



Woodcote

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CORRESPONDENT

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

WOODCOTE VOLUNTEERS – 40 YEARS OLD!



40th Anniversary Cheese and Wine Reception

Well, that was some party! A heart-warming evening was enjoyed by current and past volunteers, clients and distinguished guests on Friday 3rd February, to celebrate 40 years of providing a driving service to residents Woodcote and surrounding villages.



The Organising Team

Over 75 guests enjoyed drinks, food and entertainment at Woodcote Village Hall on Friday evening in a tribute to volunteers past and present. The attendees at the evening included volunteers, both current and past, clients and guest speakers and we were entertained by performance on the piano and singing by two wonderful musicians, Ethan and Alejandro, 6th form pupils at the Oratory School.

There are so many people we'd like to thank for their contributions to the success of the evening, including:

Our clients – who put a smile on the faces of our team by their cheerfulness, fascinating life stories and gratitude.

Our wonderful speakers:

Helena McBride, our Chair, who introduced the event and talked about the history of Woodcote Volunteers.

Dr Ed Capo-Bianco on behalf of the Medical Practice, who work closely with us and appreciate that there are many patients who would not be able to receive treatment without us.

Ann Lardon, one of our regular clients, who spoke movingly about the help we provide with kindness and good cheer.

Dave Turner, Chair of South Oxfordshire District Council, who recognised the invaluable service we provide and the power of community spirit.

Monika Watters, our longest serving office helper (30 years and still going strong!), who spoke about being an office helper and what an invaluable service the whole team provides.

Continued on page 9

COMMENT FROM ST LEONARD'S

In my younger days there were no more pleasurable activities than weekends away, walking in the country and climbing mountains both in this country and on longer trips abroad. Not, I have to admit on the end of a rope, but always where I could put both feet on the ground and walk with one foot in front of the other.

On fine clear days the rewards for those mountain walks would be tremendous, the views, the silence, except for the birds and often the wind, could be just such a rewarding experience.

Being in an organised walking group, sometimes with very experienced walkers, the adequacy of our clothing and boots was always drilled into us. It was good advice; you never knew when the weather would change. I well remember an occasion when, walking to a youth hostel from the Swansea Valley over the Black Mountains, a clear winter day turned into a vicious blizzard and we experienced a white-out and only a map and compass saw us through. There was no substitute for preparedness; you will frequently read of occasions when the Mountain Rescue teams have had to go out to rescue walkers who were tempted by clear weather to go out on the mountains unprepared.

Looking outside, there are now signs of spring, with flowers coming into bloom, and yes my lawn is looking as though I must extricate the mower from the shed, but as I write this, we are again suddenly going into reverse with a very cold blast coming into the country from the arctic. But it cannot change the fact that spring is here. The days are getting longer; the length of daylight on 1st March is 3 hours longer than it was on the shortest day in December. Summer is on the way, but a very long way off yet!

There is a natural order to the seasons. Though there would seem to be some disturbance with the timings of the seasons, we know that spring will be followed by summer, then autumn and winter again, and we can prepare for each.

In the church we have now moved into the season of Lent, where we are getting prepared for the events at Easter. There is a natural order to our observations at this time; there's Lent, Holy Week, then Easter, Ascensiontide and Pentecost, that creates a great spiritual journey that we trace and travel from year to year. Every year it's the same, every year it's different. The narrative doesn't change, but we do; the content remains the same, but the context changes. Our lives change from year to year, and the Easter story reveals something different to us each time we hear it.

Going through life is rather like finding our way through a landscape; we need maps and a compass to guide us. Jesus said he was the way which we can follow and trust, but before he was able to start on his ministry, he had some preparation to make himself face temptations as he did so.

Temptation always hits us where it hurts. At the beginning of Lent, we heard in our Gospel readings how Jesus was hungry and exposed to temptation. The tempter knows where we are sensitive and where we are weak. Temptation never comes where we are

strong and unconcerned. It always hits where we are vulnerable. We need to learn from Jesus about the best defence against temptation, Lent is a time of preparation.

Lent helps us to walk in the right direction, it's a time of preparation, a preparation for the momentous events of Easter. However, what we do need in our everyday lives is a special compass that always points us in God's direction. The Cross is such a compass. The Palm Cross that will be given to us on Palm Sunday will represent for us a compass to guide us.

Do look out for information on church services for Lent and Easter.

Brian Turner

Licensed Lay Minister and PCC Vice-chairman.

Services at St. Leonard's in March

Every Sunday: 8.00 am Holy Communion

Sunday 5th

9.45 am Parish Communion

Sunday 12th

9.45 am Morning Service including a Baptism

Sunday 19th (Mothering Sunday)

9.30am SLOW church in the Village Hall

Sunday 26th

9.45 am Parish Communion

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

Online Services

We continue with our online service of Night Prayer every Tuesday at 8.30 pm. This follows the ancient monastic pattern of Compline and lasts for about 20 minutes.

If you would like to join us, please email me for the access codes at: rbrianturner@yahoo.co.uk

DON'T FORGET YOUR PHOTO ID!

Despite scant evidence of electoral fraud, for the first time, voters will be required to show photo identification to be able to vote at polling stations on May 4th. The new requirements, introduced by the UK government last year, mean that you must show ID to be able to cast your vote at polling stations in local elections as well as Police and Crime Commissioner polls and general elections.

Many people are unaware of this change so please make sure you have acceptable photo ID – passport or driver's licence - with you when you come to the ballot box. A full list of other acceptable forms of ID is available on the SODC website and on the Electoral Commission website. If you don't have an approved form of ID, you can register for a postal vote or if you'd like to vote in person, you can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate – for this you only need a passport sized photo and your National Insurance Number. Applications close on April 25th. Please don't lose your democratic right to vote!

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



Did you know that it's World Book Day on Thursday 3rd March? Not only is it a great opportunity for schools to encourage more young readers but it's also a good reminder for us adults to put our phones down more and read instead. Easier said than done though, isn't it...? I also did a little 'research' the other day and discovered that March is apparently *National Bed Month*. When did this become a thing? Are we all meant to stay in bed for a month until the daffs decide to pop out?

Anyway, moving on, it is good to see lots of activities being planned in this issue. I'm sure it's in anticipation of spring and better weather. It's good to add things to the diary to look forward to, isn't it? Enjoy March, and you'll all be delighted to know that we haven't mentioned Easter once in this issue (except just now).

Until next month.

Yvette

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.

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.





QUIZ NIGHT

NIGHT PLANNED FULL OF FUN & LAUGHTER!!

Friday 10th March at Langtree School

Arrive 7pm to start 7.30pm

- Each ticket includes a welcome drink upon arrival
- Each table will have (1) grazing platter, food options
- Tables can be booked up to 6 people, so why not create a team or link up with pairs to make new Langtree friends

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YOUR LETTERS

Dear Editor

I have been litter-picking in this village for over 20 years. I have noticed that while generally speaking there is less litter than there used to be, one item has not decreased in number, and that is cigarette ends. I recently tightened the string in my litter-picker and can now pick up the ends more easily. The dropping of cigarette ends is against the law and there is a maximum penalty fine of £150, depending on your council area. Experts estimate that 5 trillion cigarette ends are dropped each year and are the most littered item in the world.

Some readers may think cigarette ends will biodegrade but they don't! The filters contain plastic and take years to degrade. They also contain thousands of chemical ingredients, including arsenic, lead and nicotine, and if they are dropped into drains they can reach marine environments where they are a hazard to all marine life. Even unfiltered cigarettes are litter and an eyesore. On Friday I spent under an hour picking up litter and in that time found about 60 ends.

If any readers are smokers, that is their business, but please do not leave the ends around to spoil our lovely village.

