

Steeple Aston *Life*

September 2021

Issue No. 577



- Memories of Steeple Aston in the 1970s • Mushroom and nut recipes •
- Electric car battery recycling • The green dome observatory • and more •

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Cover photo: Combine harvesting at the Steeple Aston folly, also known as the 'Eyecatcher'. Taken by Nigel Francis in July using a drone.

Steeple Aston *Life*

COPY

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

COPY DEADLINES

The copy deadline is the 15th of the previous month.

The copy deadline for the October 2021 issue is therefore 15th September.

READ STEEPLE ASTON LIFE ONLINE
<https://www.steepleaston.org.uk/sal-magazine>

ADVERTS

All adverts, and all advertising queries (*availability, prices, dimensions, suitability of illustrations, etc.*) to **Charlotte Bartlett**
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01869 347347

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Non-commercial adverts:
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½ page - £12, ¼ page- £6.
Commercial adverts:
½ page- £15, ¼ 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
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		Cllr Bryn Williams	07836 271998
		Cllr Hugo Brown	
Cricket Club	Chairman	Peter Higgins	347493
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Deddington Health Centre	Appointments		338611
	Repeat Prescriptions	10am - 3pm	338847
	Out of Hours		111
Dr Radcliffe's C of E School	Head Teacher	Frances Brown	340204
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Garden Club	Chairman	Richard Preston	340512
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Parish Council	Chairman / Clerk	Richard MacAndrew/ Cathy Fleet	347209, 347000
Police	24hr Call Centre	(non emergency)	101
Post Office & Harris Stores		Raj	340201
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Public House	Red Lion	Chris Gates	340225
Robinson's Close	Letting Agent	Katie Rushworth	340196
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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
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Volunteer Connect - Community transport scheme			0300 3030125
WI	Joint Presidents	Merrill Bayley, Cathy Lawday	347802, 347209



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

Steeple Aston *Life*

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Editors:

Angela Smith and Robert Scott
editorsalife@gmail.com

Treasurer: Vaughan Billings
01869 340857

Secretary: Jenny Taylor
01869 340551

Advertising:

Charlotte Bartlett
01869 347347
salife.advertising@gmail.com

Deliveries:

Stuart & Penny Cummins
01869 349155
cummins2011@outlook.com

Layout design:

Edward Dowler, Martin Lipson

Committee:

Edwina Kinch, Jenny Bell,
Sue McLean, Nigel Francis

Editorial

“As long as autumn lasts, I shall not have hands, canvas and colours enough to paint the beautiful things I see.” Vincent Van Gogh, Dutch painter, 1853 to 1880.

Hello autumn. For meteorologists, autumn begins on 1st September and continues to the end of November. For the rest of us, the season starts with the autumn equinox, which this year takes place on the evening of Wednesday 22nd September (next year it will be on 23rd September). It runs to 21st December, when it is replaced by winter. The equinox marks a point in the calendar at which the lengths of the day and night are almost equal.

Autumn is also known as fall. I used to think this was solely an American term, but it turns out to have been in common use in English writing long before the New World was a twinkle in the eyes of the Pilgrim Fathers. It was probably poets who coined the phrase “the fall of leaves”, soon shortened to ‘fall’.

Both words were passengers on the Mayflower, the ship which carried the Pilgrims from England to America. Today, although the words are still used on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, fall has risen to prominence in the USA, while autumn is more common in Britain. Fall probably means little to big city dwellers who might not see a tree from one month to the next. However, in rural villages like Steeple Aston, fall is very descriptive of the season when garden rakes and blowers are used to tidy the carpets of leaves which cover the ground. As the foliage turns from green to shades of brown, areas of our countryside become even more beautiful. Who needs New Hampshire when we can enjoy the fall locally?

Talking of language and holidays, have you noticed the change in the meaning of ‘staycation’. Originally it described a period when you remained at home and enjoyed days out. Now, with trips abroad curtailed, it increasingly refers to holidays in the country where you live. I love watching language evolve.

