

Tom's marathon boost for church repairs

A North Dorset man is running in his first ever half-marathon later this month in a bid to boost funds for a project set up to preserve an important part of the history of the village where he lives.

Thomas Trevor, who lives at Middle Farm at Fifehead Magdalen is taking part in the Yeovil half marathon on 26th March to raise money for the urgently needed repairs to the Newman memorial in the village church of St Mary Magdalene.

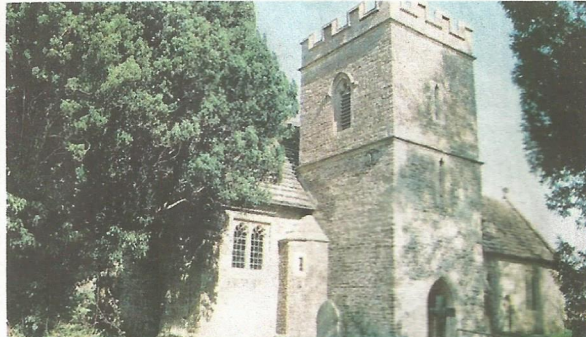
Thomas says, "Although I'm a member of Gillingham Trotters this will be my first race; I've always wanted to do a half marathon so it seemed a good way to hopefully raise some funds for this village project."

The Newman memorial in the village church was sculpted by Sir Henry Cheere who is a renowned English sculptor and monumental mason of the 18th century. In 1743 Sir Henry, 1st Baronet (1703-15th January 1781) was appointed 'carver' to Westminster Abbey, an appointment which led to his creation of at least nine monuments in the Abbey, including the monument to Admiral Sir Thomas Hardy.

The Newman family owned the Fifehead estate for almost 250 years from 1530 to 1775 and this significant monument is dedicated to Sir Richard Newman, his wife and children.

Thomas says: "This is a massive project for the church and village to undertake to preserve village history and to boast a sculpture by Sir Henry Cheere in our church but with grants and additional fundraising now is the time to start the process, before it comes away completely and we would have the additional problem of piecing it together again."

Thomas is aiming to raise £1,000 from his half-marathon effort. Anyone wishing to sponsor Thomas should visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/newman-memorial-run Jackie Spiteri



Town turns out for tidy up

Many keen volunteers turned out on a lovely spring morning on Saturday 4th March to join in Gillingham's Annual Town Litter-Pick. It was a very successful morning with rubbish collected from all the usual 'hot spots' and from elsewhere around the town. There was a bit of scrambling under bushes and dodging brambles but it was also great to see the spring flowers bursting into bloom. It was particularly good to have members of the St Mary's Gillingham Scout Group taking part, along with their parents.

The introduction of the 5p levy on plastic bags has made a very noticeable difference to the environment. There were some unusual finds - from a bed headboard to hats, gloves, trainers, bed linen and broken toys but the most unusual find must go to Herbie Light who found a rabbit (alive) and safely



William and Finley Alexander from St Mary's Gillingham Scout Group really enjoyed being involved

ushered it away from the road. Organisers would like to say thank you to everyone who took part, the town has benefited greatly from the help.

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