



Woodcote

**Vol 36 No 3
March 2024**

CORRESPONDENT

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

MODERNISING YOUR VILLAGE HALL

You may have heard us mention the long list of improvement projects that we are working our way through at the Village Hall. We've managed to tick quite a few things off and recently it's been the upgrade and improvements to the kitchen areas which we can report are finally complete.

The hall has a commercial kitchen and with the help of very generous donations from the Village Fete and the Woodcote Rally, we have been able to replace all the main appliances and purchase new cooking and serving equipment. The kitchen now boasts an electric range cooker with 2 ovens, a separate grill and 5 plate-hob, an extractor hood, fridge, microwave, hot water unit for tea and coffee making, dishwasher, hand-wash basin and stainless-steel food preparation surfaces.

All this along with a selection of basic crockery, cutlery and tea/coffee pots are available for hire at just £4/hour for residents of Woodcote. For an additional one-off fee of £10 we can also provide access to the full range of cooking and serving equipment. To help hall users plan their catering and make full use of the facilities, a full list of kitchen equipment can now be found on the hall website at www.woodcotevillagehall.com/facilities.

We have also been able to upgrade the facilities in the bar/kitchenette area of the Function Room. We've replaced the old fridge with new bottle cooler and added a microwave, urn and some new crockery. We've upgraded the power points, splashed out on some new glasses and even an ice bucket! The bar never looked so good but more importantly we've made huge strides in bringing this area up to date. It now contains everything you need should you want

to serve cold drinks, hot drinks and light refreshments. The Function Room is available to hire for £9.75/hour for Woodcote residents. It can hold up to 40 people, is a self-contained space with its own outside entrance and toilets. It is perfect for meetings, workshops, smaller gatherings and drop-in sessions, or as a separate bar/service area to the main hall for larger parties or events.

The new and improved facilities are going to be put to good use in the spring as our programme of events gets underway. Here's a run-down of what we've got coming up...

We're kicking off on March 1st with a sold-out comedy night by Laughter Craft Comedy. A first for Woodcote and with another night already in the diary for September. If you were disappointed not to make the first one, keep an eye on the hall website for details and tickets for the September event.

The Comedy night will be closely followed by our first jazz night of the year. On Saturday 16th March, Goring Jazz Club will be bringing six of Oxfordshire's finest jazz musicians to the hall to perform a set composed by the late greats Charles Mingus, Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers.

Friday 22nd March will see the return of the big screen for a showing of *One Life* (2023). *One Life* tells the true story of Sir Nicholas 'Nicky' Winton, a young London broker who, in the months leading up to World War II, rescued 669 predominantly Jewish children from the Nazis. Tickets are already available from the hall website. Expect surround sound, a

Continued on page 4

COMMENT FROM ST. LEONARD'S

As we wander around Woodcote, we can see those early signs that spring is on its way at last. As we enter March, we can see that the spring bulbs are popping up, the snowdrops have arrived, and the daffodils are about to emerge into the world. There are many things to celebrate as we come into March, as summer is just around the corner, with the hopes of warmer weather and sunnier, longer days.

During March we also have Mother's Day, or mothering Sunday. This can be a very triggering day, for those people who may have lost their mothers, mothers who have lost their children, mothers who have little or no support, those who cannot or have chosen not to have children, mothers who are supporting children who are experiencing illness or other challenges, and those who have a strained relationship, or are no contact, with their mothers.

For these individuals, Mother's Day may feel like having a sword that is piercing the soul.

We see an example of a female, a mother, in the Bible experiencing this soul-piercing. Probably the most famous woman in the Bible: Mary the mother of Jesus. In Luke 2.33-35, when Mary and Joseph brought baby Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem, they meet a man called Simeon. Simeon said some amazing things about Jesus and told Mary how she was going to feel in years to come.

"And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'"

Traditionally, this last statement by Simeon has been taken as prophecy regarding the pain that Mary would experience in witnessing Jesus' execution. Some commentators, however, link this statement instead to the rest of Simeon's words to Mary, about the division that her child will cause within Israel. Simeon is perhaps talking about the distress Mary will feel at the conflicting responses that her son's ministry will elicit. Although he will do great things, he will be maligned, stigmatised, poorly treated, rejected and ultimately die young as after false accusations, an arrest, trial and flogging and a brutal execution, by crucifixion. Mary, who became pregnant as a young, unmarried teenage mother, already knows the searing pain of being stigmatised, judged, and subjected to ridicule and false accusation. To be experiencing those things, and have knowledge that her son, too, would suffer must have weighed heavy upon her heart. However, amidst this message there also the hope and wonder that this baby will grow to be a Saviour, a change-maker and shackle-breaker in an oppressed, Roman occupied Israel. Earlier in Luke's Gospel, it states after receiving prophesies about Jesus, how Mary "pondered all of the things she was hearing in her heart". She reflects upon them and wonders what they may mean. However, in the midst of her unknowing, she continues to cling as she has done before, to the God who sent Gabriel to give her the

news that she would bear Jesus, who sustains, guides, comforts and strengthens her, and who knows what the future holds.

This same God is with each of us in our own unique situations. Whatever our feelings and experiences around Mother's Day, he holds space for it without condemnation and wishes to draw near to us all, to comfort, to guide, to sustain us, just as he did Mary, Jesus and so many who have gone before us. If you would appreciate a pastoral visit or require support, please do reach out to us at St Leonard's; it would be our privilege to listen to, prayer for and support you.

God bless,

Reverend David Benskin
Team vicar for the Langtree Team

Services at St. Leonard's

We are delighted to offer the following services offer this month. You are most welcome to attend any or all of them. Please know you are welcome also to bring people with you.

March Services:

Sunday 3th March

- 8.00 am Holy Communion
- 9.45 am Parish Communion

Sunday 10th March

- 8.00 am Holy Communion
- 9:45 am Slow church in the village hall

Sunday 17th March

- 8.00 am Holy Communion
- 9:45 Open doors

Sunday 24th March

- 8.00 am Holy Communion
- 9.45 am Parish Communion

Thursday 28th March

- 7:30 Maundy Thursday Whitchurch hill

Friday 29th March

- 3pm Good Friday services

Sunday 31st March

- 8.00 am Holy Communion
- 9.45 am Easter Holy Communion

Online Services

We continue with our online service of Night Prayer every Tuesday at 8.30 pm on Zoom. This follows the ancient monastic pattern of Compline and lasts for about 20 minutes. Join us from the comfort of your home with a hot drink as we finish the day with prayer. A warm welcome awaits.

If you would like to join us, please email me:

Rev'd David Benskin: revdbenskin@gmail.com for the contact details.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



In this issue we've added an update from the South Oxfordshire District Council. I'm hoping to have some regular updates on the SODC activities, particularly for any issues

impacting the village. If there are any SODC issues you are particularly interested in, please let me know via email.

It was great to see that the parish council is now back up to a full quota of ten councillors. Along with the newly appointed clerk, there are several new faces at the council meetings. We hope to introduce some of them in the coming issues.

The Correspondent is always looking for interesting articles from villagers. If you would like to contribute an article, please email it to wood-co@runbox.com. If you're interested in writing something, but aren't sure about a topic, please get in touch or attend our upcoming AGM, as we welcome all help.

Nick

PUBLISHER INFORMATION

Editor: Nick Kolpin *[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

Advertising:	Claire Jones	07789 190463
Treasurer:	Helen Baker	07047 097787
Production:	Dan Oldfield	01491 681962
Distribution:	Trevor Back	01491 680617
Printer:	C Z Services	07860 630865

Cover Design: Rob Spencer

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

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

Woodcote Village Hall

Private Hire
Flexible spaces & facilities suitable for events, parties, meetings, film, music, education, workshops, sports, exercise, regular classes...

Regular Events
Spring Fair, Food Fair, Music, Film...

Woodcotevillagehall@outlook.com
Woodcotevillagehall.com

Shaun Guard TV & WIFI SERVICES

- Aerials - supplied, repaired & poor reception solved
- Satellite - Sky Q dish upgrades, discreet dish installation
- Internet / WiFi - blackspots cured, internal & external data cabling
- TVs - hung on your wall or set up and tuned

OXFORD AERIALS
www.oxfordaerials.co.uk
shaun@oxfordaerials.co.uk
Call Wallingford 01491 833282

three pillars of health
PILATES, WELLNESS & COMMUNITY

NEW COURSE
Thursday 12:45
Storton Lodge, Goring
22/02-28/03
Free taster

Vanessa Mansergh m.07906 186912
GORING, STOKES ROW, NETTLEBED
www.threepillarsofhealth.co.uk

PEST WIZARDS
YOUR LOCAL PEST CONTROL SERVICE

WASPS & ALL INSECTS
RATS, MICE, MOLES & SQUIRRELS
PROMPT SERVICE

MARK DEARLOVE • 07446 377816
(01491) 833282 • info@pestwizards.co.uk

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.



