

Steeple Aston *Life*

JUNE 2020

ISSUE No. 562



Inside SAL this month:

- The village celebrates VE Day
- How to encourage wildflowers
- Lockdown activities to pass the time
- And much more....

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Cover photo: Angela Smith

Steeple Aston *Life*

COPY

All articles and letters to the Editors
editorsalife@gmail.com

COPY DEADLINES

The copy deadline for SAL has now changed to the 15th of each month.

The copy deadline for the July 2020 issue is therefore 15th June.

ADVERTS

All adverts, and all advertising queries (*availability, prices, dimensions, suitability of illustrations, etc.*) to **Charlotte Bartlett**
salife.advertising@gmail.com

01869 347347

ADVERTISING DEADLINES

Please note: there is a new deadline for adverts (black & white only), which should be submitted no later than the 15th of the month.

ADVERTISING RATES

Non-commercial adverts:
1 page (village events only)- £15
½ page - £12, ¼ page- £6.
Commercial adverts:
½ page- £15, ¼ page- £8

Steeple Aston Directory

Age UK		Richard Preston	340512
Allotments (Church)	Enquiries	Stuart Walton	347300
Angling Club		Antony Morley	tonyriver_83@hotmail.com
Archive (SAVA)	Chairman	Martin Lipson	347046
Badminton (Tuesday mornings)		Barbara Brewer	340423
Badminton (Thursday evenings)		Lydia Powell	347746
Beekeepers (Swarm collection, advice)		Paul Honigmann	340665
Bell ringers		Graham & Dorothy Clifton	347273
Hand-bell ringers		Sally Cooper	347173
Brownies		Fiona McLoone	340132
Catholic Church - St Teresa's (Charlbury)		Father Tony Joyce	01608 642703
Cherwell District Council	Bodicote House		01295 227001
Choral Society	Chair	Ann Livings	233518
Church of England (St Peter & St Paul)	Rector	Rev Marcus Green	340903
	Church Wardens	Eileen Baglin-Jones	340099
Methodist Church – Tackley		Rev Paul Carter	01865 243216
	Steward	Tim Bailey	01869 331516
Councillors - Cherwell District Council		Cllr Mike Kerford-Byrnes	07805 665393
		Cllr Bryn Williams	07836 271998
		Cllr Hugo Brown	
Cricket Club	Chairman	Peter Higgins	347493
Crimestoppers			0800 555111
Deddington Guides		Marian Trinder	340806, 07786001641
Deddington Health Centre	Appointments		338611
	Repeat Prescriptions	10am - 3pm	338847
	Out of Hours		111
Dr Radcliffe's C of E School	Headmistress	Frances Brown	340204
Football Club	Secretary	Peter Wild	07950 837773
Garden Club	Chairman	Richard Preston	340512
Golf Society	Chairman	Alan Brewer	340423
Horticultural Society	Show Secretary	Vicky Clifton	07817 025948
Meals on Wheels		Hanny Nicholson, Judith Lane	340823, 349052
Players	Secretary	Alan Wightman (07943 537909)	324875
Parish Council	Chairman / Clerk	Richard MacAndrew/ Cathy Fleet	347209, 347000
Police	24hr Call Centre	(non emergency)	101
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Volunteer Connect - Community transport scheme			0300 3030125
Women's Institute	President	Linda Needle	340028



“...folly is not always folly.”
Jane Austen

Steeple Aston *Life*

June 2020

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Editorial

By the time you read this we will have been in lockdown for over two months. While I hope by now the end will be in sight, I know I'm not the only one feeling a little trapped. Therefore, I have tried to keep this month's Steeple Aston Life as upbeat as possible.

With this aim in mind, I was a little apprehensive that with so many events cancelled, I'd have a lack of articles, especially from the clubs and societies. But I needn't have worried; I've been very impressed with the ingenuity and humour shown in the club reports despite there not being a lot going on.

On an even more positive note, I am glad to see that social distancing didn't stop Steeple Aston's residents from celebrating VE day in style. There was plenty of colourful bunting, and some rather vibrant outfits among the Union Jacks and glasses of Pimm's. Take a look at some photos from the day on pages 24 and 25.

In case you've got lockdown fatigue, we've plenty of ideas for things to do while you're stuck at home – try an online exhibition from one of Oxford's museums on page 40, or keep yourself amused with the 30-Day Music Challenge on page 35. Meanwhile we can all learn how to encourage wildflowers to grow in our gardens on page 7. And if all else fails, make yourself a cup of tea, grab a biscuit and curl up on the sofa with June's edition of SAL.

Keep smiling everyone

Angela



Photo: Edward Dowler



CORONAVIRUS

MESSAGE FROM DEDDINGTON HEALTH CENTRE

If you are concerned that you might have Coronavirus, or have been in contact with someone who has it, please do not come to the surgery. Stay at home, avoid close contact with other people and use the NHS online Coronavirus service <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19> to find out what to do next.

Age UK

Age UK Oxfordshire are providing advice & information for anyone worried about Coronavirus on their website here <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/about-us/news/coronavirus/> and have set up a new, free telephone support service including a friendly, regular weekly call to see how people are and offer advice if needed. The number is **01865 411288** - leave a message and an advisor will call you back ASAP. Please note this is not an emergency medical service; please ring 111 for medical advice and 999 in a medical emergency.

Janet Rowley

Janet Rowley died peacefully in her sleep on 30th March in Penhurst Gardens Care Home, Chipping Norton.

Mrs Rowley was a much loved and respected teacher at Dr Radcliffe's School from 1983 - 1997. Her enthusiasm for providing the highest quality of education for her pupils mingled with a great deal of fun was an inspiration to so many children, and adults as well.

BUS SERVICES ALTERED DURING EMERGENCY

See page 47 for details

The Parish Council is still looking for volunteers. As more people begin to need help, and as some volunteers are forced into isolation, we may need everyone who is willing and able. If you are interested, please contact the Parish Clerk, Cathy Fleet, at parishclerk.steepleaston@gmail.com, or on 01869 347000, or 07989 398838.

NEW SAL email address for copy and articles

From now on, please send your articles and news to our new email address:
editorsalife@gmail.com

Steeple Aston Noticeboard



New SAL deliverer for Middle Aston

After many years of delivering the largest Steeple Aston Life round, Caroline Parsons and Sue have decided to pass the baton on. The committee welcomes Lucy Robinson to the team and Lucy has already taken over the round with the May edition. The committee wishes to thank Caroline and Sue for their efforts and wish Lucy all the best (and fair weather) for the future.

Steeple Aston Village Church Fete

After a lot of discussion it's with great regret that we are cancelling this year's Church Fete which would have taken place on the 27th June. We had intended that this year it would have had a slightly more intimate atmosphere with a more party like ambience but that will have to wait now until next year.

However, we're sure that once Covid-19 has been beaten, we will all surely party! Let's look forward to that. Thank you.

Martin Dale and all the members of the PCC Fete Committee

North Side Road Closure

A short section of North Side will be closed from 29th July until 4th August 2020 in order to investigate a water leak.



Editor's Letterbox



May I congratulate heartily the Parish Council and especially, I think, Graham Porcas who shoulders the roads portfolio, who have worked no doubt over many months and possibly years to badger the authorities to mend the hill into Steeple Aston from the Rousham traffic lights.

We have now enjoyed a number of walks to observe what has been done about the spring and the excess water. To our untrained eyes it all looks to be a good solution.

And...amazing! The nasty holes have gone! Hooray! When we do eventually drive up or down we won't know we're born. I shall still be dodging imaginary holes and rough bits!

Thank you again to Richard MacAndrew, Graham Porcas and the whole Parish Council!

We raise a glass to your efforts!

Martin and Ruth Dale

Peter Mallinson

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Peter Mallinson, who passed away at his Grange Park home on Saturday 25 April. Peter had been diagnosed with cancer in September 2019.