Elizabeth Payne

Dear Editor,

I read with some delight David Sutton's article about his discovery of Tolkien's works. However, few people may be aware that Tolkien actually had a connection with Woodcote. Although many people are aware of Tolkien's connection with Oxford, one of his son's was the Bursar at the Oratory for a while. Many years ago someone told me that the beech woods around Woodcote were the inspiration for many of Tolkien's woodland scenes. I am not too sure if this is actually true, and I cannot recall who told me this, but I thought that it might be of interest.

Istvan Berkeley

(Editor's note: it appears that two of Tolkien's sons attended the Oratory School when it was based in Caversham and one went on to teach there).

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

Spring is just around the corner and there are activities going ahead that the Parish Council set in motion over winter. The new swings are due to be installed at Folly Field in the spring, *Project Cool* - to plant more trees in the village is continuing and trees have been obtained. Planting will begin during February.

The project consultation result showed that residents supported a second zebra crossing on Goring Road near the Co-op junction. Oxfordshire County Council have agreed to the crossing and the first phase and a speed check has been carried out by OCC and completed. This has shown that the zebra crossing can go ahead. There will be more updates as the project progresses.

The Parish Council supports several of the voluntary organisations in the village that are run and operated by volunteers: Woodcote Conservation Group, Woodcote Volunteers, the Community Centre, the Woodcote Correspondent, the Youth Club and the library, to name but a few.

These groups carry out a great job for the entire community of Woodcote and beyond and help to make Woodcote the community it is, for all residents to enjoy. The Parish Council recognises the great contribution they all make. The groups are always looking for volunteers. Anyone who is interested should contact them directly. Most of these groups have a website or alternatively, you can find details on the Parish Council website: www.woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk

Parish Councillors are also volunteers and currently the Parish Council are looking for three more councillors. As a councillor, you would be involved in decisions that influence the future and character of Woodcote. There is a free Zoom session on 15th March covering the basics. It is for anyone interested in becoming a councillor. There will be a short introduction followed by an open question time. It will cover eligibility, skills, expectations and some basics about life as a councillor. There is no need to book. Simply follow the link below: tinyurl.com/WoodcotePCmeeting

Meeting ID: 871 2501 2109

Passcode: 386520

FRIENDS OF ST LEONARD'S CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2023



I would like to thank everyone who has generously supported the Friends of St Leonard's (FOSLs) during the last year.

St Leonard's is a grade II listed building, rebuilt in 1846, with some of its features dating back to Norman times. It is

built on the site of a 12th century church and the bowl, just outside the porch, is thought to be a 12th century Norman pillar piscina. The church has been an integral part of the history of the village of Woodcote for over 900 years with memorial windows in the nave and tombs in the churchyard commemorating local families over many centuries. The cost of maintaining St Leonard's and the churchyard is extremely expensive. FOSL's purpose is to raise money via regular subscriptions and donations to assist in maintaining the church and the churchyard to ensure St Leonard's remains an attractive feature of the village. The funds are not used to support the religious activities of the church.

The subscriptions and donations we receive make a huge difference and during 2022, FOSLs were able to make contributions towards ongoing maintenance of the churchyard and the Garden of Remembrance, the Christmas tree, and essential repairs to the roof, lightening conductor and plasterwork.

The donations FOSLs received also enabled the purchase of 1000 snowdrop bulbs which were planted in the churchyard last spring. They are just beginning to appear in the grass, and we hope that they will continue to flower and multiply to be enjoyed by the village for many years to come.

If you would like to know more about FOSLs, the committee of volunteers who run FOSLs, or would like to make a donation or regular subscription, please contact Marcia Spiers on 07776 298754 or Julie Turner on 07980 520039 or email friendsofstlwoodcote@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

As an extra note, our Annual General Meeting will be held via Zoom on Monday 20th March 2023 at 7.30pm. If you would like to join us please email us for details: friendsofstlwoodcote@gmail.com.

Diana Davies
FOSLs Chairman

SATURDAY MORNING COFFEE SHOP



For many years since the Community Centre opened in 1993, there has been a popular Saturday morning Coffee Shop. Unfortunately, COVID-19 disrupted this service to the community.

The Community Centre Committee would like to set up a rota again of groups willing to run the coffee shop. In the past, we have had around 20 groups on the rota – some for just one session a year, others for as many as 3-4 sessions.

Last December, the coffee shops raised as much as £300 in just 2 ½ hours. This included proceeds from a raffle which is always popular. Having run several coffee shop mornings myself, I can tell you it is a lot of fun, very social but of course requires a bit of work and organisation!

So, if you are in a group that would be interested in raising funds this way, publicise your group and provide a welcome service to the community, please contact me via email below. I'll be happy to discuss how the coffee shop is run and available dates on the rota.

Frances Cork - mail@enquirieswoodcotecc.org

COME TO OUR SPRING PRODUCTION!

Wads rehearsals for our next production, Checkout Girls, are well underway for this rib-tickling little comedy by Louise Roche. Come and see the stage transformed into *Freshways* supermarket (a first for us). This is where all the gossip, trials and tribulations of the *Freshways* staff are discussed of course! With a mixed cast and quite a few well-known songs thrown into the mix (we hope you will join in) this promises to be a great night out with laughs galore! As usual, this will be in a relaxed setting around tables with the usual nibbles, bar and raffle.

When? April 20th, 21st and 22nd at 8pm in the Village Hall. Doors open at 7.15pm. To book, call the Box Office on 07956 136750 or visit www.woodcotedrama.co.uk for more details.

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PLANNING A PARTY?

Why not book the Village Hall!

It's been a busy start to the year at the Village Hall! We kicked off the with another Film Night showing *Ticket to Paradise*. The full house appreciated a warm welcome, cosy atmosphere and a reasonably priced bar. We're already looking forward to our next Film Night which will be on Friday 24th March when *Elvis* (2022) will be showing. It's quick and easy to buy tickets on the Village Hall website at woodcotevillagehall.com/news-and-events/ Or you can reserve tickets for payment on the door by calling 07929 203096.

As well as preparing for another sold-out night of Gypsy Jazz on Friday 25th February, we have been improving the halls facilities. As a result of the generous donation received from the Village Fete, we have been able to upgrade the lighting and sound equipment. New coloured lighting to the stage and main hall have been installed which can be used for parties and performances, alongside a glitter ball with coloured spotlights and an audio system with radio microphones. The audio system accepts a USB or Bluetooth connection from a phone, tablet or laptop to stream music through the main speakers in the hall, or a memory stick with music files can be plugged into the system. In addition, we are in the process of upgrading the cutlery, crockery and general kitchen equipment available to hall users. In short, a party in the Village Hall has never looked so good! So, we must extend a huge thank you to the Fete Committee, and everybody who supports and enjoys the Village Fete.

And finally, planning is steaming ahead for our second Spring Fair which will take place on Sunday 30th April. As well as a great range of authentic arts and crafts, there will also be a fabulous range of local artisan food producers with many of our Food Fair traders staging a return to the village. The British Owl project will also be returning with some of their owls. There will be plant sales and garden inspiration, workshops to get involved in, hot food, a bar, tea-room, children's activities and entertainment. It's not to be missed so do make a note of the date, *Sunday 30th April 11am - 3pm*. You can keep up to date with what we have planned at www.woodcotevillagehall.com/woodcote-Spring-Fair/

WOODCOTE WI NEWS

Ann Larden welcomed the members and our speaker Towse Harrison. The Birthday girls this month are Carole Shelley - Allen, Joan Soanes and Louise Heathcote.

We had an outing last month to see Evita at the Oxford Playhouse which was excellent. Thank you to our coach driver Steve.

The lunch club this month went to the Highwayman and had a delicious lunch.

Our speaker Towse spoke on 'Before the zip', it was a fascinating history of fastenings, textiles, threads and decorations going back 4,000 years. Who knew that you could make thread from nettles! Towse



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brought samples of dyed wool, fleeces and tools which was very interesting.