Beacon Flooring

A Family Run Business

Carpet Wood Karndean Vinyl

Free fitting on carpet orders over £150

16 High Street, Goring. 01491 454095

beaconflooring@aol.co.uk

www.beaconflooring.co.uk



Rosie Care

TEL: 01491 682437 MOB. 07966509908.

PUBLIC LIABILITY, OWN CAR, TRAINED, DBS,

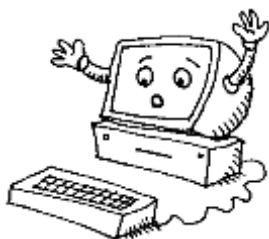
EXPERIENCED, DEMENTIA, PALLIATIVE.

Computer Problems?

Free quote – No fix no fee

Michael Harper

Over 500 happy customers
in Sonning Common
and Woodcote.



www.MiloTechnicalSupport.com

0118 972 4905

U-Connect Electrical

ALL ASPECTS OF ELECTRICAL WORK UNDERTAKEN

EMERGENCY CALL-OUTS
INSTALLATIONS & MAINTENANCE
NEW BUILDS, EXTENSIONS & GARDEN ROOMS
EXTRA LIGHTING & SOCKETS
INSPECTION & TESTING
CONSUMER UNIT UPGRADES
CENTRAL HEATING & BOILER WIRING

Checkatrade.com
Approved electrician



FAMILY RUN SINCE 2008 WITH OVER 40 YEARS EXPERIENCE

FREE OF CHARGE - NO OBLIGATION QUOTATIONS

07933 366 866

www.u-connectelectrical.co.uk

VILLAGE HALL MODERNISATION

(Continued)

reasonably priced bar, comfortable chairs, a cosy atmosphere, and a warm welcome. Film night is the perfect opportunity to catch up with friends and neighbours and all within walking distance!

And then it's back to Gypsy Jazz on Saturday 13th April when (and we still can't quite believe it), Woodcote will host the Remi Harris Hot Club Trio. One of the UK's most exciting guitarists, Remi Harris will be joined by double bassist Tom Moore and rhythm guitarist Chris Nesbitt to present an enthralling evening of Gypsy Jazz and Blues. Combining musical virtuosity with passion and flair, this dynamic trio deliver a mesmerising show inspired by Django Reinhardt, Peter Green, Wes Montgomery, Jimi Hendrix and Joe Pass. It's going to be quite a night!

After all that excitement it will be straight into the Woodcote Spring Fair on Sunday 28th April. Already packed to the rafters with fabulous traders bringing the very best artisan food and crafts alongside plant sales and garden inspiration for the warmer months ahead. As always there will be fabulous cake on offer in the tea-room, street food, coffee and a bar. Woodcote's very own and brand spanking new band, the 'Woodcote Collective' will be bringing the entertainment so do come and join the fun.

Tickets for hall events can be purchased via the hall website, www.woodcotevillagehall.com/news-and-events/, or by calling 07929 203096.

You can check the hall diary and book the village hall online at www.woodcotevillagehall.com. You can contact us by email at woodcotevillagehall@outlook.com or by telephone on 07929 203096.

We hope to see you soon!

WOODCOTE PARISH COUNCIL

At the February meeting, the council filled its remaining vacant seats by co-opting two new councillors. A new clerk has also been appointed, to start work in late February. Details of the hours the new clerk will be available will be published in the next issue.

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Recycling League Tables

South Oxfordshire is officially the number one district in the country for recycling, with 61.6% of waste being recycled. The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) recycling league tables published last month placed South Oxfordshire in first place and Vale of White Horse third. Congratulations and thank you to our residents for your commitment to recycling.

The news follows the announcement of the extension of the waste contract with Biffa until June 2026 and

work starting on a new waste strategy that will put reducing waste and reusing items at the centre of future efforts.

Alongside the high performing collection rates for both councils, a recent waste satisfaction survey has yielded encouraging results for the councils' household waste collections, indicating a high level of resident approval with this side of the service. An impressive 82% of respondents expressed satisfaction, or high satisfaction, with the overall quality of the waste and recycling services provided. Please report any missed bin collections by 6pm on the day after collection day. You can report a missed bin to Biffa, at admin.southoxford@biffa.co.uk or by calling 03000 610610.

The Councils are now encouraging residents to further boost this achievement by turning their efforts to reducing waste.

Get Ready for the Great British Spring Clean

The Council is once again supporting Keep Britain Tidy's Great British Spring Clean with litter pickers, high-viz jackets and bags available for loan to community litter picking groups and individuals from Friday 15 March to Sunday 31 March.

Equipment is limited and it's first-come-first-served, so bookings should be made as soon as possible by completing and returning the booking form and declaration document available on SODC's litter picking webpage and emailing it to waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk. We must receive completed forms at least two weeks before a litter pick takes place.

GLL Sport Foundation Grants

Local athletes in need of financial help with their sporting endeavours can apply to the GLL Sport Foundation. The Foundation supports local athletes with access to sports facilities, physiotherapy, lifestyle mentoring, mental health support and financial assistance.

<https://www.gllsportfoundation.org/news/gll-sport-foundation-awards-2024-applications-open>

WOODCOTE VOLUNTEERS

Numbers going up!

We have finalised our stats for last year and it's official – the number of clients we drove in 2023 was double the number in 2022! In some ways, this is not surprising. At the start of 2021, Covid was still fresh in our minds, putting people off both asking for a lift and for volunteering. But it was, and still is, crucial to have sufficient volunteer drivers to serve the increasing numbers of our local residents who don't have access to transport. So, a huge thank you to those of you who stepped forward last year; you are helping our vulnerable residents to get to where they need to go, whether it's a medical appointment or to a much-needed social activity.

However, our trip numbers are still increasing so please, if you think you may be able to do one drive a month, would you get in touch with us? It is a really

enjoyable and interesting volunteering role. The life stories you hear as you are driving are inspiring, humbling, funny and fascinating. Get in touch with our secretary Jane through our website if you want to know more, thank you!

Co-op Community Fund

This year, the Co-op are supporting our charity by helping us to raise funds. Please could you nominate us as your chosen charity until 19th October, when the funding round ends?

To find out more about Woodcote Volunteers and choose us as your cause, use this link:

<https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/77130>

Signing up only takes a few seconds, thank you so much.

Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held on Wednesday, 18th April, 7pm at Woodcote Village Hall. More details to follow in next month's Correspondent. It is a public meeting, so anyone can attend. If you are considering joining Woodcote Volunteers either as a driver, office helper or committee member, it is a good place to find out more.

To Finish...

If you are thinking about becoming one of our drivers, we would love to hear from you! Please go to our website (details at the foot of the page) to find out more about being a driver and how to contact us.

As usual, if you need a driver, please don't hesitate to call our office on 01491 681171. We collect from Woodcote and immediately surrounding villages. If you would struggle to pay a driver's expenses, please mention this to our office team when you book, as we may be able to help.

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 or our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/woodcotevolunteers.



R Hazell Recycling Waste

Licence Waste Carrier – CB/QP3698MJ

Waste Management Licence No. WML86315

4yd skip – £170 + VAT

6yd skip – £240 + VAT

8yd skip – £290 + VAT

12yd skip – £390 + VAT

Roll On/Roll Off Skips Also Available

Ring 01491 699101

November Financial Services

INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL ADVISERS

We offer a comprehensive range of financial services

To arrange a **FREE consultation** please call
01491 683777 or email jp@novfin.co.uk

November Financial Services Ltd. is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority



Investments • Life Assurance • Pensions

T&S Tomalin & Son Funeral Directors

24 hours service | Private client parking | Private chapel of rest
Free home visits | Pre-paid funeral plans | Full written estimate
Woodland funerals | Religious & non-religious services | Competitive prices

Call **Bruce Jones or Claire Jones**

01491 573370

www.tomalins.co.uk office@tomalins.co.uk

Anderson House, 38 Reading Road, Henley-On-Thames, RG9 1AG



A Family Run Independent Funeral Service

Licenced Waste Carrier

CB/TM3389SD

Not just a man with a van!

I'm Brian, call for a free quote!



01491 682346

07729 968753



I recycle as much as I can!
also offered!

