY FOR RELIEF IN NEED

The Annual General Meeting of the above will be held at the Sports Club on

**Monday, 23rd April at 7.30pm**

This meeting is open to all

## STILLINGTON GARDENING CLUB

Annual General Meeting  
Wednesday, April 25  
7.30pm  
Village Hall

~  
**Summer Baskets & Containers**  
by  
Richard Benwell

## EASTER MONDAY April 9

**Cream Teas  
2pm—4.30pm**

**at Stillington Chapel**

In support of Stillington Church and Chapel

*Come to help or just to meet friends*

## St Nicholas Church, Stillington

**The Annual Parochial Church Meeting will take place on Monday April 16<sup>th</sup> 2012 at 7pm in the Church.**

This important meeting is when the Churchwardens, PCC members, Deanery Synod representatives, Parish Readers and Sidesmen are elected and when the Accounts are accepted for last year.

Anyone on the Electoral Roll of the Church can vote at this meeting. If you would like to be on the Electoral Roll, please contact Michael Turvey ☎ 810473.

## EASTER IN STILLINGTON

	Date	Time	Service	Where
Palm Sunday	1 April	10.00 am	Village Praise	St Nicholas
	1 April	6.30 pm	Evening Worship	Chapel
Maundy Thursday	5 April	7.00pm	Last Supper – Village Holy Communion	Chapel
Good Friday	6 April	10.00am – 12.30pm	Benefice Family Messy Church	Sutton Church Room
	6 April	1.30pm – 3.00pm	At the foot of the cross Readings and meditations Drop in at any time	St Nicholas
	6 April	2.30pm	Watch at the Cross – meditative worship	Sutton Church
Easter Saturday	7 April	7.30 for 8pm	Benefice Easter Vigil	St Nicholas
Easter Day	8 April	9.30am	Village Easter Eucharist	St Nicholas
	8 April	6.30pm	Easter Day Songs of Praise	Chapel

## QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE IN STILLINGTON

### Stop Press:

The Duck Race has been brought forward to Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April.

Details to follow.



## STILLINGTON HAS TALENT

We know you are out there!

What can you do? Can you sing, dance, juggle, play a musical instrument, recite poetry, even be a stand-up comedian?

We are having a get together on Tuesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at 6pm in the Village Hall—all ages are welcome.

Please, please come along and amaze us with your talents.

If you have any queries, contact Janet Martin ☎ 01347 822981

## CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

The annual collection for the Children's Society will take place from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> April. Collectors will be calling between these dates. Your support would, as in the past, be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Welcome to the April 2012 edition of Stillington News. **Copy deadline for our May issue is Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> April.**

Contributions by e-mail [copy to both please]:  
Howard Williams: [howardw1151@btinternet.com](mailto:howardw1151@btinternet.com)  
Hazel Ratcliffe: [ratcliffe528@btinternet.com](mailto:ratcliffe528@btinternet.com)

Or hand in your contribution to be put in the 'Stillington News' envelope behind the counter at the shop. Any photos by e-mail only please, and, preferably, in black and white.

## PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

(a full set of the minutes can be seen at the Post Office)

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7th March  
2012 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

### TREES

Now that the faculty has been obtained, it is hoped that the work will be completed by the end of March 2012

### REPAIR OF KERBS AND FOOTPATHS

NYCC have been contacted to ascertain when they expect to commence the work on the kerbs and footpaths

### GRASS CUTTING 2012

Three Contractors were asked to tender, Farm and Land Services (present contractor), Dean Services and Wild Wood Landscapes. After discussion, taking into account of cost and quality of service, it was agreed to offer the contract to Farm and Land Services for 2012. In addition it was agreed that the Parish Council should take over from NYCC the responsibility for the cutting of Banks and Verges. This contract was given to Farm and Land Services. NYCC have agreed to make a contribution for this service.

*These minutes are in draft until ratified by the*



### WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Local farmer, Andy Chapman, gave a fascinating talk this month about 'Helping Farmland Birds'. He explained the methods he uses on a farm at Whenby and showed slides of the species typically seen in a farmland habitat. Planting special crop strips, making scrapes and ponds, leaving verges and hedges uncut were some of the methods he uses to help these birds. He also takes surveys on various local farms on behalf of the RSPB. From the results of the surveys he told us about how various species were doing both locally as well as nationally. He was justifiably proud of the increase in various nationally decreasing species as a result of the methods used on his farm. He was a most enthusiastic speaker and everyone carried on asking questions while we had refreshments. Hopefully we can ask him back to advise us on how to attract birds into our gardens too.

