

# ST MARY & ST PETER NEWSLETTER



**February 2026**

**Cover Picture :** *Dedham Vale 2001* Thanks to Andrew Stacey

## CHURCH SERVICES

**1st February – Fourth Sunday of  
Epiphany, Candlemas**

9.30am at St Peter's – Morning  
Worship

**8th February – Second Sunday  
before Lent**

9.30am at St Mary's – Holy  
Communion

**15th February – Sunday next  
before Lent**

9.30am at St Peter's – Holy  
Communion

**18th February – Ash Wednesday**

10.0am at St Mary's – Holy  
Communion

and imposition of ashes

**22nd February – First Sunday of  
Lent**

9.30am at St Mary's – Holy  
Communion

**28th February – Saturday**

3.00pm at St Peter's churchyard  
– Forest Church

**1st March – Second Sunday of  
Lent**

9.30am at St Peter's – Morning  
Worship

To check for other services and any  
alterations please email The  
Reverend Heather Wilcox –  
*RevHWilcox@outlook.com*



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**Deadline for submissions for the March edition: 15th February**  
**Contact the editor via email: [lwbnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:lwbnewsletter@gmail.com)**

## Welcome to the February Newsletter.

*Greetings and a Happy New Year to all Our Readers!*

Typing those words in mid-January reminded me of a childhood memory—the arrival of the weekly comic which used to commemorate Christmas with themed stories about the characters (Desperate Dan might have a mighty turkey pie for lunch or the Bash Street Kids would be out in the snow causing mischief).

The approach of Easter was marked by chocolate egg-themed puzzles, and even Fireworks Night was flagged up with rockets and bangers on the cover. It seems an awfully long time ago!!

These days, I seldom buy a newspaper or other disposable paper publication—I get as much ‘news’ as I can take from radio, TV and the social media. But I often make an exception at Christmas and not just for the TV listings.

There is something comforting, after all, about seeing the normal diet of gloom and disaster temporarily displaced by photos of children tobogganing in the snow, a huge crossword to chip away at over a few days, an end-of-the-year



Image: <https://katezoo.blogspot.com/2014/11/firework-covers.html>

quiz to remind you how little you have retained about the comings and goings of politicians, actors and people off the telly with no discernible talent.

It is one of the small punctuation points in the year, one of the markers for the passage of the seasons.

By the time you read this, it will be nearly Valentine's Day—so if you do celebrate it, I hope you have a good time!

*Steve Pollington,*  
Editor

Did you know Langham Community Shop has been here  
for you for over 20 years!  
Welcoming you every day, 364 days a year, that's over 7500  
times the doors have been opened every morning!



And the most staggering part of all, every friendly,  
helpful, kind and caring person welcoming you when you  
walk through the door is a VOLUNTEER.

We are not just a group of people that turn up every now  
and again, we are a family, we are friends and we all do it  
for each other, for the shop and for our amazing community.

Many of our volunteers have been here since the very  
beginning, some played a huge part in getting the shop  
started and everyone has helped to keep it what it is today.

**We are proud of what we do,  
and we will continue for many more years.**

We regularly see too many small, local businesses closing  
around us. With your constant and continued support  
we will continue to work hard and always be here for you.

You can also be part of our family; you can support us  
and help us to stay here where we belong.  
We can not just always rely on the generosity of what we  
have, we need more volunteers to keep us going and  
be able to stay open later as we have now managed to do. '

Langham Community Centre's

**100 Club Draw**

**December winners were**

1st Bradley Say no. 31  
2nd Gillian Brown no. 71  
3rd Patricia Mahoney no. 47  
4th Peter Freeman no. 16

**New members welcome.**

**Contact**

01206 323007  
shannon955@msn.com .

**WHEELCHAIR LOAN**

The Short Term Wheelchair Loan Charity (Reg. No. 112657, [www.wheelchairloancharity.com](http://www.wheelchairloancharity.com)), based at Clacton Hospital, helps people needing the short-term use of a wheelchair. The chairs are for all ages and reasons. The service is a perfect interim solution if you require a wheelchair for an occasion such as a holiday, a wedding or to help accommodate a visiting relative. The service is funded by donations and is free to users, although a deposit of £40 from borrowers is asked for.

