



Woodcote

Vol 35 No 1
January 2023

CORRESPONDENT

Delivered free to homes in Woodcote, Exlade Street and Crays Pond

PARISH COUNCIL TO THE RESCUE!

The Woodcote Correspondent Committee is delighted to report that the future of the publication is secure. This is thanks to the Parish Council which has stepped in with an annual grant to supplement advertising revenue. The Committee wrote to the Parish Council in the Autumn to alert it to the financial difficulties and provided financial evidence of projected shortfalls which, without a new source of regular income, would have meant that December's Correspondent would have been the last paper copy published after 34 years of non-stop publication.

The Parish Council has undertaken to review the grant on an annual basis, so from now on the Woodcote Correspondent Committee should be able to get back to what they do best: keeping the residents of the village and surrounding areas up-to-date with local events, stories, announcements and much more besides. Correspondent Chairman, Sam Peates, who gave a presentation to the Parish Council in November, said 'I'm sure that everyone in the village will be delighted with this news and will be grateful to our Parish Council for seeing the benefits of devoting public money to this worthy cause'.



COMMENT FROM ST LEONARD'S

By necessity this has to be written before Christmas to meet publication deadlines and you will no doubt be reading it towards the end of December.

In 2021, because Linda was quite unwell, we had to change some of our Christmas services. In particular the Christmas Midnight Communion had to be cancelled because a priest wasn't available and for the same reason, on Christmas morning, I led a non-communion service. As I have received an extension to my licence from the Bishop, I am now able to lead communion services. Therefore, as I write this, the expectation is that those two services in 2022, at midnight and Christmas morning will have gone ahead as communions.

In January we will be returning to our normal pattern of services except on the 29th when there is a 5th Sunday in the month as there will be this month, our custom in the Langtree Team is to have a combined service in one of the parishes of the Team. This month we will be holding the service at Checkendon church at 10.30am. There will be no other services in any of the Team churches that day. If the weather makes travelling safe and easy, please do join us for that service.

Talking of weather, as I write this, we have moved into a very cold spell which has brought sharp frosts that caused my car battery to say "no more, thank you". But on a more serious note, this brings to mind the plight of so many people who are concerned about the costs of heating and food this winter. We hear of the sadness of so many parents who couldn't give their children the Christmas they would wish. Despite financial help from the Government, they will be entering New Year with serious concern about paying the bills.

We know that foodbanks have never been in such demand. In church we have a collection box for food which we take to Readifood in Reading. If you can please leave a donation, not fresh food please, but tinned or packet foods. Don't forget other things like toiletries or baby necessities; Readifood are very grateful for such donations.

For the church, Christmas doesn't end on December 26th. Although Christmas lights start to disappear soon after Christmas Day and certainly after New Year's Day, in our family we keep with the tradition of keeping them on until twelfth night, although I can well understand that this year the rising cost of energy may persuade people to switch off early.

As we move into 2023, two things happen. Firstly, many of us make New Year Resolutions, full of good intentions, but as many owners of gyms will tell you, for many, the good intentions don't last very long.

However secondly, the good thing is that days start to get longer (yes, only very slowly in January) but we can look forward to all those signs like snowdrops and crocuses starting to flower and then we think that spring is on the way.

However, as we all know, we shouldn't be fooled; it can snow in April and we can get frosts in May!

Finally, on behalf of the Parochial Church Council, I wish you all a very Happy New Year.

Brian Turner

Licensed Lay Minister and PCC Vice-chairman

Services at St. Leonard's in January

Sunday 1st

8.00 am Holy Communion

9.45 am Parish Communion

Sunday 8th

8.00 am Holy Communion

9.45 am Worshipping Together

Sunday 15th

8.00 am Holy Communion

9.45 am Open Door

Sunday 22nd

8.00 am Holy Communion

9.45 am Parish Communion

Sunday 29th

10.30 am Team Service of Holy Communion at Checkendon Church. Please note that there will be no services today at Woodcote Church and no other services in the Langtree Team.

The church is usually open for private prayer each day between 10am and 4pm.

Online Services

We will continue with our online service of Night Prayer on Tuesdays at 8.30pm.

This follows the ancient monastic pattern of Compline and lasts about 20 minutes.

If you don't already join us but would like to, please contact me by email for joining details at rbrianturner@yahoo.co.uk.

SPEEDWATCH



The Crays Pond Goring Heath Community Speedwatch Group had a busy November monitoring vehicles for speeding in Crays Pond and Whitchurch Hill. The Community Speedwatch scheme has been set up by Goring Heath Parish Council supported by Thames Valley Police. During the month, 84 vehicles were reported for speeding. The group currently has six Thames Valley Police approved sites: three in Crays Pond and three in Whitchurch Hill. The group is keen to expand its team of volunteers to help keep the community safe. To find out more, please email the CPGH Group Coordinator crayspondcsww@sent.com to register your interest.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information printed in this paper, the Editor and Committee cannot accept responsibility for the contents of advertisements or any errors that may occur. Opinions expressed are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or Committee.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to our first issue of 2023. As you will have read on our front page, we are delighted that we can continue bringing you all the latest news and updates throughout 2023 and beyond. Although many of

us go online to find out information, we know a significant number of you still appreciate the Correspondent delivered to your door each month.

We hope you all enjoyed the beautiful front cover of the December issue, provided by local resident Jackie Comrie. We are very lucky indeed that she is able to capture the beauty of every season so effortlessly and we look forward to seeing some of her spring photos before too long...

In the meantime, try to stay warm and remember that the library is listed as a 'warm space' for everyone; go along and enjoy an activity, a warm drink or choose a book or two to read.

Until next month.

Yvette

PUBLISHER INFORMATION

Editor: Yvette Decmar *[via email]*

Articles for inclusion: to the editor by email to: wood-co@runbox.com, or letters may be handed in at the library. To be received by the 12th of the preceding month.

Advertisers: To place an advertisement, please email wood-co@runbox.com for details of prices and how to produce your ad in our house style. The deadline for payment and your finished advertisement is the 12th of the preceding month.

Small Ads and Announcements: £5 for three lines.

Photographs: Photos should be unedited and as high a resolution as possible (at least 500kB). Please email them as attachments to wood-co@runbox.com

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The Woodcote Correspondent is on the Village website at tinyurl.com/Woodcote-Correspondent

Note: The Woodcote Correspondent is edited, produced and distributed by volunteers.

