

Steeple Aston

OCTOBER 2020

ISSUE No. 566

Life



Inside SAL this month:

- Find out who won the village Scarecrow Competition
- Learn how to share your plant seeds
- Enter our cryptic crossword competition
- And much more...

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Click on the item's page number below to go straight to its page. To return to Contents, click on the page number at the foot of any page.

October 2020: CONTENTS

OCTOBER FEATURES

Fete at the Gate photos	24-25
Seed Saving & Sharing	10-11
Scarecrow Winner's Story	22-23

REGULAR FEATURES

Child's Play	15
Child's Play Answers	17
Church Matters	43
Gardening Spot	21
Have you ever been to...?	13
In the Kitchen	35
Mind Games	16-17
Poetry Corner	14
Steeplejack	30-31
Steeple People	7

REPORTS FROM CLUBS

AD&D Photographic Society	37
Cricket Club	38-39
Golf Society	34
Valentine Club	19
Women's Institute	20

INFORMATION

Bus times	47
Calendar	48
Church Service rota	46
Noticeboard	4-6
Steeple Aston Directory	2
Village Hall News	20

NEW ADVERTS

Clare's Gardening Services	29
House sale	32
SAVA	32
Sustainable Steeple	12

Cover photos: Mick Bonwick & Nigel Francis

Steeple Aston *Life*

COPY

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

COPY DEADLINES

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

The copy deadline for the November 2020 issue is therefore 15th October.

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
1/2 page - £12, 1/4 page- £6.

Commercial adverts:

1/2 page- £15, 1/4 page- £8

Steeple Aston *Directory*

Age UK		Richard Preston	340512
Allotments (Church)	SACAA Clerk	Nigel Grugeon sacaaclerk@btinternet.com	
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, Graham Clifton	340099 347273
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
Parish Council	Chairman / Clerk	Richard MacAndrew/ Cathy Fleet	347209, 347000
Police	24hr Call Centre	(non emergency)	101
Post Office & Harris Stores		Raj	340201
Pre-school			340863
Public House	Red Lion	Aidan & Kegan Madden	340225
Robinson's Close	Letting Agent	Katie Rushworth	340196
Scouts Group		Colin Cassford	243038
Sports & Recreation Centre	Letting Agent	Katie Rushworth	340196
Steeple Aston Walking Group		Penny, Stuart, Sue and Graham	sawgox25@gmail.com
Toddler Group		Charlotte Clarke	07799 030490
Valentine Club		Richard & Daphne Preston	340512
Village Hall (see advertisement)	Letting Agent	Katie Rushworth	340196
Village Website	www.steepleaston.org.uk	Editor: Jenny Bell	347714
Volunteer Connect - Community transport scheme			0300 3030125
Women's Institute	President	Linda Needle	340028



"...folly is not always folly."
Jane Austen

Steeple Aston *Life*

October 2020

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Editorial

Welcome to the October edition of Steeple Aston Life. As the leaves begin to turn and we've all got knitted jumpers and pumpkin spiced lattes on our minds (or perhaps that's just me!), the August Bank Holiday may seem like a distant memory. Nevertheless, to remind you of the last days of summer, we've got the results of the Scarecrow Competition, plus an article written by winner Claire (see pages 22-23) explaining her inspiration for her fabulous scarecrow. In case you missed it, check out pages 24-25 for a selection of photos from the day, including the Fete at the Gate.

Meanwhile, if you've been inspired by the scarecrows to take up an allotment or, like many of us, have spent lockdown doing the gardening, take a look at pages 10-11, where Amanda Rodgers explains her new Seed Sharing initiative, as part of Sustainable Steeple. There will be more information coming up in future editions about Sustainable Steeple too, so watch this space!

Avid readers of Mind Games will notice something a little different this month, as we've got a challenging cryptic crossword for you to solve. Written by Yoni Kinory, there's even a prize for the first correct answer selected at random. Send your answers to editorialife@gmail.com. Good luck!

Finally, if you've never made it to the Cotswold Wildlife park, take Eileen Baglin-Jones' word for it – you are missing out! Take a look at page 13 for her account of her visit there with her niece and her young son.

Here's to a great month!
Best wishes,

Angela

Photo: Mick Bonwick





Scarecrow Weekend

Many thanks to the Horticultural Society for the Scarecrow Weekend. It was a huge success, a lovely community event. We met loads of people (properly distanced) and felt that Steeple Aston was back in harness. Thanks too to all who ran stalls and teas especially to Julia Whybrew and the amazing collection for the food bank.

And ... It was fun... Hooray!

Best wishes to all

Martin Dale

A Huge Thank You

When I started the collection of food for the Banbury Food Bank I was hoping to get an average of one tin per household plus a small amount of money from selling meringues and lemon curd. I was stunned by the generosity of friends and neighbours. In all 800 tins or cartons of food plus £710 was given by Steeple, Middle and North Aston plus a particularly generous donation from Gagingwell. I don't know how to describe how much I have been overwhelmed by your generosity.

THANK YOU

Julia Whybrew



Steeple Aston Noticeboard



A VERY BIG “THANK-YOU”

During the August Bank Holiday weekend Chris and Sally Cooper and Richard and Daphne Preston had stalls outside our homes to raise funds for Katharine House Hospice. Sally had made some superb preserves and Richard and Daphne had some surplus produce from the garden, and over the weekend, and with the help of a donation from a scarecrow exhibitor, raised an astonishing £400 for the hospice.

Thank-you to all who supported us in raising this incredible sum for such a worthwhile charity which in turn has helped their continued support for families dealing with end of life care and external support for The Horton Hospital.

Chris and Sally Cooper and Richard and Daphne Preston

THE PHANTOM SNIPPER OF STEEPLE ASTON

It has been brought to the attention of the Parish Council that a ghostly presence is pruning foliage around the village. We appreciate your efforts to keep the village tidy and the footpaths clear. However, please could we ask you only to cut away foliage that actually causes a physical obstruction. And please could you ‘spirit away’ your prunings into a hedgerow rather than leave them for other people to clear up or trip over. With thanks.

Steeple Aston Parish Council

OurBus Bartons

OurBus Bartons resumed a limited service last month. For residents of Steeple Aston, this means the return of your Wednesday service to Chipping Norton and Friday service to Bicester. Please see our [website](#) and page 47 of this magazine for more info.

We follow strict guidance to keep yourselves and our drivers safe.

- All of our vehicles are fitted with sanitizer dispensers
- Passengers are required to wear face coverings throughout their journey
- All surfaces in our vehicles are disinfected after every journey
- Bus Passes will be scanned and any cash handled will be sanitized

As we must limit the number of passengers we carry to 8, you must reserve a seat by giving us 24hrs notice of your intention to travel by calling Sheila Tumman (01869 340635) or Martin Roberts on (01869 347188). Pre-booked passengers will have priority. We will only use this information to arrange for an additional bus to cover busy journeys if necessary.

We’ve missed you!

The Team at OurBus Bartons



Hello

We live in Steeple Aston and have recently become proud parents of two puppies who, by the middle of September, will be vaccinated and able to be taken out for walks and visits etc.

If you are in a similar situation and looking to meet other puppies for socialising and play dates we would love to hear from you. Please phone on 01869347970 or 07725643140.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sue and Tony Peck

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. Masks are now required for all visits to the Centre, including the Pharmacy.

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.



Steeple People



Madeleine Clifford

How long have you lived in Steeple Aston? 7 years.

Where did you move from? Brackley.

What brought you here? I moved here because it was a halfway point between mine and my husband's work.

What do you like best about living in Steeple Aston? I love the countryside especially the Eyecatcher field and the architectural character and the friendliness of the village.



