

The Bridge



Produced by Elmore Parish Council
Issue Number 39, August 2024

Pudding and Quiz Night

Saturday 7th September

Elmore Village Hall

7pm for 7.30pm

Three Rounds of Homemade Desserts

Quiz teams of up to 6 people

**(come and join others to form a team or bring a
team - all welcome)**

£12 per person

Pre-booking only:

farmerlongney@hotmail.com

01452 720544

Cash bar and raffle

In aid of Elmore Village Hall

From the Editor

At the time of writing summer has just appeared (somewhat late) so I hear you say ‘Global warming. What’s that?’ Anyway there is lots of sport to watch with the Olympics and the remaining Test Match series. Of course there’s also **The Bridge** to read so I hope you enjoy this issue. Overall your Editor doesn’t get much feedback or reaction but a recent article about The Malvern Hills was an exception as was a series of articles about field names in Elmore a few years back. It’s strange what floats your boat.

As the country discusses beefing up its defence spending in the face of international threats and the prospect of a convicted criminal in the White House this issue has a fascinating and thought provoking article about a previous war. Read on.

The War in the Far East during WW 2

This year marked the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings (4th June 1944) but the war in Europe did not end until some 11 months later with the surrender of Germany in Berlin on 5th May 1945, now celebrated as VE Day (Victory in Europe Day). However, the war in the Far East still raged on past this date with the British fighting hard to push the Japanese out of Burma. The British mark the victory over Japan on the day that Japan surrendered, which is commemorated as VJ Day (Victory over Japan Day) on 15th August 1945, the day on which Japan announced their surrender. The USA commemorate the final end of the war in the Far East with the formal signing of the surrender documents by Japan on USS Missouri on 2nd September 1945.

The British 14th Army, which fought the Burma Campaign, is sometimes referred to as the ‘Forgotten Army’. The 14th Army comprised many troops from Commonwealth countries, including The British Indian Army, as well as many units from West and East Africa. Both my parents served in India and Burma during WW2 and my wife’s father was sent with his East African Armoured Car Squadron

to Burma from East Africa to be part of 14th Army too. Burma was far away and did not impinge on the British public like the Battle of Britain and the endless bombing raids on London, Coventry and other cities in the UK. This quote, attributed to Gen Slim, sums up the public view back home at the time:

‘When you go home don’t worry about what to tell your loved ones and friends about service in Asia. No one will know where you were or where it is if you do. You are, and will remain ‘The Forgotten Army’.

Unlike the war in Europe, the war in the Far East didn’t start until the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour on 7th December 1941, by which time the allies in Europe had suffered the ignominy of the retreat from Dunkirk in June of 1940 and the Battle of Britain between July and October of 1940.

The Japanese attacks on China had begun in 1937, some years before their entry into WW2. On the 8th December 1941, the day after their attack on Pearl Harbour, Japan attacked the British Protectorate of Hong Kong as well as Thailand and Malaya. The small British Garrison on Hong Kong was not able to hold out for very long against the massive Japanese assault and the Island surrendered after 17 days on 25th December with 10,000 British and Indian Army military personnel taken prisoner. The Japanese separated the prisoners and shipped many of them to Yokohama in Japan to work as slave labour in their shipyards. I know, my uncle was one of them! He had only arrived in Hong Kong in the September of 1941 having left his pregnant wife and three sons in UK. He died in the POW Camp in Yokohama on 25th October 1942 having never seen his fourth son. My uncle is buried in the Commonwealth War Cemetery in Yokohama along with the 334 other Allied soldiers who died there as POWs.

The British military resistance in Malaya lasted marginally longer than Hong Kong with the surrender of Singapore on 15th February 1942 following the Japanese invasion into Northern Malaya from French Indo-China (now Vietnam). The Japanese quickly overcame the forces on the Malayan peninsula and reached Singapore on 8th February.

