

August /
September
2022

371

Tostock Chronicle

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and events online at

www.tostockpc.org.uk

The Chronicle has a new editor ...

Kim Mars

After many years of putting together the Tostock Chronicle, **Shirley Nice** has handed over the reins to me. Tostock owes a big debt of gratitude to Shirley for all the hours she has put in over the years on behalf of the people of Tostock. Thank you Shirley.



I look forward to keeping everyone up-to-date on what's happening in and around our lovely village.

I thought the Queen's Jubilee celebration was a fantastic success. Plenty of people, plenty of food, great atmosphere. I haven't seen a Maypole dance since I was a small lad - and that was in Australia. Well done to the organisers - **Rosemary Lister, Gail Moyle** and **Vanessa Malcom**. And another big success was the Flower Festival organised by **Sue Marriott**, who does so much for the church. Thanks to **Sharon Markell** who this year took over the organisation of the village's Open Gardens event, and thanks to **Gail Moyle** and **Jeanne O'Reilly** for organising this event over previous years.

I would like to get more people involved around the village. With so many new people in the village I'm sure there are skills we don't know about. I want to start a Village Volunteers group which will be a list of those who want to spend an hour or two every two or three months helping at various small functions. For example a core five or six of us help erect the marquees at events - it takes at most 2 hours of our time - even less if at least one of us remembers how we put it up the last time. It's a great way to meet others, and it's a bit of a laugh. Drop me an email with your name and I'll add you to the list.

I also would like to have more regular contributors - with their own column. You can write on anything you like, as long as it's likely to be of interest to the villagers in general.

The Art Show is on the 3rd and 4th of September. This event was organised by **Rosemary** and **Roger Lister** for nearly 40 years, but for the last few years **Vanessa Malcom** and **Di Mathews** have been in charge.

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Another hat for our
post-box ...

Regulars

Coffee Mornings

Every 2nd Tuesday of the month from 10.30 am. In summer this is held on the village green (weather-permitting), otherwise in the village hall.



Past & Present

Every 2nd Tuesday of the month from 7.30 pm in the village hall

Bingo

Every last Tuesday of the month from 2.30 pm in the village hall

Events

Tostock Tidy Days 13th August and 12th November from 10 am. To volunteer see Jim Langlois (see page 4)

Tostock Art Show Saturday and Sunday 3rd and 4th September (see page 3)

Macmillan Coffee Morning
Friday 30th September 10 - 12
Di Brewer (see page 8)



Cars on the Green Sunday 18th September

Contacts in our Community

Tostock Parish Councillors

Andrew Mellen	andrew.mellen@midsuffolk.gov.uk	County councillor
Harry Richardson	harry.richardson@midsuffolk.gov.uk	District councillor
Graham MacDowell	crispincottage@hotmail.com	
Marie Johansson	oldhallstables@btinternet.com	
Peter Boland	peter.boland@gmail.com	
Olivia Boland	olivia@tostock.animalparks.co.uk	

Village Officers

Tree Officer	Vacant
Footpath Officer	Vacant
Litter Picker	Vacant

Poor's Estate

Sharon Markell	01359 271190
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St Andrews Church

Rector		
Katherine Valentine	kavalentine677@gmail.com	01359 235095
Church Wardens		
Jeanne O'Reilly		01359 270337
Barney Harrison	barneybees@hotmail.com	
Bell Ringers	Sue Marriott	01359 270143

Village Hall

Chair		
Graham MacDowell	crispincottage@hotmail.com	
Hall Bookings		
Doreen Buckle	tostocktvh@hotmail.co.uk	01359 270605

Clubs

Bingo	Diane Brewer	01359 271127
Book Club	Julie Harrison	01359 270247
Brownies	Krystie	07975 556448
Carpet Bowls	Doreen Buckle	01359 270605
Cribbage	Jim Langlois	01359 270456
Crochet	Sarah Reader	
Past & Present	Sarah Scully	01359 270482
Rainbows	Krystie	07975 556448
Tennis Club		
Elizabeth Dunn	ejd1@talktalk.net	01359 270270
Susie Walton	susiewalton85@gmail.com	07793 406076