As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? I wanted to be a traffic warden when I grew up because they seemed to get paid a lot for doing very little! (I thought they got to keep all the money!)

What was your first job? My first job was waitressing in a village pub but I was also a horse riding instructor when I was just 17 and spent my gap year before university teaching riding in a school in Australia.

What do you do for a living now? I now run my own businesses selling parachute equipment, clothing and custom embroidery, and I am also a full time skydiving instructor.

What is the best job you've ever done? My current job is probably the best job I've done as it's fun and varied and you never know what tomorrow will bring, it all depends on the weather!

What is the worst job you've ever done? The worst and most boring job I've done is data entry! This is followed closely by cleaning bathrooms in a backpackers' hostel in Australia!

Tell us about any interesting hobbies you have. I have a private pilot's licence and enjoy flying. I also enjoy riding my horse.

What's your favourite food? Italian/Mediterranean.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go? Norway to see the Fjords and the Northern Lights or South Africa to see Table Mountain and to go on safari.

What do you do to relax? I like to go for a leisurely ride on my horse across the lovely Cotswold countryside.

What's your favourite saying or piece of advice? My piece of advice would be that anything is possible if you put your mind to it. Reach for the moon, even if you miss you'll land amongst the stars!

What makes you happiest in the world? I am happiest when I am seeing a beautiful view or sunset.

VICTORIA PRENTIS MP

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Meet Victoria:

Victoria holds regular surgeries for constituents in supermarkets and her office, and visits pubs across North Oxfordshire as part of her Pub Tour. Please check the website or call Victoria's office for more information about upcoming dates.



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Check out new website

theredlionsteepleaston.co.uk

Seed Saving & Sharing with Sustainable Steeple

The increased interest in 'grow your own' during lockdown has been one of the silver linings of the Covid-19 cloud.

Having only taken on our allotment back in October, we are pretty new to growing. We've had some great hits, particularly in the form of beetroot (record size so far 1.2kg, the pictured specimen opposite was a mere tiddler!), potatoes, strawberries, raspberries, sweetcorn, kale and carrots and a few misses, not least the parsnips which just didn't grow at all and the peas which suffered a bird strike before we'd properly protected them. You live and you learn.

Now, as we head into the winter, we are already thinking about spring planting and have been going through our seed stash.

I am sure we are not alone in having a seed stash and this got me thinking that it would be great if we could share seed with other growers in the village. So, Sustainable Steeple is starting a **seed saving and sharing network**.

Open to anyone, simply email amanda@sustainablesteeple.com or call on 07793 553150 if you'd like to get involved and we'll set up a sharing group where we can all post details of what we have to share.

Seeds can be spares you have got left over, that you know grow well or seed that you have saved from some of your best performers. One of the many positives of sharing is that we benefit from each other's experience – and hopefully avoid too many parsnip situations!

Start Seed Saving

If you are new to seed saving, then here are a few handy hints to help you get started:

- Only save seed from open pollinated varieties. Hybrids, such as F1 or F2 varieties revert to original traits after the first year and so you might be disappointed (fortunately most heritage and heirloom varieties are open pollinated).
- Try to avoid cross pollination. This is easy with peas and beans which self-pollinate, but with other plants such as tomatoes, it simply means that it is best to plant different varieties away from each other, to avoid ending up with a hybrid.
- Ensure you are saving seed from only healthy plants.

Why not have a go? Below are a few easy savers to get you started:

Beans

- Leave the pods on the plant until they are looking reasonably dry
- Once picked, either dry in pods, or shell them and dry as beans
- Dry on a large plate, baking paper or tray
- Leave them somewhere with lots of airflow and no direct sunlight
- To test if they are dry, use your fingernail – if it creates a dent, leave it to dry for a bit longer

Continued opposite...



Pumpkins & Squash

- Scrape the seeds from the inside of the squash/pumpkin
- Wash in a colander to get rid of any flesh
- Dry on a large plate, baking paper or tray
- Leave them somewhere with lots of airflow and no direct sunlight.
- Move them around a bit, especially over the first few days
- Be patient – it can take several weeks before they are well and truly dry

With all saved seeds, they then need to be stored in cool, dry paper bags, envelopes, seed packets and jars ready for use next season.

No need to rush out to buy seed packets, there is a **'how to' guide on the Sustainable Steeple website and Facebook page** showing you how to make them from recycled brown paper/packaging and we've put lots more information and helpful links on seed saving on there too. www.sustainablesteeple.com

Seed Sharing Event (Spring 2021)

One of the joys of seed sharing is that it is a community activity, so we are planning to host a seed sharing event in early spring (Covid-19 allowing) and a seedling swap in late spring/early summer.

Amanda Rodgers

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Sustainable Steeple Online Shop Launch

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and much more

www.sustainablesteeple.com

www.facebook.com/SustainableSteeple

We are also looking for keen crafters to help us – please email amanda@sustainablesteeple.com

All proceeds will be used to fund village projects with a sustainable flavour

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO.....?

The Cotswold Wildlife Park?

I'm generally a bit wary of visiting wild animals in captivity but a recent visit from a(nother!) niece and her young son and the consequent need to find somewhere to visit which would entertain him, led me to book tickets for the Cotswold Wildlife Park near Burford. My preconceptions and anxieties began to be overcome even as we arrived and drove up the lengthy drive to the enormous car park past Emus in very large pens, grazing quietly.



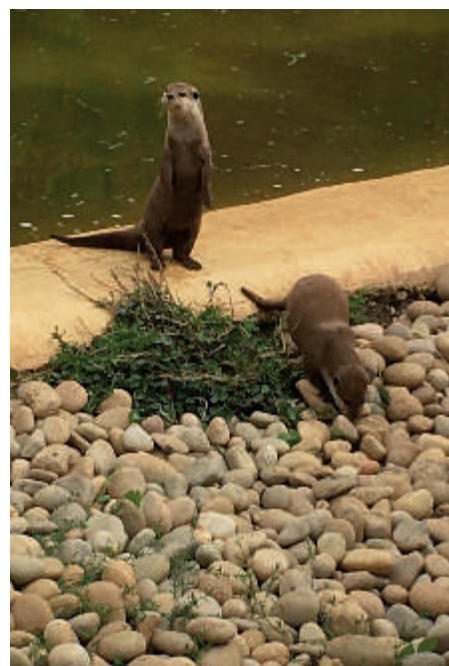
Our entry was very efficiently managed – in these days of Covid-19 you have to book ahead. Having shown our tickets we were gently advised to watch for the many 'Keep Your Distance' signs, to use the frequent hand sanitiser stations around the site and were encouraged to 'Have a lovely day!' With 250 acres to explore there is plenty of space for the animals and for human visitors (and for dogs on leads) to do just that. We found that generally people were mindful of social distancing and it was good after so many days of lockdown and curtailed activity to watch families enjoying time out together in the open air.

Some of the animals were pretty static – looking back at visitors with what we imagined might be boredom – but who really knows what goes on in the mind of a capybara? And were we right or conditioned to believe that the owls were looking at us in a wise and penetrating way? Many of the other creatures however were lively and entertaining. Watching Dora, the baby Rhino being chased around and surely teasing her mother in their large grassy area, studiously being ignored by the male rhino was a highlight of the day. The

meerkats with their tiny balls of fluff young attracted much attention in the walled garden part of the park but for my small charge the penguins, showing off in their pool of clear blue water were the favourites. 'If I had my flippers on I think I could swim fast and jump like that, Auntie Eileen!' I doubt it – but they were a lot of fun.