Enquiries may be phoned to 01255 201763 or emailed to [wheelchairloan@gmail.com](mailto:wheelchairloan@gmail.com)



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## BOXTED W. I.

The members wrapped up 2025 with a successful 'Heart Party'. Plenty of food was washed down with copious amounts of Cava & mulled wine as we focussed on our resolution 'Bystanders can be Lifesavers' to draw attention to the fact that women are less likely to survive a

cardiac arrest - as men are still fearful to apply the defibrillator. With this in mind the members sported their underwear as outerwear adding sparkle and panache!

From our generous donations we plan to provide CPR dummies for



local training and we'll report further on this later this year.

A final mention for 2025 is a nod to our member Sarah who started 2025 with a 'RED' January (Run Every Day) and kept on running daily for the whole year! congrats to her.

By the time you receive this newsletter the members have already kicked off 2026 with the regular monthly meetings- January being our social y/e celebration meal courtesy of The Anchor at Stratford St Mary and a good time was certainly had by all.

January can be somewhat quiet in the social calendar - but not for us!

Some members had a lot of fun as they 'faithfully' tripped to 'The *Traitors*' experience in London. This was followed later in January by a

joyous evening of entertainment by Colchester Operatic performing the '*Guys & Dolls*' musical.

Meanwhile on a more serious note, members are currently planning for the 2026 W.I. Federation resolution.

February however brings light hearted competition to the village hall as we will be enjoying a '*night at the races*'.



# BOXTED PARISH COUNCIL REPORT – JANUARY 2026

A reminder that parish council meetings are open to the public. Please do come along and we have agenda time allocated at the beginning of each meeting for residents to raise issues.

The public participation part of the council meeting saw representatives from Bellway's and partners present an update on their anticipated planning application for **150 homes north of Straight Rd.** They summarised the consultation position and will update again if Colchester Council include the site in the new Local Plan – which is still to be decided. The council asked that the materials and style of housing they propose to submit in any planning application they take forward, be similar to that of the Hill Farm development and not the box style development that Bellway's can be associated with.

Planning applications were discussed this month and any comments agreed can be found on the Colchester City Planning portal – search for Boxted and you find those affecting the village. <https://www.colchester.gov.uk/planning-search-results/>

Fly tipping should be reported to [Colchester.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/fly-tipping/](https://www.colchester.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/fly-tipping/)

We understand a date in 2027 has been set for the **Severalls Bridge** to be repaired; we are still waiting on the outcome of Essex Highways dynamic load tests on Boxted Bridge to see if it can be opened to pedestrians

and cyclists but are hopeful that this can be achieved.

We have heard that the Pylon project has progressed to the next stage where the Governmental Planning Inspector will now examine the case for passing legislation permitting the **Pylon project** to be implemented. We, and others, have another opportunity to make the case for consideration of an offshore route which is technically possible and being implemented for other wind projects.

In January we finalised the **budget** for the financial year 26/27. The requirement for funding, which we submit to Colchester Council, will see an increase of 2.88% on the parish council amount of Band D Council tax bills.

I hope that those that got to see the **Boxted Amateur Players** production enjoyed the performances. Any surplus from these events gets given to the Village Hall. Over the past few years, we have been able to update the curtains, stage flooring and install professional stage lighting as a result of the funds raised. Many thanks to all that supported the shows.

Our next council meeting is Wed 11<sup>th</sup> February at 730pm in the Village Hall. Please come along.

Please get in touch with the Council by dropping an email to [clerk@boxted-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@boxted-pc.gov.uk), look at [www.boxtedparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.boxtedparishcouncil.org.uk) and follow the Facebook page 'Boxted Parish Council'.