NEXT EDITION

October/November 2022

Please may I have your contributions on or before **15th SEPT**

preferably in word or publisher format, much appreciated.

kim.mars84@gmail.com

07950 682 499

More details and the latest up to date information can be found on our village website.

www.tostockpc.org.uk

Community Services

Emergency Police/Fire/Ambulance 999

Utilities

Energy power failures & Emergencies	08007 838866
Anglian water	08457 145145

Health

Woolpit Health Centre	01359 240298
Out of Hours	111
West Suffolk Hospital	01284 713000
BMI Hospital	01284 701371
St Nicholas Hospice	01284 766133

Advice

Relate	01284 767305
Samaritans	01284 750000
Drugs Hotline	0800 253 253
Citizens Advice Bureau	01284 753675

Police

Non-emergency	101
Crime Stoppers	555

Councils

Suffolk County Council	03456 066067
Mid Suffolk District Council	0300 1234000

Education

Thurston Community College	01359230885
Norton Pre-school	01359 232736

Pub

The Gardners	
Steve & Jill Gardner	01359 270460

Leisure

Cineworld	0330 3334444
Theatre Royal	01284 769505
Apex	01284 758000
Picture House	01284 754477

Travel

Bus Timetable	www.suffolkonboard.com
Rail	0845 7484950
Dial a Ride	01440 712048

The Tostock Chronicle is a bi-monthly newsletter for the people of Tostock, published by the Tostock Parish Council, and partially funded by advertising

Tostock Art Show

A date for everyone's diary - weekend of the 3rd and 4th September, with the Preview Evening on Friday 2nd.

Opening times

Friday 2nd - 7pm - 9pm

Saturday 3rd - 10am - 6pm

Sunday 4th - 10am - 5pm.



Regarded as **one of the best Art Shows in the county**, set in the beautiful St Andrew's Church and serving some of the best homemade cakes and refreshments. What's not to enjoy! Spread the word to family, friends and newcomers to the village, it's a very sociable event.

We need lots of help to make it a success. Work starts on Wednesday, 31st August, transporting furniture and putting up marquees. Thursday involves receiving and hanging artworks, then there are canapes to prepare for the Preview Evening, cakes to bake for the Show and volunteers are needed to serve refreshments and act as stewards.

If you are interested in getting involved, even for an hour, please contact:

Diane Mathews 07764 872900 or
Vanessa Malcom 07912 419936
email: tostockartshow@gmail.com

Tostock Media

Tostock Chronicle Editor



Kim Mars

kim.mars84@gmail.com

07950 682499

Photographer



Jim Langlois

jimlanglois@btinternet.com

01359 270456

Tostock Website



Adrian Malcom

adrianjmalcom@aol.com

07921 010 878

Tostock Fireworks

Saturday 5th November 2022

This event can only take place with lots of much appreciated volunteer help & support.

Planning meetings starting in September.

If you are able to offer any of your time, please contact **Hannah** on 'hannahgracejones@hotmail.com'

Find more details on this event in the next Chronicle.

Christian Aid Week

£706.30 was the total collected, of which £299.06 from Choral Evensong and £407.24 from house to house collections from Tostock and donations from around the benefice.

Many thanks to all who gave so generously and especial thanks to all our collectors and everyone who helped.

Barney Harrison



Tostock Tidy Day

We are now approaching our third Tidy Day, **13 August** for this year.

We will all meet up at the Village Hall at 10:00am with the aim to finish at 12:00pm. The project is to revisit Wood Close and edge and clear the paths around the close. Tools likely to be needed are edging tools, spades, shovels, brushes and wheelbarrows. Hope you will be able join us.

The last Tidy Day is on the 12 Nov - Edging and gutters on Norton Road.

If you have any questions or wish to suggest tasks which could be done as part of this initiative please contact: - jimlanglois@btinternet.com

Jim Langlois

Tostock Knitting and Crochet Group

Following the enthusiastic response to our request for crocheters and knitters to make a Christmas Tree, a new village group has been formed.

The **Tostock Knitting and Crochet Group** were inspired by the Open Gardens and Flower Show to make a post box topper covered in nearly 200 flowers and leaves. I'm sure you would agree, it is 'blooming' lovely!