Having moved to Steeple in 1972 with Jo and a baby Nico in tow, Peter spent 48 very happy years building a life in the village. His passion for his work in Banbury (General Foods) and then London (Lyons Tetley) was matched, almost equally, by his passion for his garden which he and Jo spent a great deal of time developing over the years - a steep learning curve and the result in 2020 is pretty impressive considering its origins as a what looked like a builders' dump behind the then newly-built house!



Peter was a founding member of the Steeple Aston Garden Club and definitely took his duties as treasurer very seriously. He was involved in many aspects of village life over the last few decades, most recently as Jo's glamorous assistant at the annual village Quiz Nights, and whilst never one to suffer fools gladly he was exceptionally generous with both his time and affection for people and, as a result, had a wonderful friendship group which both he and Jo treasured a great deal.

He was a real family man and knew how lucky he and Jo were to have been able to bring up Nico, Chris and Tara in the village with its super school and all it had to offer. As 'Gramps' he was always (secretly) thrilled to have his four grandchildren, Bethan, Wilfred, Stanley and Sydney come to visit - although he had become accustomed to a quieter life and was always interested to know when exactly they might be going home again!

He leaves a big hole and we shall miss him greatly but take comfort from the incredibly kind messages of support received from so many of you.

Jo, Nico, Chris & Tara



Lawn or Meadow? Trying to be Friendly to Wildlife

Like many in the village, I am fortunate to have a garden, somewhere to play and out of easy reach of biscuits. It has taken nearly four years but I am now starting to understand what plants will thrive on thin sandy soil. Most of my failures are the result of planting something in the wrong place, planting too close together or believing the pretty picture on the seed packet. Having plenty of time to work on the project, I have been making a lot of changes, the motivation being the desire to make the garden more welcoming to wildlife.



The largest area of the garden was the lawn or, rather, the expanse of lumpy ground with grass on it. A game of bowls here would be a challenge, so if I wanted to create a lawn worthy of the title then a lot of work was needed to level out the lumps. While contemplating and trying to avoid that task, I read about No-Mow May, a scheme proposed by www.plantlife.org.uk.

Plantlife organised their survey of flowers growing in lawns as recorded by citizen science (see SAL April 2020, article by Rachel Wade for how to get involved in citizen science projects).

Over 200 species were found flowering on lawns. The top three most abundant were daisy, white clover and selfheal. Participants reported how often they cut their lawns and it was found that the highest production of flowers and nectar sugar was on lawns cut every four weeks.

They advise keeping two lengths of grass, some patches completely left unmown to allow tall plants like ox-eye daisy, red clover, scabious and knapweed to thrive and flower, and to mow the rest of the lawn once a month to a height of 1-2 inches to boost short-sward plants.

There's lots more information on www.plantlife.org.uk.

I am going to give it a try and take part in the next flower survey called Every Flower Counts, which involves counting the flowers in a square metre of the garden during the week May 23rd to 31st. When you enter your results, the website will work out your Nectar Score to find out how much nectar is being produced in that square as well as how many bees it will support.

I visited Plantlife's display at Blenheim Palace as part of Countryfile Live. There was a very interesting talk about managing road verges for wildlife which a lot of District Councils are getting involved in. Plantlife have produced a Guide to Road Verge Management which explains the best way to help the wildflowers and wildlife which could live in our grassy verges were they not mown too low and too often or allowed to turn into scrub. Grassy verges cover an area equivalent to ALL our remaining lowland species-rich grassland so this new approach can double the opportunities for wildflowers and wildlife.

The guide is 17 pages long, so I will leave you to look if you are interested. Here are a few excerpts: SAFETY comes first and some verges need to be cut regularly to maintain clear lines of vision.

COST could be reduced if the advice to cut only once or twice a year is followed.

COLLECTING the CLIPPINGS is important because a build-up of dead clippings form a thatch, preventing seeds germinating and increasing nutrients in the soil so lush grasses would predominate. Cut and collect machines could be used or, in some locations, volunteers rake and remove the clippings from the last cut once it is dried and seeds have fallen.

SOWING WILDFLOWER SEEDS on verges does little to conserve wildflowers and can threaten the distinctiveness of local flora. Cutting less often and later will give native plants the opportunity to flower and set seed.

It seems to me that we can do a lot for our wildlife by interfering less. So, next time you feel the urge to start the lawn mower or strimmer, maybe pause, reflect, have a cup of tea and perhaps the feeling will pass!

VICTORIA PRENTIS MP

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Stay Alert

This was written on the morning after Prime Minister Johnson announced changes to the lockdown rules, and introduced the new slogan: "Stay Alert". Many found the new guidelines confusing and vague, and government ministers gave contradicting interpretations of them. Perhaps by the time you read this, the advice has become clearer.

We're being told we must adjust,
Must change and must convert.
A brand new slogan tells us
That we must "Stay Alert".

But what is this new advice?
What exactly does it mean?
The slogan may be catchy
But detail is hard to glean.

The instruction is to "Stay Alert".
But alert to what, and how?
The guidance from the government
Is very vague right now.

There's a new risk indicator,
With coloured stages 1 to 5.
But will this help the NHS
Keep more people alive?

They say we should return to work
But not by bus or train.
Just how we are to manage that
They have not bothered to explain.

They say that you can walk to work
Or get there on your bike.
For hundreds of commuters
That would be quite a hike.

We can visit parks and gardens
Sunbathe on a seat.
But ministers disagree on
How many people we can meet.

I can go to the garden centre
But I'm not sure if I dare.
For how can I be sure
Hordes of others won't be there?

There's a 'Track & Trace' app to install
And I don't wish to quibble
But what if you've no mobile phone?
Or you live where there's no signal?

Well, actually I am alert
And only too aware
Of the record-breaking numbers
Of deaths of those in care.

I am alert and waiting
For the PM to say
He's sorry about the number
Of those who've passed away.

I am alert to his reciting
What he has got right
But he could perhaps apologise
And appear to be contrite.

For missing COBRA meetings
For the failure to test,
For the lack of PPE
And ignoring experts who knew best.

Boris may like "Be Alert"
He may even love it.
But honestly what I want to do
Is tell him where to shove it.

Cathy Lawday

Whose day is it?

Back in 1910 in old Spokane,
A man brought up six children on his own,
His daughter'd seen him wax but never wain,
He didn't make a fuss or moan or groan.

So she set out this man to celebrate,
A father dear to make his virtue known,
Let's spoil him now before it gets too late,
But word got out and things have since then grown.

As time passed by it spread throughout the state,
And likewise took a hold in Britain too,
Third Sunday June became the chosen date,
Picked up by many now though started by a few.

The 70's saw it legally endorsed,
Though how this happens I don't have a clue,
There's some still argue how this day was sourced,
But who's to care if dad still gets his due.

Peter Wild

Steeple People



Geoffrey Lane



How long have you lived in Steeple Aston?

14 years

Where did you move from?

Ealing, West London. I'm originally from Petersfield, Hants, and I previously lived and worked in Wolverhampton and Cardiff.

What brought you here?

Family in Middle Aston and the urgent need to rehouse a mother-in-law in her 90s.

What do you like best about living in Steeple Aston?

I'm keen on local history and found the village not too big to get my head around.

How has the village changed in the time you've been here?

The population seems to get younger every year.

How do you see yourself, in 5 words or less?

Full of curiosity.

How do others see you, in 5 words or less?

Best not to know - obsessive? pedantic?

As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A doctor, so I could drive a Riley (my Dad taught, and drove a Morris 8 - once it came out of mothballs after the War).

What was your first job?

Civilian waiter in an officers' mess - to pay off my student debts.

What is the best job you've ever done?

Radio news on a really busy shift - e.g. The Fall of Saigon, the Chernobyl explosion, the Concorde crash at the Paris Air Show.

What is the worst job you've ever done?