Life for the civilian population of Hong Kong during the 3 years and eight months of Japanese occupation was far from easy; at least 10,000

civilians were executed by the Japanese while many others suffered rape, torture or mutilation. Enforced deportation took place and anyone who was considered to be unemployed was deported to mainland China to work as slave labour. Food was in short supply and strict rationing was introduced with many dying of starvation. As a result of the deportations, death and lack of food, the population of Hong Kong dwindled to 38% of its pre-war numbers; from 1.6 million in 1941 to 600,000 by 1944.

Stories abound about the infamous Changi Prison on Singapore Island. The old prison, originally established by the British was used to house 3,000 civilians when its original capacity was a fifth of that number. The nearby military barracks was used as a POW Camp to house some 50,000 allied military personnel. (The fortunes of the British, Australian, Dutch and New Zealander POWs held in this camp were used as the basis for James Clavell's novel 'King Rat'). About 850 POWs died in the Camp, which was a relatively low casualty rate when compared with the average death rate of 27% in all other Japanese POW Camps for allied prisoners. However, many others died after being transferred from Changi to work on the infamous Burma Railway.

Although the Allies' 14th Army had made good progress in recapturing most of Burma by 2nd May 1945, including the key city of Rangoon, the crucial turning point in the war in the Far East was the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6th and 9th August 1945 respectively. There has been a lot of debate since then over the use of nuclear weapons against Japanese civilians. Historical evidence has noted that Japan was offered the chance to surrender on 26th July 1945 and accept the terms of the 'Potsdam Declaration'. This offer was rejected by Japan 3 days later on 29th July. After the first bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on 6th August, the US President, Truman, again offered Japan the chance of surrender or face 'a rain of ruin from the air'. This offer was once again ignored and resulted in the second bomb being dropped on Nagasaki. Despite the destruction of both cities, it still took the Japanese further 6 days to surrender.

There is no doubt that the official lines of communication between the USA and Japan during the 'fog of war' were difficult and the

misunderstanding of messages as well as poor briefing of the Japanese Emperor by his military staff may have caused confusion as to the USA's real intentions before they dropped the atomic bombs and the subsequent delay in the Japanese surrender. It should also be noted that the USA also 'fire-bombed' 67 Japanese cities between March and July of 1945 as a precursor to the dropping of the 'A' Bombs in August of that year.

The bombs used on the Japanese cities were all incendiary cluster devices, which caused devastation, destroying on average over 50% of each of these cities. The devastation caused in Tokyo alone was horrific as most of the houses were wooden, so the fires spread quickly and over 100,000 of Tokyo's civilian inhabitants died in one night. It is a salutary thought that if the Allies had lost the War then most of the US military and political figures involved in the fire-bombing of Japan, would no doubt have been tried as war criminals!

An interesting historical point is that the formal Peace Treaty between Japan and most of the Allies was not actually signed until 1952 and the Treaty with the Soviet Union didn't happen until 1956. A contrast of cultural norms has been evident in the Japanese refusal to apologise for their actions against POWs, the civilians in the countries they occupied and especially the thousands of 'comfort women' who were used as sex-slaves to provide gratification for the Japanese soldiers. It has been estimated that the number of these sex-slaves exceeded 50,000, most of whom were Korean women, including a significant number of minors. In those days, the Japanese followed a culture that considered that anyone who surrendered was a coward and not worthy of respect and anyone they conquered was considered a slave. The idea that a Japanese soldier should surrender rather than die fighting was totally alien to their military philosophy and indoctrination.

During the War the Japanese Emperor had assumed a mantle of a deity in the eyes of the Japanese people, which had led to fanaticism and the rise of the Kamikazi pilots, of whom 3,800 died carrying out their missions. Interestingly, although the Japanese Emperor, Hirohito, supposedly approved all military decisions during the war, he was intentionally excluded from the war crimes tribunal.