We had a delicious tea thank you to Gillian Seymour and friends.

The competition for an unusual fastening was won by Judy Williams and the Bloom of the Month winner was Carole Shelley-Allen with a lovely snowdrop. Spring is on the way!

Please come and join us in the Village Hall at 2.30pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. April's talk will be by John Kinory on 'My life and times as a film extra'.

And finally, don't forget that the Woodcote WI is doing the coffee shop in the community centre on 29th April. See you there!

Judy Williams

THE SPRING EQUINOX

We all seek balance in our lives and a moment of perfect balance will occur this month with the spring equinox on 20th March. At 21.24 hours the sun will be exactly above the equator so, from pole to pole, the earth will be half in shadow, half in sunlight, resulting in 12 hours of day and 12 hours of night across the whole world, from Norway to New Zealand.



(photo by Jackie Comrie)

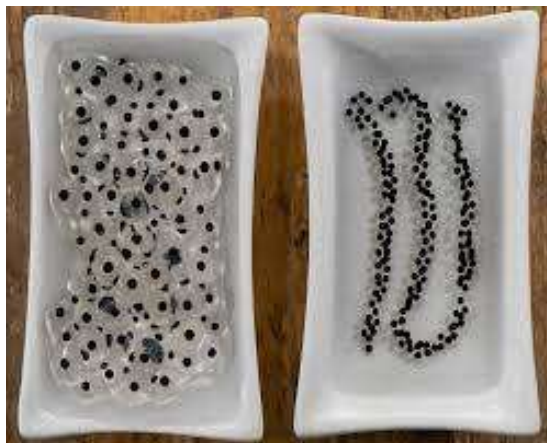
The earth takes 24 hours to rotate on its axis. It does this on an angle of 23.4 degrees (known as the axial tilt) and it is this angle that is responsible for our seasons. As well as rotating on its own axis, the earth also orbits the sun, taking a year to do so. During this time the axial tilt stays constant and so, as the earth moves around the sun, different parts receive greater or smaller amounts of sun. When the earth is at the point where the north pole is leaning towards the sun, we have reached the northern hemisphere's summer solstice, and the southern hemisphere's winter solstice. When the earth moves around to the other side of the sun, the northern

hemisphere has its winter when the south pole is tilted towards the sun. The equinoxes, in spring and autumn, occur at exactly the halfway points between these moments.

The word 'equinox' is derived from two Latin words, *aequus* (equal) and *nox* (night). The spring equinox is sometimes called the vernal equinox, the word vernal being a 16th century English word derived from the Latin *vernalis*, which itself is derived from the Latin word for spring, *ver*.

After the spring/vernal equinox, we will be into the light half of the year and by the end of March we will have a tiny bit more day than we have night. The lengthening days, especially the light evenings after the clocks change on 26th March, make it feel as if our gardens, ponds and the wider countryside are springing into life.

During March, much of the surface of ponds is covered in shiny clumps of frog spawn and strings of toad spawn. The vast amount of spawn is nature's insurance against frost and predation as many of the eggs of frogs and toads will be eaten, providing sustenance for other creatures. Newts feast on spawn ahead of their own egg-laying, always after the frogs and toads. Dragonfly and damselfly nymphs also predate tadpoles – they have a lot of growing to do and will moult up to 17 times before they are fully grown. Other animals from water beetles to ducks eat tadpoles too: it's brutal, but all part of the great circle of life in a pond.



Frog spawn on the left (laid in clumps)

Toad spawn on the right (laid like a string of pearls)

By the end of the month, spawn which has survived will hatch, and the masses of wriggling tadpoles will feast on pond algae and vegetation, clinging on and wriggling their tails. Frog tadpoles are slim and grey, flecked with gold, while toad tadpoles are chunkier and pure black. Perhaps you'll be lucky enough to see some in your garden pond or the Greenmoor Ponds.

There's still time to lend a hand with Woodcote's toad patrol. All you need is a bucket, a good torch and a waterproof coat. Email info@woodcotecg.org to get involved in toad patrol, to help at our monthly conservation work parties, or to join Woodcote Conservation Group.

Woodcote Conservation Group

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GORING HEATH BEAVERS



Forming the Beavers into 'riverbanks' (two lines facing each other) at the start of every meeting can be rather like herding cats. There is a reason every other section stands in a circle – who would anticipate standing small children in two lines less than three feet apart would become a huddle? Tadpole, however, had a brainwave and the first meeting was spent painting a river on

wallpaper, complete with marginal plants and river creatures, either side of which the Beavers now stand.

The next evening was spent learning about birds. Dipper showed how to make bird feeders by pushing seeds into apples. In lodges, the Beavers then pretended to be blue tits, sending out one team member at a time to find caterpillars hidden around the Hut. They loved this, but if they had to do this for months from dawn to dusk, the novelty might have worn off. *Musical chairs* was adapted – every time Dipper shouted "cat" or "sparrow hawk", the Beavers leapt onto chairs for safety (predictably more fun than hiding behind them, if a questionable evasion technique).

On 26th January we celebrated Burns' Night. As ever we had haggis, this time served at tables with bagpipe music playing (fancy!). Alas, with no Scots parents, the haggis could not be addressed in style, but we did our Sassenach best with the Selkirk Grace, the Beavers clearly *totally* mystified. Tables meant there was insufficient room for haggis hurling, so we had an under-and-over haggis relay race instead which, if anything, was more fun. Then the highlight of the evening: Dormouse attempting to teach Beavers the Gay Gordons. Quite simply glorious, life-affirming fun! It was enthusiastic, happily inept and somewhat akin to dodgems.

The following week Tadpole polluted our lovely, wallpaper river with rubbish. The Beavers litter-picked, sorted the rubbish into crates labelled 'recycling', 'electrical', 'food waste' and 'landfill', then discussed what should have gone where. Parents, feel free to delegate bin night. Tadpole then made a river of scrap paper squares and challenged the Beavers to collect only the blue 'clean water' squares; squares of another colour would count against their score. The pace was predictably frenetic. Finally, we created our own version of the Blackpool illuminations with many sheets of card, a light bulb on one side and "off" on the other. As one half ran around as 'superheroes' covering the light bulbs, the rest 'turned the lights on'; all marvellous preparation for life as a parent. Arthur, Albie and Harriet were invested, during a pause for breath.

WOODCOTE VOLUNTEERS – 40 YEARS OLD *(continued from front page)*



Brian Forde, on behalf of OWL (Our Woodcote Library group of volunteers), who spoke about the Library Service and what they can offer local housebound residents.

Elizabeth Payne, our longest serving driver, who explained why she loves being a driver.

Annette Mack, one of our drivers who is a member of Woodcote Parish Council, who spoke on behalf of the Council, thanking us for our commitment to the local community.

Rev. Canon Kevin Davies — thanked Woodcote Volunteers and pointed out that when the world's problems seem overwhelming, we can do something positive, locally, to help others, which in turn helps us.

Our raffle prize donors: The Highwayman, Gerald Seymour, Jessica Tilley, The Red Lion, Premier (RNK Stores), Blue Tin Produce, Kimberley's Hair, Helena McBride, Woodcote Garden Centre, The Plaice, Jane Forde and Cotswold Wildlife Park.

Our raffle helped raise £250 to support Woodcote Volunteers, so thank you to all who supplied us with prizes and bought tickets.

And finally, thanks to the organising team: Jane Forde, Christine Bernard, Janet Harper and Angela Jenkins as well as all the invaluable volunteers who made the evening a huge success.

Other News

Our next event will be our Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 19th April 2023 at 7pm in the Pavilion Room at Woodcote Village Hall. Members of the public are welcome. There will be more information about this in next month's edition.

We are very pleased to welcome Sally, Hilary and Esther to our team of volunteer drivers. Thank you so much for giving your time and we are sure you will love what you do.