Tostock Poor's Estate

If there are any older residents of Tostock (must have been resident for two years) who wish to apply for the Christmas Contribution, could they please contact **Sharon Markell** on 01359 271190 for an application form. All enquiries are treated with strict confidence. Previous recipients need not apply.

Tostock Village Hall News

The next meeting of the Tostock Village Hall Committee is due to take place at 7.30pm on Monday, 13th September 2022.

For any general village hall matters, please email tostockvillagehall@outlook.com

For all booking enquiries, please email tostocktvh@hotmail.com

**THANK
YOU!**

..... to everyone who so willingly gives their time to volunteer within our community. Volunteers both new and old, you have helped & are helping to make so many Tostock things happen!

Your Hall, your Say, Your Village's Future !!

ACCESS INFORMATION ONLINE

You can still have your say on how we can design a more versatile & inclusive space, which not only continues to meet our existing needs, but also provides a foundation for future community growth.

Access the information online via www.affectcommunity.org



Help Tostock Village Hall become a vibrant, stylish and creative community hub that you, your family and your friends will want to use.

Feed into the process via
www.affectcommunity.org

- * See outlines of initial ideas and plans
- * Share your views

Contact us via tostockvillagehall@outlook.com for more information

Tostock Flower and Veg Show 2022

Cancelled

Due to the very difficult growing conditions, and the wish by Barney and Julie to step back from organising the show, it has been decided to cancel the event this year.

After many successful years, it is time for new blood and ideas! The increasingly challenging weather makes it a good time for a rethink.

If you would be interested in helping/organising next year please contact **Barney** 01359 270247 or **Sharon** 01359 271190.

Tostock Past & Present Society



Sixteen members enjoyed a recent visit to Haughley House. We were given a tour of the house by the Lord of the Manor Geoffrey Bowden. Geoffrey was an entertaining speaker and gave us a brief glimpse of the history of Haughley including manorial records going back to Henry II, who was one of his predecessors as Lord of the Manor. His descriptions of the house and his collections were full of anecdotes and thoroughly entertaining. We also enjoyed an excellent tea and a tour of the gardens.

Autumn Program

Members and non members are welcome to all our talks which take place in the Village Hall (unless otherwise stated) at 7.30pm

September 6th - Mike Wabe
That Rings a Bell: The history of the Town Crier

October 4th - Dave Steward
The History of the North Norfolk Railway (The Poppy Line)

November 1st - AGM + Rory O'Brien
The History of the Theatre Royal in Bury St Edmunds

December 6th – An evening with Doug Patterson (details and venue to be announced later)

For further details contact **Anthony Scully** (Chairman)
Email a.r.scully@btinternet.com

News from St Andrew's Church Tostock

July was a busy month. Our Open Gardens weekend was a great success and the Flower Festival in Church had wonderful arrangements.

The weather was on our side, the marquee was up, cakes, scones and other treats piled high, the tea urn boiling, John's sweetie cart loaded with fudge, jams and chutney. The Church looked and smelt amazing with all the wonderful arrangements, each one depicting a different aspect of the Queen's 70-year reign. We had corgis, Paddington and so many other ideas to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. Then there were the 12 open gardens for visitors to explore, again all so different but all wonderful in so many ways.



We really can't thank everyone enough for all the time and effort that went into making the weekend such a success, it wouldn't have been possible without you. Discussions have already started about next year. Once again, a big thank you from Sue Marriott (flowers) and Sharon Markell (open gardens) to everyone who helped and everyone who supported the weekend. We look forward to seeing you again next year.

The Coffee Morning on the following Tuesday was moved from the Green to the Churchyard at short notice for a cool and shady place to meet. We had many visitors who enjoyed a morning get together. The next Coffee Morning will be on Tuesday, August 9th, at 10:30 am. Depending on the weather, it might be on the Green or in the Churchyard! Please keep an eye on the notice board on the Green.

On 28th August, we will have our popular Pet Service at the church. Do come along with your dogs, cats and other animals. All are welcome to join in. Each animal receives a blessing and every year they are all so well behaved!

Finally, looking ahead to autumn, please keep an eye out for the dates of the Harvest Festival and Remembrance Sunday services.