Apart from watching sweet little meerkats, bright flamingos and graceful otters I much enjoyed the gardens amongst which the animals and birds are set. They are well worth a visit on their own and all areas are wheelchair accessible – wheelchairs can also be hired. There are some animals and places which cannot be visited at present (I didn't mind missing the Reptile House!), and due to Covid-19 restrictions the little railway which encircles the site is not running but there was plenty to entertain and interest us for the day.

There are a couple of outside refreshment kiosks, plenty of places to picnic, regularly cleaned toilets are available and the souvenir shop is open with numbers carefully controlled. This was the only moment when we saw a long queue and walked on by. I guess now that schools have returned numbers will reduce considerably during the week. If you can visit then you should enjoy a peaceful time: but it's more fun, I think, if you can be with children and watch and listen to their reactions to the extraordinary range of animal and bird life in the park! Practical information: The park opens between 10.00a.m. and 6.00p.m. Booked online, ticket prices are Adults £14.40 / Concessions £9.90 / Children £9.90





Wealth Creation

The Tudors were a canny clan,
in a land of milk and honey,
ambitious doesn't cover it,
as they looked to make some money.

Their eyes were on a real big fish,
some thought t'were being absurd,
their target for their latest scam,
the king, Richard the third.

"There's little wealth in rustling,
and stealing others' cattle,
lets go for the big one instead,
and seize the throne by battle."

The rest they say is history,
with speed they did dispatch,
the fastest plot in history,
as they this fish did catch.

And so the king was toppled o'er,
his great wealth they did nick,
the first time in our history,
a plan - to get rich quick!

Peter Wild

Zoom

This damned corona virus
Is the cause of doom and gloom,
So to subvert its limitations
We've all signed up to Zoom.

Work meetings, webinars, quizzes
These can all resume.
Family chats and book groups
Can all be done on Zoom.

The picture sometimes disappears,
And then so does the sound.
And a noise like running water
Can be heard in the background.

One soul doesn't know how to mute
Or how to leave the room
But soon we will all get the hang
Of how to meet on Zoom.

Many companies have gone bust
But some have had a boom
And I'm betting that it's all been good
For the people who own Zoom.

Future generations
Will use this system from the womb.
And will think there's nothing strange
About a life lived just on Zoom.

And older generations
Will use this method, I assume,
To send us ghostly messages
From far beyond the tomb.

Cathy Lawday



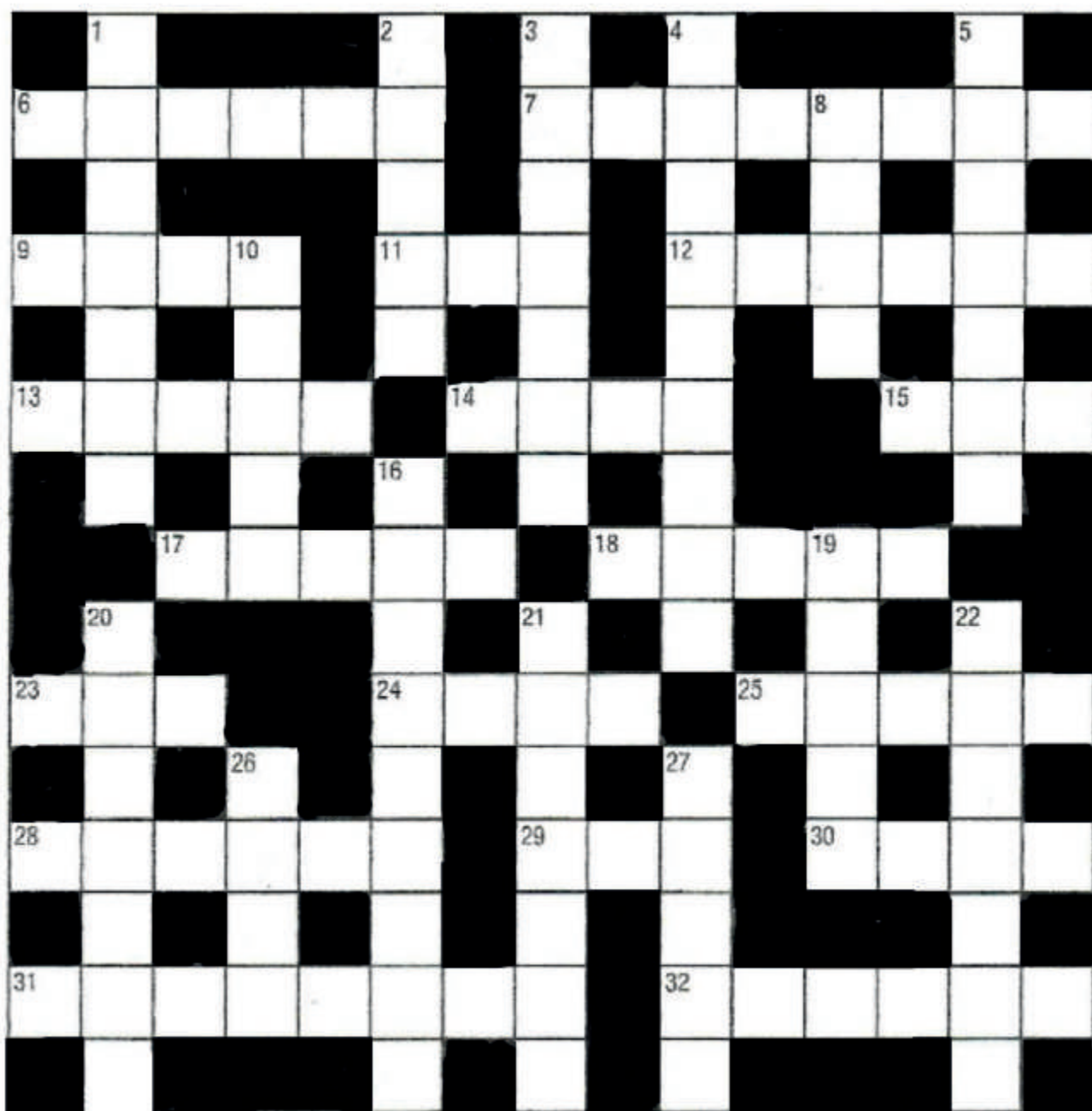
Halloween Word Search

C	O	A	I	O	E	I	Q	A	I	I	I	P	E	U
S	P	N	Q	Q	N	U	J	W	Y	T	L	G	L	P
T	N	W	E	I	T	G	N	Q	S	W	C	E	N	I
R	L	V	Y	Y	T	N	D	O	L	O	L	V	C	W
E	L	D	R	V	I	R	H	I	N	A	U	L	S	I
A	D	T	X	L	Q	G	I	E	D	G	R	G	C	T
T	G	D	B	B	U	X	E	C	M	N	V	A	P	C
E	P	O	G	Q	F	W	M	B	K	J	U	O	M	H
S	G	F	Q	A	O	U	G	O	Z	B	A	M	U	E
J	I	X	Y	L	A	V	N	A	N	K	Y	T	M	S
I	M	O	L	L	W	E	M	C	Z	S	K	C	M	J
D	U	A	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	V	T	F	Y	C
O	H	A	Z	Y	T	C	O	S	T	U	M	E	K	G
C	I	L	P	E	O	C	T	O	B	E	R	Y	R	M
E	P	P	X	R	S	H	W	R	H	L	J	S	S	E

???? Mind Games

Cryptic crossword set by Yoni Kinory

There is a small book prize for the first correct answer picked randomly by the editor after the deadline. Answers must be received by Wednesday 14th October. Please email answers to editorsalife@gmail.com. The solution and the winner will be revealed in the November edition of Steeple Aston Life.



