North Rode Newsletter

June 2026

What's on in North Rode
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It has certainly been a scorcher recently, with farmers taking advantage and silaging between the odd thunderstorm coming through. Hawthorne is blossoming and swathes of Wild Garlic are coming into flower, so summer is here! The annual North Rode Revival is this month and it will be bigger and better than before. We have stories of daredevil villagers and yet another villager stepping forward with a great tale to tell – who will be next?

Happy Birthday!

Tom Bailey is 20 on 1st June
Oscar Thomas is 5 on 26th June

Alpaca's Bring a Smile

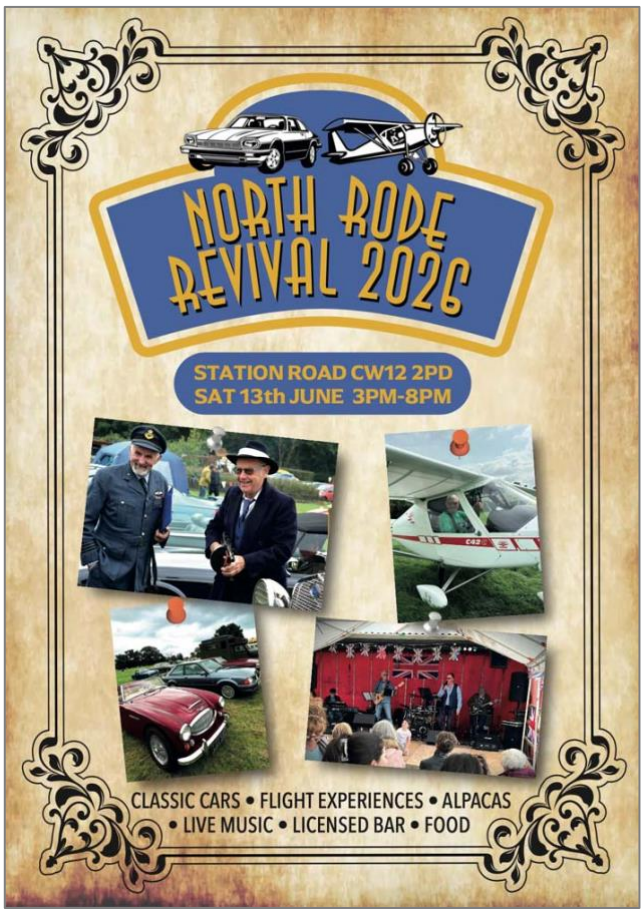
Viv Darcy very kindly brought along two of her lovely Alpacas to the East Cheshire Hospice to help bring a smile to the faces of patients and staff at their annual garden party. Helped by Joan-Marie Williams, who has recently retired as a staff nurse at the hospice and Huw Williams, Apacas Colas and Gael visited patients at their open windows and allowed Sunflower Centre patients to pet them. Many thanks to Sue & Mark Bullock for the use of their trailer.



It's Nearly Here!

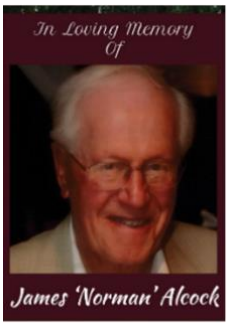
Come along and support your village and local hospice at this great event. There will be live music from three very different bands, classic cars, traction engines, flight experiences, alpacas, food and a licenced bar from 3pm to 8pm on Saturday 13th. Over the past 5 years North Rode Revival has raised over £10,000 for East Cheshire Hospice and the local community.

If you can help and/or bake a cake, please contact Janet James on 07872 558531



Daredevil John takes to the Air on his 94th Year!

John Rowbotham of Cocksmoss Lane has taken the brave step to take to the air on his 94th birthday in memory of his friend Norman Alcock and to raise money for the **East Cheshire Hospice**.