Local collection/delivery of large items including
eBay purchases, fridges, cookers, motorcycles etc

email bft.services@yahoo.com

J Roxborough Services

Tel: 01235 203881 Mob: 07909931601

Providing Commercial & Residential Maintenance Services
All building maintenance & small building works undertaken.

- } Full property renovations
- } All aspects of plastering & rendering undertaken
- } Floor & wall tiling
- } Painting & decorating
- } Brickwork repointing
- } Roof repairs
- } Bathroom & kitchen fitment
- } Fascia & gutter replacement
- } Free quotes, fully insured, recommendations freely available.
johnroxborough@hotmail.co.uk

THE BLACK LION

Freehold Public House



John & Maggie

welcome you

Tel: 01491 680625

Local Professional Cleaner



Come home to a

**CLEAN
HOUSE!**

Call Carol: 07782-373-434

Email: infocarol@mail.com



Honest, Reliable, Trustworthy, Competitive & Friendly
Fixed Weekly Hourly Rates.

LITHO & DIGITAL PRINTING

- STATIONERY • FLYERS
- LEAFLETS • NEWSLETTERS
- POSTERS • MULTI-PART INVOICE SETS
- BROCHURES • COMPLETE FINISHING SERVICE

CZ SERVICES

Call: 07860 630 865

cz.services3@outlook.com

VILLAGE GREEN COMMITTEE

We are pleased to be able to report that the whole Green has been verti-drained. This project to improve drainage was a joint project involving the Parish Council, the Cricket Club and the Football Club. The equipment hire was funded by a generous donation from the Woodcote Rally. Special thanks are due to Jonny Aldridge who spent several days operating the equipment.

There were some complaints a while back on Facebook about a pile of rotting compost. This has now been shifted and the whole area near the garage has been tidied up. We would like to thank Robert McDowell who voluntarily carried out this work and spent a day using his mini digger on our behalf.

SP

WOODCOTE FOOTBALL CLUB

CUP SUCCESSES ALL ROUND

Our two teams have performed really well since the last report in the February Correspondent. The first team has played four, winning three and losing one. It's proving a good season in cup competitions as the team has progressed to the semi-finals of the Oxfordshire Charity Cup and the North Berks Cup, while they are in the quarter-final of the North Berks Charity Shield. In the Oxfordshire competition they travelled to Long Hanborough, near Witney and won 4-1 with goals scored by Toby Nowell 2, Rhys Gray and Joe Webber. In the Charity Shield they travelled to Burghclere and won 9-0. Toby Nowell scored three with Lucas Taplin and Sam Green netting two each, and Rhys Gray and Chris Pilling one each. A 3-1 win away at Kingston Colts Men saw the team through to the North Berks Cup semi-final, the goals coming from Joe Webber, Toby Nowell and Sam Green. The big disappointment came in an away League defeat by our nearest rivals for the title, Abingdon United Development. The score was 3-2 with our goals coming from Toby Nowell and Leon Mannion.

The Development team has really turned the corner in the New Year and is undefeated in the three matches played. They too have qualified for two semi-finals. In the quarter final of the War Memorial Cup, they had a terrific win against Kingston Colts men by 3-0 with the goals coming from Archie Clark 2 and Tommy Brownlow. In the quarter final of the AG Kingham Cup, they won 5-0 at Letcombe with goals from George Scoffham 3, his first-ever hat-trick, Teddy Norris and an own goal. In the one league match played they had a creditable 2-2 draw with Frilsham, with goals by Kartel Barlow and Tommy Brownlow.

The Development team's semi-finals will be against Lambourn at East Hendred on Saturday 2nd March and against Wantage at Berinsfield on Saturday 9th March.

We are very grateful to John Douglass for coming along to take excellent action photographs at all our home matches.

SP



Sully Akers



Will Thomas 2



Archie Clark

THAMES

Building Solutions Limited.

- ▼ Extensions
- ▼ Alterations
- ▼ Refurbishment
- ▼ Patios
- ▼ Brickwork
- ▼ Carpentry
- ▼ Floor & wall finishes

**The complete
building service**

TEL. 01491 680 389 / 07956 966 089

The Boathouse
Dental Surgery

Tel: 01491 872394
www.boathousedental.co.uk

Are you someone
that hides your smile?

Let us reveal your smile.

"Never thought I'd smile again...
...but now I can."
Martin

High Street, Goring on Thames,
Oxfordshire RG8 9AB

Call 01491 872394
to book a consultation
Email reception@boathousedental.co.uk

Computer Problems?

PC misbehaving?

Fault diagnosis, Maintenance & Upgrades, Networking,
Data Recovery, Virus Cleaning, Broadband,
Telephone Cabling & Extensions, TV, Mobiles,
Website Design, Development & Hosting, and much more.
Home and Business Support.
Windows and Mac.

01491 680036 or 07961 476664
mail@influentialcomputers.com
www.influentialcomputers.com
Robin, Henry and Angus Piercey
Influential Computers Ltd - A Family Run Business Since 1984

D J SCOTT ELECTRICAL SERVICES

Your Local Electrician

- All aspects of Electrical work undertaken
- Free no obligation quotes
- NICEIC Part P Registered

Call Daniel on – 07834365331

www.djscottelectrical.com

Email- info@djscottelectrical.com



WOODCOTE CRICKET CLUB

ANYONE FOR CRICKET?

The 2024 season is fast approaching and once again we are looking forward to a very busy fixture list from the end of April through to the end of September. We will be running two teams in the Berkshire League, the 1st XI in the Premier Division and the 2nd XI in Division 5. The first home match will see the 1st XI against Silchester on Saturday May 4th. We also run a Wednesday XI which plays in the South Oxon Midweek League and these matches are played at 6.00 pm on Wednesdays between mid-May and the end of July. We also have a number of Sunday friendly matches from June to September. Our annual tour to Cheltenham is on the first weekend in September. Indoor nets start at the Oratory Sports Centre on Wednesday March 6th from 8.00 – 9.00 pm when we hope to see all existing members and we would love to welcome any new members who wish to attend.

As a club we are completely inclusive, and we welcome players of all standards and are keen to help beginners develop skills. We have a number of teenage players playing regularly in our 2nd XI and in Sunday matches. So, please do not be put off because you think you are not good enough at cricket. We have regular practice sessions throughout the season providing opportunities for players to develop their skills. If you wish to know more, please contact me, sampeates@gmail.com, 07710858366.

WOMEN'S SOFTBALL CRICKET.

If there is enough interest, we will be running some sessions for women/girls possibly one evening a week. Other local clubs have started running teams and getting a lot of interest. Please email sampeates@gmail.com if you think you may be interested.

SP

WOODCOTE CONSERVATION GROUP

Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)

This month's article is about the second most common broadleaved tree in the Chilterns, with an estimated 10 million trees across the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Ash is a member of the family Oleaceae, which also includes the olive. The genus *Fraxinus* contains 65 species, one of which is native to Britain and Ireland. The common ash is the most northerly member of the family and the only wind-pollinated species (the others are all insect pollinated).

Ash trees are found from the Arctic Circle in Norway through Europe to the Caucasus Mountains in Turkey. Although hardy enough to survive almost anywhere in Britain, ash thrives on moist, well-drained and sheltered lowland sites where it is fast growing, with the highest nutrient uptake of any native tree. Ash requires full light to flourish and, though saplings will compete for a while in

woodlands with oak, they cannot survive under beech. Many of the ash in the Chilterns have grown in gaps created when beech succumbed in the storms of 1987 and 1990. The largest ash trees are usually found in hedgerows where there is no competition for light.

Ash is deciduous, coming into leaf late so usually escaping late frost damage. Twigs bear very distinctive black buds. The timing of bud burst of ash and oak trees is supposed to be an indicator of the coming spring weather, you may have heard the old country rhyme:

Oak before ash, we're in for a splash.

Ash before oak, we're in for a soak!

Is it true? The fact that a similarly themed German proverb suggests the polar opposite highlights quite nicely that no objective evidence supports this conjecture! That said, the timing of the respective leafings of these two species tells us some extremely pertinent things about our weather.

Both tree species come into leaf around the same time of year, between late March and May. The precise timing of an oak tree's leafing is mainly determined by temperature, while ash trees are more heavily influenced by the number of daylight hours. If spring arrives early, with high temperatures in February and March, oak trees will likely leaf first; if cold conditions persist into April, ash will probably have the advantage. As our climate changes and we experience increasingly warm spring months, oak trees have recently been leafing around two weeks earlier than they did 30 years ago, while ash trees are leafing just 7-10 days earlier.