Martin Davies

Tostock Carpet Bowls Club

Not very much to report in this issue. The Club had their Bowls lunch during May at Stowmarket Golf Club which members enjoyed as we had to forego the previous years meal.



A few friendlies have been played during the last few months. The Bury League are re-starting again in late September although a few clubs have had to close due to falling numbers or some will carry on with their club sessions with their members. We have a good number of members who meet on a weekly basis, on a Thursday evening normally, away games are played when the host club play.

Doreen Buckle

News from St Andrew's Church Tostock

A Musical Evening with Yalda Davis

Saturday 3rd September at 7pm St Mary's Pakenham

Also featuring the choral group 'Feverheat Quartet'.

Come and hear Yalda Davis, a renowned Suffolk cellist who during lockdown made it her mission to play in every church in the county - which she did - often just playing to herself and the occasional passer-by! Now we are very fortunate that she is returning to this benefice to give us a special concert, giving a chance for us all to hear her.

Refreshments will be available. Donations to St Mary's Church.

All Creatures Great and Small

Bring your pet to church!

ANNUAL OUTDOOR PET SERVICE SUNDAY 28TH AUGUST
11AM ST ANDREW'S TOSTOCK

Everyone is welcome from across the Benefice & beyond to come to this special service when we give thanks for all animals, and especially our pets. All types of pets welcome - large and small. The service is informal - but it would be wonderful to see all your special animal companions, and each one will receive a blessing as we give thanks to God for all the joy, comfort and fun they bring us. We will be outside in the churchyard so there is plenty of room - please bring your own chairs.

Services at Romney Cottage

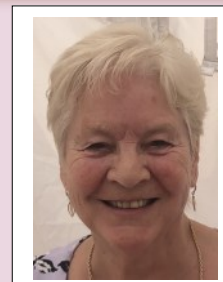
The Green, Tostock.

These are on Mondays 15th August and 19th September at 10am. All are welcome to come along and join in this informal service of prayer, singing favourite hymns and coffee and chat afterwards. See you there!

MacMillan Coffee Morning

FRIDAY 30th SEPTEMBER. 10am -12pm

Please come to this very worthwhile coffee morning. Every year, the people of Tostock have been extremely generous and the amount given goes up every year. Well done.



We look forward to seeing you all, there will be plenty of cakes (feel free to bring some if you would like). Also a raffle, and usually a couple of silly games to play.

Dianne Brewer 01359 271127 or 07985 542178.

St Andrew's Church Tostock

Benefice of Pakenham, Norton & Tostock with Great Ashfield, Hunston & Stowlangtoft

Rector Revd Katherine Valentine Tel 01359 235095

Email kavalentine677@gmail.com

Website for more details of all our churches - including Tostock - see the national Church of England website www.achurchnearyou.com



AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2022 CHURCH SERVICES

Our beautiful and ancient church is open every day for visitors and private prayer.

7TH 08:00 am 10:00 am	8TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Holy Communion (BCP) Family@Church HOLIDAYS	Norton Pakenham
14TH 09:30 am 09:30 am 11:00 am 06:00 pm	9TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Holy Communion (BCP) Morning Worship Holy Communion Evensong	Tostock Great Ashfield Pakenham Norton
21ST 09:30 am 11:00 am 11:00 am 06:00 pm	10TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Holy Communion (BCP) Family Communion Morning Worship Evening Prayer & Praise	Pakenham Great Ashfield Norton Tostock
28TH 09:30 am 09:30 am 11:00 am 11:00 am	11TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY TOAST Family Communion Holy Communion (BCP) OUTDOOR PET SERVICE	Great Ashfield Norton Hunston Tostock
4TH 08:00 am 10:00 am	12TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Holy Communion (BCP) Family@Church BACK TO SCHOOL	Norton Pakenham
11TH 09:30 am 10:00 am 11:00 am 06:00 pm	13TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Holy Communion (BCP) HARVEST FESTIVAL Holy Communion Evensong	Tostock Great Ashfield Pakenham Norton
18TH 09:30 am 11:00 am 11:00 am 03:00 pm 06:00 pm	14TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Holy Communion (BCP) Family Communion HARVEST FESTIVAL HARVEST FESTIVAL Evening Song & Praise	Pakenham Great Ashfield Norton Stowlangtoft Tostock
25TH 09:30 am 09:30 am 11:00 am 03:00 pm	15TH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY Toast Family Communion HARVEST FESTIVAL HARVEST FESTIVAL	Great Ashfield Norton Tostock Hunston