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WOODCOTE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council have been busy continuing to work through all the comments received from the village consultation. Traffic issues came out high from the consultation and several areas are currently underway.

Project for 2nd Zebra Crossing on Goring Road near the crossroads with Bridlepath, Beech Lane.

Oxfordshire County Council highways have been informed and have visited the site and accept the location and the project is underway. The first action is for a speed check near the proposed site for the zebra crossing. OCC will be carrying this out early January 2022, once the schools return from Christmas holidays. The results of this will determine if the crossing can go ahead. The Parish Council will keep the village informed.

New Speed Sign The Parish Council have also spoken to OCC highways about a new speed sign, a SID (Speed Indicator Display which flashes the speed you are travelling and slow down if over the speed limit). These type of signs are classed as temporary and need to be moved to different locations within the village. The signs will be solar or battery powered. OCC have agreed that they will instal three poles for the SID sign to be mounted on at three locations in Woodcote, these are:

Oxford Road on the left coming from the A4074, a few metres before the junction with Tidmarsh Lane.

Goring Road on the left coming from Crays Pond past the white gate and some metres down from the gate.

Long Toll entering the village past the existing 30mph sign, then on the left before the entrance to the salt depot.

A possible fourth location will be on the Reading road entering the village; this will need to wait until the housing development is completed as OCC will be moving the 30mph limit closer to the A4074 junction. Until this is done the location for a pole for the SID cannot be finalised.

20 mph Limit for Woodcote The Parish Council requested to OCC to be included in the 20mph initiative for rural villages. OCC have advised that this is likely to happen in Woodcote next year following a public consultation which could be in February/March 2023.

New Swings The Parish Council have been given a grant from the SODC District Councillors for a set of new swings on Folly Field. They are likely to be installed sometime in the New Year.

The Parish Council are still looking for new parish councillors; we have three vacancies. Becoming a councillor is a great way to integrate with the community. As a councillor you can become a real voice for the community and make a difference to the local area. Anyone 18 plus can apply. Do contact the Parish Clerk for more information or speak to one of the existing Councillors. All details are on www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk under 'Council'.

Warm Space

And finally, Woodcote Library is listed as a “Warm Space” this Winter. Warm spaces and activities are open this winter to give residents free and low-cost places to meet, take the children, get support, or have a hot drink.

Find out more at www.oxford.gov.uk/warmspaces

Clerk: 01491 681861

Email: clerk@woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk

WOODCOTE VOLUNTEERS



Happy New Year to you all! Do you have any New Year's resolutions? Ours is to try to increase our pool of volunteer drivers from the current 34 to 40! We are becoming increasingly busy and our valiant team of drivers are getting a bit stretched!

If you would like to give something back to your community, and feel a huge sense of satisfaction by helping others, why don't you consider offering a few hours each month as a driver?

Our drivers always comment on how much they enjoy volunteering this way, as they can chat to some lovely people while driving, and at the same time make a huge difference to people locally, who say they cannot imagine how they would manage without us.

You don't have to commit to any specific days or hours – we call you and if you are free to take the job, great; if not, that's no problem. You can choose how far and where you are prepared to drive – we especially need volunteers to take local people to hospitals in Reading and Oxford – but if you don't want to drive that far, we have many requests for drivers to take clients to local towns and villages. Even if you can do just one drive a month, that would be wonderful. Your expenses are paid at the current government-set rate of 45p per mile.

Once you have completed some very simple training, we organise a DBS check for you (at no cost to you). If your car is taxed and insured etc, you will then be ready to join the team! To find out more, email our secretary:

Jane Forde at info@woodcotevolunteers.org.uk

Our 40th Anniversary is around the corner!

In February 2023, Woodcote Volunteers will be 40 years old! What an amazing milestone and such a credit to the people of Woodcote and surrounding villages who have kept this much needed service going for so long. We plan to hold a celebratory event on Friday 3rd February in the Village Hall, from 6.30pm to 8.30pm. We are inviting our current and past volunteers, clients and others who support us in a variety of ways. If you have volunteered for us in the past but lost touch, please phone our office and we will take your details and send out an invitation.

Keeping our clients safe

In 2022, we began to introduce a few changes that we believe will reduce risk and keep our clients as safe and comfortable as possible. We are providing safeguarding awareness training to all our drivers, and St John's Ambulance are giving us first aid awareness training this month. We have been given guidance from our local GP's as to what to do if a client falls. We have purchased a new, lightweight wheelchair so if a client is at risk of a fall, we can keep them safe by bringing this with us for the journey. We have a number of organisational Blue Badges, so we can park close to the entrance of a building, reducing the distance a person needs to walk, which is very welcome when walking is uncomfortable or tiring.

Other news

We are very pleased to welcome Nikki to our team of volunteer drivers. Thank you so much for giving your time.

Sadly, we have to say goodbye to Janet Page and Stephanie Waite, who are leaving us. Janet has been a driver with us for ten years and Stephanie helped in the office for over a year. Thank you so much - you will be missed.

And finally...

If you need a driver, please don't hesitate to give us a call on 01491 681171. Our drivers are available to take you to medical or social appointments and we can collect prescriptions.

Please give us as much notice as possible before the date you need us. One of our office workers will answer the phone between 9.30 and 11am on weekdays (excluding public holidays) and you can leave a message on the answerphone at other times.

Find out more about us by looking at our website: www.woodcotevolunteers.org.uk





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SAVE THE DATE!

Is your home overloaded with children's toys? Are you having a clear out ready for the year ahead? We are delighted to announce that on Sunday 29th January between 9.30am and 12.30pm, we will be holding our first *Indoor Car Boot Sale* in the Woodcote Village Hall. It will be the perfect opportunity to pass on pre-loved items whilst keeping warm inside. Pitches are limited and must be pre-booked by contacting us via email on woodcotecraft_bookings@hotmail.com. There will be refreshments available to keep us going! Looking forward to seeing you there!

THE W.I. BLUES

A fine performance by all!