Ash trees and their flowers can be male, female or hermaphrodite. Flowers appear in April, before the leaves. Male stamens are dark purple becoming paler and then yellow with pollen at maturity. Female flowers are pale green and develop into single-winged green seeds in hanging bunches. These 'keys' turn yellow in autumn and often stay on the tree into the following season. Ash is one of the first trees to drop its leaves in autumn, often when they are still green.

Ash can grow to about 45 m tall and trees can live for around 200 years, longer if the tree is coppiced or pollarded. Ash is the toughest wood and can withstand pressure and shock with little risk of fracture. This toughness means many things now constructed from metals were previously made from ash, from tools like harrows and rakes, weapons such as spears, pikes and police truncheons, to furniture and wheel rims. Its use in vehicle frames included such notables as the Morris Minor Traveller (made at the Cowley Works in Oxford) and the de Havilland Mosquito bomber. Did you know that during the two World Wars, High Wycombe's furniture factories were used to produce wooden aircraft parts to support the war effort? This included frames and wings for the Mosquito, designed by Wycombe local Captain Sir Geoffrey de Havilland, the famous aviation pioneer and aerospace engineer.

Sadly, ash trees are threatened by a fungal disease 'ash dieback' (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*), also

known as Chalara, which has been killing large numbers of ash across eastern Europe since the early 1990s. The disease was brought to the UK on infected ash trees for the nursery trade and, as the fungus is wind dispersed, it is very difficult to control now it has become established.

Chalara ash dieback has the potential to cause significant damage to the UK's ash population, with implications for woodland biodiversity and ecology, and for the hardwood industries. Experience in continental Europe, which is now being seen replicated in the UK, indicates that it can kill young and coppiced ash trees quite quickly. However, older trees can resist it for some time until prolonged exposure, or another pest or pathogen, such as *Armillaria* (honey fungus), attacking them in their weakened state eventually causes them to succumb.

Unfortunately, there is a limit to what can be done to prevent the spread of this wind-borne disease to plants as ubiquitous as ash trees. The most obvious symptoms that an ash tree might be infected is the blackening and wilting of leaves and shoots in mid-to late summer. Between July and September is the best time of year to survey ash trees for Chalara symptoms in the foliage because once autumn begins, the normal seasonal change in the colour of the leaves can be mistaken for symptoms of the disease. Infected trees often also develop lesions, but some other aspects of ash biology which are normal for healthy trees can be mistaken for symptoms of Chalara ash dieback. You can find helpful information at www.forestresearch.gov.uk.

Like the loss of our majestic elms to Dutch Elm Disease last century, our landscape and woodlands will be the poorer for the loss of ash. We can only hope that a percentage of trees will not be affected by Chalara so ash will survive and re-establish itself, even if that does take time.

We hope you enjoy our articles in the Correspondent. Woodcote Conservation Group run events throughout the year about the wildlife and green spaces around the village including guided walks. We also meet on the third Saturday of most months to care for Greenmoor Ponds and Tidmore Pool. Join us and lend a hand at one of these 'green gym' sessions! For more information about our activities and how to become a member, see our website, <http://woodcotecg.org.uk/>.

Woodcote Conservation Group



Members of the Woodcote Conservation Group

WOODCOTE COMMUNITY CENTRE

New Website and Booking System

We are delighted to announce that the Community Centre has a new website www.woodcotecc.org.uk where you can find information about The Community Centre's history, facilities available, upcoming bookings and how to make a booking.

We are now using Hall Wizard for bookings, the same system that the Village Hall launched last year. The website will link you to Hall Wizard when you press the 'Book Now' tab. The system will then send you an acknowledgement, an invoice with choice of method of payment (bookings must be paid in advance) followed by confirmation of the booking once payment has been received.

The new booking system also generates a unique keycode for entry to the Community Centre for the duration of your hire only. This code will be sent via email 3 days and then 1 day before the start of the hire.

Facilities and Room Availability

There are 2 rooms available for hire:

The Lions Den downstairs that is versatile for many different uses such as large meetings, lectures, parties, Coffee Shop, even band practice. It can accommodate up to 50 people standing and 35 seated.

The Rally Room upstairs is set up as a meeting room for up to 14 people with a large boardroom type table. Both rooms are comfortable with carpet, curtains, artwork and projector screens. Superfast broadband is included in the hire fee.

The room diary on the website shows the dates when the rooms are available for hire. Saturday mornings (9am -1pm) in the Lions Den are reserved for Coffee Shop bookings.

For any queries on making a booking, please contact: bookings@woodcotecc.org.uk.

The Lions Den and Rally Room are so named in thanks to generous donations from Goring & District Lions and The Woodcote Rally which helped fund the major project 30 years ago to restore The Old School House to what is now the Woodcote Community Centre.

Coffee Shop Bookings and Slots Available

Coffee Shop bookings can now be made on the website. Available slots available are shown as 'provisional' on the Room Diary for Saturday mornings in the Lions Den. Any booking queries can be sent to: bookings@woodcotecc.org.uk.

There is a separate page on the website for the Coffee Shop with information on running the coffee shop including Food Safety requirements. If you have any queries about what's involved, please email: coffeeshop@woodcotecc.org.uk.

There are several slots available from May onwards. Please consider running a coffee shop if you want to

boost your fundraising or raise your profile in the community!

New Committee Members Wanted

Running the Community Centre is very rewarding, but our committee needs more help and fresh ideas! The building, adjacent to the library, is owned by Oxfordshire County Council but our committee is responsible for maintenance of the interior, garden, marketing and the day to day running costs and refurbishment. We fund this through the hire of rooms, grant applications and fundraising such as coffee mornings. We meet 5-6 times a year.

If you can spare the time, we would love to hear from you at info@woodcotecc.org.uk

FRIENDS OF ST LEONARDS

Chairman's Report 2024

I would like to thank everyone who has generously supported the Friends of St Leonard's (FOSL) during the last year. I would also like to thank Mike Hill at Woodcote Garden Centre for maintaining the Garden of Remembrance.

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.

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 years.

The cost of maintaining St Leonard's and the churchyard is extremely expensive and the 2023 Quinquennial (a five yearly review of the church building) identified some major repairs which are needed to be undertaken to maintain the church building. The subscriptions and donations FOSL receive have and will make a huge difference and during 2023 FOSL were able to make contributions towards ongoing maintenance of the churchyard, essential repairs to the roof, lightning conductor, tree surgery and the Christmas tree.

Earlier this summer St Leonard's welcomed a new vicar, Revd David Benskin. David says:

"May I add my words of thanks to you all, for your support and generosity towards the Friends of St Leonard's this year. When my wife and I first came and saw St Leonard's back in March, as part of the interview, both of us were amazed at how well kept and beautiful the church looked. This is because of your dedication and generosity, and without your help and support this wonderful church could not run and continue to reach out to help the community. Thank you very much for all your

contributions, and I very much look forward to getting to know you all more over 2024. Wishing you every blessing in the meanwhile”.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held via Zoom on Wednesday 13th March 2024 at 7.30pm. If anyone would like to join us, please email us for details: diana.c.davies@btinternet.com.

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

We look forward to hearing from you.

Diana Davies
FOSL Chairman, March 2024

THE CASE OF THE REDUNDANT DOLLIES

I don't know why we keep them really. I mean the dollies. There is at least a dozen of them, tucked up in a drawer under a bed, the cherished companions of my daughter's childhood. At one time we might have been claiming to save them for a possible granddaughter, but that ship seems to have sailed, with just five grandsons, none of whom are interested in the dolls. But we somehow can't bring ourselves to throw them away.

I remember how when my daughter was two or three and we had put her to bed for the night I would listen at the door of her bedroom as she told the dolls all about her day, and how when she was four one of her very first pieces of writing read 'Thank you God for the beauty of the wold (sic) and all the dollies'. (I'm not sure why God got the credit for the dollies, but let it pass). My eldest son was seventeen when she arrived, and we named the dolls after various girls in his circle of friends at school. Sally, Jenny, Susie, Becky, Helen, Caroline... fortunately he seemed to have quite a wide range of female acquaintances.

The other relics of childhood have all gone now. The bears, the bricks, the toy animals, the books. Son number two had a panda which ended up looking as if it had done fifteen rounds with Mike Tyson, a bandage over one eye to keep its ear on, the stuffing coming out its stomach. We kept custody of it for years after he left home, then finally gave it to him when he was in his forties with the instruction not to tell us what he did with it. He seemed a little bemused and I suspect that an unsentimental cremation was involved. My third son favoured Action Men, which were eventually passed on to another military enthusiast. They came as a job lot and some were a bit the worse for wear, so I had to make up stories to explain this. Dick had lost his foot when he stepped on a landmine, but had carried on fighting bravely, while one-eyed Tom overcame his handicap to become the regimental marksman.

