



the Gander

In July it was my 25th birthday: St Swithin's Day and it rained. For those who know the legend, I would say the story held true - as many of you can testify, this has been the wettest summer on record. There is, of course, no scientific basis to the myth about the long-dead Bishop of Winchester - rain on the middle day of the seventh month naturally means the summer is not all most people hope for. For me too, July 15th was just one day: perfectly pleasant despite the weather but it didn't really make a difference to what happened on the next day or the next. Birthdays are as arbitrary as the rain. It's what happens either side that makes the difference, whether it be good or flood.

In this issue we mark 20 years of the Gander. Over the page Alan Gould recalls how this newsletter came into being, and in 80 editions appearing every quarter since, successive editors, co-ordinators and contributors have tinkered around the edges, moving it on through both toil and technology to what we have today - still evolving but sticking closely to the set of ideals we hope you share of an impartial voice for every villager, delivered free to every home.

Though I think I have a pretty good memory, I can't remember a time when Goxhill didn't have the Gander. Every three months from when it began, my brother and I helped our mother deliver to the stretch of Ferry Road nearest to our home. It became a regular event throughout the year and I know from distributing Ganders today that many of our dedicated and reliable volunteer deliverers feel the same. But time and tide move on and nothing lasts for ever.

For me the changes came in July when I got a job in East Yorkshire and moved to a property 'on the other side'. I shall continue to edit this newsletter because Goxhill is my home and the routine comfortable. I also know, without blowing my own trumpet, that there are few people willing or able to replace me. Things will, however, have to change, even if for now it is just the phone number on which I can be contacted. With everything now electronic I could be in Australia and it would make no difference.

Of more pressing concern is the loss of several of our deliverers. This summer five of them, a majority who had served us all for two decades, became for a variety of reasons unable to continue. We thank them for their efforts over the years and whether they move away or just into new opportunities we wish them well. Now they need to be replaced or how you get your Gander will have to change. Some alterations are acceptable, but this isn't one of them so please, please, if you can offer half an hour every three months for a short walk, do contact us.

By the next issue we hope to be able to share our plans (currently at an advanced stage) to add a website but this should never be at the cost of the paper newsletter. For 20 years that has been what the Gander was all about and so long as we have your support that will not change. Happy birthday.

Adam Ellis.

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Please note that comments or opinions expressed in articles printed are not necessarily those of the team.

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