Flower Festival

July 8th and 9th, 2022

To commemorate Her Majesty's 70 glorious years

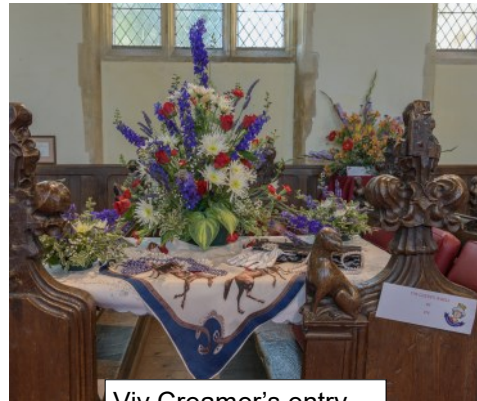
The array of different designs highlights the great effort put in by everybody taking part



Julie Harrison's entry



Viv Creamer's entry



This entry by Sue Marriott (pictured above), organiser of the Flower Festival, reminds us of that wonderful TV segment with Her Majesty and Paddington Bear

Rosemary Lister's entry



We are pleased to report that the Open Gardens and Flower Festival proved to be yet another highly successful weekend. The Flower Festival was held in the church on the 9/10th July with a theme of "Her Majesty's 70 Glorious Years". Several beautiful displays adorned the church with various interpretations of the theme. Open Gardens were

held on the Sunday 10th July. This was the first time we had held open gardens as a stand alone event, usually we had run in conjunction with the Art Show. The pressure was on to prove we could do it. Thankfully it was a huge success raising an amazing sum of £1213.61 which will go to St. Andrews Church. Twelve willing volunteers had agreed to open their gardens providing a diverse range of gardens for visitors to look at. All looked wonderful considering the extreme dryness of the last few weeks. Everyone had a lovely time chatting to visitors or catching up with friends.

cont.

Open Gardens

July 9th, 2022



Nikki and Paul Callow



Judy Swallow



Gail Moyle



Mike and Jeanne O'Reilly



Elizabeth and Jonathan Dunn



David and Stu

Some of the people who opened their gardens for the rest of us to enjoy



Organisers
Sue and Sharon

The list of thank you's as always includes many, many people from Rev. K Valentine for allowing us to use the Church and churchyard as a base, to the crew of men to erect/dismantle the marquee, to Marie for allowing us to use the field for off road parking. Rosemary and her team of ladies who man the refreshments or provide delicious homemade cakes, Sue for organising all the flower arrangers/arrangements. To everyone who donated plants for the plants stall, Janet and Jon with their ever popular homemade Fudge, Coconut Ice Chutneys and Jams. To the twelve garden owners opening their gardens, without them we could not have the event and to everyone who came and made the day a success.

Planning is already in its early stages for the next one.

Sharon Markell & Sue Marriot

Queens Jubilee

June 5th, 2022



The cake, baked by Dianne Brewer



The toast



The Maypole

... how to do it



... how not to do it ...

... just add men



Some of the 120 plus people that attended



Cars on the Green

June 26th, 2022

Another well-attended occasion, held on the village green.



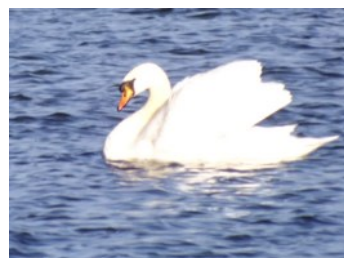
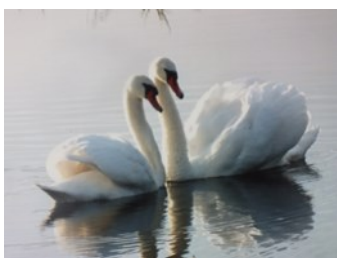
Congratulations to her Majesty the Queen on her Platinum Jubilee. Serving 70 years on the throne. The service she has given to her country is an amazing achievement and congratulations to her on behalf of all the people living in Tostock. Also, to the person/s involved with the craftsmanship of the Crown on top of the post box on the village green and Dianne Brewer making the celebration cake. Also many thanks to the many people of Tostock for the huge attendance to our village hall celebrations, which made it a most enjoyable day to remember for ever – well done everybody.