Norman Alcock was a bit of a daredevil himself. In September 2021 BBC News reported

"A man has walked on the wings of an aircraft on his 90th birthday to fundraise for a children's hospice. Norman Alcock, from Congleton in Cheshire, volunteers for Donna Louise Children's Hospice in Hanley, Staffordshire, and has raised more than £3,000 doing daring adventures on his birthday milestones. Aged 80, he took a hot air balloon ride and for his 85th birthday, he completed a skydive. Mr Alcock said for his 95th birthday, he would like to try out the fastest zip line in Snowdonia."



John says that "On Friday 5th June 2026 Norman would have been 95, and in his memory I will be trying out the fastest zip line in Snowdonia whilst raising money for **East Cheshire Hospice**. It would be hugely appreciated if you could sponsor me with a donation no matter how large or small, every penny counts! Thank You

https://www.justgiving.com/page/john-rowbotham-zip

John will be doing the zip wire alongside four of his grandchildren and daughter Sue Bullock. Good luck to all of you!

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North Rode News from the Past

1834 – 192 yrs ago

Great Sale at North Rode Hall Farm, three miles from Congleton, and six from Macclesfield.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,

By Mr. HILLIARD,

On Thursday and Friday, the 13th and 14th of March, 1834;

THE very extensive, truly valuable, and useful Dairy Cows, Heifers, Sturks, Calves, Cart Horses, superior, strong, and well-bred Colts, Yearling Foals, excellent Pony, Fat and Store Pigs, broad and narrow wheeled carts, ploughs, harrows, drills, a large assortment of other husbandry Implements, large stacks of Wheat, Dairy Vessels, and other Effects, at North Rode Hall Farm, near Congleton and Macclesfield, in the county of Chester, by order of the Executors of the late Mr. T. Lockett: comprising 49 cows calved and in-calf, one fat cow, one heifer in-calf, nine sturks in-calf, 23 yearling cow calves, two ditto bull calves, strong useful bay mare, in-foal by that celebrated horse Timour, ditto black mare in-foal, two brown horses, capital pony, useful for saddle or harness, handsome valuable well bred chesnut horse, rising three years old, free from blemish, and healthy, very promising to make an excellent hunter or carriage horse, by the said well known noted horse Timour; excellent well bred dark brown horse colt, rising three years old, ditto ditto dark brown filly, rising three years old, ditto ditto black filly, rising three years old, capital two-year old horse colt, two ditto black yearling foals; feeding sow, three fat pigs, store ditto, two sows in-pig; two large stacks of wheat, three-hound seed harrows, three sets of large ditto, ox harrow, two ploughs, turnip roller and drill, three excellent broad wheeled carts with top gearing, ditto narrow wheeled ditto, two iron straw racks, winnowing machine, bend and chains, six sets of gearing in lots, two wheelbarrows, large corn coffer, large quantity of rakes, pikels, spades, dung forks, hooks, and other implements, in lots, cheese presses, vats, tubs, and other dairy vessels, in lots.

The Auctioneer most respectfully invites the attention of Gentlemen, Farmers, Graziers, Butchers, and others to this very extensive sale of useful and valuable dairy cows, most of which are on early note, excellent milkers, and in good condition; the young stock is well bred, and very promising, and the whole will positively be sold by the hammer without reserve.

The sale to commence punctually at eleven o'clock each morning.

The cows will be sold on the first day, and the young stock, horses, implements in husbandry, dairy vessels, wheat stacks, &c. on the second day.

1873 – 150 yrs ago

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB.

This club's first excursion for the present season took place on Saturday last, in our own neighbourhood. The day was beautifully fine with a pleasant bracing wind. About thirty members of the Society, including a small proportion of ladies, arrived at North Rode Station by the 11 20 a.m. train, having been joined at Congleton by several local members, one of whom acted as guide to the party. The foot-road by "Dob Ford" was taken, which, leading through undulating fields, with good views of the distant hill scenery, brought the excursionists into Gawsworth Church yard. Here, what was considered to be the remains of an old Cross, and of a Rostrum or ancient out-door pulpit, attracted attention. The more modern work of Thomas Thorneycroft, Esq., a native of Gawsworth, consisting of an urn placed over the grave of his brother, was considered interesting as being the first work of this eminent sculptor, now residing in London.