## **2026 programme**

Wednesdays from 7.30 at the Village Hall

|                                  |                                         |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>January 21<sup>st</sup></b>   | <b>Duchess of York, Mother of Kings</b> |
| <b>February 18<sup>th</sup></b>  | <b>Edwardian Colchester</b>             |
| <b>March 18<sup>th</sup></b>     | <b>Seven Wonders of the Waterways</b>   |
| <b>April 15<sup>th</sup></b>     | <b>£10 Poms. We Chose New Zealand</b>   |
| <b>May 20<sup>th</sup></b>       | <b>Roman Findings</b>                   |
| <b>July 15<sup>th</sup></b>      | <b>Tudor Costumes and Food</b>          |
| <b>September 16<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>Suffragettes</b>                     |
| <b>October 21<sup>st</sup></b>   | <b>London Docklands</b>                 |
| <b>November 18<sup>th</sup></b>  | <b>Colchester's Jumbo</b>               |
| <b>December 16<sup>th</sup></b>  | <b>Christmas special</b>                |

**Membership is £15 for the year or £5 per evening.**

Other events include Sat 28 February Quiz night £5 per person. Thurs 18 June trip to Stow Maries £20 Entry & cream tea. Weds 19 August trip to Hadleigh Guildhall £10

## LANGHAM PARISH COUNCIL REPORT – JANUARY 2026

Firstly, may we wish all residents a slightly belated happy and healthy new year.

The last three months have proven very busy for the Parish Council, kicking off with our Annual Fireworks Display, moving on to a Christmas Carol event, and most recently a huge amount of work preparing a response to Colchester's Local Plan consultation.

The weather was reasonably kind for the Fireworks and the display itself was possibly the biggest and best ever. Just over 1,000 people came along, and the event made a profit of just over £5,000 which will be ploughed back into the local community.

Our Christmas Carols event saw some spirited singing around the Community Centre piano, close to the village Christmas tree on the Recreation Ground. We do however have plans to plant a living Christmas tree for future years.

A huge amount of work resisting Colchester's "Langham900" plans has



**WE ARE LOOKING FOR**

**VAN DRIVERS**

Do you have a few hours to spare each week? We are on the look out for volunteers to join our happy team of volunteers and drive our van for occasional collections and deliveries. No special licence is required

Contact us at..

[fundraising@helenrollason.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@helenrollason.org.uk)

Helen Rollason  
Cancer Charity

culminated in a 173 page submission to the Local Plan public consultation just ahead of the 14th January deadline. A team of 10 village volunteers assisted mightily with this work and we are extremely grateful to them all.

Finally, we currently have a vacancy on the Council – please do get in touch with our Clerk to find out more if this may be of interest. Your village needs you!

## Langham Parish Councillor Vacancy

### YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS YOU!

Langham Parish Council currently has a vacancy for a member of the public to become a Parish Councillor. If you'd like to get involved in decision making about your local community & local issues and would like to make a positive contribution to the area in which you live or work, then this is the position for you.



Do you have an interest in your local community,  
environment, transport, amenities,  
planning and housing issues,  
community events,  
as well as your local government finances  
and want to make a difference then please apply!

- You must be aged 18 years and over, eligible to vote and have lived or worked in the parish of Langham for 12 months or more, or within 3 miles of the parish boundary.

- For more information, please e-mail in the first instance

Carol Harbach, Clerk to Langham Parish Council:

Email: [clerk@langhamparishcouncil.co.uk](mailto:clerk@langhamparishcouncil.co.uk)

**LATEST DATES!**

# toddler

## play and praise

for babies, toddlers and pre-school children (and their accompanying adults)

**Tuesday, 9.30 - 11.00**

**14 October - 11 November - 9 December**  
**13 January - 10 February - 10 March**

**St Peter's Church, Boxted**

A chance for babies and toddlers to play together, enjoy some messy crafts and refreshments, with lots of opportunities for chat and refreshments for the adults accompanying them too!

At the end of each session, there will be a short act of worship, with a Bible story and toddler-friendly songs

For more information contact the parish office - 01206 243683, 6parishescolchester@gmail.com



## BOXTED RUNNERS

Catherine Roberts  
& Sarah Shelton



## QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday 28 February 7.30 - 9pm

BOXTED VILLAGE HALL

Teams of up to 6 people £5 each  
(under 16s FREE)

To book call Scott on 07904 887000

Licensed BAR in aid of Boxted Poppy Appeal



## BOXTED RUNNERS

The winter doesn't stop Boxted Runners. We'll show up whatever come rain or shine. In late November we had runners at the Hadleigh 5 & 10 mile race and the Silverstone 10km race.

