

Update from Suzi

The Craft room remains a hive of activity throughout the year, we continue with our monthly craft days, plus our bi-yearly residential Craft Weeks. Crafting remains more than the sum of its parts, it is a time to come together, drink tea and chat about all sorts of things. We have recently been painting, card making, knitting and coffin weaving! If ever you fancy sharing your own crafts or learning a new one - please give it a go - we also have biscuits sometimes!!



Kerri writes: I've been Hilfield's bursar since March 2021. Not too long ago, someone asked me if being the bursar was my dream job. I'll admit that took me a bit aback but after thinking about the job – it's requirement for order and structure and all those years I worked as a librarian – I came to the conclusion that it might not be my dream job but it's pretty close! As the person responsible for the financial aspects of Hilfield Friary, I find myself involved in more than just the day-to-day tasks of receipt reconciliation, invoices to pay, and direct debits management. I also work closely with Suzi and Sara with regard to Gift Aid transactions and the Co-operative Bank whenever there are difficulties with debit cards, fraudulent charges or questions concerning irregular actions such as international payments. If anyone in the friary has a financial query or a problem, I make myself available to get it answered or sorted as quickly as possible.



We at Hilfield Friary, like the Body of Christ, are made of many members all with our own unique gifts and responsibilities. As the bursar, my responsibility is to keep a watchful eye over the money we have been given and been entrusted with that we may use it sensitively and rightly in accordance with our Franciscan values.

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and our Facebook pages: facebook.com/HilfieldFriary
facebook.com/groups/709029506134847 (our Conservation Group)

Pax et Bonum

Hilfield FRIARY Update

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Br. John writes: Autumn is my favourite season because of the vibrant colours that surround us in this part of Dorset. Following the summer heatwaves and drought, we are promised that they will be spectacular this year. Chillier mornings and evenings interspersed with late sunshine fuel my love of real fires and wood-burning stoves such as we have in our prayer and shepherd's huts.

The seasonal variation is reflected this year in the changing composition of our community. We have already said goodbye to Claudia, and are about to bid farewell to Mike and Fran and their children Edith and Peter, and also to Amy Claire and Jem. Quite an exodus from Hilfield, with the prospect of Brother James Douglas also moving to Alnmouth in November. Each one has made a unique and heartwarming contribution to our life and will be missed. We thank God for them and pray blessings on their future paths.

But there are comings as well as goings. Ben and Zac have arrived to test their vocation as Franciscan brothers and will soon be joined by Matt. We are also expecting Beth, a proud Northumbrian, the Jameson family, and Moses from Uganda. We take people as they are at the friary, and trust that this is a special place where we can all be nurtured and empowered to become our fullest selves in God who calls us together. "Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there. We shall be satisfied with the blessings of your house, even of your holy temple" (Psalm 65 v3).





Our new solar battery

Br Hugh writes: In March we installed our first solar battery - a 13.5 kw Tesla Powerwall - outside Giles House. This lets us use some of the power our panels generate in the daytime after sundown.

In April to Sept we had to buy only 6000 kwh electricity, 60% of that bought in the same period in 2024. However, since so much of our bill is standing charges this does not mean that the bill is 60% of what it was. It also lets the water pump and some lights stay on for a time during power cuts.

We will need more batteries in the future.

Jonathan writes: The large Friary bell that sounds out across the fields as a ten minute warning before prayer in the chapel has had its cradle restored.



Philip Chatfield a well known stone sculptor and former ships carpenter helped Jonathan with the restoration. The rotted beams it sat on were taken out and new oak beams installed. The sides were strengthened by oak timbers and The words "I will sing of your strength" cut out and gold leafed in the high horizontal beam.

Would you like to be a Volunteer?

We are looking for people aged 18 - 30 who might be interested in volunteering with us for a year. This a great opportunity to deepen your Christian commitment, enjoy life in community, and to learn many new life skills that working on the land and in conservation can foster. Community life will enrich any course of study or career path in the future. Living at the heart of a Franciscan community can inspire your spiritual life—and give a close up look at what religious life is like. More information can be found on our website.

Ben Mulcock writes:

I came to Hilfield on 20th April 2021 as a 22 year old, a bit confused about what to do in life but with a clear feeling that I needed to explore a vocation to religious life and specifically the Franciscan way of life. I stared at the many languages welcoming me on the side of the rec room on that gloomy March afternoon, thinking to myself, "Well Ben, let's hope this will get it out of your system, and you can get on with life." Well Dear reader, you can tell by the very existence of this piece of writing that God had other ideas. I loved my time here as a volunteer. It formed me into adulthood. It taught me how to live well with others and the importance of maintaining a steady prayer life and, of course, that most holy discipline of picking josterberries.



Once my time was up as a volunteer, I felt like this was it. I needed to go ahead and test my vocation as a religious, but the Guardian very helpfully suggested that I really should experience at least some adult life first and that if I still felt strongly about it, I could always come back to SSF later. Wise words. 4 years and 2 jobs later the nagging feeling never left. I was overjoyed by the news that myself, Matt and Zac would be starting our initial formation at Hilfield; a place that I hold in such high regard. I have loved being back and I'm really enjoying getting stuck in with everything and slowly getting used to cooking for 30 again.

Please keep Matt, Zac and myself in your prayers as we start our discernment with SSF.

Pax et bonem

100 Years Ago

Brother Douglas invited Kenneth Hunt, aged 22, to join the Brotherhood of St Francis of Assisi, which became SSF, at what we call the Friary today in November 1925. A qualified printer he printed the Flowerette, the community magazine, held in our archives today. Apart from many trips away to prisons and workhouses to work with homeless men, he was based here until his death in 1991. (From This Poor Sort, by Petà Dunstan)