The exterior and interior of the fine old Church were next minutely examined, considerable attention being bestowed on the numerous and handsome monuments to the Fytton family. After inspecting the Old Hall, and the remains of the ancient tilting ground, one of the most interesting relics of chivalrous pastime, a visit was made to the grave of the eccentric Samuel Johnson. At the Rectory the members were most kindly entertained with refreshments by the Rev. – Gibson, and opportunity afforded to inspect the remarkable entrance hall—open to the top of the building.

The route chosen from Gawsworth to Marton was by "the Mollards," Tidnock Moss, Dry Heath, and Marton Heath. After examining the old oak tree now so rapidly going to decay, the party proceeded to Marton Church, where the Rev. J. P. Firmin, the Rector, with great kindness and ability explained the details connected with the Church and its restoration.

After a passing visit to Marton Hall, carriages were in waiting to convey those of the members who preferred not to prolong their walk to the Lion and Swan Hotel, Congleton, where at six o'clock all the members assembled to partake of a substantial tea, returning home by an evening train.—It is much to be regretted that this Cheshire excursion should have been arranged to take place so early in the year, for to this cause must be attributed the scarcity of interesting botanical and entomological specimens obtained during the long and varied walk.

1891 – 135 yrs ago

A North Rode Publican Fined.—On Tuesday afternoon at the Macclesfield County Sessions, James Bloor, landlord of the Cheney Gate, North Rode, was charged with permitting drunkenness at North Rode on the 8th, and also with selling liquor to drunken persons on the same date; and Nathan Worthington and Thomas Smallwood were charged with being drunk on the same date. Mr. R. Brown, of Stockport, prosecuted for the police, and Mr. A. T. Pattinson defended.—Sergt. Lowe stated that he and Constable Frost visited the house on the night in question, and in the tap-room they found six men, amongst whom were the two defendants, Smallwood and Worthington. They appeared to be asleep and were sitting at the table. Worthington staggered about on getting up. After further evidence the Chairman said the Bench considered that the defendant Bloor had not been sufficiently careful in conducting his house, and they should impose a fine of 20/- and costs. The others would be fined 2s. 6d. and 7s. 6d. costs.

The Rector's Letter June 2026

My morning routine rarely varies, except when I'm on holiday. I get up quite early, let my elderly dogs out, and listen to Radio 4's *"Today"* programme while making a brew for Rachel and myself. When the dogs reappear in the kitchen ready for their breakfast, they are blissfully unaware of the voices on the radio discussing the latest wars, natural disasters, human atrocities, cost of living, state of society and political chaos etc. I rather envy them.

There are days when the morning news will burden our spirits and cast a shadow over the rest of the day. For those of us who are Christians, our faith in Jesus Christ is our daily anchor. After more than thirty years as a Priest I have come to treasure the constancy of the Church of England's Book of Common Prayer, published in 1662. The Holy Communion service contains the petition in one of its prayers that, under the King, we may be *"godly and quietly governed."*

It is a statement that can seem to be simultaneously both bland and weighty. To be *"quietly"* governed can appear as an endorsement of the status-quo, but genuine godly governance entails valuing and governing people in a way acceptable to God. If this happens, then *"quiet"* governance is less about the status-quo and more about the effectiveness of government and improving the lives of ordinary people.

