

# NOT-THE-NEWSLETTER !

January 2021 A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL

*Dear Villagers,*

**In a normal January, The Osmotherley Messenger takes a break but as you do not need to be told, this is NOT a normal January and so we thought that this might be a time to send out a rather different publication. It is filled, not with news and diary dates, but with articles and quizzes, nature notes and gardening tips and, we hope, other items of interest.**

**We have had fun putting this broadsheet together and on the way have learnt a lot about the village and some of the residents. We hope you will enjoy reading it. In view of current restrictions, the Takeaway Soup Project has been put on hold, but it is hoped that some sort of service will be resumed in February. Keep an eye out for further announcements.**

**EDITORS:** Laura Goldsack and Angela Thomsett

## A Wild Winter's Day Around Osmotherley

by Steve Rogers

Before dawn, the "too-wit too-woo" calls of up to three pairs of Tawny Owls may be heard staking territory to begin their nesting in January and looking South-East the planet Venus may be seen. A robin may be singing and in the afternoon it is worth investigating any tree where the clucking alarm of blackbirds may indicate a roosting Tawny Owl.

Birds start feeding before sunrise so that is a good time to put out food. Fat balls and sunflower hearts are most popular. Feeders need regular cleaning to avoid spreading diseases. Many birds will come for garden food, berried shrubs and trees including the less common species like Tree Sparrows, Marsh Tits, Bullfinch, Nuthatch and Great Spotted Woodpecker. In Winter, possibly Siskin and Long-tailed Tit may be joined by Redwing, Fieldfare and even Waxwing. Sparrowhawk also hunt birds on feeders - a spectacular sight and all part of the natural world, and If you are lucky you may see a Barn Owl at dusk.

There will be daily migrations of corvids and gulls between their roosts and feeding sites. Buzzards (listen for their

"pee-uu" calls) are often seen being harried by Crows. A walk around Cod Beck Reservoir may turn up Crossbill, Tree Creeper, Siskin, Goldcrest and even Woodcock in the trees and Goosander plus the usual Greylag Goose and Mallard on the water. Near Sheepwash, Stonechat often perch on top of vegetation. On the beck, bobbing Dipper sometimes sport their dapper "tuxedo" plumage.

Apart from Grey Squirrel, mammals are always less obvious. Roe Deer are abundant but secretive. Hedgehogs, still fairly common here, may come out to feed if it is mild (cat biscuits plus water is the right food to offer them). Wood mice are abundant in gardens and will eat bird food leftovers. If you see rats it is best to stop all feeding for at least a month. Please do not use poison or traps as you will likely kill other wildlife or pets.

To complete a wild day, Winter night skies are spectacular with Orion and Sirius, Gemini, Taurus and the Seven Sisters being at their very best. Whatever you do, it is always worth gazing over the garden or taking a local walk. The lists above are not definitive!

## Jobs to do in the winter garden

- Rake up wet leaves on lawns and borders where slugs can hide.
- Wet leaves will decompose very quickly in a leafmould pile.
- Check ties on young trees to make sure they are secure and tie back any stems of wall shrubs that may be blown around and broken in the wind.
- There is just time to plant the last of the tulips.
- Check apples in storage and discard any bad ones.
- Apple trees can be pruned now – but leave plums and gages until the Summer.
- It's a good time to browse through the seed catalogues and send off your orders.

## I never knew that about Osmotherley...

The village has the remains of a bear hog-back. This was a 10th Century gravestone, a rectangular block represent-ing a long low house with a roof pattern resembling tiles. The gables of the "house" are clasped by a bear with its arms extended along the roof. The fragments are found in the porch of the church.

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Osmotherley's textile industry of linen weaving and pro-cessing accounted for a rapid rise in population from 534 in 1801 to 1087 in 1831. At one time, over 300 people were employed at the Cote Ghyll linen mill. The village had an open drain running down the main street (North End) and this probably contributed to the serious outbreak of typhus in 1825. The open drain was covered over in 1852.

Osmotherley was a notorious haunt for smugglers, an important base where contraband such as brandy and gin brought over the moors could be handed on. Jenny Brewster's Spring at the top of Oakdale was probably where the exchange took place.

Solomon's Temple, behind the Chequers Inn was a house built by an eccentric, Solomon Metcalfe, in 1812. Its walls were decorated with images of the apostles, the sun, moon and stars.

At one time the pews in the nave of the church were re-served for various people of the parish and could be bought and sold. Some larger pews in the chancel were for the family of Thimbleby Lodge (now Hall) and for the Bovilles of Walk Mill.

## The Osmotherley Q&A

### Jane Bamber

**How long have you lived in Osmotherley? What is your earliest memory of the village?**

For 29 years. The first time I visited the village, we were looking for somewhere to live near Northallerton. The sun was shining, people were sitting outside and it looked like somewhere you would go on holiday – not somewhere you could actually live!