And I am glad to say that we no longer have to deal with Sgusting. Sgusting was a strip of material from the edge of a blanket carried everywhere by my eldest

grandson Michael when he was small. He had the habit of sucking on it at night to help him get to sleep. It had no name at first but one night when he was staying with us, he crept into our bed and my wife awoke to find this cold slimy thing next to her on the pillow. 'Ugh, it's disgusting' she cried. 'Sgusting' echoed Michael thoughtfully, and Sgusting it became ever after. Once, carrying a pile of his things to the car, I inadvertently dropped Sgusting. I had just got the car out when Michael appeared at the kerbside brandishing it, his small body quivering with all the indignation that a three year old can muster, which is a surprising amount. 'That was a very naughty thing to do!'. But we brushed a bit of dirt off and Sgusting was as good as new, or at any rate no more sgusting than usual, and I was forgiven.

In a poem by Robert Frost that I love there is a line about children's abandoned toys: 'Weep for what little things could make them glad'. And oh, I do, I do.

David Sutton

WOODCOTE CORRESPONDENT AGM

We'd like to invite the community to attend our public annual general meeting from 1930 on the 21st of March at the Lions Den in the Community Centre.

Saturday Crafts!

Woodcote Library
10.30-11.30am



9th March – World Book Day
(join us and dress up as your favourite book character)

20th April – Earth Day
(recycle rubbish in a fun way)

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

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 Trood if you have any queries about Saturday crafts, Lisa.Trood@oxfordshire.gov.uk

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries

[@oxonlibraries](#) [Oxfordshire Libraries](#)

 OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

The Original AND BEST!

The CABIN Pre-School

BINGO

Friday 15th March 2024 – 7:30 pm

Woodcote Village Hall

Eyes Down 8pm

Tickets £10

Licenced Bar and raffle. Nibbles provided

All proceeds going to Cabin Pre-school CIO. Registered Charity 1164579

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/the-cabin-pre-school/t-earkrr>

J & L LANDSCAPING

FENCING, PATIOS and DRIVES, ROOF REPAIRS
GENERAL BUILDING, TURFING. REPLACEMENT
OF FACIA BOARDS, SOFITS and GUTTERING

PHONE: 01491-681367 or 07961-882281

Email: jimmyhearn69@hotmail.com

Free Quotations

FAST and FRIENDLY SERVICE



Heating, Plumbing and Bathroom Installations

Neil McDougall

- Local plumber
- Over 30 years experience
- Gas Safe Registered
- Free estimates

Phone 01491 680141

mcdougallneil@yahoo.com

MADE TO MEASURE

Curtains, Blinds, Cushion Covers etc.

at Competitive Prices

Call CAROLINE on 07815 610007

CABIN PRESCHOOL

As we head into the fourth term, we will have completed half our school year! Our few months will be focused on ensuring our Little Acorns are fully prepared for starting big school in September. We are also pleased to welcome many new friends to Cabin this term. They are all settling beautifully into Cabin life.

Many of the older children are beginning to hold their pencils correctly, forming recognisable letters and recalling events in their lives, seeing and pointing out numbers within the environment as well as learning songs and playing well with their peers. These are all important milestones in their development. You should be proud parents.

This term we will be learning all about Dinosaurs and using them as a base theme for play and learning. Then we will move on to celebrating Mother's Day and learning about Spring and Easter. The staff as ever will be planning some fun activities to inspire our days at Cabin.

Charlotte will be planning an activity each term to help promote your child's dental health and well-being. This term she did an activity using the bottoms of an old pop bottle made to resemble molars. The children used toothbrushes to clean off marks and spoke about healthy food and how to care for their teeth. One little boy went home and was delighted to tell his Mum that Charlotte had new plastic teeth. We loved the feedback, please let us know if they say any funny things; we love to hear them. As part of our daily routine, we clean teeth every afternoon at around 13:30 which is around an hour after lunch ends. They love proudly showing us how sparkly clean their teeth are.

The Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations have been fun. The children have enjoyed using noodles, and mixed vegetables for making soups, teas and potions. They used chopsticks to cook and eat. We have taken it in turns to dress up as a dragon whilst the children banged and played their drums to scare the evil spirits away.

We have looked at and had a go at Chinese writing, using chopsticks and tongs to move objects around to the correct numbers. During arts and crafts, we made Chinese drums, spiral dragons, and paper plate pandas. In our role play area, which has been transformed into a Chinese restaurant, they have made lots of food, and pretended choosing and ordering favourites from the menus.

You may have wondered why we use so many different resources. Clay, mud, sand, water, shaving foam, real foods, animals and insects. This benefits our children by stimulating different senses. Using touch, smell, sight, and hearing has huge sensory benefits to all children especially those who experience sensory overload. This time allows them to desensitise which helps control their mood and overall well-being.

One of the highlights of the Cabin week is Wheelie Wednesday (as it has become known) where children in Oak class (reception) and Little Acorns (Cabin children) meet up for an hour of fast-moving fun on

bikes and scooters and other physical play. We include access to chalk, ribbons, balls, and hoops for those not on wheels! We end the session by playing a circle game with singing songs like The Farmer's in the Den. It is great to see many smiley faces and to have something to look forward to each week. They get a lot of gross motor development, learning to navigate around their friends, gaining spatial awareness, sharing and turn-taking. All this interaction helps to develop their social and emotional skills. It also reinforces learning the days of the week and our routine.

Our new guinea pigs, Marshmallow and Loris have moved in nicely with Dad Rudolf. The children are enjoying looking after them and watching how quickly they grow. They feed them daily and help ensure they have water by filling up the water bottles. The guinea pigs especially like it when we come out to play in our garden area. They will squeak to us in anticipation of some tasty treats. Our guinea pigs especially like celery, cucumber, and apples which they take from the children's hands. They also love cuddles! They are a bit zippy, energetic and busy but they love to sit before trying to explore up sleeves or into coat linings.

We also are proud to look after four stick insects. We are patiently waiting for some eggs to hatch. The children love to pick Ivy for them to eat and do a daily spray of water. They are very easy to look after, and the children love holding them, a great alternative to a furry pet which may start allergies. We love to watch them climb up they look like small branches waving in the wind.

Pets make such an impact on children's lives. They boost moods, develop social and emotional skills, reduce stress and anxiety, decrease loneliness, give them responsibility and ownership, and reduce cortisol levels. Caring for living creatures encourages independence, as well as being cute and funny. It is something worth considering for all the benefits mentioned but you will need to ensure pets are supervised whilst interacting and be mindful of potential allergies.

As the warmer weather returns, we will be spending more time outdoors and growing lots of veggies in our garden ready for us to pick and munch on.

There has been a lot of interest for two-year funded places starting after Easter. If you are interested in starting your child with us, please do come in and see us. We will be happy to show you around. Once we have received an enrolment form and deposit, we will confirm your place.

There is a lot of information on Child Choices about the new funding rules if you want to know more. Alternatively, call Jayne and she will talk you through the process.

We still have some places available immediately, plus lots more for September 2024, when some of our children will be leaving to move to big school. Call Jayne to arrange a visit on 01491 680854 or email me on info@thecabinpreschool.co.uk



Vehicle Air Conditioning
Re-Gas and Repairs



N.J Car Services
Crays Pond Garage

☎ 01491 681975
☎ 07989 983381

a1sovereign

YOUR LOCAL DESIGN & PRINT SERVICE
WHILE-YOU-WAIT COPYING / PRINT FROM USB

5 mins from Goring centre + we can deliver

Copying - Printing - Laminating - Binding - Stationery
Booklets - Brochures - Cards - Flyers - Leaflets - Pads
Manuals - Conference & Training Materials - Theses
Bespoke Ring Binders - Tabbed Divider Sets + more...

>Design >Print >Finishing >Fulfilment >Mailing

01491 871555 a1sovereign.co.uk

Fireplace Magic



Fires, Stoves & Fireplaces

- Installation
- HETAS registered
- Woodburner servicing
- Chimney sweeping

10% DISCOUNT
ON CHIMNEY SWEEPING
IF QUOTE "CORRESPONDENT"

Showroom at: 45 Prospect Street, Caversham RG4 8JB
Telephone: 0118 9463060
www.fireplacemagic.co.uk

Woodcote Pre-School



01491 682300
woodcotepreschool.co.uk
fb: @woodcotepreschoolcio

Located in Woodcote Village Hall overlooking the Green, we offer a **relaxed and happy** environment for **playful and creative** learning for children 18 months to 5 years.