???? Mind Games

Across:

- 6: Messengers are involved in a nasty prang elsewhere (6)
- 7: Daily objective first is to produce part of a book (8)
- 9: Stormy decades end up in a cosy home (4)
- 11: A beastly royal in ample opulence (3)
- 12: Confused raid with an angular measure (6)
- 13: Press LP hard in the first amplification (5)
- 14: Deity exists twice (4)
- 15: Fowl in niche natural environment (3)
- 17: Extra payment in Ghana and Gabon used wisely (5)
- 18: Happy to be wed, so they say (5)
- 23: A parent holding back the flood? (3)
- 24: Lend me an ear at this spot, we are told (4)
- 25: Athletics in southern refuge from storm (5)
- 28: Mother, the race of nurses starts to the top of the profession (6)
- 29: Flower loses point and becomes void (3)
- 30: Response to a drone (4)
- 31: Prevent from taking part in a subsidiary activity (8)
- 32: Ensemble costume (6)

Down:

- 1: Agreement on three points about camping equipment (7)
- 2: Song of praise in an Alps alms house (5)
- 3: Self-reproach about a detective (7)
- 4: Commercial garments go to their destinations (9)
- 5: Takes it easy about careless two points (7)
- 8: Help with a captured Ethiopian princess (4)
- 10: Office temp observed to exhibit speed (5)
- 16: This is a genuine clue (9)
- 19: Bark back again? That will settle it, then (5)
- 20: Country embraces a returning artist with a disease (7)
- 21: A rope for an artist (7)
- 22: Chocolate cookie for the elf (7)
- 26: Like an electron when unbound without a charge (4)
- 27: Melancholy partner of some weirdo omnivore (5)

Child's Play Answers

Fun; Costume; Mummy; October; Halloween; Goblin; Trick; Ghost; Monster; Witches; Pumpkin; Treat



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This award is to support young people who are in further education or training who:

- are 18-25 years old
- live in Steeple Aston or Middle Aston (when not at university or college) or attended Dr Radcliffe's school for 2 years minimum

Awards are made at the discretion of the Trustees of Dr Radcliffe's School Foundation based on the financial need of the applicant. Household circumstances will be taken into consideration, but there is no restriction as to family income; each case is considered individually. Young people can apply any year that they are eligible regardless of whether they have received an award in the past.

Application forms and further information for these awards are available from:

- the Steeple Aston Village website
- Dr Radcliffe's School
- Mr Nigel Roots, Freeths LLP, 5000 Oxford Business Park South, Oxford OX4 2BH

Applications for the awards must be received by 11 November. Any late applications will only be considered in exceptional circumstances at the Trustees' discretion.



THE VALENTINE CLUB

Unfortunately, we are still not in a position to contemplate returning to our monthly meetings in the village hall or travelling by coach to various locations as planned, but I am sure we will be back to something like normal before too long.

Taking into consideration the health and safety of all, we have had to cancel our annual jumble sale for this year. The impact on the club is significant in as much as it is our primary fundraiser for the year but on a more positive note, Oxfordshire County Council, by way of our local county councillor, Mr Arash Fatemian, has awarded the club a grant of £500 to help us start up again as soon as circumstances allow.

Meetings have been cancelled until December when we will evaluate the situation and make a decision. To keep up to date with the club go to www.steepleaston.org.uk or our own website www.valentineclub.wixsite/aston or simply call me on 01869 340512.

Kind regards to everyone and keep safe.

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

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After our garden meeting last month and news of village hall reopening, we thought we would be able to meet again for our October meeting. However, we have cancelled the speaker as only a handful of members felt safe about meeting and after the news of only six people being able to meet in a group it was just as well we had cancelled. We had hoped to meet in Julie's garden again but with the awful rain we had a couple of weeks ago this made it impossible due to a collapse of part of her garden and the very wet area where we would sit.

Members can still enjoy virtual meetings with speakers, these being organised by the Oxfordshire Federation. We are also still enjoying our weekly quizzes and the committee are keeping in contact with our members for chats via the telephone. It very much looks as though it will be 2021 before we feel safe enough to meet again – here's hoping.

Keep well and keep safe.

Linda Needle (President)

Village Hall News



Annual Bonfire Night Thursday 5th November Cancelled

Due to constantly changing Government Guidelines, social distancing rules and no food allowed, the Village Hall Committee together with the Sports & Recreation Centre committee it was decided, very reluctantly and regrettably, to cancel this year's Bonfire Night. This recommendation and decision was made after much debate and a heavy heart given the tradition of the event and the importance to the village.

At the moment, the following are due to take place.

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

Collect keys from "Touchstones" The Dickredge, Steeple Aston, OX25 4RS.

Always remember, clean hands, social distancing and don't forget your mask.

Barbara Brewer, Chair



The Gardening Spot

The “Not the Annual Show” and Scarecrows plus a little light gardening

So, apart from the usual gardening chores during September, I should have been writing a report on the 129th Annual Flower Show and Fun Dog Show, but instead we had scarecrows and stalls scattered around both Steeple and Middle Aston over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

With so many events being cancelled across the country this year, the horticultural committee decided to mark the day by inviting villagers to create a scarecrow and display it outside their house. Little did we envisage an invasion of 39 scarecrows lurking in hedges, over walls, leaning on gates and even climbing the church tower.

The committee decided to offer an incentive of three prizes but I think most of the scarecrows arrived in Steeple and Middle Aston simply because they had nowhere else to go and let's face it, where better to be on a bank holiday weekend! Two independent judges arrived at 9am to be given a map identifying the location of this invasion and off they went to judge, in their opinion, which were the three best or most worthy winners. Three hours later they returned to tell me that they needed to go home and have a rest before making the final decision. Five hours later the phone call came through advising me of their decision. As they both pointed out, it took eight hours to decide because all the scarecrows were of such a high standard and so imaginative, they should all have been awarded a prize but first second and third is all we asked.

First was an NHS nurse standing outside Claire Hall's house on South Side with some gorgeous feathered wings, which needed to be appreciated from both front and back. At this point I should say thank-you to Claire for designing the maps that enabled both the judges and all the visitors to find the scarecrows. Second was a scary witch, peering around the corner of Paines Hill Cottage (John and Janet Coley) which has apparently sent many a walker scurrying for safety after a late evening walk around the village. Finally, in third place was the purveyor of toilet rolls and all those items of extreme scarcity experienced during lockdown. He, or maybe she, was resident at 12 Jubilee Close where Andy and Jane Cadd had been providing a home of comparative safety for this most dubious of characters. The reality is that all entries were winners as it gave the villagers something to focus on when we should all have been enjoying the flower show.

To add to the occasion of a rather pleasant walk around the village that bank holiday weekend, there were stalls offering items for a donation which in turn benefited various organisations such as The Banbury Food Bank, Katharine House Hospice, The Church and a few others. It all goes to show what a thoughtful and generous village we live in and although we couldn't have our usual show, we were still able to organise something which hopefully provided some amusement and assistance to those less fortunate than ourselves.

As for the garden, well it is that time of the year when we need to “tidy” the garden by removing all the debris that summer has conveyed upon us such as runner bean tops, herbaceous border foliage that is past its best and hedges that needed a final haircut before winter. Give your greenhouses a good clean by removing all the plants you can and washing the glass down, both inside and out. Have a look around the garden for any young plants that have seeded or layered themselves and pot them up for next year. Even if you don't want them, someone will, be it a friend or maybe a plant stall at the next village event. Keep cutting the grass but at a slightly higher level and trim the edges so that when next season arrives, the lawn will be in a decent shape. This is also the last opportunity to give your lawn an autumn feed, giving it strength to survive the winter.

The best advice I can give any gardener at this time of the year is that the more you can do now, before winter sets in, the easier and more pleasurable gardening will be come next spring.