Night shifts in composing room at Western Mail in Cardiff, being repeatedly sworn at over a colleague's unworkable layouts.

Tell us about any interesting hobbies you have

Singing (started as a choirboy); I have also studied bookbinding and violin making at different times.

What's your favourite piece of music?

Anything by Bach or Mozart.

What are you reading at the moment?

David Copperfield - prompted by the recent Armando Iannucci film.

What's your favourite food?

Spaghetti alle vongole (first choice at any Italian restaurant).

What would you save from your house if it was on fire?

My wife, Judith, then my computer.

If you won the lottery, what's the first thing you would buy?

A really old house that had been sensitively restored.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?

Probably Africa.

What do you get grumpy/mad about?

Garbled English especially on radio or TV.

What makes you happiest in the world?

My wife, Judith, and my extended family.

Tell us something about you that most people don't know.

I have had several articles published on 17th century stained glass.

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???? Mind Games

1. Five of the following words have something in common, which is the odd one out?

SERIAL SEEN SLOPE SAUCE SO SENT

2. Which four-letter word follows all the following words?

SHOCK BRAIN LONG TIDAL SOUND NEW

3. Add vowels to the letters below to give a well-known proverb. What is it?

PPRNCS CN B DCPTV

4. The alphabet is written here but some letters are missing. Arrange the missing letters to give a word. What is it?

B C F G I J K L N P Q S T U V X Y Z

5. On each row place a three-letter word that can be attached to the end of the word to the left and to the beginning of the word to the right, to give a longer word in each case. When completed, the initial letters of the three letter words will give another word reading downwards. What is it?

SHEEP _ _ _ HOUSE

DRAIN _ _ _ LONG

PEA _ _ _ SHELL

AIR _ _ _ POWDER

END _ _ _ NEST

OVER _ _ _ SACK

6. I am a fruit.

Change one letter and I am a long narrow mark.

Change another letter and I am dry weather.

Change a further letter and I am aflame.

Change one final letter and I am thin metal.

What was I and what did I become?

Credit MENSA

Answers on p.29

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19:30-21:00 (Drop-in)

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The Gardening Spot

So, it's not just us humans that get a virus!

We all know everything about Covid-19, or at least, what the “experts” tell us, but guess what; my first crop of tomato plants managed to get a “virus” or something horrible, that first made them look sick and then finished them off completely, meaning I had to sow more seeds and quickly. I am pleased to report that my second attempt look fine, but this just goes to prove there is always something to throw a spanner in the works whilst gardening.

As I write this on a sunny but windy morning in mid-May, the weather is doing its hardest to make life difficult by sending freezing cold winds down from the Arctic, and frosts early in the morning that have sent many of my early potatoes black. I know that you are all thinking, he is moaning again!!! But, on the bright side of life, what some amazing blossom we have seen this year and the spring flowers have surpassed themselves.

So here we are in June and for many of us, plenty of time to get out in the garden and enjoy the freedom of our own space or that of the allotment. It is at times like this when you feel for those families who are confined to a flat some 15 floors up in the sky! Anyhow, let us look at the greenhouse first. Your tomatoes should have started to put on growth now and it is important to ‘pinch out’ the side shoots to encourage more and better fruit, be they regular or ‘cherry’ type tomatoes. Water regularly and give them a high potash feed once a week, keeping them well supported by tying them to canes or strings. Once there are about six trusses set, take out the top shoot to concentrate all the energy into producing fruit. Cucumbers can now be planted safely in a cold greenhouse but be careful not to overwater them as they have a wonderful knack of rotting at the base of the stem. Again, keep them supported by training them up canes and reducing the side shoots to about 2 or 3 cucumbers once they have set. They like regular watering (not flooding!) and a weekly feed but in their case, a high nitrogen feed to produce those long, sweet cucumbers. I am not going to try and instruct you on the production of peppers as I have failed so many times; in fact I have given up growing them.

The vegetable patch will be filling up fast with potatoes emerging, if not destroyed by a late frost, and brassicas are settling in but keep on top of the weeds. A weekly hoeing will ensure the weeds are kept at bay and they do not compete with your crops. By time you read this I will have just planted out my runner beans and hopefully, the weather will have settled, and temperatures don't drop too low at night. Once these plants get going, they like plenty of water so have the watering can at hand, that is unless we are in the middle of a deluge! Keep sowing salad vegetables, as they are quick to mature and can provide you with a supply of fresh leaves for months to come.

The flower borders will be looking at their best over the next few weeks but again, watch out for those pesky weeds and remove them when possible. Don't be afraid to give your flower plants a feed occasionally as, just like us, they respond to a good meal. Watch out for aphid and greenfly and deal with them as quickly as possible and by what means you prefer. And then comes the question of pruning shrubs. As a rule, shrubs that flower in spring make bud on this year's growth so prune immediately after flowering. Shrubs that flower after around June make buds on next year's growth so prune in late autumn or spring.

Most importantly, get outside whenever you can and enjoy the joys that nature can provide and if you are lucky enough to have a space of your own where you can grow flowers or vegetables, enjoy the experience and take in the pleasures that are around us.

Keep safe and best wishes,

Richard Preston

Would you like to contribute to a record of this unique time?

The current Coronavirus pandemic continues to have a profound effect on us all in so many ways, and is likely to do so for some time to come. SAVA wants to assemble a snapshot of this unprecedented time, and would like to ask for your help in sharing some of your experiences and thoughts as a lasting record for future generations.

If you are interested in contributing, please find below some possible (although not exhaustive) points that you may wish to consider. We would also welcome any photos depicting your experience.



What has been your experience during the Covid-19 lockdown?

- Describe in 5 words how you have felt during the lockdown?
- Have you had to adjust your working arrangements, such as working from home? If so, what technology has assisted/hampered your ability to do so?
- If you are employed in providing an 'essential' service, what has been your experience on the front line?
- How have you filled your free time during the lockdown?
- How did you get exercise? For example, have you explored the village and surrounding area more than usual?
- Have you been aware of any environmental changes as a result of less traffic/people? If so, what are they?
- What has been your experience within the village community? Have you had more/less contact with your neighbours? Examples of acts of support and kindness?
- Are you home-schooling your children, and if so how is it going?
- What has been your biggest challenge during lockdown?
- What/who have you missed the most during this period?
- What, if anything, do you think you have learned during this crisis?
- Are there any changes you have made during lockdown, that you hope to continue?

Please email replies to: steepleastonarchive@gmail.com or for a postal address call 01869 347046

Many thanks!

Village Hall News



The Annual General Meeting of the Steeple Aston Village Hall management committee was held by teleconferencing on the 4th May 2020. The full committee is listed below, showing which group they represent.

Barbara Brewer	Tuesday Badminton (Chair)	Torquil McLusky	Scouts / Cubs / Beavers
Margaret Bulleyment	Choral society (Secretary)	Amanda Rodgers	Village Rep
John White	(Treasurer)	Chris Clarke	PCC
Janine Beckwith	Thursday Badminton	Stuart Cummins	Archive
Deborah Morris	Village Rep	Richard Preston	Valentine Club
TBC	Arts Programme Coordinator	Cathy Fleet	Parish Council
Esther Brown	WI	Rose McCready	Garden Club

In the next few months the committee will be deciding on a programme of events for the forthcoming year. If there is a specific event you would like to see in the programme or if you have any new ideas, please contact me or any committee member.

Due to Coronavirus the next event will not be taking place.

Sunday 7th June – NGS Open Gardens, Steeple Aston 2 – 6pm Teas in Village Hall and gardens - cancelled.

The following at the moment are due to take place.

Thursday 5th November Annual Fireworks Evening.

Sunday 13th December Wassail Evening.

Saturday 23rd January 2021 Annual Quiz Evening.

Please note our letting agent is Mrs. Katie Rushworth

01869 340196 Email steeple-aston-village-hall@hotmail.com

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Always remember, clean hands save lives and when in doubt, don't go out.