The Prayer Book also includes a prayer for *"The High Court of Parliament"* and, yes, whatever our political leanings may be, it is right and proper that we should regularly pray for all those elected to high office. Effective government is hard work and requires the skill of engaging with complex matters and competing interests. Over the years I have met several MPs and have always appreciated their dedication and commitment to serving their constituents. Let us pray for them and for our country, that we may be *"godly and quietly governed."*

Yours ever,

Colin

North Rode Services
June 2026

June 7th Trinity 1 Flowers: Hilary Trueman	**11.15 am** Holy Communion (CW)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	The Rector Marilyn Ainslie Myrtle Bullock
June 14th Trinity 2 Flowers: as last week	**11.15 am** Holy Communion (BCP)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	The Rector Lynn Petts Margaret Cann
June 21st Trinity 3	No service at North Rode	**Gawsworth**	**10 am** Holy Communion **6 pm** Evensong
June 28th Trinity 4 Flowers:Rose Brocklehurst	**11.15 am** Holy Communion (BCP)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	The Rector Louise Jackson Charles Baxter
July 5th Trinity 5 Flowers: as last week	**11.15 am** Holy Communion (CW))	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	Revd Anne Freestone Sharon Oldfield Mary Hobson

If anyone would like to receive Holy Communion at home, or while in hospital, please contact the Rector.

Rector: Revd Colin Wilson	01260 223201
Enquiries: Mrs Diane Lowe	01260 272576
Secretary: Mrs Diane Lowe	01260 272576
Treasurer: Mrs Lynn Petts	01260 222902
Newsletter: Huw Williams	07791 717459

http://www.northrodechurch.org.uk

North Rode Parish Council



The annual parish meeting and Parish Council AGM was held on 7th May . The annual parish meeting we well attended by over 30 villagers, who were given an update on Daintry Hall plans by Mark Bullock, how Cheshire+Warrington combined authority may affect our area by Steve Purdham and an overview of Parish Council Activities including Peak Cluster by Cllr Huw Williams.

Peak Cluster – The Parish Council have been chasing up queries made during the consultation with peak Cluster, and because of the failure to respond have engaged with our MP Tim Roca to seek information on our behalf.

Well Dressing on 30th August – Plans are moving ahead with a road closure to enable a village picnic to take place in the road by the well and for a Village Ceilidh in the evening. Full details will be in the July/August newsletter and on leaflets to be posted out to villagers.

Highways – The Parish council have decided to purchase and install a mirror at the Daintry Hall end of the narrows on Bank Lane, to hopefully allow traffic to see round the bend and check for oncoming traffic before committing to entering the narrows in an effort to reduce gridlock at times. We continue to push Cheshire East for a new traffic count and to repair the leaking drain on Church Lane.

Local Things to Do





Wild Garlic (*Allium Ursinum*)



Wandering though shady and damp woodlands around North Rode, you may encounter glades of Wild Garlic growing in profusion at this time of year. It is an indicator that you could be standing in ancient woodland and a rare and special habitat. You will find it growing in deciduous woodland, along hedgerows, and river banks all over the United Kingdom and it flowers from April to June.

Common names used for wild garlic are ramson, buckram, broad-leaved garlic, wood garlic, bear leek, bear's garlic. The second half of the Latin name, ursinum, refers to the fact that brown bears loved to eat the bulb. This also gave rise to two of its common names – bear leek and bear garlic.

Wild garlic is a medium-sized bulbous perennial with a distinctive and pungent garlicky smell that pervades woodland in spring. The leaves are long, pointed and oval in shape with untoothed edges. They grow from the plant base and the bulb and have a strong garlic scent. The flowers are small, white, with six petals on a thin stalk and around 25 flowers form each rounded flower cluster which is held high on a single, leafless stalk. Wild garlic reproduces through bulbs, and very occasionally seeds. The seeds are 2–3mm long, flattish on one side and black and are dispersed when the parts of the plant above ground die down.

Using Wild Garlic

It has traditionally been used in medicine and modern research suggests that, like garlic, eating wild garlic may help to reduce blood cholesterol and lower blood pressure. It is also a popular foraged ingredient. Its leaves can be eaten raw in salads, or blanched and used in place of spinach, or made into a soup or pesto. They have a mild garlic flavour and are at their best before the flowers appear. The flowers are also edible and can be added raw to salads.