Sadly, we have to say goodbye to Ian Brannan and Mavis Beardsley, who are leaving us. They have been drivers with us for several years. Thank you so much and 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 health related, social appointments and we can collect prescriptions. Just give us a call if you are not sure if we can take you somewhere!

Please give us as much notice as possible before the date you need us. One of our friendly 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

We're here – to get you there!



The Oratory duo — Alejandro and Ethan



Jon Hatt: preparation



Rev Cannon Kevin Davies



**Dave Turner (SODC) and
Helena McBride (WV Chair)**



Ann Lardon — a WV user

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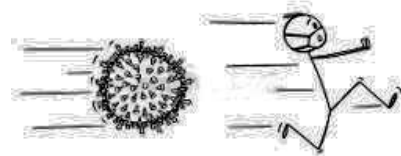
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THE CASE OF THE COVID SUFFERER

By David Sutton

So, I reckon I have long Covid. I base this on a sudden onset about a month ago of acute pains in the legs, the sort that make tying



shoelaces and putting on socks a distinct trial and rule out jogging completely. I have googled 'leg pains + Covid' and sure enough leg pains can be a symptom of long Covid. Admittedly, it appears that pretty much anything else can be a symptom of long Covid too, and admittedly, I have done a test and don't appear to have Covid at present, nor am I aware of ever having had it in the past, but I am pretty confident of this self-diagnosis.

My wife does not agree. 'You can't have long Covid if you haven't had short Covid', she says. To which I say: who made her keeper of the Covid rule-book. Anyway, I probably have had short Covid, but just in that quiet uncomplaining way we men have, too busy caring for others to take any thought for ourselves.

'So why don't you go to the doctor?', she says. I really don't like going to doctors with slightly vague things that they probably can't do much about anyway other than to prescribe painkillers. And I always remember Dr Simpson's favourite dictum from many years back: 'Things that don't get worse usually get better'. This is certainly true of most of my running-related injuries in the past – hamstring pulls, thigh strains, knee pains, sprained ankles – and I certainly hope it will be in this case: meanwhile if people see me proceeding round the village at a geriatric shuffle rather than my usually sprightly stride, they will know why. Of course, it could just be that I am at last suffering from what my grandson likes to call 'oldism'. No, no, I won't hear of it. Take care.

WOODCOTE CRICKET CLUB

The cricket season is edging closer and the opening game on Sunday 30th April is an away friendly game against Ewelme. The Berkshire League matches begin on Saturday 6th May with our newly-formed 2nd XI at home against Twyford & Ruscombe 2nd XI. On that day, the 1st XI travel to play Reading United at Waltham St Lawrence hoping for yet another successful season. The South Oxon Midweek League gets underway with an away match against Clifton Hampden on Wednesday 10th May.

Once again, we will be hosting BBC Caversham for their Sunday home matches. Indoor net practices will start at the Oratory Sports Hall on Wednesday 1st March from 8.00 – 9.00 pm and continue for six weeks on the same day and time each week. We are anticipating that lots of new players will be attending. We are very keen to recruit as many new players as possible to ensure that we are able to meet the demands of a very full fixture list. From the beginning of May we will be running our Saturday morning 'fun-cricket' sessions from 9.00 – 10.00 am for primary-age children. This has proved very popular over the past two years.

Also, in the April edition I will provide details of the Saturday morning coaching sessions which we are helping to run on the Green. Sessions will start in May and take place between 9.00 and 10.00 am. Please do contact me if you wish to know more about any or all the opportunities we are offering – sampeates@gmail.com, 07710858366.

SP

WOODCOTE FOOTBALL CLUB

After the awful weather through most of January, football finally resumed on 28th January and we were pleased to get two wins after such a long lay-off. The first team travelled to Hazlemere in the League and came back with a narrow 4-3 win, goals coming from a Toby Nowell hat-trick and Joe Webber. On the same day the Development team played at home in the North Berks War Memorial Cup quarter-final and posted a 2-1 win to take them through to a semi-final against Benson Lions. On target for Woodcote were Archie Clark and George Scoffham.

On 11th February it was the turn of the first team to win at home. Their 5-3 victory over Mortimer raised them to second place in the Hellenic Division 2 (East) table. Remarkably, Toby Nowell scored his second hat-trick in successive weeks, while Joe Webber scored twice. There are still plenty of games to be played before the end of April, with both teams well-placed to win trophies. The excellent support we receive at home gives the teams a real boost, so we hope to continue to attract as many locals as possible to cheer us on from the side-lines.

SP



Football match between Woodcote Development and East Hendred (Woodcote in white and red)



LANGTREE SCHOOL



We'd like to introduce the village of Woodcote to what's been happening at Langtree school so far this year - and tell you a bit more about what's going to happen!

Just like the Cabin and Woodcote Primary, the secondary school is like a micro-village, with a diverse and bustling mixture of children, teachers and activities at any one time. The children are constantly busy trying to learn and have fun in the process - and here at the Parent and Teacher Association, we're busier than ever after the inertia of Covid, trying to raise much needed funds to give the school that extra bit of financial support, in order to plug the governmental funding holes.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic (and there were many throughout education!) Langtree has come out strongly on what we hope is the other side; our GCSE-season of 2022 was the very best ever, which is testament to the tenacity of our whole school community. Exams are far from the only measurement of this however, and does not capture the full story of what a school is or should be about - there are so many other facets of Langtree: our Drama, Music and Arts departments, our sports teams and various extra-curricular clubs.

Starting off our fundraising for 2023 was our visit to Whitchurch Art Café, (The Old Rectory Stables, Whitchurch-on-Thames) on January 28th. Open to the general public, it was a success and despite Whitchurch High Street being closed to traffic on the day, lots of people came along to enjoy homemade cakes and listen to live music, which brought in a welcome £190 for our science labs. **Please make sure to save the date for our next visit on June 10th.**

Upcoming on our social calendar this spring are two major events:

Our famous Quiz Night is returning on March 10th, which will give the parent community cause to brush up on their general knowledge. Tickets are £10 each, £20 per couple and include a drink and a grazing platter!

Right after this, we have the production of Bugsy promises to be a scream. The ensemble is huge, the music roaring, and the outfits both gangster and flapper!

Please tune in to our subsequent newsletters to find out how it all went and how the Langtree-collective felt about it!

The Langtree Parent and Teacher Association

WOODCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Last month I mentioned that Year 5 have been sharing the writing of playscripts with a visiting actor from The Oxford Playhouse. They have now completed their scripts which have been whisked away to the panel for selection. The feedback from the professionals is that it is going to be a tough job to select only one play but that is what they are working on right now. In a few weeks' time, year 5 will go to Oxford to see their play performed professionally at The Playhouse. They are really excited. I will keep you up to date with the selection as and when we know it.



Year 5 and 6 have undertaken their much anticipated, annual outing to The O2 Arena to sing with Young Voices. This year there were just over 9000 children in the choir! It was an amazing experience. They sang a range of songs from traditional folk songs, pop songs, reggae, Disney classics and some new songs written especially for them. They shared performing with Urban Strides, The Beatbox Collective and Heather Small! We were so delighted to be able to sing "Proud" with her. That was truly an experience they will never forget.

Last week, we ran a coffee morning for parents to stay and chat with our Special Needs Coordinator. This was open to any parent who would like to know more about any aspect of learning within the school. It was extremely popular and will now be running monthly throughout the year. We will organise different presentations for each event which parents are able to drop in to. Next month's theme is

supporting children's mental health and anxieties, along with lots of coffee, biscuits and chatting together.