Barbara Brewer, Chair



WI Report

Although our members are not meeting at present, we are keeping in touch regularly by telephoning to have a chat and sending out messages to keep them informed.

In total we have made 60 laundry bags for NHS workers, and at present some of us are making masks. We will try to make more if needed, and when we can get the elastic. We are sending our members weekly quizzes to keep their brains active and these are much appreciated.

The National Federation are keeping us well informed and sending out our monthly magazine, while the Oxfordshire Federation send us weekly editions of News and Views to keep us up-to-date. Through the County Federation we are able to go to virtual meetings with speakers on Zoom; they also include competitions, recipes and tips.

We are all looking forward to meeting again - we don't know where and when, it is just a matter of wait and see. If anyone needs any information about joining the WI when we are meeting again, please don't hesitate to contact me for more information about our activities, outings etc. on 01869 340028.

Keep Safe and well.

Linda Needle (President)



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Steeple Aston Parish Council

Steeple Aston Parish Council has a vacancy for a parish councillor. If you are interested in joining the parish council and making a difference within your community, please contact me and I will be pleased to give you more information.

Cathy Fleet

Parish Clerk

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mobile : 07989398838

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO.....?

Kalgoorlie

It's always a delight to me when a SAL reader tells me that they've taken the trouble to visit somewhere I've written about and several people to whom I've spoken (even in lockdown!) have told me with pleasure about visits to Australia. No, not to Wave Rock but to various destinations in that huge country, so I'm emboldened to write this month about another place, or rather places, linked to an extraordinary engineering feat which has fascinated and interested me very much since I encountered its story.

In 1891 John Forrest, the Premier of Western Australia, then something of a Cinderella State, (but on the eve of unprecedented expansion) invited the Chief Engineer of New Zealand, an Irishman named Charles Yelverton O'Connor to become General Manager of Railways and Engineer in Chief for the State of W.A.. O'Connor was lured by the promise of an annual salary of £1,200 which was a modest recompense for his daunting responsibilities. He was to oversee developments, which in ten years from 1901, transformed Perth, the state capital, from something of a frontier town into a thriving city of business and industry.

O'Connor immediately began work to design and oversee the construction of Fremantle Harbour, Albany, many miles further south, as the main port of entry to and exit from W.A.. This was a significant achievement in its own right, but perhaps he should be remembered most for the Goldfields Pipeline Scheme.

In 1893 another Irishman, Paddy Hannon, while prospecting for gold, discovered the Golden Mile in Kalgoorlie 595km from Perth in an exceedingly hot and arid area of the State. In 1891, just as O'Connor arrived in Australia, a goldfield was declared which led to a massive increase in population in Kalgoorlie and its sister town, Coolgardie, as prospectors flocked there with hopes of making a fortune. The big problem, which everyone faced, was the lack of water. Transporting water across such a distance and across an unfriendly terrain was not a sustainable option – so O'Connor was called upon to solve the problem.

The solution, which O'Connor proposed, was to build a dam and a pipeline to carry water from Mundaring Weir, in the hills of the Darling Range beyond Perth, to Kalgoorlie, where it would be held in a giant reservoir at Mount Charlotte. Completed in 1903, the weir and pipeline are still in existence – and the Big Pit goldmine in Kalgoorlie is the biggest open pit mine in the world. The museum at Mundaring tells the dramatic story of the project and is interesting enough, but to stand at edge of the Big Pit and watch the vast machinery, see the tiny figures of miners like dwarfs in the place where people work 24 hours a day to scrape and dig gold and minerals from the earth and hear the cacophony of sound is an experience I won't forget. I wonder what C.Y. O'Connor would think?



It's not as simple a story as I've perhaps suggested. Rather like HS2, there was opposition, squabbles and controversy. In 1902 there were suddenly vituperative attacks on the Engineer especially related to the purchase of an expensive and sophisticated lead-caulking machine to fix the 28ft lengths of pipe together. These media attacks contributed to O'Connor's decision to end his life. Ten months before the great celebrations (all opposition forgotten for the moment!) to greet the water in Kalgoorlie, O'Connor left home for his usual morning ride just before 7.00am with his son's revolver in his pocket. He reached the shallows of the Indian Ocean at Robb's Jetty, where ships had docked before he'd designed the new Fremantle Harbour, dismounted, entered the water and shot himself.

Designing and overseeing the construction of the Goldfields Pipeline was a marvellous and enduring project and a great achievement for C.Y. O'Connor. When we visit the dam at Mundaring or get repeated glimpses of the shining pipeline as we drive towards Kalgoorlie it's hard not to reflect on the triumph and tragedy of the life of that great engineer.

Eileen Baglin-Jones



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VE Day

Despite the circumstances, it was wonderful to see Steeple Aston's residents out in force to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day on May 8th.

Many houses in the village were decorated with colourful bunting and proudly flying the Union Jack. On some streets, World War II music was playing softly, with people dancing along. On the corner of Paines Hill and North Side, Vaughan Billings proposed a toast to commence the celebrations, and many residents set up camp on the roadside to join in the festivities with a glass or two.

Take a look at some of our favourite photos of the day, and keep a look out for the huge flag on the front of Church Cottage. This flag belonged to Vaughan Billings' grandfather and was used on VE day by his parents. Look out too for a couple of Welsh Dragons and Leigh Rushworth's Empire flags in the Dickredge.

And you can't fail to spot Revd Marcus Green's waistcoat of Union Jacks.

And on the subject of VE day...



Local resident Roger Needle had an extra reason to celebrate. Roger Needle was born in Summertown on 1 September 1939, the day that Germany invaded Poland and WWII was officially declared. His father went off to fight shortly afterwards, returning at the end of the war, and he was raised by his mother and his grandfather and uncle, who lived in the adjoining semi-detached house.

Photos courtesy of Merrill Bayley, Becca Coker and Angela Smith





Parish Council Meeting *Notes*



The May Parish Council meeting was another session on Zoom. This was fine 'til about half way through the meeting when one of the Councillors managed to get himself and three or four others booted off the system. They gradually rejoined us with lots of apologies from the errant Councillor who had randomly fiddled with the controls. Zoom caused a few other problems as well; we could not tell whether the Chairman was signing the minutes or not, one Councillor had to 'mute' herself because of noisy dogs and most of the time the Clerk was only visible from nose upwards.

There were two visitors at the meeting who had come to discuss the planning application for Hatch End, the old chicken sheds between Steeple and Middle Aston. The sheds are gradually collapsing and they cannot be re-let in their present state. The owners have put in a planning application to pull down all but one of the sheds and replace them with a small business and light industrial estate. The initial outline plans were shown to the Parish Council in September and at that point the Parish Council were largely supportive, but wanted to know more about the size of the development and its traffic implications.

The plans are for 29 or 30 units for small commercial or light industrial use. There are lots of both pros and cons with the scheme. There are currently 15 people working on the site and it would be very attractive to have more work opportunities in the vicinity. As well as local jobs this is likely to have a beneficial effect on the numbers of people using the shop, the pub and the bus. The current buildings are in a bad state and a derelict site would not be pleasant. Also if the development does not go forward what would the site be used for and would the alternatives be worse?

The site would look like what it is; a small business and light industrial estate rather than its existing more rural identity. The buildings would be taller than the existing ones though judicious tree planting could help. However the biggest concern is about traffic; both while the estate is being built and when

it is operating. While it is being built large lorries would have to get there and neither Steeple Aston nor Middle Aston would want to agree to them coming through. In Steeple Aston large lorries would have to go along Southside and Paines Hill, creating special difficulties on the corner between them. This would involve a substantial increase in parking restrictions on Southside, Paines Hill and Fir Lane. The roads in Middle Aston would only be slightly easier and equally would involve extra parking restrictions. A Councillor told me after the meeting that access for large lorries would involve passing 80 homes in Steeple Aston or, if the lorries came through Middle Aston, 18 homes would be on the route.