Robert

*Narrowboats on the Oxford Canal at
Lower Heyford wharf. Photo by Nigel Francis.*



Steeple Aston Noticeboard



Mick Bonwick 1948-2021

On behalf of my family, I would like to take this opportunity to include a few words in Steeple Aston Life to express my sincere thanks to everyone. It has been a great shock and I have been really overwhelmed by all the cards, letters and offers of help received. I am just so thankful that I live amongst such a caring community here in Steeple Aston.

Anne Bonwick and Family



RIDE and STRIDE

'Ride and Stride' is happening again this year – Saturday 11th September. All details are on line at www.ohct.org.uk

For those of you who have not taken part before, this is a fund-raising event where you walk or cycle to as many churches and chapels in the area as you can manage in a day – and ask friends and family to sponsor you. The money is shared between the Oxfordshire Historic Church Trust and any church you nominate.

Dorothy Clifton – local organiser
01879 347273

Nicholsons 'goes back to roots'

Nicholsons Nursery in North Aston is changing direction. They say that their company ambition is clear "to plant trees at scale to mitigate Climate Change and work towards Net Zero, and to offer Plants, Forestry and Landscapes with a core focus on sustainability."

You will no longer be able to drop in for coffee and cake. The Yurt will become a restaurant, taking bookings only for breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea. They will no longer sell gifts and interiors. Their Rosara garden furniture will be available online. Also, they will no longer sell Christmas trees or host their popular Christmas fair.

You can read more about the changes at nicholsonsgb.com/back-to-our-roots/

Parish Council Meeting Notes

The Parish Council does not meet in August so there are no notes in this issue. 'Steeplejack' will be back in the October issue with a report of the September meeting.



Oxfordshire Plan 2050

The latest consultation on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has now launched and runs until Friday 8th October. The plan will set the development framework for the county for the next generation. It will affect all Oxfordshire residents, either directly (through development) or indirectly (through impacts on services, infrastructure, our countryside and rural character).

CPRE Oxfordshire is fighting to make sure that the growth options are deliverable without undue damage to our countryside and some otherwise good policy proposals for getting to net zero and restoring nature. That means guiding development to the right places and building high-quality compact housing to make the best use of scarce land.

Have your say now – it's too late to act when the bulldozers arrive! Find more information on the CPRE Oxfordshire website www.cpreoxon.org.uk



Fascinating facts about September

- Although there are 12 months in the year, September is one of only four to have 30 days. The others are April, June and November.
- September is the ninth month of the year. It is the longest word amongst the months, with nine letters. No other month has the same number of letters as its position in the calendar. April, for example, has five letters, but is the fourth month.
- September is derived from 'septem', the Latin for seven, and was originally the seventh of ten months in an early Roman calendar. January and February were later added to the beginning of the year, moving September to ninth place.
- In 1752 the British Empire moved from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar and 2nd September was followed by 14th September. This was because the Gregorian calendar accounted more accurately for leap years and at the time was 11 days ahead of the Julian calendar. It has been claimed that many people mistakenly believed that their lives would be shortened by 11 days, though this is now thought to be an urban myth.
- It is said that being born in September increases your chances of success in later life. This is because the school year starts in September, meaning that September babies are the eldest in their school year. This can make them more confident than their contemporaries, increasing their academic performance. Those born in other months might beg to differ.

VICTORIA PRENTIS MP

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

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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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Contact Victoria:

Constituency:

☎ 01869 233685
📍 Orchard House
Hopcraft Lane
Deddington
OX15 0TD

Westminster:

☎ 020 7219 8756
📍 House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

victoria.prentis.mp@parliament.uk



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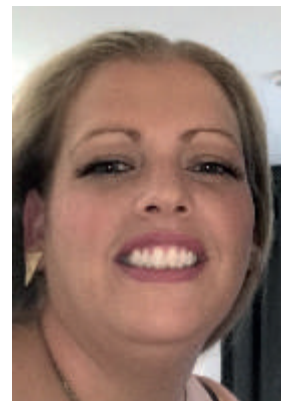
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Steeple People



Clare Walker



How long have you lived in Steeple Aston? 32 years.