On behalf of The Horticultural Society, THANK-YOU for supporting the scarecrow competition and all the stalls at the end of August.

Keep safe and best wishes,

Richard Preston

The Winner's Story: The inspiration behind the NHS Angel Scarecrow

Thank you to the village for a fun bank holiday weekend, it was lovely to see everyone enjoying our NHS Angel Scarecrow. If you inspected her closely, you would have noticed there was a bit more to her – she is actually a Research Nurse! Our scarecrow was my tribute to all the NHS Research Nurses who have worked so hard throughout the pandemic to care for patients on ground-breaking clinical trials.

The Department of Health funds The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), which is the research arm of the NHS. The NIHR enables high-quality health and care research in England by meeting the costs of additional staff, facilities, equipment and support services. This means that research is embedded within the NHS and contributes to making it the world-class service that we are all lucky enough to access.

It's been very clear that the powerful capability of clinical research embedded within the NHS has facilitated the amazing research effort in the UK. Within weeks of the pandemic breaking the RECOVERY study (lead by the University of Oxford) was open and recruiting patients in every acute hospital trust in the country. This study has since recruited over 12,000 patients, gathering evidence on different treatment options for patients hospitalised with COVID-19. It was this study that was able to evidence that hydroxychloroquine was not offering any benefit to these patients, and that dexamethasone (a relatively cheap and readily available treatment) reduced deaths by a third.

In research, it's not often that we are able to demonstrate the impact of research in such a clear and immediate way. Usually, participants have to wait several years to read the summaries of the studies they take part in. The pandemic has really shone a light on the research activity within the NHS. Taking part in research is a personal choice, but I hope that everyone will consider looking into what research is available to them – ask the doctor or nurse at your next medical appointment and see what's out there! Taking part in research can sometimes give personal benefits (access to new treatments, better monitoring of your condition), and it will certainly help others who follow after you.

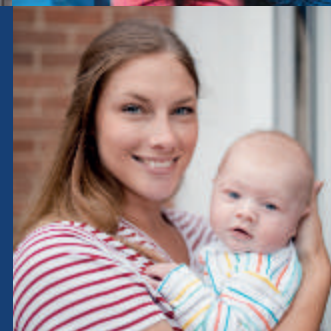
The NIHR website <https://bepartofresearch.nihr.ac.uk/> allows you to search for research opportunities. If you follow the links on the page for supporting COVID research you can also sign up to give permission for researchers to contact you about taking part in COVID-19 vaccine studies. By collecting details about people who are interested in taking part in vaccine studies, this will help cut down the time it takes to find volunteers. This will help them to carry out studies and find a vaccine faster. You can sign up if you are 18 or over, and live in the UK. You are not signing up to take part in a specific study when you use this service. You are letting researchers know you're happy for them to contact you if they think you might be suitable to take part in their studies.

Research is the only way we will get out of this pandemic, so if you feel you might be able to participate then please sign up to hear more about what is involved, and tell your family and friends!

Claire Hall



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Fete at the Gate and Scarecrow Competition

Here are a selection of photos from the day



Photos: Mick Bonwick, Nigel Francis and Claire Hall

Fete at the Gate and Scarecrow Competition

Here are a selection of photos from the day

For more photos of the day, take a look at:

<https://www.steepleaston.org.uk/photo-gallery-2020/nggallery/media-gallery-2020/scarecrow-competition>



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Dr Radcliffe's School in Lockdown

Guy Brigg, MBE, deputy head at Dr Radcliffe's School, has kindly recorded this information for the archive. We think it paints a very clear picture of education for the more fortunate children during lockdown.

Casting my mind back to mid-March seems like a slightly distant and hazy memory now, so much has happened in the world since those early days of the virus. I do distinctly remember the unease that set in across the teaching profession and the wider world with dire warnings of lockdowns and mass illness as we all moved into a world that we couldn't have imagined this time last year.

At school in the meantime, emergency plans of action went into overdrive, spearheaded by headteacher Frances Brown and the rest of the team. We needed to move quickly to ensure the continuation of an effective and meaningful curriculum. Year 3 teacher Katie McGurk sourced an excellent online learning platform called Seesaw and every child in the school was assigned an account. Spare and out-of-date laptops were speedily reconfigured to enable children with no computer access at home a means for communicating with their teachers and then we were set to go.

The virtual learning platform enabled all the teachers in the school to set tasks, read stories, record videos, prepare PowerPoints and even teach specific skills all covering each year group's specific curricula. Children were able to respond, post their work online and receive individual feedback from their teachers. They could even record their responses verbally if they wanted to. The feedback from parents was universally thankful and praised the school's rapid response and efforts to maintain some semblance of normality in these unprecedented times; I know the whole staff were also hugely appreciative for the support we received from the parent body.

The children were amazing and adapted brilliantly. although anecdotally we all knew how desperate they were to get back to school and see their friends and some proper 'live' teaching. Throughout the lockdown period we also had a small group of key-worker children in school and staff were rostered on to cover these groups. Plans were made for the successful return of Year 6, Year R and Year 1 and the children were put into separate learning bubbles with staggered playtimes and their own play areas. To minimise crowding, families were given staggered start times and pick up times, which worked successfully.

Even the governors had to change the way that they were working. An emergency action committee was put in place in order that there was flexibility to meet weekly if needed. Due to the continuous change in guidance this was a necessity. The EAC (emergency action committee) was made up of Frances Brown (headteacher), governors and a member of ODST (our academy trust). All meetings were set up via a video networking site. There were frustrations with this due to each individual's internet connections and it was never quite certain who would be visible on the day.

Frances and the senior leadership team were determined that all the year groups would have the chance to come back to school before the summer break and so we devised a system of half-class bubbles using all available spaces in the school and this allowed us to have all the children back on a part-time basis for the last three weeks of the school year. Huge credit is due to Frances and her meticulous planning for this. We all knew how important it was for the children's mental health and well-being that they got to see their friends, say goodbye to their teachers and have a proper end to the school year. I can only imagine how anxious some families will feel in schools where they weren't able to do this with children at home for almost 6 months. I'm so pleased we were able to achieve a continuity of education for Dr Radcliffe's pupils.

Guy Brigg

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Parish Council Meeting Notes



The September Parish Council meeting started by welcoming the new Councillor, Rebecca Lewin. There is a full description of her on the website (steepleaston.org.uk) so I will just say she has wide experience in financial management and human resources in large and small charitable organisations.

There is hope that we might get an internet connection in the Village Hall and it could even be free of charge via a government fund. Apparently the Village Hall has been selected as one of the contenders but we are unlikely to know for a couple of months whether we have been successful. If we are chosen the new facility will also improve mobile reception around the Village Hall as well. My fingers are tightly crossed.

There was a long discussion about cutting back the hedge and even the trees in front of the Lawrence Field houses on Heyford Road. They decided, in the end, to trim the hedge back to where it had been a year ago and to ask the residents of the houses for their views on whether it should be trimmed back further next year.