Next month we have a planning meeting to organise a North Yorkshire East Federation Ramble around Stillington followed by a lunch in the Village Hall. The meeting starts at 7.15pm on 11<sup>th</sup> April.

EH

### 200 CLUB ~ Drawn by Mrs C Cookman

- 1st: Mr & Mrs H Tomlinson
- 2nd: Mr & Mrs P Tomlinson
- 3rd: Mrs S. Gall

Extra Copies of this issue can be found in Stillington Stores

### STILLINGTON BOWLING CLUB:

We are on schedule—weather permitting—to officially open the Green on Sunday, 15th April—play commencing at 2pm.

This is the opportunity for members to start their season and also for newcomers to come along and try their hand at bowls [assistance will be provided]. A supply of bowls is available for beginners. Flat, unridged-soled shoes have to

### STILLINGTON WANDERERS



This month we were again favoured with excellent spring sunshine at least for the time we were out walking. First we drove to Bulmer and walked out to Thornton-le-Clay and on to Foston village turning left by the church and returning across fields to Bulmer.

Next we parked at the top of Caulkley's Bank and walked down to West Ness where we were severely tempted to buy very appealing chocolate cakes and other mouth watering items of farm home produce. Then on along the banks of the Rye (is there anywhere so picturesque?) towards Nunnington Hall, into the village and back to the cars along the ridge top. En-route we saw the expected profusion of daffodils, some primroses, just a few violets and one solitary cowslip.

Next walks are planned for 2nd, 16th and 30th April. Meet white bear 09.30 Info ☎ 810047 HCS

### TENNIS

The new season is about to start with social events, junior play and coaching all available.

Club afternoon sessions continue on Saturdays from 2pm and all standards are very welcome. Home match nights will be on Tuesdays and some Wednesdays this year; match practices start Sunday evenings at 6pm from 15<sup>th</sup> April.

For more info. contact Ken Stirk ☎ 810531; Jenny Jones ☎ 810805 or Graham Cookman ☎ 810047

### FUNNY TRICKS

Funny Tricks magician, Ian Keable, managed to amuse and bemuse a rapt audience at the Village Hall on 16th March with an excellent evening's entertainment of unbelievable magic, which got more complex and amazing during the second half. Many thanks to all the willing [?] participants, the ladies who baked/brewed/served, the raffle organisers and the 'crew' who shifted everything around. Thanks also to staff at the Village Store for selling the tickets.

Rural Arts Shows are not cheap to put on but we have enjoyed a half-cost subsidy with help from the Arts Council and Hambleton District Council to bring first-rate entertainment into our village and made a small profit for Hall funds along the way.

YM

### FLOWER ROTA

- Apr 1 LENT
- Apr 8 M Law
- Apr 15 B Milburn
- Apr 22 R Bresnen
- Apr 29 M Price

## THE COUNTRYSIDE IN MARCH

March certainly came in like a lamb but will it go out like a lion, as the old proverb has it? Today, 19th March, I have had to cut the lawn as it was looking so unkempt and unsightly. This is a first—cutting grass in March! However, green grass in the right place is welcome and will be appreciated by the ewes when they finish eating roots.

We were amused recently when three hen pheasants came to the pond to drink. The first walked to the edge of the water and was confronted by an irate water hen 'you're not drinking my water'. All three tried separately to drink and each was sent packing and eventually off walked the thirsty pheasants. I have been told that water hens would not let duck nest on our pond and I didn't nearly believe it. However, last year when a teal duck landed it was soon away with a flea in its ear, so there may be some truth in what I had been told.

The spring wild flowers are coming out with the sunshine. Yesterday, we saw an area of white violets growing at the edge of a wood and a bank of yellow primroses on a newish road embankment. Celandines are opening their shiny petals to the sun. These early flowering plants along with many more beauties will flower and set seed before the more vigorous grasses and undergrowth really get going. They are happy to be robbed of light etc. till next spring and they will thrive in that environment for many years. Amongst the most persistent is our native bluebell—sometimes you will see them growing where there is no

annually; of course they are welcome and a joy to the eye.