Where did you move from? Born here, moved to Banbury for a couple of years and then moved back.

What brought you here? We returned to Steeple so we could bring up our family in a beautiful village.

What do you like best about living in Steeple Aston? Being in the countryside and being close to my family.

How has the village changed in the time you've been here? Lots of new faces, but otherwise not a lot.

Where do you think of as home? Steeple Aston.

Give a potted history of yourself – in 40 words or less. Born and raised in Steeple Aston, have two older brothers. Qualified as a beauty therapist after leaving school and ran my business from the little shop along Southside. I then went on to qualify as a dental nurse and am now head nurse for a brilliant local dental practice. I have two beautiful children, two ponies, one dog and seven chickens. I have a lot of great friends and when allowed love to socialise with them. I'm very much a home bird and am happiest when around family and friends.

How do you see yourself, in five words or less? Funny, happy, silly, busy and organised.

How do others see you, in five words or less? Fun, cheerful, caring, loud and happy.

What do your family (or friends) find most annoying about you? I'm impatient and want things done there and then.

What do your family (or friends) find the most endearing about you? Always happy and smiling. Can make anyone laugh.

Early bird or night owl? Cat or dog? Optimist or pessimist? Early bird and night owl. Dog. Optimist.

Technology: friend or foe? Friend most of the time.

To Marmite or not? Definitely to Marmite.

What was the best thing about being a child? Having no responsibilities.

What is the best thing about being an adult? Being able to make your own decisions.

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

What was your first job? I helped out at the local B&B in the village.

What do you do for a living now? Dental nurse and gardener.

What is the best job you've ever done? My current job as a dental nurse and as a gardener. It's a great balance.

What is the worst job you've ever done? Retail.

What's your secret/guilty pleasure? I love decorating and am always decorating a room in the house.

Tell us about any interesting hobbies you have Horse riding.

What's your favourite piece of music? I love all types of music apart from classical. Don't really have a favourite piece.

What are you reading at the moment? Don't have time to read. If I have time, I love a good film.

What's your favourite food? Mum's roast dinners.

What would you save from your house if it was on fire? Children and the dog and maybe the husband!

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

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go? I'd love to go to New Zealand.

What do you do to relax? Go for a walk or spend time with the horses.

What's your favourite saying or piece of advice? The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.

Who is your hero? Which person do you most admire, and why? My dad is my hero. He's an incredible human being.

Who would you most like to have dinner with – dead or alive? My grandparents (dad's parents). I was very young when they passed away and I only just remember them. I would love to have a conversation with them now that I'm grown up.

If you were on a desert island, what would you miss most? My family and all my animals.

What do you get grumpy/mad about. Rude people. But otherwise I'm a very happy person.

What makes you happiest in the world? Family and friends.

Tell us a good joke. I asked my dog what's two minus two... he said nothing.

The ARTS Page



I may be the only person ever to have got 0% in an art exam! My attempt was probably abject, but the marking nevertheless was rather harsh. When people I meet find out I'm a classical musician, they can say "oh, but I'm not musical". I answer with a question. "Do you like music?". Usually the answer is "yes", so I reply that they are musical, they appreciate it, and they can leave it to us to perform for them.

Despite my art mark, I now go to as many galleries as I can, wherever I am. I love them! An anecdote. Years ago, Heather had a hairdresser who asked what I was doing. Conducting a classical concert in the local cathedral was the answer. The hairdresser's reply was "Oh that sort of concert is not for us".

My point here, is that the Arts, in all their wonderful diversity, are for all. I was for many years a Trustee of Youth Music, who do wonderful work right across the board, bringing music to disadvantaged children – see what they do at youthmusic.org.uk

Maybe you love to sing, try the Steeple Aston Choral Society, maybe to paint, try the courses and workshops in Middle Aston, at the House and The Arty Crafty Place next door. In previous issues I've flagged up wonderful theatrical and creative projects for all ages at places including the Ashmolean, Chippy Theatre, Mill Arts/Banbury, Oxford Playhouse and the Oxford Story Museum. Space doesn't allow more detail, but they look terrific on their websites.