The WADs Autumn Production, 'The W.I. Blues', written by John Peel was something of a departure from the normal repertoire for this well-established and prolific society. Plays for all-women casts are hard to come by but, as in this case, the choice of play can be dictated by acting availability. Terry Sopp and Patrick Thomas had their work cut out to bring this dialogue-rich and demanding play to the stage. They were indeed fortunate to have five actors capable of learning and delivering all that dialogue in a credible way. The play itself has something of an identity crisis, a mixture of comedy and farce with strong undertones of deep anxiety and pathos. All of the action takes place in the drawing room of Grace, the leading light in the local WI, who is hosting a meeting of her supporters to head off a threat to the society from 'the wrong people in the village'.

As it turns out, the WI theme is simply a plot device to bring the characters together to reveal their individual mid-life crises. Heather Simpson, one of the society's most accomplished performers, was in fine Hyacinth Bucket form as the overbearing and haughty Grace. Was she having a fling with her double-glazing salesman, hinted at by the regular 'wrong numbers? Had her husband gone out for the evening or for good? The scatty and dowdy farmer's wife, Fiona, played beautifully by Helen Coyne, supplied much of the comedy with some slapstick moments of inebriation and a pass-the-parcel game, which she was determined to win. Helen Coyne portrayed with great sensitivity the underlying heartache of a betrayed wife.

The third character, the totally insouciant, narcissist Jane, flamboyant, promiscuous and vacuous, provided good material for a strong performance by Natalia Ruiz-Moreno. Gillian Fowmes played Pippa, wife of an ex-footballer and herself from an aristocratic background. Somehow the lines given to Pippa seemed a mismatch with the supposed background of the character, but that was the fault of the author, and Gillian delivered her lines confidently and clearly. The final character, Hazel, played competently by Susan Clark, awaits an important phone call about a serious medical condition. A 'blip' on the night meant we never got to find out what was wrong with Hazel.

As usual with the WADs, all the technical off-stage work was to a high standard, with the challenging sound effects well-orchestrated by John Worsfold and Marcia Spiers. As ever, an appreciative audience went home happy!

SP



WOODCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

This month we went to space, learnt about chemicals that combust and met a 4-metre tall, baby Tyrannosaurus Rex. It has been a very exciting time!

On a very normal looking Tuesday morning, a planetarium appeared in our hall. All the children had the chance to spend an hour looking at our solar system, learning about the first journey to the moon, the new missions back to the Moon and the plan for journeying on to Mars. This coincided with the timing of the launch of Artemis 1 on its flight around the moon. Everyone was very interested and we were all amazed at the number of stars that can be seen in the sky!

More scientists visited us to show our KS2 children how combustion arises, how an understanding of science can save lives, how to make a mini fire extinguisher in their kitchen, what makes a firework so pretty and how dangerous fire can be in the wrong weather. The scientists taught us why we don't play with fire at all.

KS1 children spent time exploring materials, working out the best materials to use for the job it needs to do. They had great fun spraying water and mud at different clothes, learning about heating and cooling materials and answering questions like "does chocolate burn?" and "can you make a stone anchor?"

KS1 spent further time this month digging for fossils, identifying fossils from some of the most iconic dinosaurs of the past: Tyrannosaurus Rex, Stegosaurus, Triceratops and a few other surprises. The children learnt when each dinosaur lived, where they came from, what they ate. To top off the day the whole school met three real dinosaurs, all babies. Two were very small but one was very, very big!

After all that excitement, Christmas has arrived at the Primary School! We are delighted to be back with our traditional nativity performance with an audience of parents enjoying the children's interpretation of the script! The last two years have been recorded for parents to watch at home but this year we have three performances and almost seventy children on the stage together. They are so looking forward to showing their families and friends what they have achieved in their drama lessons. The play is called *The Magic Christmas Box* and it takes the children on a journey to understand the true meaning of Christmas.

And very soon, years 5 and 6 will be off to The O2 Arena in London to sing with Young Voices. This is a

long but spectacular day. They will report on this in next month's issue. Until then, Happy New Year everyone!

Mrs L. Hunt



Planetarium in the hall



Sophie the dinosaur



Fire show



Baby Dinosaur

CABIN PRESCHOOL

We started off on the first with an awesome traditional display created by our Elf Harry. He had transformed Cabin into a Christmas grotto. The children were amazed and spent the day exploring lots of wonderful Christmas experiences.

In Santa's workshop, the children can wrap up boxes, toys, make cards and mark make using stencils, ink pads, cello-tape, ribbons, glitter, whilst dressed up in elf costumes, dresses, nativity outfits. Thank you, Carla for the time, inspiration and execution of this area.

The nativity display in the cosy area with a baby Jesus for role play was created by Louise, Anya made a beautiful window art display and Charlotte decorated with plenty of tinsel, wrapped the big surprise and turned the display board into Bethlehem with the characters the children had made all week. Katie created a stunning display of lights to finish off the look. What a team! Thank you all for giving up your time to create this.

We have been out and about too. We visited Woodcote Garden centre to look at their display of Christmas trees and came back to discuss why we have trees at Christmas time. We made our very own mini trees from pinecones, sang to our parents in a little show with a lot of work learning all the new songs and we joined Woodcote preschool in a Christmas service at St Leonard's. Thank you Brian for leading the service.

Christmas lunch with big school was amazing - thank you Woodcote Primary, we are slowly working towards becoming one big family, officially we are not quite there but we are starting to be included within the school's experiences. It is going to be amazing to be part of Woodcote Primary School.

We welcome Vinnie and Ella in January to join our family, so exciting to have new friends to play. Cabin has some space available for anyone needing childcare. We offer very flexible sessions up to 6.5 hours per day from 0830 - 1530, easy drop offs in the playground making a very easy transition to big school. Call Jayne on 01491 680854 or email us on info@thecabinpreschool.com for more information.





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WOODCOTE PRESCHOOL

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the families that came and watched the children's Christmas Nativity Play. This year we performed "Born in Bethlehem". All the children worked very hard to learn lots of new songs and actions. We were so impressed with how fantastic the children were during the play, and we hope their families were too! Thank you to everyone who came to support us, provide outfits and buy mince pies!