This edition is my way of acknowledgement and respectfulness to the Queen for her dedication throughout her long serving reign, I have been whacking my brain out, as to how I can connect a country life article with royalty. So I've come up with a few solutions or

ideas. The first is that my family have been camping for at least the last 40 years. Many of them years, we have spent our annual holidays camping on the royal estate at Sandringham, and on one occasion at the Sandringham Flower Show I managed to shake hands with the Queen's son his royal highness Prince Charles. I can also remember when in 1961 the Queen passing through our village of Sicklesmere the place I was living at, at that time, in the royal limousine on her way back to London after a visit to Bury St Edmunds, waving my hands like mad as she went by. The third inspiration and subject for this article, which I hope is a connection with royalty which is my love and admiration for Britain's largest resident bird – Mute Swans and the fact that the Queen owns some of the swans on certain parts of the river Thames. So now let's uncover the history and traditions and enjoy some of my best photos I have taken of Mute Swans.

From the ugly duckling who turned out alright in the end to the graceful stars of Tchaikovsky famous ballet, the iconic and elegant swan has always had a powerful hold over our imagination. But turn the clock back 1,000 years and Britain's largest resident bird was by all accounts, far more important to our early ancestors than just something decorative to look at, or to hear about in stories and legends. For them it was a status symbol very much like the flash cars and designer clothes of today. And, as with all things bling, the more of them you owned, the better. Not only were the birds an elegant adornment to your moat or lake, but weighing in at a whopping 12kg or so, they could also be roasted and served up as a magnificent centre piece for the feast in the finest houses. Indeed, so highly prized was the swan that aristocratic families began using an elaborate system of marking the birds' beaks to claim them as their own.



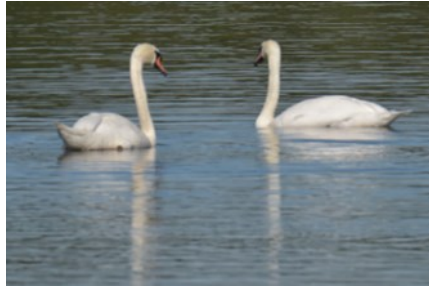
Cont..

In the 12th century the King of England went a step further, announcing that all the unmarked swans in the land belonged to him. And so things stood for around 300 years, when the Mute Swan population was officially divided between the monarch and 2 city livery companies – The Vintners and Dyers – a situation that exists to this day. Which is how the ancient custom of Swan Upping – a method of counting and claiming ownership of the birds first came about.

Each year's clutch of cygnets was rounded up and marked according to whose property the parent birds were. If the mother and father had different owners, the new cygnets were divided equally between the two, if with left overs, or odd numbers – going to the owner of the male, or cob. As families began breeding their own domesticated poultry, however, the desirability of the birds decreased dramatically. But the centuries-old swan-upping ceremony carried on and is still going strong well in to the 21st century. Hundreds of years after it first began, this most quirky and unusual of Britain traditions now takes the form of a glorious, colourful week-long pageant held on the river Thames each July and enjoyed by the crowds of tourists and spectators who line the route. Infact it starts this Monday 18TH July 2022 at 9 am when I am right in the middle of writing this article, commencing from Sunbury Loch cut, Surrey finishing on Friday 22nd July at Abingdon Bridge at 5 pm.