- Varied curriculum of activities
- Large indoor and outdoor area
- Fresh homecooked meals
- Holiday Clubs for children 2-8 years
- Flexible choice of sessions

Open Mon-Fri, 8:30am-3:30pm

Arrange a free trial session for your child now
Registered charity number: 1180857 • Ofsted URN: 2558022

REGISTERED OSTEOPATH

KAREN L.PHILLIPS D.O.

WOODCOTE PRACTICE 01491 684060
Flexible appointment times
Private Health Insurance Provider

BONNER LOCKSMITHS

INSURANCE APPROVED
DOOR & WINDOW LOCKS
SUPPLIED & FITTED (BS3621)

DOMESTIC & COMMERCIAL PREMISES
DIGITAL LOCKS GRILLES BARS
ALL AREAS COVERED

01491 680216

Crestwell House, Beech Lane
WOODCOTE, READING

CALL OUT SERVICE

FULL MEMBER OF BRITISH LOCKSMITH INSTITUTE

Goring Gap Walk
Half Marathon & Marathon Walks

Walk with friends, walk for fun or join forces and walk for a cause

Saturday 18th May 2024
Mapledurham House
..along the Thames and through the riverside villages of the Chiltern Hills..

riversideramble.co.uk

Charity rates and free race village promo space.

Circular Routes
Toilets on the route
Village Hall Support Stops
Friendly Marshals
Finisher Medals
& More



WOODCOTE PRE-SCHOOL

We would like to welcome Remy, Leni, Luna & their families who have joined us this term.

The children have been very busy this term practising their dressing skills by dressing up in various outfits whilst playing Superheroes, Doctors, Chinese Restaurants. They have been transforming the home corner into a hospital, doctors, garage, a superhero house. Playing with the dolls and Barbies, serving their teachers food they have made. There has been a lot of teamwork and working together to make houses and castles with the magnets, completing puzzles, pretending to be mechanics and fixing the scooters with our tools, building the Great Wall of China with the bricks and shaving foam.

We have been looking at shapes within Pre-School and our environment. The children enjoyed weighing their ingredients, pouring, mixing and baking their delicious cheese straws that they ate for their snack. We have been practising writing our letters, painting, drawing people in our families and hammering golf tees into the playdough.

The children sampled Chinese noodles, ate prawn crackers and all had a fortune cookie for Chinese New Year. They played in the Chinese restaurant, dressed up, played with the coloured rice and using chopsticks to mark make.

We have been enjoying lots of painting, sticking, cutting and gluing. There has been lots of fun playing outside, dancing, doing yoga and enjoying some parachute fun.

We are looking forward to being able to visit our very own allotment and to begin planting all our produce for this year. It's such a great opportunity for the children to learn all about growing.

Woodcote Pre-School Group CIO is part of the @Coopuk Local Community Fund, to find out more about our project and to choose us as your cause.

We have a Quiz Night being held at the Red Lion Woodcote on Wednesday 20th March, please book a table and come along and support us.

We are accepting the new 2 year old funding available from April, if you would like more information please contact us or go to www.childcarechoices.o.uk.

Easter Holiday Club is running from Tuesday 2nd April to Friday 5th April for children aged 2-8 years. Early Bird booking is now available. Book your place before 6th March to receive a discount. We also offer a 10% discount on siblings. Please email or ring to book.

We still have availability within Preschool so if you are interested in your child joining us then please contact Wendy on 01491 682300 or email us at woodcote.pre-school@hotmail.co.uk. If you would like more information or to find out what we do and are about feel free to look up our website www.woodcotepreschool.co.uk or our Facebook Page: Woodcote Preschool CIO.



WOODCOTE YOUTH CLUB: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Woodcote Youth Club is going well, and we regularly have over 20 attendees at our Junior and Senior clubs. Although this is a great resource for the young people of our village, both clubs are at risk due to staffing issues. Over the past year, we have had some excellent volunteers of all ages that are now moving on to university or developing their careers. In order to keep both clubs running, we need replacement staff.

Working at a Youth Club is a fantastic opportunity to gain volunteer experience with young people. Any student looking for a career in teaching, public service or caring would gain valuable skills that would improve their knowledge and employability. In the past, we have had Duke of Edinburgh participants and college students looking to enhance their university applications and CVs.

Ideally, we are looking for people to commit to one session a week in order to build regular relationships with our young people. However, we also have volunteers of all ages on a rota system, so if you are interested in working with young people and can spare an evening a month, please get in touch. No experience is needed, just a patient and approachable manner is all that is required. Support and guidance will always be available. We have various communications methods:

- Email: woodcoteyouthclub@gmail.com
- Facebook: Woodcote Youth Club
- Instagram: Woodcoteyouthclub

Facebook is generally pitched to the parents, but messages for the kids go on Instagram, so please encourage your child to follow us if they would like to attend Youth Club. To watch a short promotional video about the club please search for Woodcote Youth Club on YouTube.

WOODCOTE WI

Sally Lambert welcomed the members and wished them a Happy New Year.

Celebrating their birthdays this month were Louise Heathcote, Joan Soanes and Carole Shelley-Allen, we hope they enjoyed their birthdays.

We have skittles and lunch booked at the Hithercroft sports centre in March, which is always good fun, especially the knockout rounds!

Our speaker was John Paine who spoke on the Maharajahs of India and showed us the beautiful Palaces, sumptuous Hotels and Railway Stations. John then showed us the beautiful tigers, birds and animals that he had photographed in the National Park in East Rajasthan.

We had a wonderful tea thank you to Gillian Seymour and helpers.

The competition for a photograph of a wild animal was won by Kathy Brewer of a giraffe and her baby, Gillian Seymour came second with her photograph of

tigers and Carole Shelley-Allen third whose photo was of a lion family.

Shirley Bryant won the bloom of the month with a Bergenia.

In March we have our Annual Meeting followed by a Beetle Drive, which will be on the third Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm in the Village Hall, please come and join us.

Judy Williams

WOODCOTE AMATEUR DRAMATICS SOCIETY

Since our record-breaking production of *An Amateur Killer* last November, WADS have certainly not been resting on their laurels or basking in the glory. Oh no, it's straight on to the next adventure. I've been to various libraries and scouring the internet to find our next thrilling production. After reading through countless scripts, staying up half the night and even dreaming about some of them, I have finally come up with what will hopefully be a couple of belters.

It's a Double Bill for our next production with not one but two 1 act plays.

The first is called *The Attic* by Robert Scott. This little chiller of a ghost story is set in, you guessed it, the attic of a suburban home of Demi and Callum. What are the strange noises that can be heard and what's the story behind the half-written letter Demi finds? Is it a confession of a terrible doings? There's only one way to find out the answer!

The other play to end the evening is a lovely comedy called *White Lies* by Richard James. This little gem is about four ladies that used to be best friends at university many years ago. It's time for a reunion to catch up! Is that a good idea though? Do you think some of the old rivalries and feeling towards each other are going to resurface? You bet they are! This award-winning comedy has lots of very witty lines with some outrageous and quirky characters. Just like the sort of people you meet every day!

The all-important dates are May 16th, 17th and 18th. Tickets will be £12, with the box office opening on the 1st of April.

Please see our website www.woodcotedrama.co.uk or find us on Facebook.

WALLINGFORD & DISTRICT ART CLUB

Join our friendly Wallingford and District Art club for our March live demo *Woodland Sketchbook* at Centre 70 from 7.30pm-9.30pm on Tuesday 19th March. Cotswold artist, Kieran Stiles, illustrates his methods of working outside, using mixed media on a woodland sketchbook scene. Kieran shows that this is a great way of capturing a brief moment in a very immediate way. The demo is free for club members and £5 for visitors. If you would like further information about this event or other club activities, please visit the club website at www.wallingfordartclub.org.uk or email admin@wallingfordartclub.org.uk

WALLINGFORD CORN EXCHANGE

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.

Please look at the website (www.cornexchange.org.uk) for updates. Tickets £10 for Adults and £5 for under 15s unless otherwise stated.