The plan for Hatch End includes 97 car parking spaces and 50 bike spaces. No one knows how many jobs the site will generate but it is unlikely that 97 spaces will be sufficient and what no one would like is to see car parking along the road outside the site. Also, the workers at the site are likely to be arriving about the same time as the school traffic is arriving. In theory we could ask for minimal site traffic at school drop off and collection time but there is no realistic way this could be enforced.

An idea put forward at the meeting is for the space between the path through the beeches and the site to be used as extra parking for either the school or the site. The planning application only mentions traffic from those working at the site, but there are bound to be visitors and deliveries as well when the site is operating.

One suggestion the Parish Council made in September was for a pavement to be extended to the site, which would help those walking to school from Middle Aston. This proposal is not included in the current plans. At the meeting someone suggested a one-way system going through both Middle Aston and Steeple Aston in one direction only.

The Parish Council are going to ask for more time to comment on the plans and will ask the owners for more details on their proposals.

Parish Council Meeting *Notes*



It is sad that the Parish Council has just lost one of its best Councillors. Amanda Rogers has resigned after two years and in that time I have been hugely impressed by her commitment to getting things done. At Parish Council meetings she was frequently the first to volunteer, and she did not give up if she had taken on a project. Although pressure of work has forced her to resign she intends to continue to support village activity in any way that she can, including continuing on the Village Hall Management Committee and running Sustainable Steeple – the project she started, which amongst other things upcycles and reuses unwanted items to make money for village projects. Her energy and enthusiasm will be sorely missed. A huge THANK YOU to Amanda from us all.

If you would like to be a Parish Councillor, but are wondering what is involved, you can contact the Clerk, Cathy Fleet and she will explain. All I can tell you is that I enjoy going to the monthly meetings. Cathy can be contacted for a chat on 01869 347000 or you can email her at:

parishclerksteepleaston@gmail.com

The Councillors enquired how things were going in the village in general. The meal service provided by S&J Cuisine has a steady 45 clients. The volunteer system is working well. The shop and Post Office have reopened, which is great news. Regular medicines will be delivered to the shop for collection in the old way for those not self isolating, but will continue to be delivered to those needing to stay at home. Those in each category will be informed about what is happening for them. The daffodils donated by the Village Hall Committee will be planted by the Clerk so they are likely to end up somewhere on Fenway. The telegraph poles are looking ‘scruffy’ with old notices and these will be culled where reasonable.

Our District Councillor told us that Cherwell had just managed to have their first virtual meeting since lockdown. That means it has taken them 7 weeks to get the IT sorted. Before this I thought the

Government had been appallingly slow off the mark but Cherwell leaves them standing for incompetence and inaction.

The District Councillor was asked if Cherwell’s purchase of Castle Quay in Banbury was now seen as a mistake. The old idea was to build extra restaurants and shops there, so Cherwell had thought, presumably, that they could cream off the profits. The District Councillor tried to prevaricate but finally admitted that even if it was going to lose money it might still have social advantages for the town. He tried to claim the purchase was having different results to expected, rather than being wrong. Why cannot politicians have the sense to see when to admit mistakes?

The Councillors have decided to go ahead with getting a sublease for the Village Hall so that the Village Hall Committee can prove to grant givers they have tenure in the building and are not likely to be ejected from the building any time soon.

The Parish Council was asked for comments on the re-application of the scheme, which has already been refused, for houses to be built in the garden of The Beeches. The Parish Council did not object to the development but the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan is against it because it involves developing ‘back land’. We should know the planner’s decision by the next meeting.

The Parish Council meeting in June will be on 15th June at 7.30pm. If you would like to come and tell the Council what you think about the Hatch End development, or anything else for that matter, contact the Clerk on parishclerksteepleaston@gmail.com. She will then email you an invitation. All you have to do is click on the invitation and you will be taken to the meeting automatically. I promise it is as easy as that.

Steeplejack

This report is the personal view of the SAL reporter, and is not intended to be a complete record of the Council meeting. The official record - once approved - will be available at www.steepleaston.org.uk



From what I've read on England Golf and, from experience in other countries, I think we can expect the emphasis on social distancing to continue for some time, so we will be a two ball for now.

We all miss the social aspect of our golf but for now let's just enjoy being out there and able to play our lovely game.

My first game back after 50 days off was on the 13th May, playing at my old club The Cotswolds, Chipping Norton, and boy did it show!! They say the first part of your game to go is the short game, I think it was about the 15th before things improved.

One interesting thing is the Tee times on the course from 7am to 7pm were fully booked and will be for the next month or two. Because of what I said about the social side of golf I cannot see SAGS playing any society games until at least August, possibly September, or none at all this year.

Stay safe, keep alert and if in doubt, don't go out.

Alan Brewer, chair

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Mind Games Answers

1. SLOPE It is the only one that is not a homophone ie a word having the same pronunciation but different meanings.
2. WAVE
3. APPEARANCES CAN BE DECEPTIVE
4. HOMEWARD
5. DANGER The three letter words are DOG, AGE, NUT, GUN, EAR and RAN.
6. LIME, LINE, FINE, FIRE and WIRE

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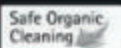
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Whether you're contemplating piano lessons for your child or yourself, feel free to get in touch.

Rosemary

Rosemary.Jefford@gmail.com
Tel: 07542 086 038



The National Garden Scheme

There is a huge amount of evidence demonstrating the health benefits to be gained from gentle exercise, fresh air and getting closer to nature.

The NGS has been providing these every year for very many years until this awful virus has caused the cancellation of so many recreational activities, NGS garden openings included. Social Distancing obviously becomes impossible. It is particularly poignant that the scheme has raised a great deal of money for nursing charities year after year.

Anyway, Roderick and Hanny are happy to open our garden on a continuous basis, starting now. Sadly this will not raise money for the nurses, but we believe it has the potential to deliver many health benefits. Please enter via the gate at the bottom of Water Lane and first mooch around, and make use of the three park benches, which are wide enough for social distancing.

We hope we can keep this facility open for the duration of the lockdown.

CAUTION: part of our garden is a water/bog garden and needs special care.

Roderick Nicholson

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Church Matters



Last year at this time I spent three weeks in Atlanta, visiting my sister. On that trip I bought two prints which now sit on my kitchen wall, two slightly comical animals looking out (with blue skies beyond them) as if from windows onto my breakfast table. A sheep in one, a goat in the other.

Jesus tells a tale about these in Chapter 25 of St Matthew's Gospel. He writes of sheep and goats being separated, being placed on God's right and left. And to those on the right, the sheep, he says - I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you invited me in; I needed clothes and you clothed me; I was ill and you looked after me; I was in prison and you visited me.

And he gets the response - When did we do this for you?

For me? - he says - Why, when you did it for the very least, you did it for me.

One of the wonders of these terrible days is that I see a lot of sheep around, and I mean that in the best possible, Matthew 25 sense! I see a lot of people helping others. Doing good. Talking to the lonely. Shopping for those who can't do it for themselves. Taking time and not rushing past.

When we do it for each other, we do it for Jesus. And none of us are perfect, and all of us have off days, and all of us need others to help us sometimes. For sure. But these are days that are transformed by the simple human kindness that Jesus picks on and says is never just 'simple human kindness'. It is beautiful and life giving and transformative and godly. Thank you for playing your part in bringing light in these dark days. It's how we will all get through OK.

The Fete, Church Buildings, Sunday Services...

As I write in mid-May, I'm aware that things can change very quickly, so this is where we stand right now.

The Fete is off. Thank you so much to all who have worked hard, but I fully agree that there is no way things can continue without knowing if we can safely hold the Fete or not. So with great regret, this year's Fete will not happen. The Fete is a terrific community event and a really important fundraiser - but this year, safety must come first. Here's to a healthy 2021!