At the weekend, a lady brought a frond of cypress to ask what the purple bobbles were on the underside of the fringe. She was surprised to learn that these were the flowers of the tree and would become small round cones later in the year. One of the areas of our observation which is very often overlooked is the flowering of our trees. Some bear catkins like the hazel that we are all familiar with, but the poplar also bears large catkins, some grey and the black poplar large crimson ones. Some trees bear flowers in clusters often of green or yellow. One of these, the sycamore, is loved by the bees and smells full of nectar and the whole tree is a buzz of busy bees. The oak has trailing flowers that come with the new leaf, whereas the ash has strange crown-like balls of clinker - before the leaves—that are swelling at the present time. Of course, some trees are spectacular in flower like cherry, apple, horse chestnut and, of course, the thorn, both blackthorn and whitethorn with its wonderful May blossom. Last year we saw a large tulip tree with its large orangey-green flowers and pointed it out to people who were surprised not only at its flowers but at the tree itself.

So here is an exercise for you—look and see and learn as the trees around you enter their flowering stages.

p.s. I nearly forgot! We saw a white stoat as we picnicked in Littondale last week and were entertained by its bobbing in and out of a stone wall for a few minutes.

## STILLINGTON GARDENING CLUB - February 29, 2012

Following a warm and sunny day, members gathered in the Village Hall, a good sized group, ready to listen to our guest speaker Tim Lewis talk on the joy of growing orchids.

Jim Coates, our Chairman, welcomed members and reminded everyone of the vacancies on the committee for a Programme Secretary and a Show Secretary and the proposed trip on June 6th to Littlethorpe Manor.

A hearty welcome was then given to Tim who pointed out that he would answer questions throughout his talk. He warned us that collecting orchids can become an obsession and told us that the family Orchidaceae has 900 genera and 25,000 species. Orchids, often regarded as fragile or difficult, are now a feature of garden centre displays. Most cultivated orchids are epiphytes—they grow on trees—but are not parasitic. Epiphytic orchids occur in warm, humid rainforests and absorb moisture from the air and food from decaying leaf litter in the tree axils in the wild. Species orchids are disappearing rapidly because of deforestation. The orchid has three petals plus one specialised lip called a labium, fertilisation is by insect. There are five main type of orchid.

Orchids can be grown in the home and many are first grown in Holland. The 'moth orchid' or phalaenopsis can be grown successfully in the home. Time discussed in detail the aspect, watering, feeding, humidity, flowering and re-potting and the general requirements of all orchids.

Tim brought with him a lovely selection of orchids from his own greenhouse and discussed each one in turn, which could be grown in the home, conservatory or greenhouse and the temperatures needed for survival. He gave members lots of tips on do's and don'ts.

I think that quite a few members will be having a go at growing orchids at home thanks to Tim's enthusiasm. DMcM

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

1. Something to consider if you have a GPS - don't put your direct home address in it. Reports of GPS systems stolen from vehicles (when left in town/ car parks etc) & thieves use it to trace victim's home to steal goods.
2. Mobile Phone contact list: thieves can use this to obtain personal & financial information. A thief, in possession of a stolen phone, can text 'Mum', 'Hubby' etc in the contact list and request reminders of card pin number etc. If sensitive information is being asked through texts, confirm by calling back.
3. Following recent concerns raised by West Yorkshire Police relating to the vulnerability of Euro cylinder style locks used mainly on uPVC doors, North Yorkshire Police has issued advice on the following site:  
<http://www.northyorkshire.police.uk/index.aspx?articleid=8291>
4. Beware of telephone calls purporting to be from a Microsoft Support Centre (or other supplier) suggesting they can resolve some technical issues identified with your computer. Microsoft and other such companies do not make unsolicited calls. If you receive such a call, please hang up immediately and do not provide any information.
5. Police Contact: to report non-emergency incidents call ( 101. In emergencies always dial 999.

## VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Members of the Committee were surprised and saddened to hear that our Chairman, Jim McLaughlin, has decided to resign for personal reasons. At the Committee Meeting on February 21st, thanks were expressed for the work he has done and regret at this leaving.

We are, therefore, in urgent need of a safe pair of hands belonging to someone with a heart for this community and the ability to guide us through the continuation of our Village Hall refurbishment. We know you are out there; a solid group of Committee Members are waiting to work with you. Please contact Michael Turvey on ( 810473 for further information or to offer your services.