The Arts don't just happen. They need support and where necessary lobbying (such as against the 50% cut in Arts and Humanities funding in tertiary education). But I know many would love to see more activity here in the Astons. Please let me have your ideas. I hope to convene a meeting in the autumn to share ideas and suggestions.

Building on my opening point, we went to three terrific exhibitions locally.

'Tokyo: Art and Photography' at the Ashmolean offers 400 years of the world's most populous city seen through paintings, woodblock prints, photography, pop art and more. It gives one a panoramic overview of Edo's development into modern Tokyo, the highs and lows, the poverty, the flourishing artistic life, night life and much more. Not an historical/political/economic approach, but a rich insight into their people – on until 3rd January 2022. Also check out the Ashmolean Adventure – a new digital guide for families!

'I grew up in the 80s' is at the Banbury Museum until 3rd October 2021. Whether you did or didn't, this is a colourful and informative show of innovations, household gadgets, music, comics, magazines and iconic films, bringing that decade to life. For children, it is a step back to see where so many things we take for granted developed and improved.

Nearly next door is the ever-eclectic Mill Arts Centre. Pretty much something for everyone, it currently has a lovely textiles exhibition in the front foyer (until 16th September) featuring work by students of their popular Textile classes.


Mentioned above, The Arty Crafty Place, Lakeside Business Park, is a treasure trove, or as they say 'a little world of gorgeousness'. There is wonderful artwork to buy and numerous workshops on Indian block painting, pattern, lampshade and stationery printing, just for starters. Wander up, or go online to www.theartycraftyplace.co.uk – you won't be disappointed.


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APPLE PRESS

The Steeple Aston Apple Press 2021

We will be running "Community Apple Pressing days" in September / October when you can just turn up. Look out for notices around the village and on the village website.

Alternatively, the complete kit is available for hire at the unchanged rate of £20

Contact Penny and Stuart on
01869 349155 or email

cummins2011@outlook.com for details.



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Dates for your diary – we will be back at St. Peter & St. Paul's in Deddington for the monthly craft fair that takes place alongside the Farmers' Market on Saturday 25th September, 23rd October, 27th November and 18th December – please do come and see us!

Please keep buying things from our online shop! – it's probably a bit too early to use the 'C' word, but if you're looking for gifts, seasonal or otherwise, we have a broad range of beautifully crafted items, all made from items that we have saved from being thrown away.

www.sustainablesteeple.com
www.facebook.com/SustainableSteeple
amanda@sustainablesteeple.com or 07793 553150



The Gardening Spot

Time to clear-up!

At the time of writing, the sun is shining and the garden is looking pretty good, so I decided to have a look at what I wrote last year for the September issue. Much to my surprise, I have been writing this column for many years now and I am thinking that everyone must be fed-up with reading my articles. There again, if you are reading this then I must assume you usually do and that means that there are at least two people who have nothing better to do every month. If that other person is you, thank you!

For me, the last few weeks have been busy what with keeping the weeds down, digging potatoes, picking beans and tomatoes, and cutting grass as it has not stopped growing this year. On top of that, we have just had the annual show which takes up a fair bit of time and I have started to cut the various hedges that seem to have put on two years growth in twelve months. Anyhow, enough of my moaning as September is always a busy month for gardeners as it is the beginning of the end of the year – or put more simply, time to clear up!

This month can be one of the best of the year weather-wise and, if you can, this is the best month to start tidying up the garden. Clear away any potato tops and store your potatoes safely in a dry but cool place, ensuring that no light can enter the bag or container that holds the potatoes. If you grow sprouts or sprouting broccoli, consider staking the plants if they are exposed to wind, otherwise they will blow over and your crop will be reduced or lost.

We might be in a dry period (who knows as the weathermen don't), but your runner beans should still be in full crop so give them plenty of water. Pick off any old beans, so encouraging nice young ones. Sorry to keep on about this, but hoe off any weeds as that will reduce the number of weeds come next year.