On the 7th of December, we drew our Christmas Raffle! We had lots of lucky winners of some fantastic prizes. Thank you very much to everyone who bought tickets and supported Pre-School. And an enormous thank you to everyone who donated prizes – John and Maggie from The Black Lion, Kimberley's, Co-op, Cotswold Wildlife Park, Blenheim Palace, Birdsong Osteopathy, Stanrod Motors, Aldridge's, Odds Farm Park, Beale Park, Albert Fields, Checkendon Equestrian Centre, The Goring Grocer, Masooms, Didcot Railway Centre, Stonor Park, Blue Tin Produce, The Corn Exchange, The Packhorse, Millets Farm Centre, Norden Farm, Crocodiles of the World, Forresters, The Highwayman Inn, Goring Village Butcher, Alto Lounge, Virtue Gymnastics, Christmas Tree World, The Cherry Tree, The Woofy Washy Cabin and anyone else who was kind enough to make a donation or we may have forgotten to thank! We raised over £1000 which is an amazing amount and will go towards buying new toys for the children.

Coffee Shop was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who made cakes, helped out and came to buy cakes and drinks. We raised an amazing £280! We are looking forward to our next one already.

As always, Tanya cooked us all a fantastic Traditional Christmas Dinner. We all wore our festive outfits and got into the Christmas Spirit.

Some of our school leavers were able to go over to Woodcote Primary School to watch their nativity play. It was so nice to see all the children who have attended here over the last few years and it was a great experience for our school leavers to visit the primary school.

Our Christingle service at St Leonard's with our friends from The Cabin was lovely, and we want to extend a big thank you to everyone at the church and those who came along to support us. The children did a great job of making their Christingles and carefully carrying them to and from the church. They sang lots of songs we had been practising and we look forward to doing it again next year. Thank you so much to J.L. Landscaping for our beautiful real Christmas tree!

On the last day of term we held our Christmas party. We had an exciting visit from Father Christmas and his cheeky elf Freddy! The children were so pleased with the presents that Father Christmas gave to them. We danced to Christmas music, played games, had glitter tattoos and enjoyed party food for lunch.

We would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year! We will see you when we return on Thursday 5th January.

We do still have some spaces left, if you would like to book a visit or for more information, please contact Wendy Powell on 01491 682300 or email woodcote.pre-school@hotmail.co.uk



Our nativity play



Meeting Pudsey



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DO YOU KNOW THE DUMPLINGS SONG?

As is usual with Goring Heath Beavers, the onset of dark evenings has not driven us indoors; Euan, who started with us in November, was perhaps starting to think Beavers always met outside. We moved from Bonfire Night to practising for Remembrance Sunday. Miles Temple explained Remembrance Sunday and talked about his military career, with the Beavers, as usual, full of very direct questions. They were particularly impressed at being allowed to look at Miles' medals. We then went to the war memorial to practice for the big day, rounding off with a dark play on the swings. The Beavers turned out in force on Remembrance Sunday itself and Alex and Emily, as the senior lodge leaders, carried the flag and laid the wreath. They were dead chuffed.

On 16th November we went on a night hike. Traditionally Beavers (well, our Beavers) hike to a pub, but Otter decided that this time we would both start and finish at The Sun – she was destined to be a leader at The 'Eef. The Beavers, two tiny sisters and several parents walked about two miles through pitch dark woods, finding reflective owls en route. Yaroslav and Big Ern were delighted to be asked what "owl" was in Ukrainian and before long the Beavers were excitedly shouting "sova!" every time they spotted a marker (all the real owls had long since fled in terror). The chips and squash on our return to the pub were just the bee's knees and newer Beavers thought they'd achieved some kind of activity club Nirvana. As is traditional, an unusual number of dads did pick-up.

The following week was our Ukrainian night, organised by Yana and Olena who pulled out all the stops. And how! They came with a presentation about the history of Ukraine (from Vikings, to Cossacks, to independence from the USSR) and a vat of home-made Ukrainian dumplings. These were steamed pastry parcels stuffed with mashed potato; ultimate carbs! Most of the Beavers therefore loved them. Their master-stroke, however, was persuading a professional bandura player to perform traditional folk songs to the Beavers all evening. Their favourite was the cheery 'I love dumplings song', though all attempts at getting us to learn more than the first half line of the chorus failed. Utterly!

The 1st December was devoted to practising carols and making Christmas cards for our traditional carol-singing raids around Woodcote, of which more next month. Don't worry, our victims agree to a raid in advance and, though our singing is at times truly terrible, it always raises a smile, not least from the Beavers.

WOODCOTE FOOTBALL CLUB

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Pride of place this month must go to our Development Team which recorded three wins in November. In Division 2 of the North Berks League, they began with a hard-fought 1-0 win at Compton, with Ben Rusher getting the all-important goal. They also won 2-0 at Letcombe with goals by George

Scoffham and Sully Akers. In the North Berks War Memorial Cup they are through to the next round following a 3-0 win over Kingston Colts Men. Tom Brownlow, Dan Wallace and Archie Clark were on-target in that match. The team remains top of the table in Division 2. In contrast, the first team has had probably its worse month for some time. Their only win came in a 7-0 goal-riot against the bottom team in the Hellenic Division 2 (East), Holmer Green. Toby Nowell scored a hat-trick and the other goals came from Tyler Edwards, Ryan Corbett and Joe Webber. The downside has been a 2-1 league defeat by Newbury, with the goal coming from Toby Nowell, which may well have dented our chances of regaining the title we won last season. We also bowed out of the Oxfordshire Intermediate Cup (which we won last season) with a home 2-0 defeat by Chalgrove Cavaliers and we are out of the Hellenic Bluefin Cup after a 4-0 home defeat at the hands of Clanfield.

SP



Development team in tracksuits sponsored by Bouchier fencing



Action Woodcote v Clanfield



Action Woodcote v Newbury

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THE CASE OF THE LIBRARY USER

Among the many things that have, for better or worse, changed within my lifetime are public libraries. On the whole, I would say that the changes have been all to the good. Back in the 1950's, when as a teenager I first began to frequent them, libraries were fairly intimidating places staffed by fairly intimidating people. For one thing, they were pervaded by a solemn hush, rather like a church. One spoke, if one spoke at all, in whispers, and anything like a cough, sneeze or squeaky shoes earned immediately hostile looks of reproof from the librarians. Ah, the librarians! These tended to be either fierce-looking elderly men, possibly ex-military, or severe and spinsterish middle-aged women, and they were united in one thing: a deep resentment of the fact that people could simply come in off the street and help themselves to books off the shelves that they spent so long keeping organised. One saw their point of view, of course: if one had gone into the job inspired by a love of order (and I think that in their cases this was a much more likely motivation than a love of books), then it must have been immensely frustrating to have that order constantly undone by a public who not only took books away but sometimes took them off the shelves, looked at them, and then put them back IN THE WRONG PLACE. I used to imagine the librarians working long after closing time each day, working their way along the tall shelves late into the night, and pouncing with muttered imprecations on finding that, say, a Williams had been replaced to the left of a Wilkins instead of to the right.