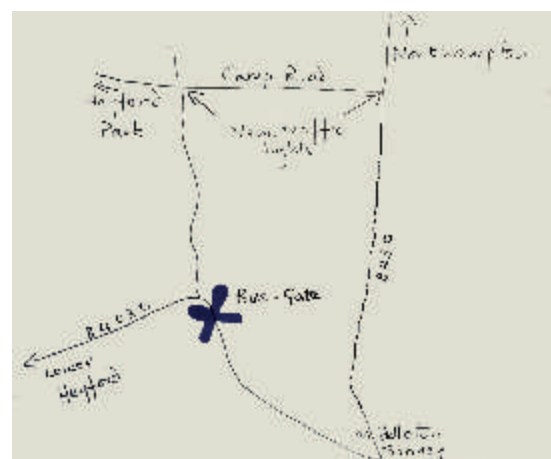
Representatives of the Dr Radcliffe Trust and the Parish Council have been discussing the bottom car park by Robinsons Close. The area is owned by the Trust and they say it would not be consistent with their objectives to spend a lot to improve the access and upgrade the surface. Instead they are proposing to put up a sign saying users are trespassing. This will protect them from claims for compensation by drivers, such as one of the Councillors, who recently grounded his car on the way in. The Councillors were concerned that if the lower 'car park' was closed there would be more parking on the road. However it was assumed that drivers of four by fours would not be put off by either the road surface or trespassing signs so nothing would change from now except that the Trust could not be sued for the state of their unofficial 'car park'.

Both our District Councillor for Cherwell and our County Councillor for Oxfordshire each attended parts of the meeting. They were both thanked for their Covid Support Grants which together came to about £750. In fact the Council has spent about £150

more than this on cleaning equipment and cleaning time though it has been decided that the cleaning should now stop. Let's hope Covid-19 lets it stay that way.

A few months ago there was an application for planning approval for eight houses to be built in the paddock behind The Beeches and this was turned down by the planners at Cherwell. The plans have been resubmitted but this time for ten houses with one extra three bed house squeezed in. This change might be because planning applications for ten or more houses have to be decided by the Councillors, not the planning officers who turned it down last time. Also ten houses is below the threshold of eleven for being obliged to include some affordable homes. If the scheme does get approval this time it will come with up to £44,000 from the developers to be spent in the village.

The Oxfordshire Highways Department are keen to encourage the use of buses and bicycles which seems sensible till you see what they are proposing for Heyford Park. The idea is that the road from here to Bicester will have a bus-gate across the road about half a mile before the Middleton Stoney cross road (at the dangerous extremely sharp bend where the road to Heyford Park joins the B4030). The bus, bikes and local residents will get through but the rest of us will have to go an extra two and a half miles round with two extra sets of lights on the way. The diversion would mean finding a different route or turning left at the dangerous corner, taking the first turning on the right at new traffic lights and turning right on to the B430 at new lights there.



Parish Council Meeting *Notes*



This daft idea will not happen for at least two years as its implementation depends on the amount of traffic generated at Heyford Park and that in turn depends on the speed of the house building there. Our Councillors only heard about the bus-gate recently even though other villages around were consulted about this proposal. The reason for this is that it was assumed that traffic from Heyford Park would not go through Steeple Aston. Highways seem to have forgotten that others, like us, would like to continue using the B4030 to get to and from Bicester.

It was clear that blame for this barmy concept was being laid at the door of the officials in Highways. Our County and District Councillors were against the idea but it appears the concept has been planned for a long time and it may now be difficult to stop this ludicrous proposal going ahead.

We were told there would be a bus every 20 minutes from Heyford Park to Bicester. Initially the bus service would be subsidised by the developers at Heyford Park. It was hoped by Highways, rather improbably to those at the meeting, that the regular bus service would become so well used that it would become financially viable and so continue in the long term. Apparently, and unsurprisingly, all the local villages are against the bus-gate.

One of the Councillors, Graham Porcas, is a star of TV, radio and social media. He talked about being made a Road Warden and he will soon be given a tamper (a heavy flat weight on the end of a handle) and some tarmac so he can mend holes in the road himself. Since he told us justifiably proudly that he had got a pothole mended by Highways within three hours of reporting it I was not sure he needed to take direct action himself, though it does sound fun.

The houses in some roads in Steeple Aston have a covenant in their deeds which try to ensure the open ambience of their front gardens will be protected. This is a matter for the local residents and not the Parish Council but some recent works, which are

inconsistent with the covenants, were described by the Councillors as 'regrettable'.

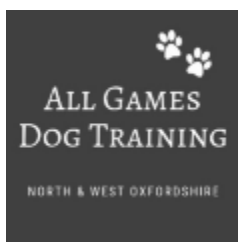
There was a brief discussion of where some road signs have been obscured by foliage. Potentially much the most serious ones are at the junction of the dual carriageway and the road from Middle Aston. Apparently this has meant that some drivers coming from Middle Aston, because they could not see the other lane of the dual carriageway, had turned right instead of left - an accident waiting to happen. The 30mph signs on Sixtyfoot are also obscured and we were encouraged to report our concerns to Fix-My-Street.

The Government wants to radically change the planning system. Cherwell would have to prepare a new Local Plan in which sites to be protected, or for development, will need to be identified in advance. In most cases planning applications will then not be needed, and there will therefore be no opportunity for local communities to object to specific schemes. Separately, we have been asked to identify for Cherwell's current Plan review what planning issues are of concern. First we would like to ensure that if further new houses are built in the parish that planners take note that we have already a good amount of affordable housing. Secondly, the possibility of a substantial business park at Hatch End must be made proportionate in size to its rural location.

Sadly Covid-19 has meant that both the Remembrance Day Parade and the firework display have had to be cancelled this year. But twenty people are still enjoying meals from S and J Catering and volunteers are helping in other ways. Do come to the next meeting, via Zoom, which will be on 12 October instead of the usual third Monday in the month.

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



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Steeple Aston Village Archive is pleased to announce that the **Village History Centre** at the Village Hall, Fir Lane is re-opening on Saturday, October 3rd.

The Centre will be open each Saturday morning from 10.00 till 12.00 as before, but with “COVID Secure” measures in place for your and our safety. A maximum of 2 visitors will be allowed at any one time.

While we have been closed, we have not been idle. The extraordinary events of this year have been, and continue to be, recorded for posterity in our archive, and contributions of photos or personal testimony are always welcome - preferably digitally to:

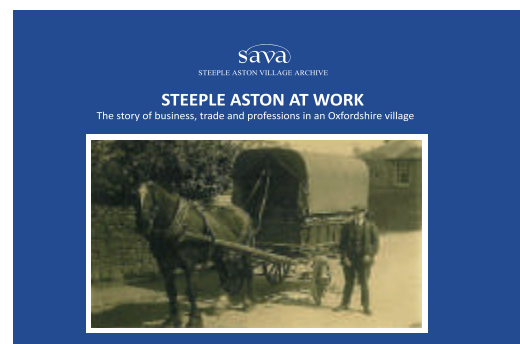
steepleastonarchive@gmail.com

We are also busy producing our **annual Exhibition and book**; this year it's “Steeple Aston at Work”.

We hope to be able to proceed with the Exhibition, on the weekend of November 7th and 8th in the Village Hall, but much will depend on current restrictions.

See next month's SAL for an update.

Our super new book on the subject - to be published on the same weekend - will in any case make a **perfect Xmas present**.





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Steeple Aston Golf Society



I hope everyone is keeping safe and well and have managed to avoid coming into contact with the COVID-19 virus.

Unfortunately the current situation is such that organising a SAGS meeting is still not possible. The Stratford meeting has been cancelled. However, a friend of mine has two tickets for the 2020 Ryder Cup. They are box seats plus airfares and hotel accommodation. He didn't realise when he bought them that this is the same day as his wedding.

If you're interested and want to go instead of him, it's at St Johns Church, at 14.15. Her name is Maisie. She will be the one in the white dress.

All the best for the rest of the year, stay safe, keep your distance and don't forget your mask.

Alan Brewer, Chair



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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





We have a bumper crop of pears this year. They are Conference, which tend not to ripen easily on the tree. They need to be picked with their stem attached, and stored carefully until ripe, or peel and poach them with vanilla and honey, and they will turn the most delicate shade of coral. I will make some pear and ginger compote, and freeze it. Ginger complements pears and apples, though it's not quite the marriage made in heaven which is apple and blackberry. Whoever came up with that combination should be canonised – or is that blasphemy? Juice this year is going to be pear and apple – a luxury.