The runners at Hadleigh were faced with pretty wet conditions throughout the race, but everyone ran well and finished strongly and were proud of their efforts.

At the Silverstone 10km our runners lined up and zoomed their way around the race track. There were no pit stops for a change of shoes and, like the runners at Hadleigh, finished full of pride in their performance. There were PBs at Silverstone from Cheryl, Jacs and Jo (who was taking part in her first ever 10km race). John was first in his age group.

All of this confirms to me that Boxted Runners is full of wonderful determined

people who do themselves and Boxted Runners proud whenever they put on their Club kit and cross that starting line.

We also celebrate and applaud the efforts of two Boxted Runners stalwarts Catherine Roberts and Sarah Shelton who ran every day for the last year. This is a phenomenal achievement and one for both of them to be exceptionally proud of. It takes tremendous discipline and commitment to get out the door each and every day. They must both be so proud of your achievement

If you feel inspired, please feel free to get in touch with us. Find out more on - [www.boxtedrunners.co.uk](http://www.boxtedrunners.co.uk)

Ian Bown



## God's love letter

As I was thinking about what to write this month, a couple of lines from one song, kept going round and round in my head. It's not a particularly modern song, indeed, I wasn't even born when it was written, but its words you may be familiar with, these words were 'love letters straight from my heart,' from the song, *Love Letters*, written in 1945 with lyrics by Edward Heyman and composed by Victor Young.

February is of course, the month in which we may celebrate Valentines Day, with '*Love Letters* straight from our hearts,' written to our nearest and dearest. Certainly our consumerist culture, will encourage us to spend money on cards and gifts for our loved ones.

As with many celebrations, one size doesn't always fit all ... whilst many will enjoy the romance and the opportunity to express their love at this time of year, what about those who have lost their loved one, or whose relationship has broken down, or who are still searching for 'the one?' How do we hold these tensions, whilst celebrating the love that so many have found?

Valentines' day will closely be followed by Shrove Tuesday, if chocolate and roses aren't your thing, then maybe pancakes, lemon and sugar are, before we potentially put all these things to one side and celebrate Ash Wednesday and enter the season of Lent, with its themes of Fasting, giving and prayer.

Lent, is an intentional season of preparation as we prepare to remember the events of Holy Week, culminating in Jesus death on the cross to save us from our sins, before joyfully celebrating his resurrection, and the assurance that we can enjoy eternal life with God, on Easter day.

The whole bible is a 'love letter, straight from the heart of God,' and we see that most clearly expressed in the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, which tell the story of Jesus life, death and resurrection, *Gospel*, literally translating as the GOODNEWS. So this Lent, why not spend a little time each day, reading from God's love letter and commit to reading just one gospel in the 6 weeks of Lent, Mark is the shortest gospel and the most action packed, page turner!

This love letter straight from the heart, the bible, is Good news for all of us, no matter what is happening in our lives and for all time.

May God bless you

Rev Heather

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# BOXTED HISTORY GROUP

## *WHAT DID GEORGE STEPHENSON DO FOR US?*

In 1750 the population of Britain was about 50 million and 85% of them lived in the countryside. The means of transport available to people were horse, wagons and boats. Consequently most people did not travel far beyond their village. Things changed with the advent of steam power.

The impetus for change came from the need to transport goods. Roads were little more than mud tracks in winter and canals, though invaluable for transportation in some areas, were not practicable universally because of difficult terrain. In north-east England there was an abundance of coal and a great demand for it in the rapidly expanding London. Direct transport by road was desperately slow. From York to

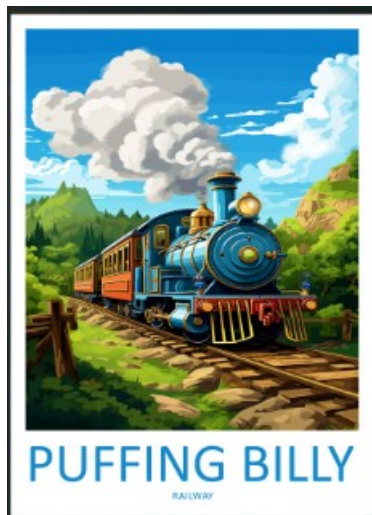
London took 3 days. The standard practice was to take it to the nearest port and load boats to carry the coal to the capital. Mine owners realised that there were fortunes to be made if a new solution was found.