Wild garlic Pesto

Ingredients

- 100g wild garlic leaves
- 50g parmesan cheese or 50g nutritional yeast for a vegan and veggie-friendly version
- 50g toasted pine nuts
- 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil
- Lemon juice
- Salt and pepper

Method

1. Wash wild garlic leaves thoroughly.
2. Place the leaves, parmesan, olive oil and pine nuts into a food processor and blitz. You could do this with a pestle and mortar if you want to be more traditional.
3. Add more oil if you want to have a thinner pesto.
4. Add salt, pepper and lemon juice to taste.

F**oraging**

It is not illegal to gather above ground parts such as leaves, however it is illegal to uproot wild garlic. To use the roots/bulb, you need the landowners permission. The early leaf growth could be mistaken for Lords and Ladies or Lily of the Valley. The best way to check that you've picked wild garlic is to crush the leaves in the palm and smell. If it smells like onion, then hopefully you've picked the right plant. If in any doubt do not use.

Credit: Woodland Trust, National Trust

North Rode WI Report

Secretary Pam Robinson writes

The President Diane Lowe opened the May Meeting welcoming members. May is Resolution Month and the Accessing Public Toilets won the Vote by a large majority. Members voted to inform our Mossley Delegate that we all agreed on that Vote. Apologies were also read out.

Thanks were given to Pam Robinson for the Table Flowers to Diane and Carrie for the Raffle Teas and to Hilary and Carol and Diane for Refreshments. The Treasurer said Finances were quite healthy and Members had paid the Subs last Month. The Coffee Morning held in April had been very successful. The Spring Meeting of the Cloud Group was held on Wednesday 6th May and North Rode WI were on the Competition Table . Not as many members attended as usual. The new CFWI Chair is Ann Beckett following on from Selina Prescott. An Invite has been received from Gawsworth WI to a Bingo Evening 7pm £1.00.

Dates for your Diary

- **Thursday June 4th** - NFWI AGM Meeting on Zoom
- **Friday June 12th** - Jodrell Bank Visit Show and Lunch, 11am to 2pm, £26 per person
- **Wednesday July 1st** - Cloud Group Lunch, Legs of Man, 12 Noon, £22.00
- **Wednesday July 8th** - Literary Lunch, Hartford Golf Club, 12 Noon
- **Thursday July 30th** - An invite from Eaton WI to their Meeting at 7.30pm which will include Line Dancing and a Supper.
- **Thursday September 24th** - Our Coffee Morning at Gawsworth Methodist Church Hall
- **Monday October 5th** - CFWI Autumn Meeting at the Storyhouse Chester, Tickets £15 Some very good Speakers will be there including Floella Benjamin who is a very well-known personality plus other speakers and a Rock Choir.

After the Resolution voting The President welcomed two members of St John's Ambulance who came to show the Members CPR - How First Aid saves lives. There is only a 10% chance of survival outside a Hospital if you are having a Heart attack. It is very very important that people learn CPR. British Heart Foundation do Open Days in the Autumn and have a Restart the Heart Day. Diane Lowe gave the Vote of Thanks to Marie and David for their time to come and explain their important job saving lives.

The Raffle Prizes were won by Carrie and Pauline. The next Meeting is on Tuesday June 9th 7.30pm. Note this time when we are having a Wine Tasting with Stuart Pyecroft and Dorothy Waite. The Competition will be for a Wine Glass. Visitors are very welcome to Eaton Church and Community Hall on the Second Tuesday of the Month 2pm in the Winter Months and 7.30pm in the Summer Months

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Marton School

Dear Friends

As we move through another busy and exciting half term at Marton School, there is much to celebrate and look forward to within our school community

One of the highlights of this term has been the official opening of our new school pond. We were delighted to mark this special occasion on Sir David Attenborough's 100th birthday — a fitting tribute to someone who has inspired generations to care for the natural world. The pond will become a wonderful learning space for the children, encouraging curiosity, wildlife exploration and outdoor learning opportunities for years to come.

Our Year 6 pupils have also been working incredibly hard in preparation for their SATS assessments. We are immensely proud of the determination, resilience and positive attitude they have shown throughout the year. They have approached their revision with maturity and enthusiasm, supporting one another every step of the way. Whatever the results, they should feel very proud of all they have achieved.