In my ancient cookbook, started in April 1992, I have, in my Mum's writing the recipe for:

Pear and Ginger Pudding

Mum writes at the bottom "Very old recipe! At least 50 years".

For 6

450 gm pears – peel, core and chop. Stew until soft in just enough water to prevent burning. Chop them a little more so the pear is in tiny pieces, or puree if you would prefer. Pour into an ovenproof pie dish.

Add 25 gm brown sugar.

Melt 40 gm butter and 110 gm golden syrup in a pan.

Allow to cool a little.

Add a beaten egg.

Stir this mixture into a bowl holding 85 gm self-raising flour and a generous teaspoon of ground ginger, until you have a smooth mixture. Pour this mixture on top of the pears. Bake in a medium oven (about 160C) for 35 minutes. Halfway through cooking, sprinkle blanched split almonds on the top. Take care. The syrup in the batter causes the mixture to catch very quickly.

Serve this warm, with cream, ice cream or crème fraîche.

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‘Feel the Land; Photography and Emotion’ by Astrid McGechan, LRPS was our September presentation by a photographer who started off sorting out her own wedding photographs and graduated on to creating artistic, emotion laden images using her mobile phone before moving onto an Olympus camera. Her philosophy is to give the viewer an opportunity to ask questions about what is happening in the image. So, whilst the work she displayed was a mixture of street, landscapes, and people, Astrid is not afraid to push the boundaries and go against recognised techniques. By chance Astrid took a photograph that was over exposed, of a decaying boat. She liked the result because it captured the idea of a faded past and went onto create a series of faded images.

Another idea that impressed was her work using reflections in glass and water, a most colourful image of the windows of Coventry Cathedral was created using reflections giving an abstract impression of the building. Throughout her work Astrid has been adventurous to try different techniques either in post- production or on the camera. By adding texture or an overlay to an image, it can change the feeling for a viewer making it moodier or adding warmth and calm. Astrid has also experimented with camera movement to capture waves and sand to great effect. She loves skies, especially clouds and sunsets, feeling that they can portray a range of emotions from funny to moody. Her message was there were no right or wrong ideas and to have fun and experiment to discover and enjoy the freedom to create an image for a viewer.

I would definitely recommend visiting www.astridmcgechan.com to view her work. For those inspired www.lightandland.co.uk organise workshops in the UK and Europe. Astrid generously donated one of her prints, that was raffled; the winner being Colin Lamb.

Our next presentation is by Scott Hurd about Namibia and wildlife on October 7th at 7.30pm. We are still meeting on ‘Zoom’ and therefore please check the website for details if you wish to join us.

Anne Hunsley

www.addphoto.co.uk

The Cricket Report



Captain's XI versus Chairman's XI....

Under the careful tutelage of Jock Shepherd, Greg Renk has mastered the big roller, known affectionately as the “Beast”, and our track had been rolled so much that it actually resembled a real cricket track and many runs beckoned. Jon Scotchbrook had mown the outfield to within an inch of its life (literally!), so with a fast outfield too. And so it was that The Chairman's XI opening pair, two 13-year-olds, Cosmo Page-Croft (38) and Hector Higgins (30) batted fluently to put on 77 for the first wicket before being dismissed in quick succession by the wily Greg Renk (1-18) and a beautiful off-cutter from Olly Doggett (1-9). Paul Nicolaides (26) and Jon Scotchbrook (50*) then put on another 50 partnership before Paul was deceived by the aerial bombardment of Hugo Rittson-Thomas (1-12). Tom Chessser (52*) took the score past 200 with Jon before both retired after making elegant 50s, which allowed Darren Haskell-Thomas to make his Steeple Aston debut in front of a vocal crowd – his two young sons! A fine boundary promised much until he was deceived by the canny length of Charlie Simmons-Jones (1-23). Chris Watson (10) and Peter Higgins (10*) scrambled 23 runs off the last few overs before Nigel Doggett (1-38) castled Chris on the last ball. The Chairman's XI had amassed the highest score in this game of 249-5 off 35 overs. Surely a winning score?

The Captain's XI get off to a flyer...

Jeremy Farrar looked pleased to be out of the SAGE Zoomathon and hit a quickfire 50 before retiring in only the 11th over. However Ed Page-Croft (2-20), also making his Steeple Aston debut, had dried up the runs from the top end, despite a breezy 18 from 3rd SACC debutante, Tim Jones. It could all have been so different for Tim with Sam Hatz bowling an absolute beauty of a Chinaman when he had not scored; we're still not sure how it missed the stumps! Then the two “Silver Foxes” Greg Renk (27) and Nigel Doggett (30) began compiling runs at an alarming rate and the Captain's Team were 152-2 off 24 overs – 98 needed from 11 overs. Sadly at this point Hector Higgins had to retire with a damaged knee after bowling only 5 balls, his father completing the over. This one ball would prove crucial to the game's climax! Chris Watson (1-36) then bowled Nigel with a looper that slipped under Nigel's bat and the Chairman (3-21) removed Greg Renk. The game had now swung back in favour of the Chairman's Team.....

Which way would it go?

Olly Doggett completely changed the course of the match, smashing an unbeaten 51 to leave the Captain's XI needing 30 to win from 5 overs. Hugo Rittson-Thomas (15) hit a couple of fours to pile the pressure on the bowlers, though Tom Chessser (0-13 from 5 overs) was as unplayable as ever. As we came to the last over 6 runs were needed to win, with the Chairman to bowl only 5 balls. Who would bowl the last ball? Jonty Renk, who had bowled a very tight line earlier in the day, hit the second ball for what would have been a “2” if Jonty had been running at both ends. Unfortunately Charlie S-J was not quite so fast and was run out; sadly Jonty was also one short, so no runs scored. Somehow the decrepit old Chairman managed to bowl 5 dot balls, taking Jonty's wicket on his final ball. This allowed Olly Doggett back to the crease with a 6 needed to win from the last ball and he'd already hit 3 sixes! I turned to my team and asked who would like to bowl the final ball? Amidst a lot of foot shuffling, no eye contact and muffled “no thanks”, Cosmo the teenager put his hand up. All I said was “Whatever you do, don't bowl it short”, which of course was terrible captaincy, because he did! As we watched the low long hop pitch and Olly wind up, we looked to the mid-wicket boundary. Olly hit it well, but, wait, the ball was heading to Darren 6 feet in from the boundary. Would he catch it and fall over the ropes? Would he perhaps parry the ball over the ropes, or would he catch it? The ball hung for an age and Darren took an incredible catch under enormous pressure, much to the enjoyment of his supporters. What a game, but more importantly what spirit from our village club. A number of pints and plates of chips were sunk in the White Horse after the match.

The Cricket Report



Return fixture: Blenheim Palace CC are 1-0 up...

With almost 500 runs scored the previous weekend on the same pitch, uncharacteristically winning the toss, Captain Doggett elected to bat and, looking for a fast start, opened with Arthur Higgins and Tom Chesser. A few overs later both were gone and we were 7-2. We then had Stan bowling to Stan and Nigel to Nigel, our Stan getting the better of theirs with four quick boundaries before being out for 16. At 28-4 trouble loomed but a fine 53 run partnership between Captain and Chairman followed - Nigel Doggett hitting an excellent 44 and a hamstrung Pete Higgins playing a “runner-assisted Geoffrey Boycott inspired” innings of 21. Greg Renk contributed a useful 13 and was followed by James Liebrecht who hit a quick, powerful 26 not out.