The O2 Arena

The Partnership Annual Boccia Tournament has recently taken place and Woodcote entered 2 teams. This event is open to any child who may not usually get involved with sport. It was a collaborative event and the children had an amazing time. Boccia is a game similar to Boules or Bowls and can be played standing up or sitting down. The children took it in turn to throw the jack and then bowl a weighted, chasing ball. The Olympic value of respect was awarded to the Woodcote teams.

The first signs of life are emerging in our wonderful wildlife area. We are looking forward to watching the buds grow, almost imperceptibly, over the coming weeks. Year 1 are waiting eagerly for the frog spawn and will, no doubt, bring some into the classroom to study.

Would you like to help promote your local primary school? The Governors have a vacancy for a member of the community to join the Governing Body. Please do consider helping us in this way. If you would like further information, please either pop into school or email chairofgovernors@woodcote.oxon.sch.uk

Mrs L. Hunt

CABIN PRESCHOOL

Chinese New Year was certainly celebrated by us all! We had great fun as you can see in the photos of Lion dancing, thank you again to the Rolfe family for lending us your Lion; it was very well behaved and enjoyed the broccoli we fed it to give us good luck. We enjoyed playing with noodles, using chopsticks, and taking food orders in our Chinese restaurant role play area. We ate fortune cookies at snack time and listened to Chinese nursery rhymes while we played. We got crafty making dragons, panda bears and colouring animals from the Chinese zodiac. We also learned to say some numbers and greetings in Mandarin.

Thanks also to Hugo's Dad for helping us level off and make safe a bit of ground in our outdoor area that needed attention.



www.thecabinpreschool.co.uk

01491 680854
Info@thecabinpreschool.co.uk

Cabin is a friendly pre-school in a great location within Woodcote Primary School.

- children from 2 years old through to start of school
- dedicated outdoor space plus access to the playground, field and climbing frames.
- offer an exciting range of activities including: French and sports
- flexible choice of sessions
- Term time, 9am - 3pm, early drop off and late stay available



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We loved having two young men, Toby Best and Dominic Serrais, who very bravely came over from Langtree School to show the children a trombone and a saxophone. We had been singing about those instruments when we learnt the song *I am the Music Man* but none of the children knew what they were. Thanks to Mr Henderson for arranging the visit for us.



Kindness week, which we celebrated during the last week of term, has been overwhelming. We are so impressed and touched by all the wonderful comments our parents sent in about their children. It has been a real celebration of our children at Cabin. We knew they were amazing, and this proves it. Parents have reported back how helpful the children are at home, making pretend cups of tea and breakfast in bed to parents, helping with younger siblings, standing up for an injustice and ensuring that the right action is taken, helping with washing, putting cutlery on the table, sorting socks, helping with disabled older siblings, helping with younger siblings and just being kind and fun to be around...these are just a snippet of the parents' comments and feedback. Each child stood up in front of the class as we read out the responses. They felt so proud, and you could see their smiles become huge as they listened to and enjoyed the praise. Well done to all Cabin's lovely children.



Friday mornings have become *Food Fridays* and this term we have made banana milkshakes, lemon shortbread, red jelly (a favourite), vegetable spring rolls and bread.

We say goodbye to Anya who has been with us since joining us for her placement in September. She is completing a childcare course and has been working with us two days a week. We are so proud of her and what she has achieved. Thank you, Anya, we will all miss you!



We are looking forward to warmer weather and lots of lovely outdoor activities. We will soon have chicks hatching, a special Mother's Day morning, a visit to see how the bulbs that we planted on the village green are growing, and a trip to Bucklebury Farm.

On the 17th of March we will be holding our annual bingo night at the village hall. For tickets, please email fundraising@thecabinpreschool.co.uk or see Helen Baker in the school playground, you will be issued with a number for entry. £10 in advance or £12 on the night, payments can be made via sum up card payments. Nibbles will be provided on the tables and a pay bar is available. Doors open at 7.30pm, eyes down at 8pm. Everyone welcome.



Some spaces are still available. We are a great pre-school to transition to Woodcote Primary school.

Please call us on 01491 680854 for more information or to book a visit. Or email us on info@thecabinpreschool.co.uk

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DOLPHIN IN PANGBOURNE

A brief history...

A club was started by a group of boys over 70 years ago for physical recreation. They were given the use of a large room in The Mill, Whitchurch, by Mr John Dolphin. When The Mill was no longer available, Mr Dolphin began the plans for a clubhouse by the river and the name Dolphin was adopted.



Today, Adventure Dolphin offers outdoor and water-based activities to local communities, children and adults. If you haven't visited us, come on a Saturday morning when canoeists and kayakers are on the river. Dates for new courses will be published in Spring

Adventure Dolphin is a centre of excellence for the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and we will be offering places for new starters at Bronze, Silver and Gold level in September. The dates for Open Evenings to find out more about each award will be confirmed in the summer.

For more, visit: adventuredolphin.co.uk

WORLD BOOK DAY

By Anya Decmar

She gallops down the stairs, trips over her feet, and lands in front of her parents with a smile as big as the character she is. Her library copy of Alice in Wonderland now rests on the ground with her fingers wedged beneath it.



"You have to stop running down the stairs Phoebe!"

"I'm not Phoebe!", she replies with a huff, "I'm the Cheshire Cat!"

"And does the Cheshire Cat run down the stairs? I think not", Phoebe's mum continues her conversation, before the Cheshire Cat runs back up the stairs to collect the rest of her (his) belongings.

Upon arrival at school, Phoebe's eyes scan the classroom, looking for anyone else who is dressed up as a character from Alice in Wonderland. She spots a Mad Hatter standing by the pots of scissors and glue sticks. She walks over, in character, and greets him and he responds crazily, enthusiastically, and with a grin (that is not quite as big as Phoebe's). Then Alice spots the pair and happily joins them, clacking her shoes together whilst adjusting her headband to perfection.

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Sadly, Phoebe concludes that there are just three characters from Alice in Wonderland at her school today. But she decides it is no bother! She grabs a whiteboard pen and heads to the board at which she begins to draw a little white rabbit with a hat and a stopwatch. The drawing is detailed, and she finishes it with a proud glance in her teacher's direction. The teacher nods approvingly.

As the day goes on, Phoebe closely watches the rabbit on the whiteboard, in case he moves or runs away. Each lesson passes, and he doesn't move. Finally, the day ends, and Phoebe is tired from being in character as well as watching the White Rabbit on the board, ensuring he does not move. However, as she turns around to wave at her parents who are waiting in the playground, her eyes are drawn to the board...and the lack of the rabbit that should have been there. All that is left of the White Rabbit is a hat. In glee, the Mad Hatter dashes over to rub it off.

That night, Phoebe goes to sleep as Phoebe and she dreams of the White Rabbit. She imagines the hole he could have found at school and the way he could have escaped whilst she was at lunch but did not.

The next day at school, Phoebe walks into class and there in the corner of the whiteboard sits the White Rabbit with his stopwatch. This time, he has no hat.

WOODCOTE PRESCHOOL

Happy Lunar New Year! The children were very adventurous, and they loved trying lots of different Chinese snacks. We enjoyed reading our new Peppa Pig book about how Peppa and her friends celebrated Chinese New Year.

Valentine's Day was celebrated with lots of craft. We made cards and heart-shaped bird feeders to take home. We explored the countries of Italy and France through food and craft; we were very impressed with the children's matchstick Eiffel Towers!

The sun is starting to shine and we have been loving spending lots of time playing outside. Our trips to the allotment are beginning and we can't wait to plant lots of yummy vegetables.

National Storytelling week was so much fun, we read lots of new books and old favourites. We dressed up, made crafts, and learnt new songs.

After half term we are going to be celebrating Shrove Tuesday and enjoying yummy pancakes. We have St Patrick's Day and St David's day coming up too. And we will be exploring the Holi festival and getting very colourful!

We have been busy planning for British Science week, and we are so excited to do lots of experiments with the children.