On 15th and 16th August 1945, after the Japanese surrender, some Japanese officers and soldiers, devastated by what they felt as the ignominy of surrender, committed suicide. In the confusion at the end of the war in the Far East over 100 American prisoners of war were also murdered by their Japanese guards. In addition, many Australian and British prisoners of war were murdered at the prison camps at both Ranau and Sandakan in Borneo by the Imperial Japanese Army, probably as reprisals and also in an attempt to cover up the atrocities committed against the prisoners during their incarceration. At Batu Lintang Camp, also in Borneo, death orders were found which proposed the murder of some 2,000 POWs and civilian internees on 15th September 1945, but the camp was liberated four days before these orders were due to be carried out. Although Japan surrendered on 15th August, Japanese forces remained in combat with Soviet forces on several fronts for two weeks following VJ-Day which emphasises the independence exercised by the Japanese military who seemed to ignore political direction.

The film about the Bridge over the River Kwai immortalised the British POW involvement in the construction of the Burma Railway from Bangkok to Rangoon. Some 12,600 Allied POW's died of disease, malnutrition and executions during the construction of the infamous railway but a little known fact is that around 100,000 local civilians also died during the construction of the same railway. When Japan invaded Thailand on 8th December 1941, the Thai government quickly capitulated and their reward was the enslavement of over 200,000 Thai civilians to aid the Japanese war effort. Civilians from Malaya and Korea were also shipped to the area to work on the infamous railway.

During the Burma Campaign between October 1943 and November 1944, the Allies suffered 29,300 military casualties while the Japanese lost over 71,000 military personnel. When these casualty figures are compared with the British losses alone during the whole of WW2, which totalled 383,700 military deaths and 66,200 civilian deaths, it is hardly surprising that the war in the Far East is not regarded as hugely significant in British national history. However, even these British casualty figures pale into insignificance when compared to the Russian

losses, with over 8.6 million military and 4.5 million civilian deaths during WW2. John Field

This shocking account shows the truth of a quotation attributed to Sir Winston Churchill that ‘Jaw Jaw is better than War War’. Ed

News from St John the Baptist Elmore

Regular services at Elmore Church are, 9.30am Holy Communion 1st and 3rd Sundays each month (with choir), 4pm Evensong 2nd and 4th Sundays. There is no service at Elmore on a 5th Sunday.

Thank you to all who attended the concert at Longney, and those at the annual Elmore Chamber Music Festival. I'm sure you'll join me in congratulating all who took part. We are very blessed to have such a high standard of choral and instrumental music in this Benefice.

We are holding another **Coffee Morning** for the village, in the Church on Saturday 17 August, 10-12noon. Another chance to look round this Grade 1 listed building, and the Churchyard, and to see the Church records we have on site. All welcome!

Harvest Festival will be celebrated on Sunday 6 October (9.30am) with the Harvest Supper the following Saturday evening (12th) in the village hall. Tickets £18 pp from Jill Hurran 01452 720539 mob 07904 282661 or Jennifer Watts 01452 720233.

Christmas plans:-

Longney have their annual Advent Fair in the Church on Saturday 30 November, 1000-1200.

The 9 lessons and Carols will be at Longney on Sunday 15 December, 7.30pm. Christmas Eve Midnight Mass is at Elmore, 11.15 pm.

Do be in touch if I can help you in any way. God bless you
Rev Richard Martin 01452 720015 vicar@hardwicke-elmores-longney.church

For the latest news please see our weekly newsletter posted on our website Elmore: St John the Baptist - A Church Near You

Elmore WI

Our annual Coffee Morning held in May was a great success with over £600 raised to help with our running costs

In May Liz Godsell from Godsell's Cheeses gave us an insight into cheesemaking and brought many delicious samples.

In June we enjoyed a quiz and much delicious food. And in July our own Julie Bircher demonstrated the making of a hand tied bouquet and talked about her flower business. The bouquet was raffled and the proceeds sent to the Hedgehog Hospital.

Our annual skittle match at the Anchor will be held in August, complete with Basket meal.

September 10th another of our members, Rosemary Carter, will be telling us about her experience volunteering at an Elephant sanctuary.

October 8th our talk is '200 years of Saul Junction'.

November 12th it will be 'Cooking in Tudor and Stuart time'.

I will not mention the meeting after November as it is far too soon to think about it.

We welcome any visitors to our meetings held on 2nd Tuesday of each month in the Village Hall at 7.30.