Meanwhile, excitement is building as Key Stage 2 prepare for their end-of-year production of *Peter Pan*. Rehearsals are well underway, songs are being practised enthusiastically and costumes are beginning to appear! As the children prepare for this much-loved story about adventure, imagination and growing up, it feels especially fitting for our Year 6 pupils as they begin thinking about their own next chapter beyond Marton School. One line from the production captures this perfectly: "All children, except one, grow up." We cannot wait to see the finished performance and share it with families later in the term.

We are also looking forward to the Friends and Family Fun Day on Saturday 17th May. Thank you in advance to everyone who continues to support these events so generously. In preparation for the fun day, children are invited to come to school with crazy hair in exchange for donating sweets for the tombola. We always love seeing the children's creative hairstyles, and every donation helps make the event a success.

As half term holiday approaches, we hope families will enjoy a well-earned rest and some quality time together. When we return, we head into what is traditionally the busiest half term of the school year, filled with trips, sports events, performances, residential trips, school camp out, transition activities and celebrations.

We look forward to making many more happy memories together before the summer holidays arrive.

Mrs Nevin Deakin, Headteacher





My Story

Anne Lever

I come from a Scottish family, on one side my father the Ballingalls came from Fife, my mother a Mackie from Renfrewshire in the West. Although I was brought up in Sussex I always felt at home in Scotland.

We would often travel up to the Highlands in the days when you could put your car on the sleeper train and the Scottish landscape has continued to inspire my painting ever since. My Great Great Grandfather farmed in Fife (the name Ballingall is an old Scots surname and a Gaelic place name with quite a bit of interesting history attached) He lost all his land in the great banking crash of the West of Scotland Bank in the 19th C and moved to Stirlingshire and became Factor of the big estate of Blair Drummond where he remained for 50 years and became a moving force in the agricultural improvements of the time. One of his four sons was my great grandfather who went out to India with his wife to plant the first tea Gardens in Assam for the Findlay company.

My Grandfather, David Ballingall was born there in the mountains of Assam and christened in the Anglican Cathedral in Calcutta. The family eventually moved back to London, still in the tea business, and he was sent to Highgate school then to Cambridge, then St Bartholomews hospital to train as a doctor. In World War I he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps and went to France where he survived the war working throughout as a surgeon and being one of the first to be awarded the Military Cross. He was badly affected by his experience of treating the wounded after the battle of the Somme but never talked of it. After the war, he remained in the Army and went to serve in Jerusalem in 1921, under General Allenby. There he married my Grandmother, Beatrix Chandler, a VAD nurse from Devises in Wiltshire, whom he met when she was nursing him in a nursing home for wounded officers in Wiltshire. (A VAD nurse was a volunteer in the Voluntary Aid Detachment, formed in 1909 by the British Red Cross and Order of St. John. During WWI, tens of thousands of civilian women stepped up to serve as nurses). He was married under army orders and in the Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem.



Captain David Ballingall



The Kings Own Donkey Troop in China

My uncle Charles and my father Patrick were born 1926 and shortly after and in the early 1930's the family was posted to China, where my Grandfather was an Army Medical Officer in charge of the British Regiments in Tientsin (the Treaty Port of Peking, a hangover from the Boxer Rebellion) and the British Legation in Peking. It was called the North China Station and was about as far flung a bit of the empire that you could find. All the children went to the international school with the Americans and the Japanese Germans and Italians and I remember him saying that the Americans were bigger than everyone else so the Brits and the Japanese teamed up in a gang to take them on. He said that it was a dangerous period politically with War Lords and unrest and he was told if he got lost he must find a British soldier or a Sikh policeman to help. To keep the children of the regiment out of mischief the Kings Own Donkey Troop was formed, and they followed them on short expeditions up to the Great Wall of China for family picnics. The regiment at the time was the Royal Scots so the drama of the piped band, the Donkey Troup adventures and the treasure hunts that were organised made for an exciting childhood.