Cinema

One Life (TBC)

- Friday, 1st March, 7:30pm

The Nettle Dress (12A)

- Sunday, 24th March, 7:30pm

All of Us Strangers (15)

- Monday, 25th March, 2:30pm

Wicked Little Letters (15)

- Friday, 29th March, 7:30pm
- Saturday, 30th March, 7:30pm
- Sunday, 31st March, 7:30pm

Live on Stage

Crescendo Music in association with the Sinodun Players present *Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang*

- Tickets £25 (adults), £19 (under 18s)
- Wed 13th to Sat 16th March, 7:30pm
- Wed 20th to Sat 23rd March, 7:30pm

Crescendo Music is once again partnering with The Sinodun Players to produce the hit musical *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. This fantasmagorical stage version features all the classic scenes and songs from the 1968 movie, including *Toot Sweets*, *Me Ol' Bamboo*, *Hushabye Mountain* and, yes, an actual flying car! Previous collaborations between Crescendo and The Sinodun Players have produced top-class sell-out shows, most recently *Chess*. This one-off production is sponsored by Chitty Hire, the official Chitty supplier to theatres across the UK, so audiences are in for a spectacular visual and musical treat! Book early for this classic, much-loved story featuring a stellar cast and crew of local talent, working in conjunction with a professional production company with West End values and know how.

- Music and Lyrics by Richard M Sherman and Robert B Sherman
- Music by Special Arrangement with Sony/ATV Publishing
- Adapted for the stage by Jeremy Sans
- Based on the MGM Motion Picture
- Licensed script adapted by Ray Roderick
- Based on the children's novel by Ian Fleming
- This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International
- All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI

Live Screening

Royal Opera: *Madama Butterfly*

- Tuesday, 26th March, 7:15pm

- Live from the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
- £18 (adults), £15 (seniors), £10 (under 18s)

Conductor: Kevin John Edusei, Director: Moshe Leiser and Patrice Caurier. Cast: Asmik Grigorian, Joshua Guerrero, Lauri Vasar, Hongni Wu, Ya-Chung Huang, Jeremy White, Josef Jeongmeen Ahn, Veena Akama-Makia, Romanas Kudriašova, Sung in Italian with English subtitles.

When the young geisha, Cio-Cio-San, marries American Naval Officer Pinkerton, she believes she is entering a real, binding marriage for life. Forsaking her religion and community, she learns all too late that for Pinkerton, their marriage is merely an illusion – with tragic consequences. With a score that includes Butterfly's aria, *Un bel dì, vedremo* (*One fine day*) and the Humming Chorus, Giacomo Puccini's opera is entrancing and ultimately heart-breaking. Moshe Leiser and Patrice Caurier's exquisite production takes inspiration from 19th-century European images of Japan.

Titanic The Musical

- Wednesday 27th March, 2:30pm and 7:30pm
- £18 (adults), £15 (seniors), £10 (under 18s)

Winner of 5 Tony Awards (including Best Musical), based on the real people aboard the most legendary ship in the world, *Titanic The Musical* is a stunning and stirring production focusing on the hopes, dreams and aspirations of her passengers who each boarded with stories and personal ambitions of their own. All innocently unaware of the fate awaiting them, the Third-Class immigrants dream of a better life in America, the Second Class imagine they too can join the lifestyles of the rich and famous, whilst the millionaire Barons of the First Class anticipate legacies lasting forever.

NT Live: *The Motive and the Cue*

- Thursday 28th March, 7pm
- Filmed live at the National Theatre
- £18 (adults), £15 (seniors), £10 (under 18s)

This electrifying brand-new play directed by Sam Mendes brings Richard Burton and John Gielgud's infamous *Hamlet* rehearsals to the big screen, with Johnny Flynn and Mark Gatiss. Why would the most famous movie star in the world choose to do a play which everyone already knows? And what lures us back to the same plays, year after year? This fierce and funny new play by Jack Thorne offers a glimpse into the politics of a rehearsal room and the relationship between art and celebrity.

ST LEONARDS QUIZ NIGHT

Please come and join us for a fun quiz night on Friday 12th April, 7:30pm at the Village Hall. Tickets are £8 per person and does include nibbles and a banger baguette. Wine and soft drinks are available to purchase.

Individuals and teams up to 6 players are welcome. If interested, contact Gillian on 681711.

All proceeds to go to St Leonards church. Hope to see you there.

LOCKSMITH **ACG SERVICES** 

Locks changed, fitted, repaired & opened.
Yale locks, five lever mortice locks, digital locks,
UPVC door locks & handles, UPVC window locks.

Emergency callout service

Over thirty years of experience. Free quotations

Tel: **01491 682050** or **07710 409216**

www.acgservices.co.uk

Office: 3 Wayside Green, Woodcote, Oxon RG8 0PR. Proprietor Richard Hornden

mb mortimer burnett

Chartered Accountants & Business Consultants



New business? We can help you grow!

01491 874332
admin@mortimerburnett.co.uk
www.mortimerburnett.co.uk
The White House, Mill Road, Goring on Thames, RG8 9DD

J & R Collier

 **BUILDERS** 

- Building & Property Maintenance
- Listed Building Work
- Extensions
- Roofing
- Plastering
- Decorating
- Plumbing

01491 680779 or 0118 9451518

ADVANCED PEST CONTROL

of Ewelme
Established 1970



HOUSEHOLD, GARDEN & FARM PESTS
wasps, rats, mice, rabbits, cluster flies
and all other insects
dealt with promptly

Lee Carrington
Field View, 97 The Street
Crowmarsh Gifford
Wallingford

Tel: 01491 835610
Mobile: 07970 010214

GORING HEATH BEAVERS

Tradition went out of the window when we came back on 12th January: 'Wing it and Pray' games were replaced with a discussion about what it means to be a Beaver and the importance of the promise. The Beavers drew round their hands then wrote the promise on the fingers of one hand, leaving the remaining fingers blank for examples of them doing their best, being kind and helpful, and loving the world.

Some things do not change: 19th January was Dipper's traditional 'bird' evening. In preparation for the Great Garden Birdwatch, the Beavers made bird feeders. Last year they pushed seeds into apples; this year normality was restored: seeds and nuts were rolled in lard to create fat balls... and lots of gloriously lardy Beavers. One or two could have swum the channel. Having been degreased (more or less), the Beavers moved on to a worm treasure hunt and the much-loved adaptation of musical chairs: every time Dipper shouted "cat" or "sparrow hawk" the Beavers leapt onto chairs for 'safety'.

The following week would ordinarily have been Burns' Night (Gay Gordons, haggis, neeps and mayhem) but no. What?! Otter ran a night hike, the aim of which was to improve the Beavers' ability to 'number-off' (which had been found lacking during carol-singing). On dark nights, back when dinosaurs walked the Earth, we began giving each Beaver a number and, at the command "number off!", they would call out their number in turn, ensuring we had everyone. After two miles, with Pavlovian rewards of McVitie's biscuits (Burns' Night, see), they got it. Note to self: this herd of Beavers walk as slowly as Scouts. Unheard of!

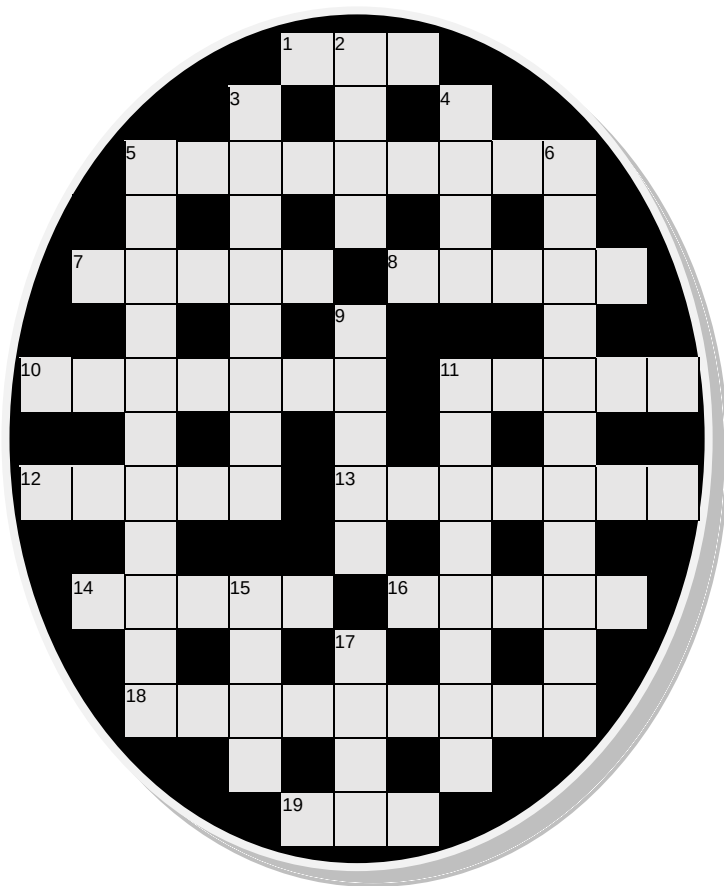
1st February was "Experiments Night". They discovered that cornflour paste is a 'non-Newtonian fluid' i.e. it doesn't follow Newton's law of viscosity so is soft when gently prodded, but hard when whacked (like Beaver leaders). They tried chromatography with coffee filters, discovered that their arm-spans were broadly the same as their heights, flooded tables with bicarb volcanoes and worked in teams to make bridges from a single sheet of A4 (the best bridge, constructed by Hugo, took the weight of over 300 pennies). All in all, a triumph of fun and learning.