132-7 off 35 overs – surely not enough?

Opening bowler Jonty Renk’s perseverance was rewarded with 2-17 from seven overs. The “Silver Foxes” were inspired – Nigel Doggett taking a stunning low catch off a rare Jonty half-tracker, and Greg diving everywhere saving singles. Jonty’s second wicket was a (nearly spilled) simple catch to wicketkeeper Phil Chesser. At the other end Tom Chesser’s 1-5 in seven overs featured only one scoring shot off the bat and a ball that spun miles to bowl the opener. After 14 overs Blenheim were 26-3. Man of the match James Liebrecht then returned to form with a magnificent spell of 1-11. Paul ‘Swanny’ Longman (2-22) maintained his form and even his calm when Tom Chesser dropped a tough chance. Tom made up for it with two of his three catches off Paul’s bowling. With Blenheim 62-6 off 28 overs, a wicket each for Arthur Higgins and Paul Nicolaides concluded matters.

Blenheim finished on 86-8, ending our COVID curtailed season with a great 46 run victory.

Here’s to normality in 2021!

All the best

Peter Higgins
Chairman SACC


Photo: Nigel Francis



Tom Chesser opens the bowling against Blenheim Palace CC

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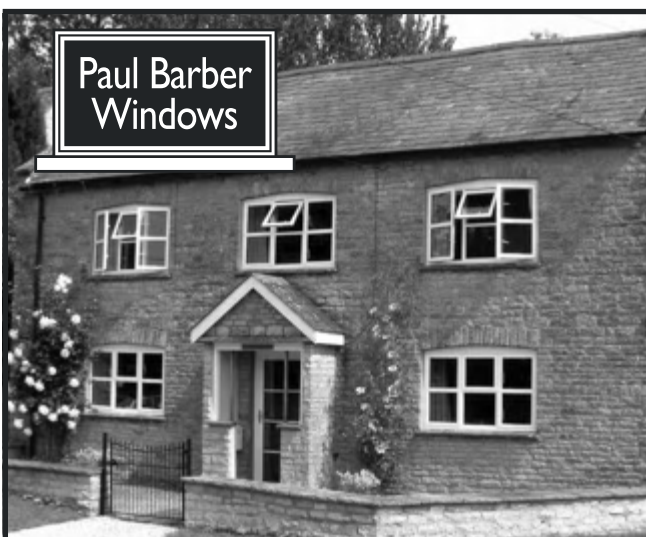


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Church Matters



Here goes...

So six and a half months after weekly church services moved online, and following two and a half months of outdoor services around the Benefice, it's time to go back inside! On October 4th at 5.30pm, Tackley church will see our first indoor service since March. The wardens, PCCs and I have worked together with Bishop Colin's approval to begin a new series of services that hopefully will enable us to continue our worship together through the autumn and into the winter months.

First: a huge thank you to everyone who made the summer outdoor services such a success - to everyone who worked hard to prepare for services and to clear up afterwards, to everyone who came, to those who won the 'best face covering' competitions, to our hand bell ringers, our tower bell ringers, our musicians who played outdoors and to everyone for bringing such good humour, kindness and love as we gathered in all our churchyards: thank you!

Next: let's take all of that terrific 'can-do' spirit as we go back inside. It will be a bit different from how things used to be, but it will be wonderful, and I am really thrilled that we have reached this point. How will it be different?

- * We are still keeping just one service a week in the Benefice. So please do check the rota to see where we are week by week. (The exception is Remembrance Sunday when there will be a service in each parish. Many apologies - we can't put on a big All Souls service this year; however we will read out names of loved ones at Evensong on Nov 1st, and that week's online service will also mark the day.) We are a Benefice: so anyone from any parish can of course go to any service.
- * Though if you plan to come - you need to book! In order to comply with social distancing guidelines, and because we want everyone to feel safe at all times, we have to limit the numbers of people in our church buildings. You may be pleasantly surprised at how many we can still safely fit in though, so don't let that put you off. To book for any service at Steeple Aston call Eileen on 340099, at North Aston call Clive on 340470, and at Tackley call Julian on 331252. You can already book for any service on the rota (except on Remembrance Sunday at Steeple Aston - that's outdoors, so there's no need to book).
- * When you come you will be shown where to sit. I hope this makes sense - we need to make best use of the space so as many folk as would like to can come, and this means some may not always be able to sit where they'd like. We have tried to make sure very few people are behind pillars!
- * We have a new pattern of services! Steeple Aston will hold morning communion services and the other two parishes will normally share Evensong services between them.
- * We still aren't allowed to have congregational hymns - but we can have a small choir singing, and we will do this at our Evensong services. We've even had some special music written for us...
- * We do all have to wear face coverings or masks whenever we are inside the church buildings.
- * Worship at Home, our online service, will continue each and every week. So if you can't come to a service in a church building, or you just want the chance to sing out a hymn - that will always be there. The easiest way to find it is to go to the homepage of our website, www.sntchurch.com, though we also have a phone service for people without internet. If you ring 929021 (and that is a local call) you have the option to listen to a full service, or just a sermon, or just some prayers.

Our services are for everyone because God loves everyone. Everyone is welcome, to everything, all the time. Booking for church may feel strange at first - but please, don't worry, do pick up the phone and then please come and join us. I very much look forward to seeing you as we continue in faith and love and kindness, and as we move forward together through these remarkable days.

More news is always available on our website: www.sntchurch.com...



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Sunday 18th October	5.30pm Benefice Evensong Canon Robin Gibbons		
Sunday 25th October		10.30am Benefice Communion Revd Clare Hayns	
Sunday 1st November			5.30pm Benefice Evensong for All Saints Canon Robin Gibbons
Sunday 8th November	9.30am Remembrance Canon David Tyler	10.50am Remembrance (OUTDOOR - no booking) Canon David Tyler	5.30pm Remembrance Canon Robin Gibbons
Sunday 15th November		10.30am Benefice Communion Revd Marcus Green	
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Sunday 29th November		10.30am Benefice Communion Revd Marcus Green	

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07.02 08.00 08.44 10.03 then..03 past the hour until 16.03 17.02 18.02
 19.02 20.10 21.25 22.55

Buses from Steeple Aston (outside post office) to Banbury

07.52 08.55 09.57 then ...57 past the hour until 14.57 16.00 17.00 18.00 19.00
 19.55 21.10 22.25 23.55

Arrives Banbury

08.35 09.35 10.36 then.. 35 past the hour until 15.35 16.38 17.38 18.38 19.29
 20.24 21.39 22.54 00.24

MIDDLE BARTON BUS (FRIDAY ONLY)

S Aston Red Lion Bicester Mkt Square Bicester Tesco Bicester Avenue S Aston Red Lion
 10.40 —————> 11.04 —————> 11.12 —————> 11.16
 13.48 —————> 14.06

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.

OCTOBER			
Monday 12th	Parish Council Meeting NOTE CHANGE OF DATE	Online?	7.30pm
Thursday 15th	SAL November issue copy and advert deadline		
Saturday 24th	Farmers' Market	Deddington	9.00 – 12.30
NOVEMBER			
Thursday 5th	Annual Fireworks Evening CANCELLED	Robinsons Close	
Sunday 15th	SAL December issue copy and advert deadline		
Monday 16th	Parish Council Meeting	Online?	7.30pm
Saturday 28th	Farmers' Market	Deddington	9.00 – 12.30

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

Steeple Aston Life is published by Steeple Aston Life Committee

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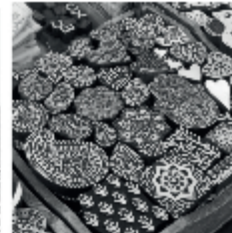
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