**Tell us something about yourself, perhaps something which most people don't know?**

I lived in Barcelona and Rome.

**Do you have a favourite walk, view of place in the village or surrounding area?**

It is impossible to choose a favourite view because there are just too many. I love walking down the Valley Steps to the bridge. I have many happy memories of

playing in the river with the children and dogs and it's our favourite Morning Mile route too.

**What would your friends say is your best quality?**

I tell a good story.

**What is the one thing which instantly makes your day better?**

Cake.

**What do you value most about living here?**

Because Osmotherley is used to having lots of visitors, it is a welcoming and friendly place and I love how easy it is to go for a walk or a run in such beautiful surroundings.

**Who or what makes you laugh?**

The children at school are very funny – sometimes unintentionally, so my Osmotherley Village Theatre training comes in very handy at times when I need to keep a straight face.

**If you could learn something new, what would it be?**

I would love to learn to ski.

**Where is your favourite place in the world?**

I can't decide, Barcelona or Rome.

**What is your most treasured possession?**

Two photo albums with pictures of lovely holidays with our boys when they were little.

### Quick Fire Round

**Dog or cat?** dog  
**Roller skates or pogo stick?** roller skates  
**Birthday or Christmas?** Christmas

**Are you a washing line or kite string?** Washing line

**Mountains or ocean?** mountains

**Night or day?** day  
**Book or film?** book

### Ava Rae - aged 8

**How long have you lived in Osmotherley? What is your earliest memory of the village?**

I have lived in Osmotherley for 8 years. My earliest memory is being in our old house and my bedroom was the smallest.

**Tell us something about yourself, perhaps something which most people don't know?**

I have swimming lessons on a Wednesday.

**Do you have a favourite walk, view of place in the village or surrounding area?**

I like walking around Cod Beck.

**What would your friends say is your best quality?**

My friends think that I am funny.

**What is the one thing which instantly makes your day better?**

My puppy jumping on me when I wake up.

**What do you value most about living here?**

It's a very pretty place to live.

**Who or what makes you laugh?**

My dogs make me laugh.

**If you could learn something new, what would it be?**

I would like to learn to speak German.

**Where is your favourite place in the world?** Thailand

**What is your most treasured possession?**

My dogs

### Quick Fire Round

**Dog or cat?** Dog  
**Roller skates or pogo stick?** Pogo stick  
**Birthday or Christmas?** Christmas

**Are you a washing line or kite string?** Kite string

**Mountains or ocean?** Ocean

**Night or day?** Day  
**Book or film?** Film

**Inside or outside?** Outside

**Spring or Autumn?** Spring

**Northallerton or Stokesley?** Stokesley

## Village Quiz

1. What links a Lancashire football team with an Essex town and theatre land?

2. What is the area of the North York Moors National Park?

a) 550 sq miles  
b) 650 sq miles  
c) 750 sq miles  
d) 850 sq miles

3. What river does the Cod Beck flow into?

a) The Tees  
b) The Wiske  
c) The Ure  
d) The Swale  
e) The Leven

4. What was conducted at Walk Mill (now Boville Park)?

a) Bleaching linen  
b) Corn grinding  
c) Timber

5. Who was on the throne when Thompson's shop was opened?

a) George II  
b) George III  
c) George IV

6. The A 684 starts from Osmotherley and ends at:

a) Leyburn  
b) Kendal  
c) Sedburgh  
d) Northallerton

7. The Queen Catherine is named after:

a) Catherine of Aragon  
b) Catherine Howard  
c) Catherine Parr  
d) Catherine of Braganza

8. What village feature was restored in 2011?

9. For ages Osmotherley and Thimbleby residents have been expecting this to fall any day. What?

10. When was the Cod Beck reservoir built?

a) 1955  
b) 1949  
c) 1953

11. What was the main product of Tunncliffe's sawmill used for?

12. What was the name of Osmotherley's old-fashioned village bobby (he wrote a book about his time in Osmotherley)?

13. What part of the village was called the Irish Battery?

14. Whilst visiting Osmotherley in 1755 who wrote in his journal about the violent breakup of the cliff at Sutton Bank?

15. What was the fate of Wildgoose Nest?

16. How many of these foxes are flying at this B&B?

a) 5  
b) 7  
c) 9

17. What links: Sneck Yate Limekiln House Slastones Soloman's Temple?

18. What was washed away on 8 Aug 1857?

19. Clog making was a local industry. What wood was used to make clogs?

20. Mount Grace belonged to what Order?

a) Cistercian  
b) Carthusian  
c) Dominican  
d) Benedictine

21. Osmotherley once had its own village bus service "the primrose and brown" from 1926 to 1964. Which brothers ran the service?