Blue Moon Yoga Elmore Village Hall

10am each Monday from 16th September

A Gentle Yoga - a perfect way to start your week with some gentle stretching, breathwork and relaxation for anyone who would like to try yoga, continue on their yoga journey or simply come, meet new friends and try something new.

There are many benefits of practicing yoga. Regular yoga practice can create mental clarity and calmness, increase body awareness, improve strength, balance and flexibility. It helps you manage stress, brings relaxation, improves sleeping patterns and so much more.

All equipment will be provided, unless you would like to bring your own.

If you would like to join, ask any questions or get further information, please contact Blanka on:

email: bluemoonyoga@hotmail.com or telephone: 07450 270 974

Ancient Patronage in Elmore

Tony Leach

I have always been interested in local history and read some very obscure books. While reading through the PhD thesis of Christopher John Barnes (Birmingham University) on Music and the Reformation, a familiar family name cropped up which highlighted the contribution then being made to the Parish of Elmore by the Guise family. In this case Sir William Guise (1566 – 1642)

What I am including here are the sections that mention Sir William and Elmore.

Firstly page 75

In Gloucester, the ‘puritan’ local schoolmaster and minister William Groves was appointed when the city’s lectureship appears to have first been instituted in 1598, receiving the annual stipend of £20 19s 7d

Evidence shows that the city had been providing regular lectures prior to this date as early as 1564 when John Hitchens, a woollen draper, bequeathed £25

‘Towardes the fyndinge of a preacher that shalbe able to instructe the people in godes booke and that he shall preache ones a Daie for one whole yeare at suche places within the Citie of gloceter as shalbe throughte moste Conveniente by the Judgemente of Master maior and Master Recorder’. Groves was formerly master of St. Mary de Crypt school between 1589 and 1595 and later vicar of Hartpurty 1603 and 1612 . He was also curate of St. Mary de Crypt between 1601 and 1603 . He was installed as vicar of Elmore in 1601 under the patronage of renowned godly sympathiser Sir William Guise, when the corporation of Gloucester had to grant Grove leave to perform his duties at Elmore every Sunday.

And then pages 102-3

In the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries, areas of particularly godly identity rose in notoriety. In Gloucestershire, these areas were often centred around the cloth trade, including Dursley, Elmore, Eastington, Forthampton, and Tytherington. Whilst the largest influence on the laity’s affectations perhaps lay in the hands of the minister, the minister was often presented to the church through the patronage of an individual. Obtaining the patronage to a parish was

perhaps the easiest and most influential method for an individual to impress their preferred style of worship upon a church. A succession of presentations from a sympathetic patron often caused the creation of godly communities within parishes. Influential patrons, such as Sir William Guise of Elmore and Nathaniel Stephens of Eastington, ensured that networks of godly ministers

Source (for those who may wish to read the whole document and especially the middle section which covers court cases and showing how different values were by the sort of things you could be convicted for back then) 'Music and experience of Worship, Continuity and Change in Reformation Bristol and Gloucestershire, 1530 – 1642' by C J Barnes, www.theses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/12502

Village Players

Village Players have started rehearsals for our 2024 pantomime! Oh yes we have! We are proud to announce that this year's production will be Treasure Island. Will Jim Hawkins find the treasure or will Long John Silver the pirate scupper everything? You'll have to come along to find out! 28th Nov to 1st Dec and 5th to 7th Dec at Elmore Village Hall.

Tickets will be on sale shortly. Details will be published in upcoming copies of **The Bridge**, and on our facebook (facebook.com/) so keep your eyes peeled!

We are always on the lookout for new members, so if you or someone you know fancies getting involved onstage or helping backstage with costumes, set, props, choreography etc. please email: villageplayers@outlook.com

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

The Hall is quiet through August; activities resume in September when all our user groups are up and running for the new season. Blanka is returning with her yoga classes on Mondays (new date) at 10.00am, starting on 16th September. Details are found elsewhere in **The Bridge**

A Quiz and Pudding Night (in aid of Hall funds) will be held on 7th September. Look for further information, including booking details, on the front of this edition of **The Bridge**.