Our **church building** remains closed. The guidelines have changed a bit and now allow me to go in, but remain clear that public access is not permitted. I am staying out of all three buildings most of the time because I do not feel I should be going in when no one else can.

Church services remain online, and our short '*Worship at Home*' video services are available on the homepage of www.sntchurch.com every week. These will continue - and I am delighted to note that so many people are watching these. The videos have included lots of church members recently, as well as singers and musicians recorded in isolation and performing congregationally by the wonders of technology! The current guidelines say we *may* be able to start public worship services in early July - and we will advertise here, and online, via the *Rector's Ramblings* emails and on posters if and when this happens. There is a feeling that many would like us to gather in the open air initially, and we are taking guidance on this.

The church building is closed, but God is with us wherever we are. His love never ends, and if we are low, he is the one who promises to raise us up. He is our refuge, and our hands are his hands to care for and protect each other. He is our strength and our song, and even when our bells and hymns are silent, our community spirit sings his praise, and his Spirit will help us find that music this day and every day as long as we need breath to sing.

The Rector's Ramblings emails carry more news; to be included in this regular update, contact Revd Marcus Green on steeplerector@hotmail.co.uk. Or check our website: www.sntchurch.com

Revd Marcus Green



Garlic, garlic, garlic.....and yoghurt

By the time you read this, the wild garlic season will be coming to an end. However, now we can exercise as much as we can, please forage with care and attention, the last of this year's crop, with the land-owner's permission. It is marvellous stuff, full of vitamins and unique flavour. Try it in Spanish omelette, risotto, soup, fresh herb salsas, a little chopped on freshly baked fish or eggs. Try it as the garlic ingredient in home-made raita, chopping it finely with this season's fresh mint, chopped cucumber, natural yogurt, and sprinkles of roasted cumin.

Fresh, wild garlic is free, so experiment. There is masses written about it...even in days when we only had books for reference. "Wild Food" by Roger Phillips is one of the best. There is a pocket guide, which booklovers can slip into theirs, just in case wi-fi is unavailable on your walk. And while you are foraging, sit in the sun for a while, wearing a hat, and absorb some vitamin D – another ingredient for a healthy life.

I have been making my own natural yogurt during these lockdown days, using the very last couple of spoonfuls of some good live natural yogurt. Use the same quantity of freshly warmed (tepid) milk, to refill the pot, mix it thoroughly, and leave in a warm place, covered with a small towel over night. The result is a bit stringy, but delicious, if you are an addict, like me! I'm not sure if it would work for the recipe below though. It's great for smoothies. I believe, from a yogurt-making friend, that powdered milk prevents the stringiness. Do any of you know more?

Yesterday, I was given a slice of fruit cake to put in my pocket "to keep you going". It was moist and delicious, and held together well in its parcel. It had been made as a thank you for my friend who had been shopping for her cocooning 91 year-old neighbour. It was dark brown, from the molasses sugar, and had a well distributed mix of dates, raisins, cherries and orange for flavour. It did keep me going but was a little heavy for a walk on a sunny day. An iced cake is not suitable, but something that goes with fruit, fresh or dried, does. So, I've chosen another cake to share, and hope it takes you just a little further on your foraging quests, through our summer days.

YOGURT CAKE

350g caster sugar (300g brown sugar, if you prefer)
2 large free range eggs
2 lemons, finely zested
3 tsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
½ teaspoon salt
180ml sunflower oil
250g natural yogurt
260g self-raising flour, or plain with baking powder as raising agent
Icing sugar to serve (not essential!)

Measure the sugar into a bowl, add the lemon zest, salt, lemon juice and oil. Beat to combine well. Add yogurt and flour, and mix to a batter. Pour into a prepared large loaf tin, or bundt tin, or 20cm circular tin. Bake at 180C / 350F, lowering if the top of the cake browns too fast, for 45 minutes, until your cake tester comes out clean. Cool in the tin. Pack a slice, and march off into the wild blue yonder! Or pour a cuppa, and enjoy it at home.

30-Day Music Challenge

I was recently sent this by my niece and while I was working my way through, it struck me that some others might also appreciate having a go. The idea is to come up with one answer per day and then swap with friends or family members to get their choices. It's quite likely that you'll have your mind jogged by tunes you haven't heard in a while and, in some cases, ones you'll be hearing for the first time!

Lawrence White

- 1 A song you like with a colour in the title
- 2 A song you like with a number in the title
- 3 A song that reminds you of summertime
- 4 A song that reminds you of someone
- 5 A song that needs to be played loud
- 6 A song that makes you want to dance
- 7 A song to drive to
- 8 A song about drugs or alcohol
- 9 A song that makes you happy
- 10 A song that makes you sad
- 11 A song you never get tired of
- 12 A song from your pre-teen years
- 13 A song you like from the 1970s
- 14 A song you'd love to be played at your wedding
- 15 A song you like that's a cover by another artist
- 16 A song that's a classic favourite
- 17 A song you'd sing a duet with someone (on karaoke)
- 18 A song from the year you were born
- 19 A song that makes you think about life
- 20 A song that has many meanings to you
- 21 A song you like with a person's name in the title
- 22 A song that moves you forward
- 23 A song you think everyone should listen to
- 24 A song by a band you wish were still together
- 25 A song you like by an artist no longer living
- 26 A song that makes you want to fall in love
- 27 A song that breaks your heart
- 28 A song by an artist whose voice you love
- 29 A song you remember from your childhood
- 30 A song that reminds you of yourself

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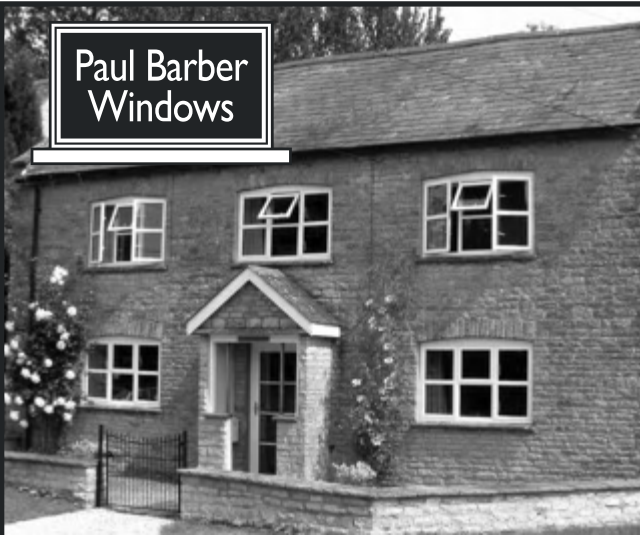
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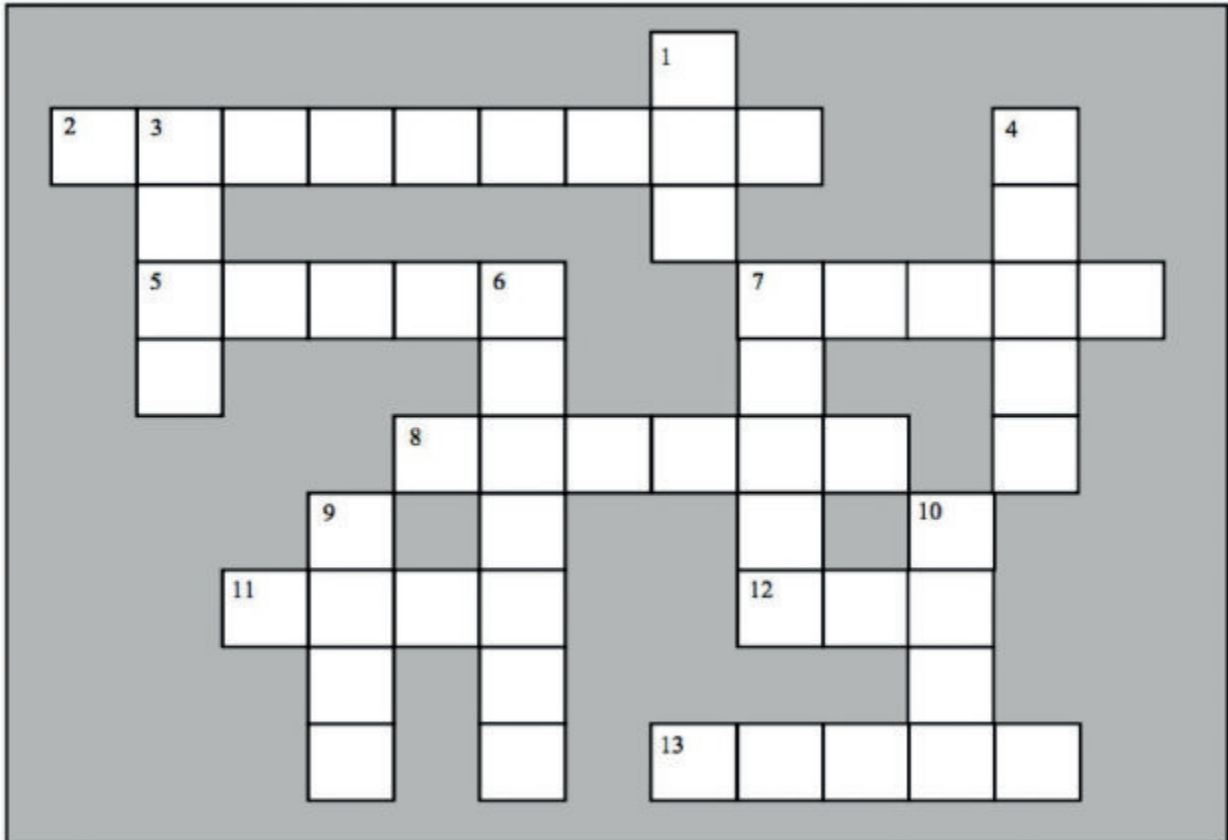
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Farm Crossword