If you grow maincrop raspberries, now is the time to cut out the old stems, those which bore fruit this year, and tie-in strong new stems securely. Autumn raspberries will now be in full production and you don't prune them back until next spring. If, like me, you haven't sorted out your strawberry bed, do it now. It is not too late and it will pay dividends to take out old plants and reposition some of the new 'runners' that have rooted themselves giving plenty of space to grow come next spring.

In the greenhouse the tomatoes will be coming to an end towards the end of the month. I find the best way to ripen the last few tomatoes is to cut them off on their stems and place in a warm but not too sunny a spot where they will ripen over the coming month. Once you have done that, clear the old plants and dispose of safely, then tidy the greenhouse to reduce the chance of infection or over-wintering pests.

The herbaceous borders will soon be coming to an end. Clear them of dead or dying material and possibly separate some of the plants giving you more stock for your garden or a present for your neighbour. By doing so you will be encouraging strong new growth for next year.

If you have apple trees, especially cookers, over the next few weeks they should be ready to pick. If you have a decent crop you can't eat them all at once, so consider storing them over winter. Ideally you need to pick them carefully so as not to bruise the fruit then place them in cool storage, possibly the garage, making sure they are separated as best as possible. This will help reduce any loss if one or two go bad as they won't infect the next fruit.

As for the lawn, the grass has not stopped growing all year. This is good as we have some wonderful green turf, but the lawn mower has been in overtime. It might sound a bit strange, but if you can an autumn feed will strengthen the grass in readiness for winter and give you a good start come next year.

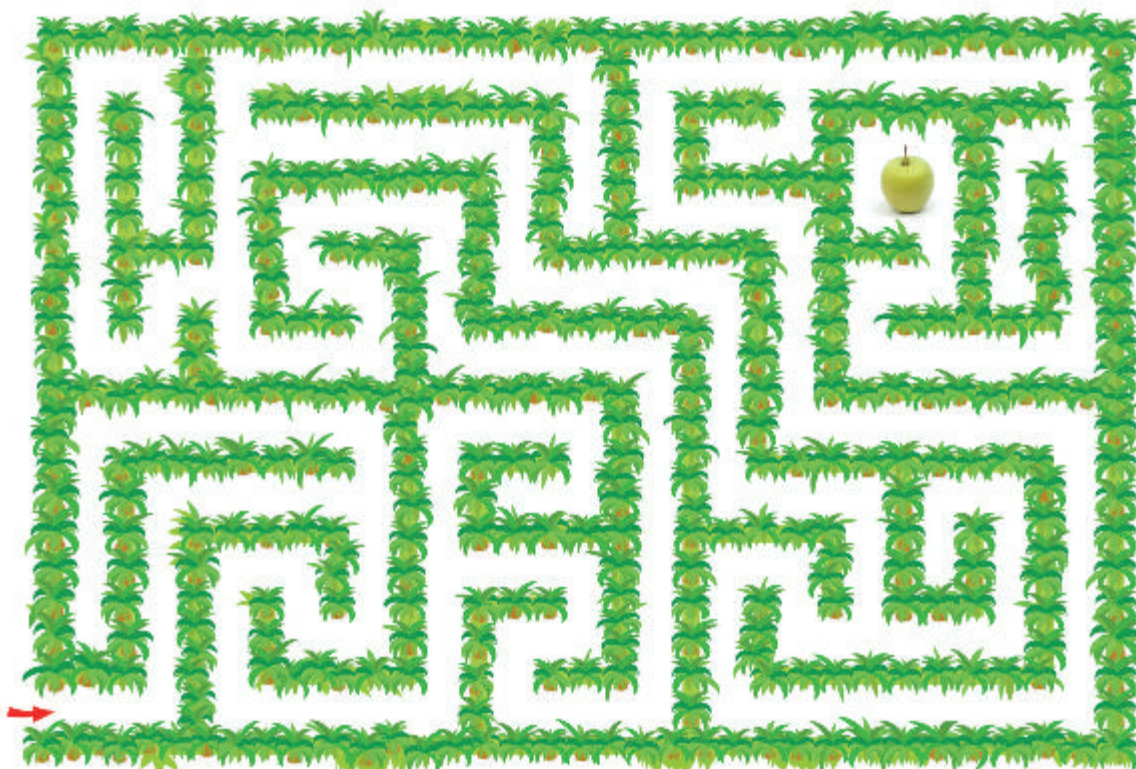
Well, I did say I had been writing this column for many years now, so apologies if I am repeating myself. If anyone would like to have ago at writing something for SAL in the coming months, please do so as I could then have a rest.