World Book Week is one of the highlights of the year and we will be sharing our favourite stories and encouraging the children to share them with us and dress up as their favourite characters.

We will be running holiday club for the first week of the Easter holidays, please contact us on the details below to book your child's space.

We have a few spaces left for children aged 18 months to 4 years old. If you would like to book a visit, please phone us on 01491 682300 or email Wendy Powell on woodcote.pre-school@hotmail.co.uk



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WHITCHURCH & GORING HEATH HISTORY SOCIETY

In our everyday lives we probably don't pay them much attention, but the Blue Plaques on the buildings of South Oxfordshire mark the places where writers, engineers, and other notable people spent their lives. Marie-Louise Kerr returns to Whitchurch Village Hall on March 16th to tell us their stories – and make us think about who else should merit this recognition. She is a very engaging speaker, and we are delighted to welcome her back.

The lion statue in Reading's Forbury gardens commemorates the fallen soldiers of the Battle of Maiwand. Dan Allen of the Victorian Military Society will explain the campaign of the second Anglo-Afghan War in 1880, which gave rise to tributes to the "Berkshire Eleven" in poetry, art and literature. At Whitchurch Village Hall, on Thursday April 20th.

Our meetings start at 7.30pm, with coffee served from 7pm. Non-members are welcome, £3, to include coffee or tea and biscuits. But why not join us? Membership is just £12, and covers our eight lectures and the possibility of coming on two membership only summer outings. Contact vickyjordan5@hotmail.com.

THE CORN EXCHANGE WALLINGFORD: MARCH

Cinema

All regular performances normally start at 7:30pm unless stated otherwise. The bar and auditorium will open from 7pm so there's plenty of time to collect drinks beforehand.

We are also showing films on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons at 2:30pm. Please look at the website for updates.

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

The son (15)

Sunday, 12th March, 7:30pm

Monday, 13th March, 7:30pm

Women Talking (15)

Tuesday, 14th March, 7:30pm

Wednesday, 15th March 7.30pm

Roman Holiday (U) 70th Anniversary

Thursday, 16th March, 7:30pm

What's love gotta do with it? (12A)

Friday, 17th March, 7:30pm

Saturday, 18th March, 7:30pm

Sunday, 19th March, 7:30pm

Saint Omer (12A)

Monday, 20th March, 7:30pm

Till (12A)

Tuesday, 21st March, 7:30pm

Wednesday, 22nd March, 2:30pm

The Middle Man (12A)

Thursday, 23rd March, 7:30pm

Friday, 24th March, 7:30pm

Marcell, the Shell with Shoes On (PG)

Saturday, 25th March, 2:30pm

Saturday, 25th March, 7:30pm

Heathers, The Musical (15)

Tuesday, 28th March, 7pm

Live Screenings

The Royal Opera – Turandot

Wednesday, 22nd March, 7:15pm

Sung in Italian with English subtitles. Puccini's final opera is a glorious pageant of rich colour, dance and drama. In the court of Princess Turandot, suitors who fail to solve her riddles are brutally killed. But when a mysterious prince answers one correctly, suddenly he holds all the power – and a secret.

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

Live on Stage

Chess

Tuesday, 7th March to Saturday, 11th March at 7:45pm with a Saturday matinee at 2:30pm

The collaboration between Crescendo and the Sinodun Players with recent successes; Guys and Dolls, Showtime and The Sherman Show is back... this time presenting the hit musical Chess. Written by ABBA's Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus with lyrics by Sir Tim Rice, Chess is a masterpiece of musical theatre featuring songs like I know Him So Well, One Night in Bangkok, Anthem, and Pity the Child. If previous shows are anything to go by, this will be first class and one not to miss!

Tickets: £18 (adult), £16 (under 18s)

Launch of the New Corn Exchange Space

We are pleased to announce that the Club Room in the Corn Exchange is to become a second space in the theatre where we will host some theatre, music, open mic nights, talks, poetry readings and cinema. Watch this space in the months to come for announcements of events. The space is accessible via the stage door in Mousey Lane. The space is on the first floor via a staircase and unfortunately we are unable to provide access for those with limited mobility.

An evening of One Act Plays by the Sinodun Players

Tuesday, 28th March to Saturday 1st April at 7:45

Three classic plays in an evening of comedy and pathos. Indian Summer of an Uncle by P.G. Wodehouse, has the theme of class, conflict, control, responsibility and escape. A Talk in the Park by Alan Ayckbourn deals with the failure of human communication and obsession as well as isolation.

Suppressed Desires by Susan Glaspell satirizes the then-current obsession with dream interpretation: Henrietta is unable to stop overanalysing the dreams of her husband, Stephen, and sister, Mabel.

Tickets: £10 (limited numbers)

Coming Soon

Abba Sensation Tribute Band

Saturday, 22nd April, 7:45pm

Widely considered to be one of the best ever Abba Tribute Acts, they play to packed theatres and festivals throughout Europe. A stunning stage show, which combines costume changes, lighting effects and a faithful reproduction of the Abba sound. A great evening's entertainment is guaranteed for all age ranges. The band love audience participation, so you can sing along, clap or even get up and dance.

Tickets £18

Room of One's Own

Saturday, 29th April, 7:45pm

Live on stage, Virginia Woolf's trip through the history of literature, creativity and sexual politics. Adapted and performed by Rebecca Vaughan. The award-winning Dyad Productions (Female Gothic, I, Elizabeth, Christmas Gothic, and Austen's Women) return with a twenty-first century take on Virginia Woolf's celebrated talk. Take a wry, amusing, and incisive trip through the history of literature, feminism, and gender. Meet Charlotte Brontë, Jane Austen, Aphra Behn, and Shakespeare's sister – Judith! Travel to the far-flung future of... 2028. But whatever you do, Keep Off the Grass. Tickets £18

CHOLSEY REPAIR CAFÉ

Our repair café scheme continues to grow in capability, numbers of helpers, and the variety of projects we can attempt. Our underlying aims are to pass on repair skills, advise, and reduce the amount of waste going to our council dumps.

On the other hand, our success has led to repair sessions being very busy indeed, sometimes leading to unavoidably long waits for attention and we won't be advertising quite as widely for the foreseeable future — although if you're reading this, it means that we're still happy to see you.

We regularly attract customers from communities that ought to be capable of starting repair cafés of their own and we would like to see new schemes, however small, opening throughout South Oxfordshire. If anyone reading this would like to learn how we go about operating Cholsey Repair Café (CRC), I would be delighted to share our knowledge and experiences.

The next CRC session will be held at the Cholsey Pavilion between 11.00 and 13.45 on Saturday 18th March 2023.

Ian Wheeler
Co-ordinator

Board Game Group for adults

at Woodcote Library

Tuesday 14th March at
3.30-4.30 pm



and subsequently on the 2nd Tuesday of the month
We look forward to welcoming you!

If you need assistance getting to the library you can
contact Woodcote Volunteers who may be able to help
(01491 681171; woodcotevolunteers.org.uk)

Please join us at our free drop-in sessions where a
selection of board games and playing cards will be
provided. Tea/coffee and biscuits also provided!

Thank you for supporting your local library
Please contact the Library Manager – Lisa Trood - if you have any
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WALLINGFORD & DISTRICT ART CLUB (WADAC)



This month's demonstration will be given
by Mark Fennell, live in Centre 70,
entitled "Portrait in Acrylic" with a
palette knife

Mark Fennell is a professional portrait painter and
he works predominantly in oils and acrylics; his
work has been selected for exhibition with The Royal
Society of Portrait Painters. As well as portraiture,
Mark also enjoys the challenge of painting outdoors,
working at speed to capture the fleeting effects of
light over landscape. Mark is a regular contributor
to and featured in "The Artist", "Artist and
Illustrators" and "SAA Paint magazine".