Of course, there were ways in which librarians could exact their revenge on their annoying public. There was no self-service in those days, so everything had to be issued at the counter, which gave them a chance to cast a disparaging eye over your choice of reading matter. Nothing was actually said, but a potboiling thriller would be treated to a contemptuous curl of the lip, while anything more elevated, like 'War and Peace' or a Shakespeare play, would be met with raised eyebrows that said as clearly as any words could: 'Really? You are going to read that?'

All transactions, as I have indicated, tended to be carried out in silence, with none of the pleasant chat our modern librarians engage in. But I did once

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succeed in provoking an utterance. This was in the school holidays, when, eager to read the next book in a series, I took back in the afternoon a book that I had taken out and finished reading in the morning. The librarian glared at me with outrage. 'This is simply not done!'. I never found out why it was simply not done, but slunk away like a man accused of some unspeakable perversion.

But there was just one good thing about the libraries of my youth: you knew where you were when it came to finding a book, especially if it was fiction, because all fiction of whatever genre was simply arranged on the fiction shelves in straight alphabetical order. Not so these days. Say you go into Reading Library looking for a Lee Child book, as most of the reading population these days seem to do. Could it be on the Crime shelves? Possibly, the books do involve a lot of crime. But then there is a separate set of shelves for Thrillers, so it may well be there. It might even be on the General Fiction shelves, though this is less likely. If it's a recent publication it could be on a display labelled 'New Releases'. On the other hand, if it's one of the earlier books in the Jack Reacher series it might be under 'Retro Reads'. Or it might be on a stand dedicated to popular paperbacks. And of course, it could be on the Just Returned shelves. Ah, the librarians of the past would never have tolerated a Just Returned shelf: when a book came in it was put back in its proper place immediately by some harassed and scuttling underling. Still, I think most will agree that this modern chaos is a small price to pay for the friendly and welcoming institutions that we now enjoy.

David Sutton

NEW HEAD TEACHER FOR THE ORATORY SCHOOL

The Oratory School is delighted to announce the appointment of its new Head Teacher. Dr Julian Murphy, Head of Loughborough Amherst School in Leicestershire, will take up the post in September 2023. He is replacing Joe Smith, who, in his seventh successful year as Head Teacher, is leaving to take up another headship in London in the Autumn.

Educated at Birkbeck College and Oxford University, Dr Murphy has been Head at Loughborough Amherst, also a co-educational Catholic school, for



the past six years. Previously he was Director of Studies at Woldingham School in Surrey. His wife, an art teacher, and his two children will be joining him at The Oratory School.

"I am thrilled to be taking up this appointment," said Dr Murphy. "On my visits to the school I have been struck by the warm and friendly atmosphere of the community, and its commitment to a breadth of education where every pupil has a chance to shine."

RBL POPPY APPEAL 2022



We would like to thank everyone for all your donations towards the Poppy Appeal. You raised an amazing £2,894.38. This is up on 2021's £2,395.87. (These are the cash donations, anything paid by text or the main website is in addition to this).

We really appreciate all the local shops, pubs and businesses having poppy boxes. The Red Lion held their monthly quiz in November for the Poppy Appeal which raised an amazing £260. So thank you Jay and Chris for organising this.

In Crays Pond, I'd like to personally thank Margaret Miles and Doreen White for doing house-to-house collections. Between you, you raised a wonderful £350! And as ever, the schools were brilliant, especially the primary schools. So a huge thank you, especially, to Woodcote Primary School and the Oratory Prep School. We couldn't have done it without you.

Linda Burton and David Jennings
Joint Poppy Appeal Organisers for Woodcote & Goring Heath on behalf of the RBL

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NEW NAME FOR LOCAL CAMERA CLUB

Known as Whitchurch Hill Camera Club for more than forty years, we now have a new name and a new look: The Whitchurch on Thames Photographic Society.

Having suffered during Covid, being unable to hold meetings and other events and members putting their cameras away, as a club we are now engaged on revitalising our program and expanding our aims with a greater diversity of photographic subjects.

Our programme of meetings has therefore been modified. Once every two weeks we now meet in person at Whitchurch on Thames village hall for competitions, discussions on equipment, computer programs and day to day activities.



Currently our competitions are all projected images, displayed on the big screen in the hall and assessed by qualified independent judges from different organisations. The results are entered into a ladder to find the overall winner at the end of the season. We also have themed competitions, for example Natural History and Monochrome. Next season we hope to get back to regular print competitions as well.

The weeks in between we are holding 'ZOOM' meetings online, which has enabled us to engage with a greater diversity of subjects and speakers with specialist talks on an increased range of photographic ideas from all over the country. So, if you have an interest in photography, visit our website at either www.wotphoto.co.uk or the old website at www.whitchurchhillcameraclub.co.uk. Or why not come along to one of our meetings in the hall for a free first visit where you will receive a very warm welcome, a cup of tea and a biscuit.

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HER WINTER'S FRUIT PIE



By Anya Decmar

When the year rolled over once more, on January 2nd, Grandad John strolled to his garden centre at the end of the road and picked out his fruit trees that he wanted to grow for the year. He did this every year. He chose raspberry canes, blueberries and a variety of bare root trees, often apples and pears. Every January, he would have to wait around a while for the ground to soften slightly so that he could plant and garden in trepidation.

If you were wondering why he always chose fruit trees, Grandad John wanted to make his wife's favourite fruit pie for summer. If he planted them in the New Year, he believed they would perfectly ripen in time for her to announce, "I really fancy a fruit pie!". So, every year he would do the same journey to the garden centre and every year, he would plant his tree saplings with care.

Unfortunately for Grandad John, he was always out of luck. He had been trying to make his wife a homemade fruit pie every summer for both her and their family to enjoy, but it was always spoiled by the trees! They would grow to around one metre high, with shoots and strong roots, but when the time came for the trees to form flower buds, they would

fail with anguish, heads hanging low. Grandad John finished his summer depleted and each year, his excitement to plant his fruit trees faded.