Book now to secure your tickets!

EVH Christmas Lunch (in aid of Hall funds) will be on **Sunday 15th December**. More information will follow over the next few months.

Demand for space in our Hall is steadily increasing, early bookings (or enquiries) are advisable. I look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks to all users and supporters of the Hall.

John (Hardisty) Chair

01452 721798 or pikelett@hotmail.com



We had a busy summer preparing for concerts and singing at 3 weddings in local churches. David our musical director harmonised some songs into 3 parts which was challenging but satisfying when we mastered them. We encouraged the audience to sing along with us especially at Wisma Mulia where we are always made welcome. We decided to have our main concert indoors this year and chose St Peter's Church Framilode. The evening included wine and nibbles, was very sociable and well attended. The acoustics are good and it was a pleasure to sing in the lovely church. Thanks to St Peter's for hosting, the choir for providing the food, local businesses for donating raffle prizes and to our audience for attending, adding a much needed boost to our funds. Our final concert was held in a lovely garden on a sunny evening at the request of a friend. A good way to end the season.

We are a community choir who sing a mixture of popular songs and Christmas carols in the local churches led by David our enthusiastic director. We always welcome new singers and meet at 7.30 on Thursday evenings in Frampton village hall during term time, starting

on September 7th. No auditions, either drop in on a Thursday evening or call Pam Greenfield on 01452 740126.

From the Parish Council

Hello readers of The Bridge,
Two focus areas from me in this issue.

1 Our urgent need for a new Parish Councillor

An urgent request to you all for a new Parish Councillor. As raised in the previous Bridge we are now in desperate need of another Parish Councillor to join us. One of our number must resign by the September Parish Council meeting, and if we do not secure a replacement we will need to close down the Parish Council (with no means to reactivate it in future as it would be subsumed into the District Council). That would lead to a degradation in services provided and those of us living in the village having less say on matters impacting us.

Being a councillor is not time consuming and there is no minimum time you must spend on the council. I ask anyone interested in supporting us to please contact me or another councillor to understand more about what is needed. As the Editor pointed out in the previous issue of The Bridge, we are not a diverse council and it is especially important to us to have other viewpoints and opinions represented, so a special encouragement to volunteer to anyone not represented by our current councillors.

2 Sellars Bridge Closure

As you are aware Sellars Bridge has been closed since 22nd July to enable essential maintenance and repair work. The bridge is to remain closed until 30th August. We have been informed this is the 'worst case' timeline and retain hope the work is carried out and completed sooner than advertised. The work is being carried out by the Canal & River Trust (CRT). Gloucestershire Highways agreed to the request from CRT to close the bridge and put a diversion in place to reroute traffic. No consultation was sought with the local parish councils. We are now being included in the communication plan for the maintenance

work of the bridge. This is to be updated every two weeks and on CRT's Twitter feed [in-betweenx.com/crtwalesandsw](https://twitter.com/in-betweenx.com/crtwalesandsw)

Both CRT and Gloucestershire Highways have been very good at communicating their plans and we have seen various emails replying to residents that have concerns. It is an important distinction that while the replies might not be the ones we want, we cannot accuse either of ignoring residents correspondence or concerns.

The main concern from residents is the inevitable increase in traffic that is flowing through Elmore Lane West. The hedge growth on the sides has, in the opinion of many of our residents, made the road visibility poor enough to warrant a safety concern. Both Highways and EA have listened to the concerns of residents and made several visits (4 at last count) to Elmore Lane West recently to assess the hedges and see if there is a safety issue. In their opinion, the level of hedge growth and traffic is not a safety issue. It is currently nesting season which adds a further complication around the hedges being cut back. Unless on future visits they deem it a safety issue they will not compel landowners to cut them. They will keep this under review. It is a very good idea, as many of you have, to complete the 'report a problem' link on the Gloucestershire Highways website page. Inspections should keep being made. [Report a problem | Highways \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/report-a-problem-highways). The hedges on the river side of the road are maintained by and are the responsibility of the Environment Agency (EA). The opposite side is the landowners responsibility. Should either want to cut the hedgerow now, Highways have asked that they are consulted first.