Happy gardening.
Richard Preston



Apple maze

Do you eat your 5-a-day of fruit and vegetables? Starting from the bottom left, see if you can reach the apple in this maze. The solution is on page 37.



September puzzle

How many words of three or more letters can you make using the letters in the name of this month? Each word can only use each letter once (except for 'E', which appears three times and can be used up to three times in a word) and must contain the letter in the shaded box. How many words can you find? Our found list is on page 37.

30 = good

35 = excellent

40 = brilliant!

S	E	P	T	E	M	B	E	R
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Seeing the funny side

- I am best friends with 25 letters of the alphabet. I don't know Y.
- I am an archaeologist. My career is in ruins.
- Don't you hate it when someone answers their own questions? I do.
- I got fired from the calendar factory for taking a day off.
- I can't count the number of times I failed maths at school.
- Always borrow money from a pessimist. They'll never expect it back.
- It was an emotional wedding. Even the cake was in tiers.
- What is the difference between ignorance and apathy? I don't know and I don't care.



Steeple Aston's forgotten historian – Canon Michael Wood

This rather baroque-looking gravestone in the New Graveyard on Fir Lane marks the final resting-place of Canon Michael Wood, who came to live in Steeple Aston in 1920. He had only fairly recently returned to England after serving in the church in South Africa. Wood took up residence in Paynes Hill House, accompanied by several sisters, and was soon befriended by the Rev. Charles Cunliffe Brookes (son of the late Rector J. H. Brookes), who urged him to set about researching the history of Steeple and Middle Aston.

Wood did so with relish and was soon delving among the archives at Brasenose College and ancient documents in the Public Record Office in London. He was perhaps embarking on one such outing on 1st August 1923 when he met his unfortunate end. Newspaper reports say he left home to catch the 9.20am Oxford train and “appears to have hurried somewhat”. After crossing to the up platform he fell forwards, and soon passed away, “despite the attentions of Dr. Hodges, of Deddington, who happened to be passing”.

Wood's sister later passed his research notes over to Brookes, who used them as the basis for his own *History of Steeple Aston and Middle Aston*, published in 1929. As Brookes ruefully comments in his preface to this work, these notes “proved most helpful”, but they would have been even more valuable if they had indicated what sources Wood had consulted. As it was, “much had to be gone over afresh”.

Brookes' *History* (including a well-thumbed copy in Steeple Aston Village Archive) remains the standard text for those who would follow in his footsteps. In its turn, it also formed an important source for the chapter on Steeple and Middle Aston in the *Victoria County History of Oxfordshire*, Volume 11 (1983), pp 21-44, under the heading Wootton Hundred (northern part). This is available online at:
www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol11/pp21-44

Brookes also leant heavily on two existing books by William Wing, his *Annals of Steeple Aston and Middle Aston* (1875) and his earlier *History and Antiquities of Steeple Aston* (1840). These are now very rare, but fortunately scanned copies of both are available on a single disk from SAVA at £8 – see ‘Steeple Aston Book Collection’ at:

<https://www.steepleastonarchive.org.uk/shop1.html>

Geoffrey Lane

The green dome observatory

Tim Haymes describes his enduring love of astronomy

If, during the last few months, you have walked up the footpath that runs off South Side, up the lane and across the fields towards Rousham, you can hardly have failed to notice the domed, green outbuilding that first made its appearance in the south-west corner of our garden earlier this year. This is a small-scale version of a professional observatory, with a motor-driven rotating dome and vertical shutter. I use it for astronomical observations and deep-sky photography.