My father was sent home to Loretto School in Musselborough which was one of the oldest boarding schools in Scotland. He followed his father to Emmanuel College in Cambridge but, as WW2 had broken out, deferred his entry to join the Army where he went out to Greece and then to Palestine, before returning to Cambridge. He had played rugby for the army at the end of the war and was also a good runner and found himself as a miler running for Cambridge with Chris Chataway and Brasher at the same time as Roger Bannister was running for Oxford and getting ready to make his bid for the 4 minute mile record. The Oxford and Cambridge Athletics clubs were much involved as pacers and it was an exciting time. He told me he got a letter from his father saying "never mind all this sport – how about work" He left Cambridge to become a Lawyer in London, where he met my mother May and moved to Seaford on the south coast, where I was born.



Patrick Ballingall



May Ballingall

My mother's father was a Controller of Customs in Sierra Leone in West Africa. After he retired he settled in Sussex, not far from the Ballingall family (Scotland was too cold!). My mother did great work in the war as a Wren, intercepting and codebreaking Japanese signals at a Bletchley Park, but never talked about it. At the end of the war she went out to Berlin with the Malcolm Clubs, an organisation run by Lady Tedder to look after British Airmen in Europe. This was a difficult time as Europe was in chaos but she and her friends did get out of the base at the airport to explore, but only with a military escort. She managed to get into Hitler's bunker by bribing the Russian guard with cigarettes, and it couldn't have been long after he had committed suicide there. She never said much about it except that the entire city was in ruins and many people were starving.



Coastal Scene by Alexander Ballingall

I went to a small girls boarding school Micklefield in Seaford, where being in the Art room and painting became my thing (I seem to remember that in our family the boys were encouraged to do woodwork whereas paintings was considered a girls thing), I had always fiddled around with paints from a young age and I was told this was 'in the family'. There were a number of Alexander Ballingall paintings on the walls of my grandparent's house (He was quite a well-known Scottish Painter and his big watercolour works of the Fife coast are still collectable) and my great grandmother had been an amateur artist as had a number of the family. I had a fierce Art Mistress – Miss Hutchinson, who was trained at the Slade School of Art. She gave us all a rigid training in drawing and still life which was boring but as it turns out was a very good grounding for the future as around this time the art schools stopped doing any of this. My school was in an area with many other day and boarding schools They had been built after the first war as the sea air was supposed to be particularly good for children. I remember crocodiles of school children going to church from them all on Sunday all in different uniforms.. I wondered what I was going to do when I finished school and should have gone to art school but I had had enough of academic art by then and could not see how I could earn a living and be independent. My father had always told me not to feel limited being a girl in what I could do so I decided to study Law at Exeter University. When I graduated, I articled for 2 years with a law firm in London specialising in acquisitions and mergers. It was exciting and interesting work but very tough. I was one of only two girls in the office of solicitors and articled clerks and it wasn't the easiest time to be a young woman in the City of London, however I survived and qualified and then worked for 5 years as a solicitor in a West End firm specialising in commercial litigation. My role seemed to be to do all the logistics and briefing of Counsel and organising vast trial bundles for the high court, It was stressful work and besides I was missing time to paint and be more creative.

So I took a leap of faith and did what was called The V&A course which was a brilliant year of looking at the History of European Art, Architecture and the Decorative Arts which was intended to lead on to a career in Arts Administration or the National Trust. But I started to paint again and it simply flowed out, mainly traditional

landscapes in watercolours and it was during this time that I met my future husband Bernard. He was at the Bar in Manchester and a prospective SDP candidate and his election date clashed with my exam date. We survived that clash and were married and decided to settle down in North Rode, where our children were born.