Over the course of a number of years we have, as Elmore Parish Council, put in place a number of measures to encourage road users to slow down which should help alleviate the issue. Elmore residents can continue to contact Gloucestershire Highways or CRT themselves and we remain more than happy to make any representation on your behalf. You can contact anyone of us to make that representation, however you might want to contact Vince direct as he has a line of communication to both Highways and CRT (meredith2fn@btinternet.com).

The next EPC meeting is 16th September (hopefully Sellars Bridge would have been open for many weeks by then) and we hope to see you there and be in a position to continue the work of the Elmore Parish Council.

Best Wishes,

Matthew Brandon

Chairperson Elmore Parish Council

1st Elmore Brownies

At the end of last term we finished with a very interesting visit to the incinerator near Dobbies Garden Centre. This term we have been working on our 'Grow Your Own' badge; as part of the badge we each planted a sunflower seed and took it home to see how tall it would grow. We also drew a plan for a garden and a care plan for our sunflower. We had a visit to Saul Junction and enjoyed a ride in a narrowboat. Thank you to Cotswold Canals Trust. We have had a go at some different tasks working on the UMAS and Skills Builders, one of which was to help understand how to approach and take care of dogs. We enjoyed a joint campfire with 2nd Frampton on Severn Brownies and 1st Elmore Guides where we built campfires and cooked s'mores. At the end of this term we went on our indoor residential to the County Headquarters at Deer Park, Cowley where we enjoyed olympic themed activities.

1st Elmore Guides

To start off this term we enjoyed a sweet themed games night where we put a twist on a beetle drive and an M&M themed ice breaker. We have been working on our 'Network Skills Builder' where we got to think about our hard and soft skills. We have also started our Gloucestershire Wilding Badge by making bird boxes with the assistance of Steve Wells from Homemade Hutches specialising in woodwork. We hope to donate these boxes to Elmore Court to help them with their rewilding project. We finish this half term with a walk along the Severn Way to The Anchor Inn to enjoy a chip basket meal. This half term we went fishing in Saul; thank you to Ron Hartell, bailiff for GUAA who helped organise the activity; the winning Patrol

was the Pandas with a weight of 2lb 1oz of fish. We have also enjoyed a joint campfire evening with 2nd Frampton on Severn Brownies and 1st Elmore Brownies. We visited Elmore Court to find out more about their rewilding project; thank you to the staff at Elmore Court for providing a fantastic evening where we got to explore around the court seeing a barn owl, buzzards, kites and lots more wildlife. We finished the term with activities at Robinswood Hill. Over the summer break we will be having our unit camp at our County Headquarters at Deer Park, Cowley.

If your daughter is interested in joining Brownies (7-10 years), Guides (10-14 years) or if you would like to volunteer as a Young Leader/ DofE Helper (14-18 years) or Adult Leader (18+) please contact Catherine or Jenny on 1stelmore@gmail.com.

Yet Another Local Limerick

(entirely fictional of course)

At a big wedding at Elmore Court
For courage the groom drank half a quart
Of the finest Scotch whisky
Which at first made him quite frisky
But later on nothing of the sort

Elmore Parish Council Contacts

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Dorie Jones Clerk	01452722034	elmore.parish@hotmail.com

The Parish Website address: www.elmoreparish.co.uk
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Parish Council Meeting Dates 2024

Monday 16th September

Monday 9th December

All the above are held in the Village Hall, 7pm

Public welcome

Last Copy Date for The Bridge, 2024

Friday October 11th

Please send any copy to the editor on or before the above date. Regular contributors will be warned of each of the date 2 to 3 weeks in advance. Hardcopy should be sent to Rose Cottage, Elmore, GL2 3NS and electronic copy to rosecottage1818@gmail.com

Regular Police Reports

To receive regular emails with helpful advice and information register with yourcommunityalerts.co.uk