Across

2. This is put in a field to frighten the birds away
5. This cereal is used to make flour
7. Cows eat this and animals sleep on it
8. The person who runs a farm is called one
11. A male one of these is called a billy _ _ _ _ _
12. These animals "oink"
13. Cats love to chase one of these

Down

1. This animal lives in a kennel
3. These animals produce milk
4. Sheep and cows eat this
6. A farmer drives one
7. White woolly animal
9. A baby horse
10. Chickens lay these

Answers on p.43



As all arts venues remain closed, two of our readers review some of the excellent online exhibitions on offer:

Young Rembrandt at www.ashmolean.org

I've always had a soft spot for Rembrandt ever since visiting his Self Portrait with Two Circles at Kenwood House on Hampstead Heath. It was rumoured that his eyes would follow you around the room – and the picture felt so real that I half-believed it.

So I was really looking forward to the Young Rembrandt exhibition at the Ashmolean in Oxford. I should have been quicker off the mark. It had been open for less than three weeks when Coronavirus struck and the museum had to close. However, the Ashmolean has come up with an online offering which provides an in-depth look at the exhibition and lots of extra information as well.

The exhibition contains 30 paintings and 90 drawings and prints by Rembrandt. It covers the years from 1624 to 1634, tracing how “a young and unremarkable artist from Leiden became the superstar of 17th-century Amsterdam and one of the greatest artists of all time.”

Your virtual visit starts with seven-minute introductory film by curator An van Camp. Then you are taken round the exhibition through the five sections tracing Rembrandt's progress over 10 years. Obviously they can't show all the exhibits, and the layout seems to me to be a bit clunky. But it does give you a good idea of Rembrandt's progress, the influences on him and his development as an artist from an amateur who drew “fingers like sausages” according to the curator to an acknowledged master. You can click through to examine some of the works in close up which gives a real insight in to his progress and technique.

Then, and this is the icing on the cake, there is a programme filmed after the lockdown written and presented by Simon Sharma. I'm not always a Sharma fan but he is a real expert on Rembrandt and this half-hour film brings the exhibition to life much more than the static online Ashmolean offering. It's full of interest, detail and humour. I thoroughly recommend it. To find the film search for Museums in Quarantine on BBC iPlayer. Others in the series include Warhol at Tate Modern, Tate Britain and the British Museum.

The Ashmolean is hoping to extend the season of the exhibition so that we will be able to visit in person when the museum reopens. Whenever that is I'll still be keen to go, there's nothing like seeing the real thing, but I'll be so much better informed than if I'd visited back in March.

Jenny Bell



Pitt Rivers Museum Virtual Tour at www.prm.ox.ac.uk

As I usually work in Oxford city centre, I've often wandered over to the Pitt Rivers Museum in my lunch break to take a look around. As it's completely free, it's easy to dip in and out of the exhibits depending on my interests and how much time I have, just as you can on the Virtual Tour.

Every one of the museum's glass cases has been photographed in a manner similar to Google's Street View, and you simply click the arrows on your screen to move between them. You can zoom in if anything particular catches your eye, although sadly the resolution is not strong enough to read the labels.

Some of my favourite objects include the Noah's Ark toy, a German-made wooden ark dating from 1860, and a pair of 19th century faux silk Georgian pumps, which although very pretty, seem far too narrow to fit on anyone's feet. You can find out more information on both of these objects on the website's Online Collections section.

The Pitt Rivers Museum is a bit of a maze, and it's just as easy to lose yourself among the artifacts online as it is in reality. However, there is a useful floorplan and 'Dollhouse' mode, which allows you to work out where you are. Furthermore, if you are lucky enough to own a virtual reality headset, you can change the setting to VR and feel like you really are walking the museum's corridors. Let's hope it's not too long before that becomes a reality once more.

Angela Smith

Suggestions for online activities from national arts venues

NATIONAL THEATRE – London nationaltheatre.org.uk

Weekly streamings of their best plays

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE – London roh.org.uk

Shows a wide variety of operas

TATE – London tate.org.uk

Lots of interactive material including online galleries

THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS – London royalacademy.org.uk

Online tours including a Picasso exhibition

CLASSICFM – classicfm.com

A veritable treasure trove of links!

OXFORD DAILY INFORMATION – dailyinfo.co.uk

An excellent Coronavirus section with a Virtual Events page

YouTube videos

There are some wonderful things on YouTube, for example

Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra Virtual Ode to Joy

Royal Opera House Hallelujah Chorus

And two funnies:

Dudley Moore Beethoven Sonata Parody

Dudley More Little Miss Britten

To find them type the above into YouTube's search bar

As it seems we will be needing the arts and entertainment online for some time, please send us your ideas and suggestions.

Nick and Heather Cleobury

Cricket reflections...

With the absence of any matches I asked the Club Members for any cricketing memories, village or otherwise, that might provide some amusing moments, celebrity anecdotes or interesting stats:

Graeme Hick bats 3 against the SACC...

Sunday 22nd May 2011 Chris Nevile of the SACC toiling in from the bottom end to bowl to Graeme Hick of the Lord's Taverners. Hick's lifetime average 41,142 runs at 52.2, Chris Nevile's bowling average significantly higher. On the first ball of the over Chris falls flat on his face without the ball leaving his hand. Hick has just stroked a majestic 4, when Chris bowls a dreadful long hop down the legside. Will it be a 6 over square leg, a reverse sweep for 6 over point, or will he snick it our keeper? Phil Chesser dives as if imbued with the spirit of Alan Knott and takes the catch. **G Hick ct P Chesser b C Nevile 7**

A Memory from Nick Cleobury...