22. What is the meaning of the word 'LYKE'?

23. Which of these was NOT mined around Osmotherley?

a) Alum  
b) Quarry stone  
c) Coal  
d) Iron ore  
e) Jet

24. What is the height of the centre of Osmotherley above sea level?

a) 145 metres  
b) 155 metres  
c) 165 metres  
d) 175 metres  
e) 185 metres

25. Name the vicar who along with 4 of his children died of a plague around 1842.

26. The Kings Head pub (now closed) at the bottom of Clack Bank was originally named after a Duke, Who?

27. The Cod Beck comes from the Celtic word Coed. What does Coed mean?

28. List as many houses and cottages in the extended village which have names or part of their names of flowers, shrubs or trees (there are at least 10)

**answers are on the back page ...**

# The Osmotherley Q&A

## Tony Hobbs

**How long have you lived in Osmotherley? What is your earliest memory of the village?**

For 32 years. We moved here from Birmingham following my appointment to a post at Eggescliffe School. My earliest memory is driving from Swainby, past the reservoir to view The Old Police House. The village looked idyllic. We had lunch outside the Queen Catherine and spoke to Tom Green the Landlord.

**Tell us something about yourself, perhaps something which most people don't know?**

I grew up in a small village just outside Canterbury. I am the second of 4 brothers and I have 4 sons too. My brothers and I attended a Naval Boarding school in Suffolk. As a member of the school choir I once sang in St Paul's Cathedral.

**Do you have a favourite walk, view of place in the village or surrounding area?**

One of the joys of Osmotherley is being able to choose a walk to match energy level and time available. I particularly enjoy walks to the reservoir forest, Rocky Plains and Green Lane.

**What would your friends say is your best quality?**

What a tricky question! Perhaps my calm and steady nature.

**What is the one thing which instantly makes your day better?**

Blue sky and sunshine.

**What do you value most about living here?**

The amazing physical environment and the sense of community within the village.

**Who or what makes you laugh?**

Listening to my four sons talk and joke around when they get together! 'Monty Python', 'Would I lie to you?' and 'I'm sorry I haven't a clue'.

**If you could learn something new, what would it be?**

Falconry

**Where is your favourite place in the world?**

The Adisham Road, Bramling near Canterbury with its woods, chalk pit and fields. It was our playground when we were growing up! Closely followed by New Zealand where my youngest son Ralph lives with his two children

**What is your most treasured possession?**

My Cuddy Lane field and barn.

**Quick Fire Round**

**Dog or cat?** dog

**Roller skates or pogo stick?** Roller skates

**Birthday or Christmas?** Christmas

**Are you a washing line or kite string?** Washing line

**Mountains or ocean?** Ocean

**Night or day?** Day

**Book or film?** Book

**Inside or outside?** Outside

**Spring or Autumn?** Spring

**Northallerton or Stokesley?** Northallerton

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

With the latest lockdown now in place, please remember that if you are being affected by the restrictions in any way and need some help, there are volunteers available in the village - just ask.

You can contact volunteers either directly by posting a request on the Osmotherley (Village) Facebook Group or ringing one of the co-ordinators listed here, who will identify the best person to complete your request. All the volunteers are local.

**Telephone co-ordinators:**

Eileen Webb 883897  
Cairine/Alison 883826  
Chris Edmonds 883408  
Bethany Bilby 07511189681  
Heather Rowe 07751 881330

## The Largest Room

In my house there is a cathedral dedicated to me.

Where dreams have no limitations and thoughts, undisturbed, run free-

Where plans take shape and hopes can grow within the cooling stone. Where reflection can be a companion  
In a space built for being alone.

So where is this temple of solitude,

possessed by a privileged few?

I'm sure that you've guessed. This chapel of rest

Is otherwise known as the loo.

**by Brian Holder**

24. (c) 165 metres  
25. Rev. Burgess (plaque on the wall in the church)  
26. Duke William, Duke of Cumberland  
27. A wood  
28. Jasmine, Ivy, Briardale, Applegarth, Oakdale, Oakgarth, Muscari, Lilac, Rose, Red Briers, Elmet

15. Flooded under the  
16. (a) 5 (Vane House)  
17. Drove Road  
18. Linen Mill at Cote  
19. Alder  
20. (b) Carthusian  
21. Robert and Harry Crowe  
22. A corpse  
23. (d) iron ore

9. The Hanging Stone  
10. (c) 1953  
11. Pit props  
12. PC Norman  
13. Row of cottages in Barningham  
14. John Wesley  
15. (c) 1953  
16. (a) 5 (Vane House)  
17. Drove Road  
18. Linen Mill at Cote  
19. Alder  
20. (b) Carthusian  
21. Robert and Harry Crowe  
22. A corpse  
23. (d) iron ore

## QUIZ ANSWERS

1. The centre of the village  
2. (a) 550 sq. miles  
3. (d) The Swale  
4. (a) Bleaching linen  
5. (b) George III  
6. (b) Kendal  
7. (a) Catherine of Aragon  
8. The Pinfold