Then one year in late January, when grandchildren, aunts, uncles and cousins gathered at Grandma and Grandad's house for a get-together, George, the youngest of the grandchildren, noticed that there were fewer fruit trees planted by Grandad that year.

"Oh George, well spotted. I thought they wouldn't grow again this year so I decided to plant fewer trees just in case." Grandad John smiled with a chuff, but the pain of his failure shone through and George could see that Grandad was upset.

Once the family gathering was over, George went home and decided to go on a mission. He reached for his jar of saved-up pocket money and set out to his own garden centre. He asked for the healthiest saplings that they could provide and it cost him his entire jar - apart from £1 - with which he bought himself a Blue Tit badge. He came home, much to his parents' shock, with what looked like a cluster of twigs and George asked his dad if he was able to go to Grandad's to plant them in surprise.

At the August barbeque later that year, the family were sat in Grandma and Grandad's garden around the big table covered in food. The red gingham cloth hid any mess spilled by George or his new baby cousin. There was a plate of sausages piled high, still sizzling from Grandad's grill, and some chicken skewers cooked in a smoked paprika marinade. There was also a dish of roasted vegetables (which George chose to ignore) and a mountain of juicy burger patties, charcoaled to perfection. Sitting right in front of Grandma was a fruit pie. Grandad John sat proudly next to his wife and smiled at her admiring the pie. He winked at George, who was beaming, his face smeared in red sauce, a burger in one hand and a slice of the fruit pie in the other.

And now years later, every New Year, when George and his wife host the family celebrations, he always makes sure to include a fruit pie following his Grandad's recipe. Despite being a summer pudding, George is always adamant to honour his Grandma and Grandad who used to love pie. And at the end of every January, he goes to his garden to check on his trees in the hope that they fruit in time for the summer barbeque.



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WALLINGFORD & DISTRICT ART CLUB (WADAC)



This month's demonstration, on Tuesday 17th January 2023, is a live demonstration entitled "A Spring Landscape" in acrylic and chalk pastels by Claire Cross



Claire is a successful local artist based in Abingdon and the tutor for WADAC's Tuesday morning art classes. Her work can be seen in many

exhibitions around Oxfordshire and she recently sold the painting as shown. "Welsh Valley", at our December "Joyous" Art Exhibition and sale.

Entry is free to members, £3 for visitors

Tuesday morning and afternoon art classes recommence on the 3rd January.

If you are interested in joining us on any of our events or the club, please contact davidbooth7@outlook.com or admin@wallingfordartclub.org.uk or tel: 01491 681400.

The club meets at Centre 70, Kinecroft, off Goldsmith's Lane, Wallingford, OX10 0DN

THE CORN EXCHANGE, WALLINGFORD: JANUARY/FEBRUARY

Cinema

All regular performances normally start at 7:30pm unless stated otherwise. We are also showing films on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons at 2:30pm. Please check out the website for updates.

Tickets £10 for adults and £5 for under 15s unless otherwise stated.

I Wanna Dance with Somebody (12A)

Tuesday, 31st January, 7:30pm

Wednesday, 1st February, 2:30pm

Wednesday, 1st February, 7:30pm

Death of a Hollow Man (12A)

Friday, 3rd February, 7:30pm

Special celebration of 25 years of Midsomer Murders with an episode filmed in the Corn Exchange in 1997.

This is a Free Film courtesy of the President of the Sinodun Players, John Warburton

Avatar, The Way of Water (12A)

Saturday, 4th February, 2:30pm

Saturday, 4th February, 7:30pm

A Man called Otto (12A)

Sunday, 5th February, 7:30pm

Monday, 6th February, 7:30pm

Tuesday, 7th February, 7:30pm

Wednesday, 8th February, 2:30pm

Live Screenings

Like Water for Chocolate with the Royal Ballet recorded earlier this year

Monday, 30th January, 7:15pm

Christopher Wheeldon's new full-length ballet brings the magic of Laura Esquivel's modern Mexican novel to The Royal Ballet. A co-production between The Royal Ballet and American Ballet Theatre. The ballet reunites Artistic Associate Christopher Wheeldon with the creative team behind Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and The Winter's Tale, composer Joby Talbot and designer Bob Crowley. Inspired by Laura Esquivel's captivating family saga, where the central character's emotions spill out through cooking to influence everyone around her in startling and dramatic ways. Mexican conductor Alondra de la Parra acts as musical consultant for Talbot's newly commissioned score and Wheeldon has worked closely with Esquivel to reshape her richly-layered story into an entertaining and engrossing ballet.

Tickets: £18 (adults), £15 (senior citizens), £10 (under 18s)

Live on Stage

Jack and the Beanstalk from the Sinodun Players

Friday, 13th January to Saturday 28th January, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday evenings at 7:30pm, Saturday evening at 6:30pm with a Saturday matinee at 2:30pm

Dame Dotty Dimple and her two sons (not forgetting Buttermilk the cow) will entertain you while they try to save their home from the Broker's Men. And of course there's that pesky Giant, Buster Gut Bucket making the poor villagers of Windy Bottom very scared – villagers keep disappearing to feed that ogre. But hopefully Fairy Sugardust will make everything alright in the end and the wicked Witch Piccalli will be defeated.

Tickets: £15 (adults - Friday, Saturday), £13 (adults - Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday), £8 (under 16s)

WOODCOTE WI NEWS

Ann Larden welcomed the members, a guest and our speaker Chris Caddy. Celebrating her birthday this month was Betty Thomas.

Our speaker Chris Caddy spoke to us about the Lake District- a World Heritage Site. Chris was very informative telling us about the geology, the lakes, mountains and bustling towns. Chris also told us about the famous people who lived there and got their inspiration from the beautiful surroundings.

We had a lovely tea thanks to Betty Thomas, Barbara George and Wendy Muchamore.

The ladies that lunch went to the Bell at Crowmarsh where they had a lovely lunch, the best fish and chips and lovely staff to cater to our every need.

Several members went to Drayton for 'An Audience with Anne Boleyn' played by Lesley Smith, which we thoroughly enjoyed. Lesley is curator at Tutbury Castle.

Carole Shelley- Allen won the competition for a photo or memento of a National Park and also won the Bloom of the Month.

Come and join us in February in the village hall at 2.30pm when we will be celebrating our 78th Birthday with fun and frolics!