I have been an amateur astronomer for most of my life. When I first became interested in stargazing, the night sky in towns was still fairly dark and the space age had only just begun. I made what I thought was a telescope from bits in my dad's shed, but I couldn't get it to work! Then I was given a 'Spy glass' made by Dollond of London, which I also used for plane spotting.

At the age of 17 I joined my local astronomy group in Maidenhead. Here I was encouraged to make my first 'proper' telescope, a six-inch f/8 reflector, which I was told was a "useful amateur instrument". I bought the mirror optics, made a rectangular tube from plywood and hardboard and set it on a mounting, the main component of which was a Morris Minor back axle donated by our neighbour. When I first tested the optics on Jupiter, I was astounded by the detail and I was hooked!

At our last house I built my first observatory using marine ply to form the rotating dome, which was mounted on a breeze block base. The benefits of an observatory are many-fold. Not only does the building protect the observer from the wind, which can be really bitter in winter, but it means that the telescope can be permanently set up and aligned, which saves an enormous amount of time and effort.

Continued on next page



Below: Jupiter can be seen as a bright spot just to the left of the tree on the left side of the image. On the other side of the same tree, slightly lower and somewhat fainter, is Saturn. Taken around midnight on 15th July this year.



As astronomical equipment and my interests have both become more sophisticated over the years, an observatory has really become essential, so when we moved to Steeple Aston in 2019, after almost a year searching for somewhere with the right horizon and suitably dark skies, the first item to be ordered was a new dome. Like everything else, its delivery and installation was delayed because of Covid, but since its arrival I can be found making observations or taking photographs every night that weather permits.

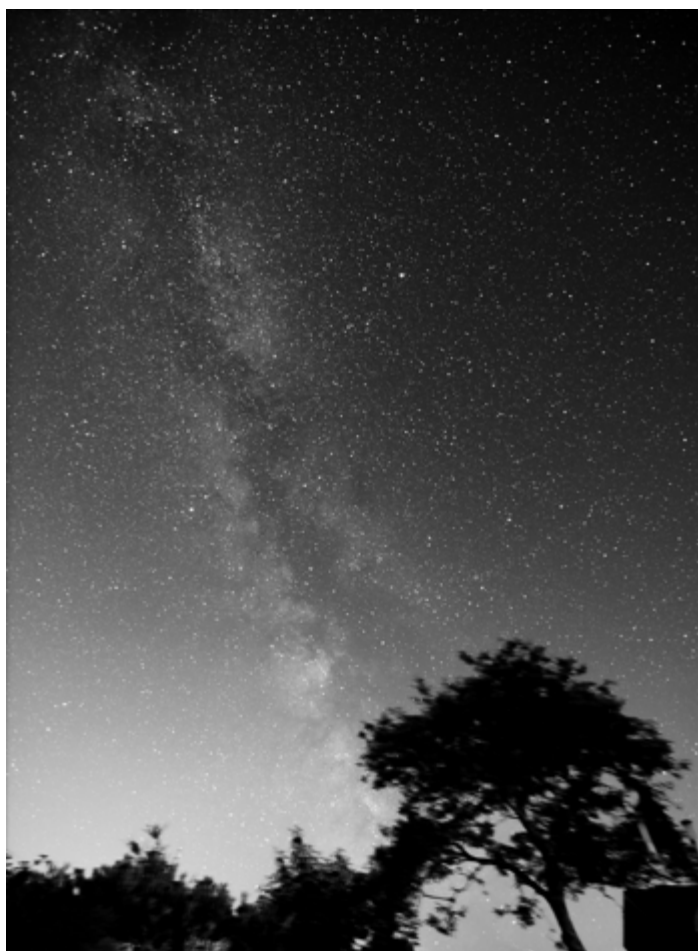
From making general observations of the night sky, I initially began to specialise in recording lunar grazing occultations, but for the past 25 years or so I have been more interested in asteroid occultations. An occultation occurs when the light from a star is briefly hidden by another object that passes between it and the observer, such as an asteroid passing across a star, or a star momentarily disappearing behind a mountain or crater on the moon. These events are predicted and then measured and recorded by amateur astronomers around the world. The results are collated and used to increase our understanding of the solar system, from shape of asteroids to heights of the moon's craters. I am responsible for coordinating occultation observing for the Asteroid and Remote Planets Section and the Lunar Section of the British Astronomical Association.