YM

## Re-roofing Project

Before Christmas it was suggested that residents of the village might like to share in this part of the Village Hall refurbishment by purchasing one or more roof tiles [£1 per tile]. So far, over £600 has already been donated and it is hoped that this welcome news may spur more people to contribute a little. Some grant funding is available so we hope there will soon be sufficient money to pay for the re-tiling. Should we be fortunate enough to have surplus funds then the extra will be put towards another part of the planned refurbishment. A simple plan showing the tiles purchased will be displayed on the Hall door notice-board so we can all see how the project is progressing.

## QUIZZES AT SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB

The March quiz made £321 for Stillington Under Fives with the winning team of Janet and David Martin, Vicky Harland and David Hargreaves.

Thank you to everyone who has joined in this season. The quizzes restart Friday, October 5th 2012.

## THANK YOU

Anne North would like to thank friends for their huge support and kindness following John's death. Flowers, cards, visits, messages and hugs have helped so much.

Adryenne Hope would like to thank everyone for their kindnesses after her recent fall.

Pat & Robin Conway would like to thank everyone who came to their coffee morning on Thursday 15th March. A special thank you to those who provided cakes and raffle prizes, just under £250 was raised for the Jubilee Fund, well done !

## CRICKET CLUB:

The cricket club are looking for match ball sponsors for the forthcoming season which starts on the 21st April. It is very expensive to run a cricket team— the cricket club has to buy new cricket balls each year to comply with league rules. This amounts to hundreds of pounds each season as we have to supply a new ball each week and, with two teams playing each week from April 21st to September 8th, that amounts to 21 games in total and that is just the league matches. A new cricket ball costs £20.

If anybody wishes to support/sponsor the Cricket Club in this way please contact Belinda Wells ☎01347 811180 or just call at Moonfleet, South Back Lane, Stillington.

## TEA DANCES:

The welcome return of Elizabeth Harrison will take place on Sunday, 1st April and will provide easy sequence dance music at the Sports Club from 3pm until 6pm with excellent refreshments and raffle all for £4.50 per person.

The Tea Dances will be held on the first Sunday in each month for the rest of the year with music played by Elizabeth, Mark Stafford and Philip Randle. All welcome.

## FIRST AID

Eleven people attended a six hour first aid course over two evenings of the 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February at Stillington Primary School. The first aid course was conducted by the Red Cross and was most enjoyable. The eleven successful candidates were Tracey Moss, Belinda and Timothy Wells, Caroline Parker, Toby Wells, Judy & Lizzie Brookes, Philip Swiers, Philip Hartley, Mathew Wood and David Hargreaves. Skills learned will hopefully help those involved deal with any emergencies in a more capable manner. We are grateful to Stillington Primary School for providing a wonderful venue and Stillington Parish Council for subsidising part of the costs.

DH



**PLAYGROUP:** Wednesdays and Thursdays in term time: 9:15am to 3:20pm at Stillington School. Aged 2 years to school age. The first session of this half term will be on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

**BABY AND TODDLER GROUP:** Tuesdays in term time: 10am to 11:30am at the Village Hall. From birth to school age. Drop in at any session with your child. The first session of this half term will be on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2012.

Contact: 07779 414226; Website [www.stillington-under-fives.org.uk](http://www.stillington-under-fives.org.uk)

## ST NICHOLAS CHURCH CLEANING:

Apr 2 - Apr 14	Mrs Bresnen & Mrs M North
Apr 16 - Apr 28	Mrs Nash & Mrs M North
Apr 30—May 12	Mr & Mrs Law

## SCHOOL NEWS

It is hard to believe but the end of the second term of this school year is approaching fast.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF LITERACY:** since September, great emphasis has been placed on improving literacy, on giving our pupils the absolutely vital skills of learning to read and write fluently and clearly.

**'THE BIG WRITE':** every Friday, the Junior pupils are required to do 45 minutes of concentrated writing on a given topic. In an age of 'soundbites' and 'text-speak' this gives them the opportunity to develop and express their ideas in some depth and learn how to order their work in sentences and paragraphs with correct punctuation. The teachers are very pleased with the progress which has been made by pupils of all abilities and intend to continue with this work.