George Stephenson (1781 -1848) brought together existing and

emerging technologies to solve the problem. He developed a steam locomotive that had specially designed iron wheels that ran on iron tracks instead of the wooden wheels that were used before. It could move at 15 mph - much faster than a wagon. As tracks were extended there were objections from landowners who did

not want grouse shooting on their estates to be disrupted.

Before long entrepreneurs realised that trains could be used for carrying people as well as transporting goods and passenger services began. The comfort of the coaches varied according to the price travellers paid: the cheapest ones



were little more than open-top wagons while the most expensive had a roof and were not dissimilar to the more comfortable horse-drawn carriages still on the road.

Such was the enthusiasm for the new railways that in the 1850s more and more companies were formed to lay lines and run trains. Investors were keen to make a profit. By 1923 the government realised that things were becoming unmanageable and the system of over 100 companies needed to be rationalised, especially as people were being defrauded by bogus companies. The number of companies was reduced to four.

As the rail network grew so did the concern for safety. In the 1840s safety was somewhat haphazard. There was no system for indicating the approach of trains and so the task was given to the local policeman. A better way of doing things had to be found and signals were introduced. When the arm of the signal was horizontal it indicated to the driver that the train had to stop. These have largely been replaced by lights but a few are still in existence.

One of the consequences of the introduction of railways was the standardisation of time. Before it was

standardised each place went by local time with the locality setting its own time. This was of no use for timetabling so standardisation was introduced.

Progress continued to be made through the 20th century. Steam engines were replaced by diesel and then by electric. What was seen as progress at the time is now often regretted: The network was reduced by 50% in the Beeching cuts of 1963 and later the railways were privatised. After first being nationalised in 1948, re-nationalisation is now under way. George Stephenson would be amazed at the developments and the speeds that can be reached but he is the man who started it all.

ALAN LADBROOKE



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**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families  
Diocese of Chelmsford

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2 pm**  
**St. Mary's West Bergholt**

*1<sup>st</sup> Meeting  
of the  
King's Ridge  
Mothers' Union*

**Join Us and Join In!**

**WELCOME**

*If you would like more information contact  
Joy (01206241871) or  
Anne ([anne.price1616@gmail.com](mailto:anne.price1616@gmail.com))*



**Community Cafe  
Coffee Morning**

*hosted by  
2nd Langham Scout Group  
Friday 20th February 2026  
at Langham Community Centre  
10:30 - 12:00  
ALL WELCOME*

## **COLCHESTER SUGARCRAFT**

We are a small friendly club who welcome everyone interested in cake decorating and making flowers and models from sugarpaste. We meet at **Stanway Community Hall** on the last Thursday of every month at 7.30. Visitors £5 includes refreshments.

**February 26<sup>th</sup>** Fuchsia Natalie Porter **March 26<sup>th</sup>** Easter theme Jacqui Kelly **April 30<sup>th</sup>** A.G.M. Sugarpaste model.  
Renew membership £40 per year.

Contact Sue Albins [Sue28albins@btinternet.com](mailto:Sue28albins@btinternet.com) or 01026 251955.



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**Come and give it a try!**

## BOXTED EVERGREENS

*We hope 2026 will prove to be a good year for our Evergreen ladies.*

The last event in 2025 was our Christmas meal which does seem a long time ago now, but members were treated to a two course meal at a local venue *The White Hart* and our ladies also received Christmas presents from the club. The afternoon went very well and we all had a lovely afternoon.

We are now concentrating on our programme for this year.