Bernard and me on our engagement

A defining moment for my art was taking a course run by Robin Child previously Head of Art at Marlborough College and well known in artistic circles. This course gave me the confidence I needed and a sense of purpose and the tools I needed to paint in a different more abstract style. I was finally ready to allow myself to be an artist in the way I wanted. I think if you are creative in some way it is not good to bottle it up or deny it an outlet. I also think that even though there were a good many years when I was not painting you still go on observing and developing as an artist. Finally I realise that a career in the law did teach me to think in an organised way (relatively!) which is also important for me when I'm painting.

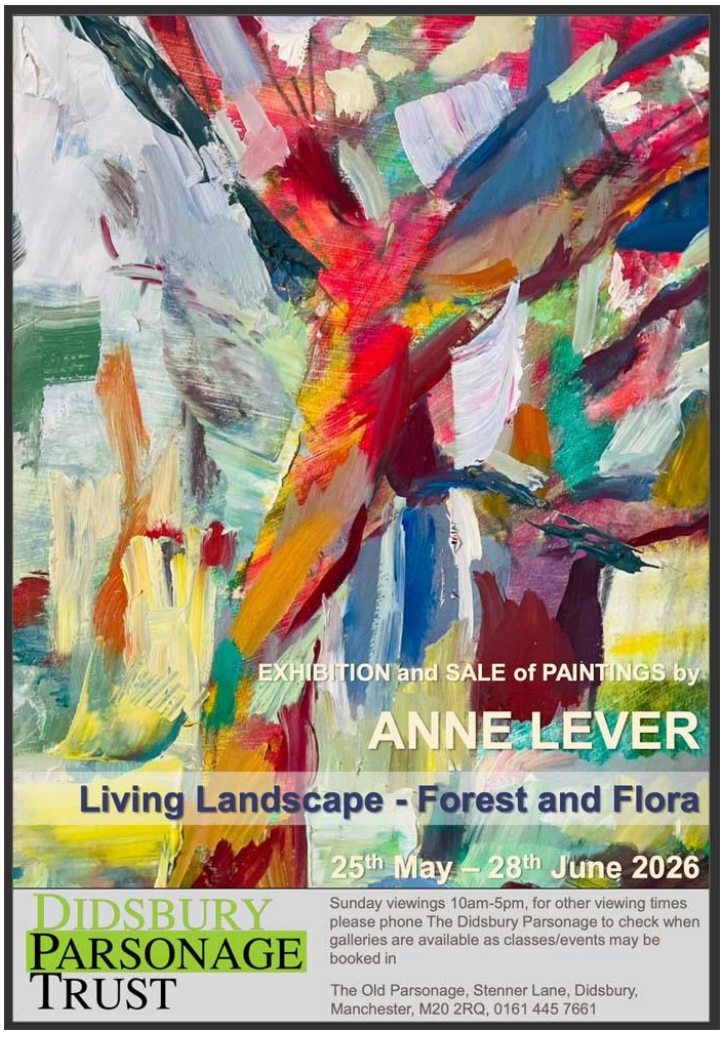
I paint from memory not the reality of what I have actually seen but trying to transmit the experience of being there.. I start with a brush stroke and see where it goes. I seem to swing between periods when the work is representational to times when it is more abstract. I think what I am trying to do really is to show the wonder of the natural world.



I love being out in the landscape in all weathers and wherever I am on my travels or here at home in Cheshire. I often visit Scotland and the Sussex downland and coast where I was as a child, but it is always the wild places and mountains that I find most inspiring.

I paint landscapes large and small, colour is important to me, as is a sense of order in a painting , I have done a few portraits and some book illustrating. I work in a variety of mediums, mainly oils and love using collage. I sometimes regret selling paintings I have done but I think once a painting has been finished (and that is always a difficult question...when is it finished!) it should then have a life of its own up on a wall.

I started showing my paintings at charity fairs, but my big break came with an exhibition at the Grosvenor Museum in Chester, and I have since exhibited in London, Manchester and Cheshire. I try to do one exhibition a year and this year it is in Manchester at The Parsonage, in Didsbury 25th May to 28th June and open to the public on Sundays 10am-5pm.



(I have a website where you can see my work www.annelever.co.uk and you can also find me on Instagram.)