Judy Williams.

WALLINGFORD PHOTOGRAPHIC CLUB

As winter progresses, Wallingford Photographic Club continues to enjoy a mix of online and in-person meetings (the latter at Crowmarsh Pavilion). Our inclusive club allows people of all ages and levels of experience to learn how to improve their photography through conversations with other members, presentations by visiting speakers, practical evenings and competitions. The club meets every Thursday at 7.30pm for an 8pm start (7.45 start on competition evenings and online sessions).

2023 kicks off with a members' evening, called '8x10' where eight members talk for ten minutes about some images, a technique, or a genre or some kit close their hearts. Then on 12th we head online to learn how to publish a photo book, with Joe Houghton. Back to the Pavilion on the 19th when Julian Elliott will show us the people and architecture of Uzbekistan, and the month ends with another competition (with 'no set subject').



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READING RSPB GROUP ACTIVITIES



Trips in 2023 will start with a visit to Dorney Wetlands near Windsor on Sunday 15th January and a trip to Bury Down near West Ilsley on 17th January.

All indoor meetings are held monthly in Pangbourne Village Hall starting at 8pm. Visitors are very welcome. There is an entrance fee of £5 for non-members, juniors half price. New members are always welcome with annual membership set at a modest £15 (£10 for juniors). Join us for our next one on Tuesday 10th January. For more information visit www.reading-rspb.org

TREecycle THAMES VALLEY

Sign up to have your Christmas tree recycled and support Sue Ryder. We are encouraging local residents to keep spreading the festive cheer into the New Year by signing up to have their Christmas trees collected and recycled to raise vital funds for families needing their care.

After the festivities are over, Treecycle Thames Valley, supported by Rabbits Vehicle Hire, G A Butlers & Sons, Ashburton Ltd Landscaping and Arbourfield Tree Care, will be collecting real Christmas trees direct from people's front door or driveway so that they can be chipped into mulch and recycled.

For a donation, people who live in OX10, OX11, OX12, OX14, OX49, RG1, RG2, RG4 7, RG4 8, RG4 5, RG4 6, RG4 9, RG5, RG6, RG7, RG8 0, RG8 7, RG8 8, RG8 9, RG10, RG14, RG18, RG19, RG20, RG30 and RG31, RG40 postcodes can have their trees collected between Monday 9th and Thursday 12th January 2023.

All money raised will help Sue Ryder to continue offering its compassionate palliative care and bereavement support - helping its teams be there when it matters. To find out more about the environmentally-friendly fundraising collection drive, and book a collection, visit sue Ryder.org/thamestrees.

Or contact the Sue Ryder Thames Valley fundraising team with any queries on 0118 9550 433 or email: thamesvalley.fundraising@sue Ryder.org

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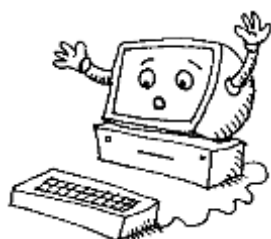
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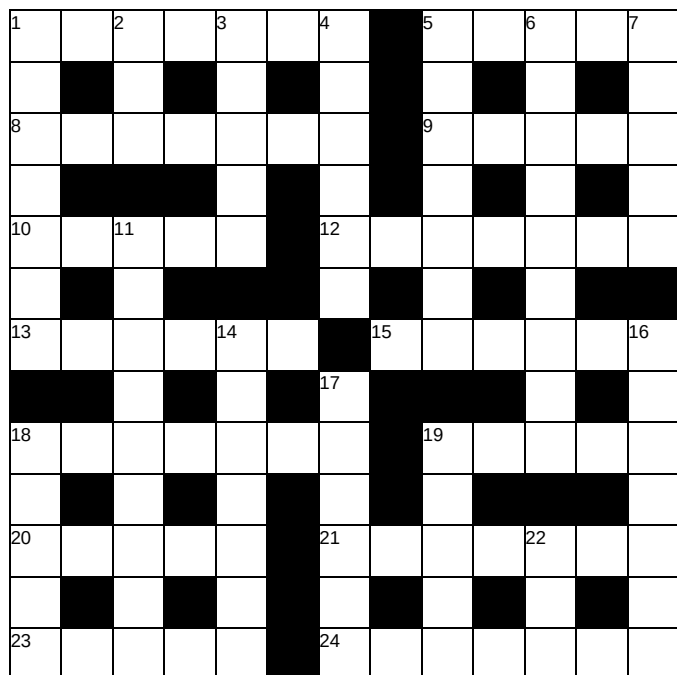
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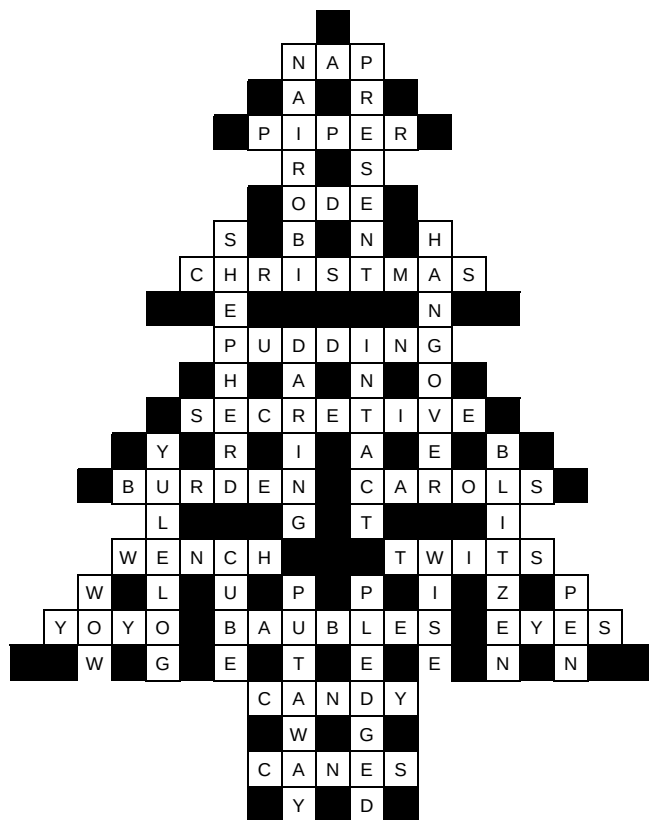
Across