The live demonstration is on Tuesday 21st March
2023 and will last two hours beginning at 7.30pm.
Entry is free to members, £3 for visitors

Tuesday morning and afternoon art classes - the
current Term (6 weeks) started on 21st February. A
few places are available so please contact us if you
are interested.

Tuesday social evening and non-tutored workshops
at 7-9pm; drop in and have a chat with fellow artists
at all levels. Great chance to get back to painting or
starting out. All club members are willing to help
new artists. Three new artists of mixed abilities
dropped in last month and enjoyed the experience so
much that they have joined the club.

The workshop on Saturday 11th March is on
Landscape in oil/acrylics with Paul Oakley. Paul is
planning that two paintings can be achieved in the
time, one to be in an impressionist style. Oil paints
will be available for those wishing to try painting with
oils.

If you are interested in joining us on any of our
events or the club, please contact
admin@wallingfordartclub.org.uk or

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

Please note: Goldsmiths Lane entrance off the High Street is closed off. The only access to Goldsmith Lane by car is by a road off the roundabout in front of the Methodist Church in St. Leonard's Square. Traffic lights are operating as this road is usually a one-way road.

READING RSPB GROUP ACTIVITIES



We started our New Year programme on 10th January with a talk by Oliver Smart on the birds of Cuba. Oliver is a renowned wildlife photographer who also guides birding trips. Cuba is the largest Caribbean Island and is around half the size of the UK. It has a wide range of interesting habitats including mangrove swamps, cloud forest and limestone mountains and caves. Its position between South America and Florida means that it attracts passage migrants and overwintering birds, bringing the total number of recorded species on the island to an impressive three hundred and sixty-eight. There are also twenty-four species endemic to the island, including the endangered Fernandina flicker and the Cuban parrot, both suffering from the effects of forest clearance. Cuba also has the tiny bee hummingbird which, at just 57mm long and weighing 4.5 grams, is about half the size of a goldcrest. Its wings beat at an astonishing eighty beats per second.

Hopes for the future protection of habitat and wildlife rest with education programmes for children and emerging facilities for wildlife tourism which has the potential to provide a welcome source of income in what is still quite a poor region.

On Sunday 15th January, six of us visited Dorney Wetlands and Eton Wick along the Jubilee River between Maidenhead and Windsor. It was a sunny morning and bitterly cold in the fresh wind, but it was worth it. The main river was quiet with just the odd Mute Swan, Tufted Duck, Great Crested Grebe and Black-headed Gulls but when we got to the flooded field and pool at the sluice at Eton Wick the sheltered ditch held lots of overwintering Chiffchaffs flitting back and forth, plus a few Cetti's Warblers which showed themselves surprisingly well for a bird that likes to stay hidden in thick vegetation. The flooded field held nine Shelducks, a handful of Lapwings and hundreds of Black-headed Gulls with two Common Gulls. So we had a good morning bird watching and recorded thirty-nine species.

On Tuesday 17th January, twelve of us met up in the Bury Down car park on the Ridgeway above West Ilsley. Luckily it was not windy but it was a frosty morning although the sun tried to come out the warm us up a bit. We walked along the Ridgeway past Cow Down looking for the special birds that can be found here. Corn Buntings used to be widespread on farmland but are now very restricted to a few areas such as this, so it made the trip worthwhile to get good views of six or more. Another farmland bird that used to be very widespread is the Yellowhammer, we also found some here. They are lovely colourful yellow birds which stand out well compared to the rather drab Corn Bunting. Another bird of the hills and open areas is the Raven, we saw two which we located as they flew about making their distinctive cronking call. Two other highlights were the large flocks of Skylarks in the fields and also a covey of Red-legged Partridges. We had an enjoyable walk and saw twenty-one species of bird.

In March our programme continues with a talk on 14th by Gary B. Prescott, aka the "Biking Birder", on Egyptian Adventures: Birds, People, Places and Unexpected Encounters.

The outdoor trips in March will be a walk at Moor Green Lakes near Finchampstead on 19th and a trip to RSPB Otmoor near Oxford on 21st. Our indoor meetings are held 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).

For more, visit group.rspb.org.uk/reading

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'Good Morning Woodcote' (photo by Tanya Sutton)

WHITCHURCH ON THAMES PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



We meet on alternate Wednesday evenings from 8pm at Whitchurch Village Hall, Manor Road, Whitchurch. RG8 7EU. On the other alternate Wednesdays, we have Zoom meetings where we feature top level speakers from the world of photography. On the 'Live' evenings in the hall, we also have our own members giving talks on a wide range of subjects. Have a look at our website- www.wotphoto.co.uk

Hopefully all the freezing weather is now over as we are approaching Spring. We are well under way and we start our March programme with a meeting at Whitchurch Village Hall on Wednesday 1st of March, with a set subject competition titled "The Letter C". which will be judged by Rojer Weightman.



The following week on Wednesday the 8th we have a Zoom meeting titled "The Why, Not The How" presented by Peter Downs LRPS

On Wednesday 15th March, again at the village hall, we have a print competition with no set subject when the judge will be Kevin Day.

On Wednesday 22nd March, we have another Zoom meeting titled "Finland's Wildlife In Four Seasons" presented by Jenny Hibbert.

On Wednesday 29th March in the first half, we have our 6 x 4 print competition which consists of five 6 x 4 prints (formally called enprints in the days of film!) mounted on a board, these will be judged by the members. In the second half we have our discussion evening where we discuss various aspects of the club, and choose our set subjects for the following season.

During the season we have battles against other clubs, and internal competitions where there are trophies to be won in the six rounds of ladder competitions for digital images which consist of both open and set subjects, also there are the Natural History and Monochrome trophies up for grabs! Come and visit us to see what we have to offer; you will receive a warm welcome.

PANGBOURNE & DISTRICT BOWLS CLUB

Our new season of bowling in Pangbourne will be starting in a few weeks' time with our Open Day on Saturday 15th April starting at 2pm.

We have just celebrated our big Centenary year in 2022 and we are already planning a new season of matches and competitions as well as a number of special events and social activities for our bowlers. Before this however we need to make sure we continue to grow and become the leading bowls club in the area. To do this we need people to join us, both experienced and new bowlers, male and female, also youngsters. We are continuing our Special Offer for anyone joining the club this year – just £50 for the first year which is half of the normal subscription.

We have been part of the village life of Pangbourne and District for 100 years and we intend to be around for many years to come. Why not come along to our Open Day and join in the fun. You will find us a very friendly group of people. We enjoy getting together in the summer not only for a game of bowls but also for social events and much more besides.

The bowling green can be found at the far side of the Recreation Ground, Thames Avenue, Pangbourne near the Tennis Club courts.

So do come along on Saturday the 15th April where you can meet us, have a cup of tea and try your hand at bowling. You will be surprised how fascinating and additive the game is.

For further details contact Alan Copeland by email – alan@alancopeland.co.uk or by phone – 01491 681471. Alternatively, have a look at our website – www.pangbournebowls.co.uk

WALLINGFORD PHOTOGRAPHIC CLUB

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 (7.45pm for online sessions and competitions).

March opens with an inter-club competition (in Abingdon on 2nd) then a members' evening on the 9th at the Pavilion. Then we have consecutive online meetings: Rod Bird "What photos mean" (why photos are taken, rather than how; 16th) and Alison Mees "Living the African Dream" (wildlife photos and stories from the bush; 23rd) – each hosted via Zoom. For the 30th March we return to the Pavilion when Mark Seymour "Street and Travel Documentary Photography".

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Saturday Crafts!
Woodcote Library
10.30-11.30am



Sessions will run:
Saturday 4th March – World Book Day
(join us and dress up as your favourite book character)
Saturday 29th April – King Charles III Coronation

We look forward to welcoming you at our family friendly drop-in sessions!

Craft sessions are free, however donations are gratefully accepted to fund further library events.
Thank you for supporting your local library.