CHOLSEY REPAIR CAFÉ

The Cholsey Repair Café opens its doors on the third Saturday of odd-numbered months, meaning that the next session will be on Saturday 16th March. Doors are open from 11.00 to 13.45 and earlier visitors can get a nice cup of tea or coffee and home-made cakes at the Cholsey Community Café, next door, from 10.00 to midday. As usual, the volunteer fixers can tackle bicycles, electrical (and sometimes electronic) items, sharpening of tools, textile repairs, gluing, soldering and a good deal more. If a repair cannot be made, further advice is available. All work is free of charge although a donation towards operating costs is appreciated.

More information, including contact details, can be found at www.cholseyrepaircafe.com.

EASTER (EGG) CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Imitate leaders of a powerful enterprise (3)
- 5 Cold shower hits moral reform (9)
- 7 Found sailor in empty seat (5)
- 8 Pontification on latest reasons to sulk (5)
- 10 A European has bottle opener and tumbler (7)
- 11 Wireless commercial in Brazilian city (5)
- 12 Ponders first of many applications (5)
- 13 Smallest note on hesitation (7)
- 14 Humble location (5)
- 16 Exhausted snake lacks core energy (5)
- 18 Recover after troubled aunt of course (9)
- 19 Regularly engage early bird (3)

Down

- 2 Approve permit (4)
- 3 Rodents mostly have clothes bugs (9)
- 4 Bear backs band (4)
- 5 Heated and angry about essence of Easter fare (3,5,4)
- 6 A lot take University funds of monarch at Easter (6,5)
- 9 Impact of afterthought about coaster's return (5)
- 11 Phone Yank for opener (8)
- 15 Does it still have rests? (4)
- 17 Boast about outfit (4)

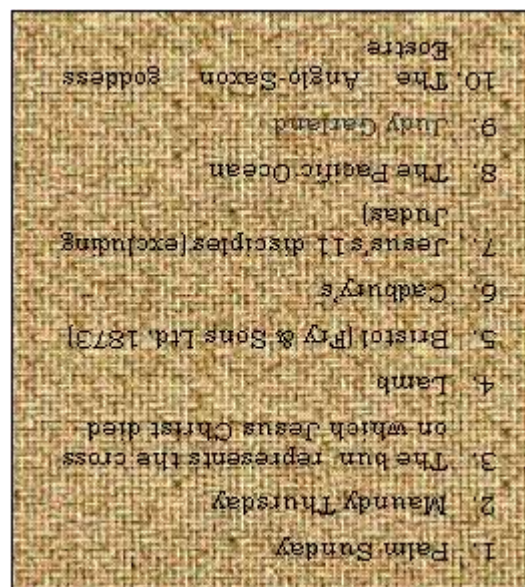
JANUARY CROSSWORD SOLUTION

P	L	E	A	S	I	N	G		C	O	O	P
	O		S		N		U		H		P	
U	N	U	S	E	D			E	D	I	T	O
	G		E		O		S		N		R	
P	E	T	S		O	A	T	S		S	T	Y
	R		S		R				A		O	
			H	O	R	S	E	H	A	I	R	
	W		R				O		R		B	
S	H	Y		L	O	V	E		S	H	E	D
	I		M		A		D		T		D	
S	T	A	I	R	S		O	G	R	E	S	S
	E		S		I		W		I		I	
E	R	O	S			S	U	N	S	P	O	T

EASTER QUIZ

1. What is the Sunday before Easter Sunday called?
2. What is the day before Good Friday called?
3. What is the tradition behind the hot cross bun?
4. What meat is traditionally consumed on Easter Sunday?
5. Where was the UK's first Easter egg produced?
6. Which company makes Creme Eggs?
7. What do the marzipan balls on simnel cake represent?
8. Where is Easter Island located?
9. Who starred with Fred Astaire in the 1948 film Easter Parade?
10. What is Easter named after?

QUIZ ANSWERS



DATES FOR THE DIARY

Regular Weekly Events

Every Monday

** Youth Club – Juniors (year 7's). Woodcote Village Hall. 7.15pm-8.45pm. From Jan 15th

Every Tuesday

** Youth Club – Seniors (years 8, 9 & 10). Woodcote Village Hall 7.15pm-8.45pm. From Jan 16th.

Every Thursday

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

** Chance To Chat. **Mowforth House** 2.30pm-4pm

MARCH DATES

Fri 1st	*	Comedy Night. Woodcote Village Hall. 8pm
Sat 2nd	*	Coffee Shop in aid of Checkendon Brownies & Oxford Hospitals School (cash only). Woodcote Community Centre. 10am-12.30pm
Tues 5th	*	BMMHS Zoom talk: 'The British Army during the Korean War'. Email zoom@bmmhs.org. 7.30pm
Wed 6th	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: 'Las Vegas to Dallas'. 8pm
	*	Wallingford U3A meeting. Crowmarsh Village Hall. 2pm
Thur 7th	*	Wallingford Photographic Club talk: 'Self-drive safari, Namibia'. Crowmarsh Pavilion. 7.30pm-10pm
Sat 9th	*	Coffee Shop in aid of 1st Purley & Pangbourne Scouts (cash only). Woodcote Community Centre. 10am-12.30pm
	*	Saturday Crafts: World Book Day. Woodcote Library. 10.30am-11.30am
Tues 12th	*	Board Games Club for adults. Woodcote Library. 3.30pm-4.45pm
Wed 13th	*	Friends of St Leonard's AGM via Zoom. 7.30pm
	*	BMMHS Talk: 'D-Day Logistics'. Woodcote Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Henley & District Stamp Club meeting: Annual Auction. Bix Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society meeting: Natural History competition. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Thur 14th	*	Wallingford Photographic Club competition: Portfolio and Travel. Crowmarsh Pavilion. 7.30pm-10pm
Fri 15th	*	The Cabin Pre-School Bingo Night. Woodcote Village Hall. 7.30pm
Sat 16th	*	Coffee Shop in aid of FOWPS (Woodcote Primary School). Woodcote Community Centre. 10am-12.30pm
	*	Cholsey Repair Café. Cholsey Pavilion. 11am-1.45pm

SMALL ADS

AVON CALLING :: I'm your local AVON representative, would you like a brochure?

Kerry 01491 682437/07966 509908

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

MARCH DATES *Continued*

Sat 16th	*	Jazz Night: Mingus Meets the Messenger. Woodcote Village Hall. 8pm
Tues 19th	*	Wallingford & District Art Club demonstration: 'Woodland Sketchbook'. Centre 70, The Kincroft, Wallingford. 7.30pm
Wed 20th	*	Woodcote WI AGM. Woodcote Village Hall. 2.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: 'Land'. 8pm
Thur 21st	*	Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society meeting: 'Henry James and the Country House'. Whitchurch Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Woodcote Correspondent AGM. Woodcote Community Centre Lion's Den. 7.30pm
	*	Wallingford Photographic Club Zoom talk: 'The art of macro'. 7.30pm-10pm
Fri 22nd	*	Film Night: One Life. Woodcote Village Hall. 7.30pm
Sat 23rd	*	Coffee Shop in aid of St Leonard's Flower Team (cash only). Woodcote Community Centre. 10am-12.30pm
Sun 24th	*	Treehouse School 5k, 10k and Family Run, Cholsey. Visit https://treehouse10k.org.uk
Tues 26th	*	Chatterbox. Woodcote Community Centre. 2pm-3.30pm
Wed 27th	*	Henley & District Stamp Club meeting. Bix Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society meeting: 6 x 4 Competition and discussion evening. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Sat 30th	*	Coffee Shop in aid of OWL (Woodcote Library). Woodcote Community Centre. 10am-12.30pm

FORTHCOMING DATES IN APRIL

Tues 2nd	*	BMMHS Zoom talk: 'Stanford Tuck - Hero of the Battle of Britain'. Email zoom@bmmhs.org. 7.30pm
Wed 3rd	*	Wallingford U3A meeting. Crowmarsh Village Hall. 2pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: 'A year of taking pictures'. 8pm
Sat 6th	*	Goring Repair Café. Goring Village Hall. 10am-12.30pm