- 1 and 5ac One of a dozen! Crazy thing or 'What You Will' (7,5)
- 5 See 1 ac
- 8 Wind appearing shortly after May 1st. (7)
- 9 Artist in early summer showers (5)
- 10 Blow up Queen on university exercise (5)
- 12 Raiders change sirens high to low (7)
- 13 Crush rubbish outside hotel (6)
- 15 Change corset for protection (6)
- 18 Deck made of stone (7)
- 19 Last in various roles (5)
- 20 I'm after sanctuary wearing this (5)
- 21 Damaging and all you can carry after initial heave (7)
- 23 English head retired to German city (5)
- 24 Night fliers hear lefty's agreements (3,4)

Down

- 1 Exam about English MP cause a storm (7)
- 2 An even recount takes a long time (3)
- 3 Jack causes façade to change direction (5)
- 4 Give the French to manage (6)
- 5 Apprehensive over sun exploding (7)
- 6 Advisor follows sighting helpers (5,4)
- 7 Tries some of the latest style (5)
- 11 Mounting disorders (9)
- 14 Cool guy! (7)
- 16 The Spanish trust troubled swimmers (7)
- 17 Last runner thrown out at sea (6)
- 18 Compromise when magistrate drops Juliet for earliest flame (5)
- 19 Wearing cap around old city – sensational! (5)
- 22 Cunning pilot (3)

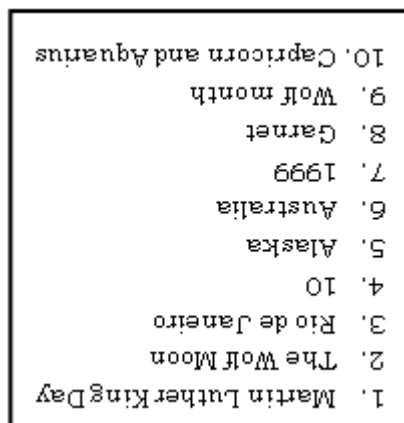
DECEMBER CROSSWORD SOLUTION



JANUARY QUIZ

- What day is celebrated in the US on the third Monday in January?
- What is the year's first full moon called?
- What capital city is named for January?
- Before January was introduced how many months did the year have?
- What became the 49th US state in January 1959?
- Whose national day is 26th January?
- In January of what year did Euro notes and coins go into circulation?
- What is January's birth stone?
- What did the Saxons call the month of January?
- What are the two zodiac signs in January?

QUIZ ANSWERS



DATES FOR THE DIARY

Regular Weekly Events

Every Sunday

** For church services see page 2

Every Monday

** Youth Club – Juniors (year 7's). Woodcote Village Hall. 7.15pm-8.45pm

Every Tuesday

** Youth Club – Seniors (years 8, 9 & 10) Woodcote Village Hall 7.15pm-8.45pm

Every Thursday

** Rhymetime for pre-schoolers. Woodcote Library 10.15am-10.45am

** Chance To Chat. Community Centre Lion's Den 2.30pm-4pm

Every Saturday

** Coffee Shop. Community Centre 10.00-12.30pm

JANUARY DATES

Tues 3rd	*	BMMHS Zoom Talk: 'Pearl Harbour'. Email info@bmmhs.org. 7.30pm
Wed 4th	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society: Practical Photography Meeting No. 3. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Thur 5th	*	Wallingford Photographic Club meeting: Members Evening. Crowmarsh Pavilion. 7.30pm
Sat 7th	*	Goring Chamber Choir presents: 'The Epiphany Journey'. St Thomas' Church, Goring. 3pm
Tues 10th	*	Board Games Club for adults. Woodcote Library. 3pm-4.30pm
Wed 11th	*	BMMHS Talk: 'Hunting Evil'. Woodcote Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Henley & District Stamp Club meeting. Bix Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: 'The camera doesn't lie, but photographers do'. 8pm
Thur 12th	*	Wallingford Photographic Club Zoom talk: 'Publishing a photo book'. 7.45pm
Tues 17th	*	Wallingford & District Art Club demonstration: 'A Spring Landscape'. Centre 70, Wallingford. 7.30pm
Wed 18th	*	Woodcote WI meeting. Woodcote Village Hall. 2.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society: Natural History Competition. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Thur 19th	*	Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society meeting. Whitchurch Village Hall. 7.30pm

SMALL ADS

LOCAL HANDYMAN :: No job too small. DIY jobs in and around the home. Kitchen and bathroom renovations undertaken. Call James 07961 882281

JANUARY DATES *continued*

Thur 19th	*	Wallingford Photographic Club talk: 'Uzbekistan'. Crowmarsh Pavilion. 7.30pm
Sat 21st	*	Cholsey Repair Café. Cholsey Pavilion. 11am-1.45pm
Mon 23rd	*	Woodcote Pre-School & Baby and Toddler Group Open Morning. Woodcote Village Hall. 10am-11am.
Wed 25th	*	Henley & District Stamp Club meeting. Bix Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: 'River Severn - Source to Estuary'. 8pm
Thur 26th	*	St Mary's Players present: 'The Elves and The Bootmaker'. Ipsden Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Wallingford Photographic Club competition: 'No set subject'. Crowmarsh Pavilion. 7.45pm
Fri 27th	*	St Mary's Players present: 'The Elves and The Bootmaker'. Ipsden Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Film Night: 'Ticket to Paradise'. Woodcote Village Hall. 7.30pm
Sat 28th	*	St Mary's Players present: 'The Elves and The Bootmaker'. Ipsden Village Hall. 2.30pm
	*	St Mary's Players present: 'The Elves and The Bootmaker'. Ipsden Village Hall. 7.30pm
Sun 29th	*	Indoor Car Boot Sale. Woodcote Village Hall. 9.30am-12.30pm

FORTHCOMING DATES IN FEBRUARY

Wed 1st	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society: Digital Competition No. 4. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Thur 2nd	*	Wallingford Photographic Club Zoom talk: 'Scotland behind the lens'. 7.45pm
Wed 8th	*	Henley & District Stamp Club meeting. Bix Village Hall. 7.30pm
Tues 14th	*	Board Games Club for adults. Woodcote Library. 3pm-4.30pm

CLOSING THOUGHT

"If I had my way, I'd remove January from the calendar altogether and have an extra July instead".

Roald Dahl.