I was a poor cricketer, my abilities not matching my love of the game, but I was playing for the Lord's Taverners against the Duke of Norfolk's XI at Arundel. Richard Stilgoe was bowling and the new batsman was Tim Rice, who asked Richard where the weakest fielder was? "The conductor chap at mid-on" replied Stilgoe. Attempting a 6, Tim miscued and was caught by yours truly 1st ball. As it happened, I had submitted a grant application with the Foundation for Sport & the Arts, and as Chairman, Tim Rice wrote to me the following week, that despite my dastardly behaviour at Arundel, we had been awarded the grant. Next on to bowl, the scorebook read: **W Carling ct J Edrich b N Cleobury 15**

I never reached those dizzy heights again!

Gatting gets hungry...

Back to the Lord's Taverners at Barton Abbey, Mike Gatting comes out to bat at 4. The Tavs are 53-2 off 6 overs; it looks like we are in for a beating. Gatting takes his guard and suddenly Chris Tarrant shouts out on the tannoy system. "Hold on, wait, the poor chap looks desperately hungry" and with that Tarrant ran out onto the square with a plate of pork pies. Gatt gratefully devoured a pie, then set about devouring the "other pies" that were being sent his way. As the great Geoffrey might have opined, "Buffet bowling – help yourself". Gatting moved serenely to 30 off 36 balls without taking even one single. Then Greg Renk came on to bowl his enticing pie-dobbers. Gatting could not resist and slashed at a wide one. Now I like to think I took a scintillating diving catch, but as my son always points out "Dad, you fell over as you caught it". Even so it's in the scorebook: **M Gatting ct P Higgins b G Renk 30**

A Steeple Aston CC record...

And finally 4 wickets in 4 balls by Paul Longman against Islip in June 2017. After 8 overs Islip were 28-2. In his fourth over not much happened from Paul's first two balls, but then a hat-trick, including a sharp catch behind the stumps by Phil Chesser (not another one!) and a fourth wicket with the final ball of the over. As it says in the scorebook: **P Longman 4.5 overs 1 maiden 9 runs 7 wickets**

Let's hope that some new cricketing memories may yet be made this summer.

All the best

Peter Higgins, Chairman SACC



THE VALENTINE CLUB

Unfortunately, there is no “news” as such whilst we are keeping safe and adhering to government guidelines as the world attempts to combat Covid-19 and all the implications that it brings. I can confirm that any meetings of the club planned until and including July have been cancelled, but be assured, we will endeavour to bring those speakers and entertainers back next year. As I mentioned in last month’s SAL, the steam train trip had been cancelled and this now applies to our visit to Wells on the 10th June. As for future trips, we will have to wait and see how things pan out over the coming months.

To try and brighten members’ lives and probably bore them silly, I have been circulating photos of our garden and the ever-changing scenes to be found around Primrose Garden. If you have any photos that you feel might be suitable to circulate via email to our members, please feel free to send them over to me and, with the help of my very limited IT skills, I will send them on to club members who are on email. If any member who reads this and is not receiving emails from me, it probably means I have either lost your email address or did not have it in the first place. Please send me an email and I will add you to my list of members.

To keep up to date with the club visit www.steepleaston.org.uk or our own website www.valentineclub.wixsite/aston or simply call me on 01869 340512.

BREAKING NEWS! OCF (Oxfordshire Community Foundation) have just awarded the club £500 to support future programmes and ensure the viability of the club over the coming months whilst we are in the hold of this devastating pandemic.

Keep safe everyone.

Richard Preston, Group organiser
Richard.preston5@btopenworld.com or 01869 340512

Child’s Play Answers

Across

2. Scarecrow
5. Wheat
7. Straw
8. Farmer
11. Goat
12. Pig
13. Mouse

Down

1. Dog
3. Cows
4. Grass
6. Tractor
7. Sheep
9. Foal
10. Eggs

Plant Sale in aid of Mary’s Meals

Many thanks to all generous folk who supported this sale. Through pre-sales, and on the day, Mary’s Meals will be able to cook and serve a meal a day to about 150 more hungry children for a year. Mary’s Meals have negotiated with government and community leaders in Malawi, Zambia and Kenya, in order to maintain their feeding programmes during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Caroline Edwards

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Non-Represented Clubs.....	£12	
Discount for represented clubs – 15% for six block bookings		

Letting Agent : Katie Rushworth (340196)
 Chairman: Barbara Brewer (340423)
 Secretary: Margaret Bullement (347346)

A represented club must send a representative to the Village Hall Committee meetings.

Rubbish bin collection day = Thursday

June	July
4 th blue & brown	2 nd blue & brown
11 th green	9 th green
18 th blue & brown	16 th blue & brown
25 th green	23 rd green
	30 th blue & brown

Steeple Aston Sports and Recreation Centre Letting Charges

Social Function peak times (up to 6 hours) £55
 Social Function off-peak (up to 5 hours) £27.50

Meeting of represented club: £11 per session

Caution Money for Private Lettings: £100

Letting agent: Katie Rushworth - Tel: 340196

Mail to: rec.trust@googlemail.com

Chairman - Torquil McLusky - Tel: 347914

Treasurer - Chris Cooper - Tel: 347173

Bus times

This timetable is a guide only - please consult local listings for up-to-date information and weekend times.

REVISED S4 BUS SERVICE (Mon - Fri)

Buses from Steeple Aston (outside post office) to Oxford

06.29 07.44 09.03 10.33 12.03 13.33 15.03 16.33 18.03 19.22

Arrives Oxford

07.07 08.42 09.44 11.14 12.44 14.14 15.44 17.14 18.44 20.04

Buses from Steeple Aston (outside post office) to Banbury

07.57 09.17 10.02 10.37 12.07 13.37 15.07 16.37 18.07 19.37 21.00

Arrives Banbury

08.40 09.53 10.40 11.13 12.43 14.13 15.43 17.13 18.43 20.05 21.29

MIDDLE BARTON BUS (Mon - Fri)

Bus from Steeple Aston (Nizewell Head) to Heyford Station 07.35 18.08

Arrives Heyford station 07.39 18.13

Bus from Heyford Station to Steeple Aston (Nizewell Head) 18.15

Arrives Steeple Aston (Nizewell Head) 18.16

5 BUS SERVICE (Wednesdays)

Bus from Steeple Aston to Chipping Norton 09.00

Arrives Chipping Norton 09.40

Bus from Chipping Norton to Steeple Aston 11.50

Arrives Steeple Aston 12.26

8 BUS SERVICE (Fridays)

Bus from Steeple Aston (outside Post Office) to Bicester 10.41

Arrives Bicester Village railway station 11.06

Bicester Tesco 11.12

Bicester Avenue 11.16

Bus from Bicester to Steeple Aston (outside Post Office)

Bicester Village railway station 13.37

Bicester Tesco 13.43

Bicester Avenue 13.48

Arrives Steeple Aston (outside Post Office) 14.05

Steeple Aston Calendar

All events are subject to possible last-minute changes and cancellations due to Coronavirus. Do check village notices, www.steepleaston.org.uk or contact the organisers for up-to-date information before you set out.

JUNE			
Monday 15th	SAL July issue copy and advert deadline		
Monday 15 th	Parish Council Meeting	Online	7.30pm
JULY			
Wednesday 15th	SAL August issue copy and advert deadline		
Monday 20 th	Parish Council Meeting	To be confirmed	7.30pm

Choral Society Rehearsals. Village Hall - 7.45pm - Mondays
Badminton. Village Hall - 10am -12.30pm - Tuesdays
Bell Ringing practice. Church Tower - 7.30pm - Tuesdays
Scouts. Sport & Rec Centre - 7.30pm - Tuesdays
Baby and Toddler Group. Sport & Rec Centre - 9am -11am - Thursdays
Cricket Nets. Robinson's Close - 6pm - Thursdays
Badminton. Village Hall - 8pm - Thursdays
Village History Centre (SAVA) open 10am-12pm - Saturdays

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[e-mail: print@joshuahorgan.co.uk](mailto:print@joshuahorgan.co.uk)

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