Please contact the Library Manager – Lisa Tread
if you have any queries about Saturday crafts.
Lisa.Tread@oxfordshire.gov.uk

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries
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HENLEY AND DISTRICT STAMP CLUB



At the Henley stamp club, we have our annual auction where you will be able to obtain fantastic philatelic material. This year we can proudly announce that we have over 800 lots of excellent quality.

To learn more about stamps and postal history why not visit us at Bix one Wednesday evening? You can then meet people who find postal history and the story of stamps fascinating too.

Wednesday 8th March – Stamp Auction.

Wednesday 22nd March – Guest speakers from High Wycombe.

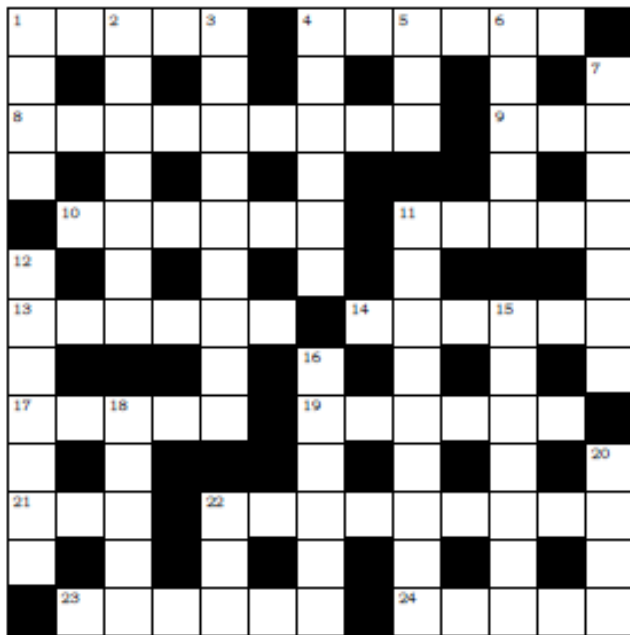
Meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at Bix Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Visitors and new members are very welcome.

Further details can be obtained by phoning Brian on 01491 681739 or on our website: -

www.henleyphilatelic.org.uk

MARCH CROSSWORD



Across

1. Quiet demo about small motorcycle (5)
4. Car part modifies tailgate (6)
8. Alligator drops everything to follow small navy guide (9)
9. Fool as first stooge (3)
10. Backed Tyneside lots to be hot (6)
11. Thirty seconds, or less (5)
13. Put back after derail mishap (6)
14. Caught by short answer back to socialist (6)
17. Train officer, initially at church (5)
19. Plague has artists tormented (6)
21. Sound alternative to outboard (3)
22. Isle of Grain sign (9)
23. More than one when first couples plan urgent alliance (6)
24. Teams left and right (5)

Down

1. Drive motorway to Northern Ireland in this? (4)
2. Important pal has four to back (7)
3. Logged his slippery means of transport (9)
4. Honouring, in passing without the French (6)
5. Artist returns to east for stud location (3)
6. Educate rat in dancing (5)
7. Across a step? (7)
11. One liners on a broken, slain, moor? (9)
12. Old farm vehicle returns to hill for a new one (7)
15. Answer about odds on last greyhound (7)
16. Bloke leads the Spanish to church (6)
18. A quiet state to the start of last month (5)
20. Burden of one losing direction to US (4)
22. Endlessly scary jaguar (3)

FEBRUARY CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Across

- 1 VILLAGE HALL
- 9 NIECE
- 10 EQUABLE
- 11 IRAN
- 12 SCOTLAND
- 14 ODOUR
- 15 UNCLE
- 20 EYESORE
- 22 ABET
- 24 ANDORRA
- 25 PANDA
- 26 SWITZERLAND

Down

- 2 ICELAND
- 3 LIES
- 4 GREECE
- 5 HAUNTING
- 6 LIBYA
- 7 INDIA
- 8 DEEDS
- 13 AUTOCRAT
- 16 LEBANON
- 17 NEPAL
- 18 REBATE
- 19 STEAL
- 21 ENDOW
- 23 OPAL

MARCH QUIZ

1. March comes in like a lion and goes out like a ...?
2. The March Hare is a character in which book?
3. In Roman Times, what was Ides of March?
4. The four March sisters appear in which novel?
5. What quarter day falls on March 25th?
6. When, in March is 'Pi' Day?
7. What are called scallions in the US?
8. In what country was the long march in 1934-5?
9. What Roman god was March named for?
10. When is St David's day?

ANSWERS

1. Lamb	2. Alice's Adventures in Wonderland	3. A deadline for settling debts.	4. Little Women	5. Lady Day	6. 14th (Pi=3.14)	7. Spring Onions	8. China	9. Mars	10. March 1st
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DATES FOR THE DIARY

Regular Weekly Events

Every Sunday

** Holy Communion 8.00am

** For other 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

MARCH DATES

Wed 1st	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society: Digital Competition No. 5. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Thur 2nd	*	Wallingford Photographic Club interclub competition versus Abingdon. Abingdon. 7.30pm
Sat 4th	*	Saturday Crafts: World Book Day. Woodcote Library. 10.30am-11.30am
Tues 7th	*	BMMHS Zoom Talk: 'Operation Freshman – Telemark'. Email zoom@bmmhs.org. 7.30pm
Wed 8th	*	Henley & District Stamp Club meeting. Bix Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: 'The Why not the How'. 8pm
Thur 9th	*	Wallingford Photographic Club members' evening. Crowmarsh Pavilion. 7.30pm
Fri 10th	*	Quiz Night. Langtree School. 7pm
Tues 14th	*	Board Games Club for adults. Woodcote Library. 3pm-4.30pm
Wed 15th	*	Woodcote WI meeting. Woodcote Village Hall. 2.30pm
	*	BMMHS Talk: 'Role of the Medic in Modern Warfare'. Woodcote Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society: Print Competition. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Thur 16th	*	Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society talk: 'Blue Plaques of South Oxfordshire'. Whitchurch Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Wallingford Photographic Club Zoom talk: 'What photos mean'. 7.45pm
Sat 18th	*	Cholsey Repair Café. Cholsey Pavilion. 11am-1.45pm

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Mon 20th	*	Friends of St. Leonard's AGM via Zoom. Email friendsofstlwoodcote@gmail.com. 7.30pm
Tues 21st	*	Wallingford & District Art Club demonstration: 'Portrait in Acrylic'. Centre 70, Wallingford. 7.30pm
Wed 22nd	*	Henley & District Stamp Club meeting. Bix Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: 'Finland's wildlife in four seasons'. 8pm
Thur 23rd	*	Wallingford Photographic Club Zoom talk: 'Living the African Dream'. 7.45pm
Fri 24th	*	Film Night: 'Elvis'. Woodcote Village Hall. 7.30pm
Sun 26th	*	Gift Fair. Goring Village Hall. 10am-4pm
Wed 29th	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society: 6 x 4 Competition and discussion evening. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Thur 30th	*	Wallingford Photographic Club talk: 'Street and Travel Documentary Photography'. Crowmarsh Pavilion. 7.30pm

FORTHCOMING DATES IN APRIL

Tues 4th	*	BMMHS Zoom Talk: 'The War in Ukraine'. Email zoom@bmmhs.org. 7.30pm
Wed 5th	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: '177 Years of Photoshopping'. 8pm
Thur 6th	*	Wallingford Photographic Club talk: 'A Journey around Namibia'. Crowmarsh Pavilion. 7.30pm
Wed 12th	*	Henley & District Stamp Club meeting. Bix Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	BMMHS Talk: 'History of the Glider Pilot Regiment'. Woodcote Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society: Digital Competition No 6. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm

CLOSING THOUGHT

Computers and the internet have made us faster but they do not make us smarter.

Scott Belsky