**'THANK YOU' TO MRS SUE THOMPSON:** who visits the school every week to hear the Infant children read and has kindly donated a lovely selection of books to our new school

**WORLD BOOK DAY ~ THURSDAY, MARCH 1ST:** we celebrated this day by asking the children to come to school dressed as a character from their favourite book, or bring a 'prop' related to their book, or just bring their book to school. Sharing books which give us real enjoyment, with others, is one of the greatest pleasures of reading.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF MATHEMATICS:** a recent report on the state of maths in Britain suggests that many adults barely have the mathematical ability of an 11 year-old so schools are aware that we must pay great attention to this subject to prepare our pupils for life. Parents can also play their part here by learning how maths is taught in schools today [not always by traditional methods] and by improving their own skills to empower themselves to help their children with their homework. To this end, there will be a Maths Evening in school on Wednesday, April 18th to which all parents are invited. Congratulations to one of our pupils who has achieved his Gold Mathsletics Certificate.

**SPORTS ROUND UP:** now the days are getting lighter we have resumed some of our sports activities. Cluster netball and football matches have already taken place with more to be played in the competition. Good luck to our teams. Very well done to two of our pupils who took part in the schools' Cross-Country Finals on Tuesday, February 28th and came 7th and 26th respectively.

**STILLINGTON SCHOOL'S SPORT RELIEF MILE—FRIDAY, MARCH 23RD:** everyone in school will take part in this on the Sports Club field. For the fittest and most energetic this could be a practice for the village Sports Relief Mile the following Sunday involving their whole family—and the dog.

**ST PATRICK'S DAY CEILIDH—FRIDAY, MARCH 9TH:** thank you to everyone who supported this evening organised by FOSS; the proceeds will be announced later.

**CAN YOU HELP?:** once again, we are collecting Sainsbury's and TESCO's Supermarket vouchers which can be exchanged for valuable resources for the school. Vouchers can be dropped into the boxes outside the school office.

Mrs Tanya Clavin, Chair of FOSS, is collecting shoes we no longer require, to send to UNICEF. The school has a collection point and Mrs Gough in the office is willing to accept donations.

**ARRANGEMENTS FOR EASTER:** the **Easter Service** will be held in the Church at 9.30am on Wednesday, March 28th. Parents, relatives and friends of the school are welcome to attend.

The **Egg Decorating Competition with an Olympic Games theme**, organised by FOSS, will be judged on the last day of term—Friday, March 30th at 9.15am.

THE SCHOOL WILL RE-OPEN FOR THE SUMMER TERM ON TUESDAY, APRIL 17TH.

## WEATHER

### RAINFALL:

February continued very dry, with a total rainfall for the month of only 22mm, about half the normal value. The last such dry February was in 2008 when the total was 21mm. Statistically, with the extra day, one can expect totals in a leap year to be between 3 and 4% higher than in a normal year.

The first half of March had 16mm early in the month only to be followed by nine rainless days, so unless the next ten days are very wet we look like experiencing another dry month.

### TEMPERATURE

February was a month of extremes, with a cold first half followed by an unseasonably mild second half. The lowest temperature I recorded was -8.6°C on the 7<sup>th</sup> and the highest was 16.9°C on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

The mild weather has continued through the first half of March, with the temperature in my garden topping 20°C on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

MT



## STILLINGTON UNDER FIVES

On Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April we will be taking part in a "Toddle Waddle" to raise money for the Meningitis Trust, a charity which helps those suffering from the impact of meningitis. Over half of all cases of meningitis occur in under 5s so we thought it would be a good way to raise awareness of the disease and raise some money to help other families too. The children will be taking part in a sponsored walk through the village in the morning. Please feel free to sponsor any children you know who will be attending or sponsor the group at Stillington Post Office & Stores. The Meningitis Trust will receive 90% of the money raised; the remaining 10% will go to our group.

Advance notice: Playgroup is holding an Open Day on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May. We would like to invite both present and prospective families to come along and enjoy some of the exciting activities available on a typical day at Playgroup.

The Village Quiz in March raised £321 for our funds. We would like to thank everyone involved in making the evening such a success and everyone who attended! We had a great time (and learnt a few things too).