At the time of writing our annual **Bring and Buy sale** in January has not taken place but we are sure it will be well supported which it has been in the past. February sees us being entertained by a member of the committee talking about her life and experiences in Japan, having lived there for a year. Our March meeting will be Easter so hot cross buns will be on the menu. In April we have booked Brenda Eysers who will be chatting to us about “a stitch in time”. We are sure this will be a lot of fun, as

her last visit proved to be when we learnt so much about the history of hats and much much more.

In May we have extended our meeting time to accommodate a flower demonstration and then to allow members to make their own display, if they wish.

We are still finalising details for the rest of the year and an update will be included in a future magazine.

In the meantime, if anyone would like to come along to one of our meetings we meet on the **third Thursday of every month in Boxted Village Hall, between 2.00pm and 3.30pm.** The first visit would be free, thereafter it's £5 per meeting which covers the cost of hiring the hall, a raffle, cakes, tea and coffee.

There is an annual subscription > of £10. Should you require any further information please call Elaine, telephone number 01206 273183.

## BOXTED EVERGREENS

Our Club meets in the village hall every fourth Thursday of the month from 2.00pm to 3.30pm. The age of our members varies but the club would suit anyone over 60 so please come along and you would be given a warm welcome. Our members are always asked for their suggestions before our yearly entertainment programme is arranged and we do try our best to cater for everyone. If you would like more information about our club please call Elaine on 01206 273183.

## WE NEED YOU!



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[communityshoplangham@gmail.com](mailto:communityshoplangham@gmail.com)  
or call in and speak to anyone on shift



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Call 01206 670216, visit [www.fortishealthandwellbeing.co.uk](http://www.fortishealthandwellbeing.co.uk) or email [info@fortishealthandwellbeing.co.uk](mailto:info@fortishealthandwellbeing.co.uk)

## BOXTED HISTORY GROUP

*Meeting every third Wednesday  
of the month at Boxted Village  
Hall. 7.30 for 8pm.*

*Guests always welcome.*

The Art and Craft Club  
meet on the **third**  
Wednesday of each month,  
2-4pm at Boxted Village  
Hall.

*All welcome - come and join in!*

## BOXTED CARPET BOWLS CLUB

Come and join us for a friendly,  
enjoyable afternoon playing bowls  
at **Boxted Village Hall on Friday 2 - 4  
pm**, Sept to April

Further info please contact:

Michael Hubbard 01206 271892

Sue Smith 07465443795

sueronben@gmail.com

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Langham Scout Group

Meetings are held each  
Wednesday evening at the  
Community Centre.

**Squirrels 5:00 to 6:00**

**Beavers 4:45 to 6:00**

**Cubs 6:00 to 7:30**

**Scouts 7:30 to 9:00**

**Contact** Group Scout Leader:

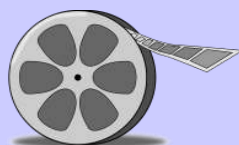
James Puxley 07935 909063

## LANGHAM LADIES

*Any ladies wishing to join the  
group or to come along as a guest,  
please **telephone Gill Brown** on  
**01206 273286.***

## LANGHAM FILM NIGHTS

For details of films and screening  
times and to book tickets, go to  
[www.langhamcommunitycentre.org.uk/  
next-cinema-screening/](http://www.langhamcommunitycentre.org.uk/next-cinema-screening/)



## Crafty Ladies

Meet on first Wednesday of each month throughout the year, 10.00 am to 3.00 pm at the Community Centre. Subscription £26 due March and September. Contact Chrissy Todd tel. 07742 131454.

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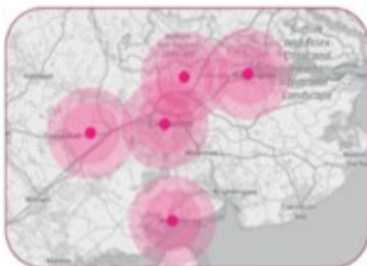
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**Please telephone either number shown for the **DAY ON WHICH YOU MAKE YOUR CALL** (not the day of your appointment). If there is no reply, please do not leave a message but **RING ANY OTHER NUMBER.****

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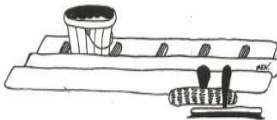
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