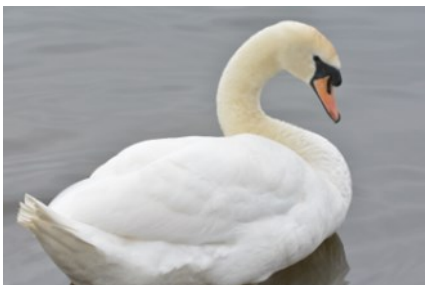
These days the emphasis is no longer, however, on property ownership and status but on vital conservation, data collection, education and the protection and preservation of these remarkable birds from a variety of hazards that have, in the past, threatened their very existence. At it's heart is the Queen's swan marker, an office currently held by David Barber who conducts the official census. He is accompanied by teams of swan-uppers representing not only the monarchy but the 2 livery companies, which continue to make major contributions to wildfowl welfare projects. Dressed in striking scarlet and navy ceremonial uniforms and flying flags and pennants from their vessels, the uppers set off on their 80 mile journey up the river in a flotilla of traditional wooden stiffs in search of adult swans and their broods – the month of July is specifically chosen because that years crop of cygnets are not yet able to fly. When an adult swan and its young are spotted a cry of (all up) is given to alert the uppers that should surround the birds with their boats. Then, watched by spectators on the bank, the cygnets are rounded up, carefully lifted out of the water – sometimes in special design slings – and taken ashore to be weighed, measured and given a thorough health check. *Cont..*



Any sick birds are taken for treatment and the rest are tagged according to their ownership – those belonging to the livery companies have rings attached to their legs, while those belonging to the Crown are to this day left unmarked. Then, with great care taken that the young are not separated from their parents, the birds are finally returned to the water. Crucially, however, the cygnets are not the only members of the younger generation closely involved in the ceremony. Every year hundreds of children whose schools lie along the swan upping route are invited to take part, learning valuable lessons about their environmental and cultural heritage, as well as enjoying a truly memorable day out. For many of them it's their first chance to get up close and personal with an under domesticated species in its natural habitat and children are encouraged to stroke and study the young birds and find out as much as they possibly can in lively question and answer sessions with the swan maker. For the young fisherman and rowers among them, it is particularly useful opportunity to learn about the dangers their sports can pose to Mute Swans, and the importance of respecting the rivers and wetlands upon which they live and thrive.

The good news is that this is a message that's really starting to hit home, with Mute Swan populations soaring again following a dip in the 1980's and 1990's according to wildfowl experts. A major factor here, is the significant reduction in the use of toxic lead weights by fishermen, which in the past the birds would swallow as they hunted around for gravel to help their digestion. Also playing their part are the big electricity companies who are now going to great lengths making their power cables more visible to swans with a series of visual aids.

Relatively mild Winters in the past 2 decades and a change in Agricultural methods meaning that cereal is available all year round have had a positive impact too. So it's good news for swans and for the many people who regard them as an irreplaceable feature of the British countryside.



Cont..

With man continuing to work alongside nature from the uppers in their skiffs and wildfowl charities working to monitor populations, to the large multi-national organisations, the future of this most admired of birds seems, for the moment at least, assured. Swans are monogamous, meaning that a breeding pair will stay for life.

The average lifespan of a swan is 10 years, with the oldest recorded age in Britain a staggering 26 years. The swans on the moat at Wells Cathedral in Somerset, are trained to ring a bell attached to a string, with their beaks when they are hungry. Don't get on the wrong side of the swan they can be very aggressive and, with a wing span of well over 2 meters, can make a daunting sight when made angry, the male will think nothing of attacking intruders including dogs and humans, if his young or nest are at risk.

The Mute Swan, resident all year round, is joined in the winter by the migratory Whooper and Bewicks Swans. The male is known as the cob, and the female as a pen. The idea of a swan song came about from the ancient belief that a Mute Swan, largely silent for most of its life as its name suggests will break into a beautiful sound just before its death. In Scotland and Ireland, thought to be embody the souls of humans.

The swan is the national bird of Denmark. The famous swan boats in Boston public gardens. U.S.A. were inspired by the mediaeval German legend of Lohengrin, a knight in shining armour who crosses a river in a boat drawn by a swan to defend his heroine. You can just imagine this next picture of a swan pulling that boat for him. I hope you all enjoyed this royal edition in honour of the Queens Platinum Jubilee.





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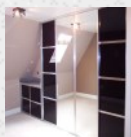
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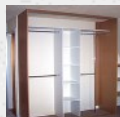


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