# VILLAGE DIARY : APRIL 2012

All events at the Sports Club unless otherwise noted

1 Tea Dance; Ladies Squash v R.I.; Pools Double 2nd round	11 Pool: B v Horseshoe; A Away to Horseshoe; VH W.I. 7.15pm	21 Cricket I v Castleford 12.30pm; Dominoes 8.30pm
2 Dominoes [Away] v New Inn VH Bowls Match 7pm	12 Zumba Class 7-8pm	22
3	13	23 Charity AGM 7.30pm; Dominoes v Huby Club Away
4 Pool : A v Commercial A; B Away to Cottage 8.30pm VH Jubilee Planning Mtg 6.30pm; Parish Council 7.30pm	14 Dominoes 8.30pm	24 VH Baby & Toddler Group 10am
5 Zumba Class 7-8pm	15	25 Pool Team K.O.; VH Gardening Club 7.30pm
6	16 Dominoes v Station	26 Zumba Class 7-8pm
7 Dominoes 8.30pm	17 Monthly Committee Mtg 8pm; VH Baby & Toddler Group 10am	27
8	18 Pool: A v Three Tuns; B v Mended Drum	28 Cricket II v Dringhouses 12.30pm
9 Dominoes v Angel 9pm	19 Zumba Class 7-8pm VH W.I. Ramble & Lunch	29
10 VH Stillington Has Talent Mtg 6pm	20	30 Dominoes v Old Black Bull Away
	MAY	2 Pool B v Three Tuns; Cricket Pilmoor 6.15pm

## CHURCH SERVICES

### METHODIST CHURCH

Minister: Rev. Ruth Duck ☎ 821460  
 Stewards: Robin Jackson ☎ 810250  
 Bob Brown ☎ 810543  
 Sally Gall ☎ 810374

Services & Preachers:  
 See Page 1 for Easter Services

Apr	15	Evening Service Mr Edward Cooke	6.30pm
Apr	22	Evening Service Rev Francis Nabieu	6.30pm
Apr	29	Communion Service Rev Ruth Duck	6.30pm
May	6	Chapel Anniversary Rev Ruth Duck	6.30pm

### ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST RC EASINGWOLD

Priest: Fr. Leo Chamberlain ☎ 821295  
 Sunday Mass: 8.30am & 10.30am  
 Vigil Mass: 6.00pm, Saturday  
 Confessions: 5.00—5.30pm Saturday  
 Website: www.stjohneasingwold.ampleforth.org.uk

### ST. NICHOLAS

Vicar: Rev. Chris Ellis ☎ 810251  
 Church: Rita Bresnen ☎ 810024  
 Wardens: Margaret Price ☎ 811262  
 e-mail: margaretp1@aol.com

See Page 1 for Easter Services

Apr	15	Morning Prayer	9.30am
Apr	22	Holy Communion—C. W	9.30am

### ST. MARY MARTON

Services in a Celtic Tradition

Apr	1	Palm Sunday Meditative Worship	6.00pm
Apr	15	Eucharist Followed by AGM	6.00pm
Apr	29	Benefice Eucharist With Bishop Martin	6.00pm

## FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

### RIP

9th March Cedric John Frost  
 14th March Morwenna Torlesse

### BAPTISM

25th March Alexia Elizabeth Beeforth & Jessica Rose Hall

## EASTER MESSAGE

A young couple were at the jewellers, and the girl asked to see some gold crosses. On being shown the first tray, she shook her head, saying, 'Not one of those – I want one with a little man on it.'

What does Good Friday mean to you? Just another day at work; the beginning of a Bank holiday weekend and the inevitable chaos on the roads; the hope of some spring like weather; perhaps the first break since Christmas; or even the prospect of Hot Cross Buns?

For many Good Friday is a truly special and holy day as we take the opportunity to consider the 'man on the cross' – Jesus, and the reason why the day is described as 'Good'. On the face of it, it should be called Bad Friday. After all, a man was unjustly executed in the most painful way possible – crucifixion. Christians believe that Jesus, the Son of God, went willingly to the cross knowing that in some amazing way, his death would mean life for millions of people across the ages. As Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice out of love for humankind, reconciliation with God became possible. A 'Good' day for you and I.

Easter Sunday is a day that everyone can recognize as 'Good' too. Jesus raised from the dead – confirmation that the words he spoke 'I am the Resurrection and the Life', were true. His resurrection also gives us hope for the future. As a caterpillar becomes a butterfly so we too will be transformed in a new life.

So – whether you wear a cross with a man on it, or an empty one, remember the Jesus who died, and the Jesus who is alive – and give thanks.

Wishing you a 'good Easter' .

**Ruth Duck**