My other astronomical interests include comets and deep-sky photography. Galaxies have always fascinated me with their diverse shapes and clusters, seeing light that left its point of origin when dinosaurs still roamed the Earth. These celestial objects need a long exposure camera to record their feeble light and a dark sky is needed, which our corner of Steeple Aston provides.

If you would like to know more, please have a look on my website ***stargazer.me.uk***

I hope at some point to organise an open evening for villagers once it is safe to do so.

A view of the Milky Way, taken around midnight on 15th July this year.



Tim with his home-made telescope around 1970.

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In the Kitchen



September whets the appetite for autumnal flavours and what better pairing to steer us towards cosy, comforting, seasonal food than mushrooms and nuts.

Mushroom Cashew Soup Serves four

50ml extra-virgin olive oil
400g (two supermarket packs) mixed mushrooms (such as chanterelles, oyster, maitake, enoki, shiitake, etc.) cut into bite-size pieces
6 shallots, finely chopped
4 garlic cloves, grated
100ml dry white wine
150ml chicken stock
50g raw cashews
1 tbsp miso paste
salt

for garnish:

freshly ground black pepper
3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1 tbsp thyme leaves
½ tsp. freshly cracked black pepper
salt

Heat oil in a large, heavy pan over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms into the warmed oil to cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer mushrooms to a plate, leaving oil behind.

Add shallots to pan, season with salt. Cook, stirring often and reduce heat until very soft, 8-10 minutes.

Add garlic and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and fragrant – about 3 minutes.

Add wine and cook for 3 minutes. Add chicken stock and return mushrooms to pot.

Bring to a simmer.

Transfer and cool two ladlesful of the soup (including some mushrooms) prior to blending in food processor along with cashews and miso paste.

Purée until very smooth. Stir purée back into soup.

Simmer, stirring occasionally, until mixture and flavours have merged, 10-15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Next make topping/garnish for the soup by bringing oil, garlic, thyme and pepper to a simmer in a small saucepan over medium heat.

Cook mixture gently until garlic is tender and just turning golden around the edges, about 3 minutes. Season with salt.

To serve, ladle soup into bowls and drizzle with garlicky oil.

Mushroom Barley Risotto Topped with Walnut and Thyme Serves four

40g butter
1 shallot, minced
2 cloves garlic, grated
300g fresh chestnut mushrooms
¼ tsp fresh thyme leaves, plus more for garnish
salt and freshly ground pepper
200g pearl barley
125ml dry white wine
900ml beef broth, hot
30g walnuts chopped
200g grated Parmesan cheese

Heat the beef broth in a saucepan and keep warm.

Toast chopped walnuts in a dry frying pan over a low heat for 5 minutes.

In a large, deep, frying pan, heat two-thirds of the butter over medium heat.

Add the shallots and garlic and cook, stirring carefully until starting to soften.

Add the mushrooms and thyme leaves and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring regularly until mushrooms are tender and lightly golden, about 5-6 minutes.

Add the barley and the remaining butter.

Cook, stirring, for about 1 minute.

Add the wine and cook until the wine is absorbed, 3-4 minutes.

Add one ladle of the hot beef broth and stir to combine.

Cook over medium heat, stirring once or twice, until nearly all of the broth has been absorbed (avoid boiling the mixture by maintaining a very gentle consistent simmer).

Continue adding ladles of broth one at a time, allowing to cook until the liquid is absorbed before adding the next. Cook until all the broth is added.

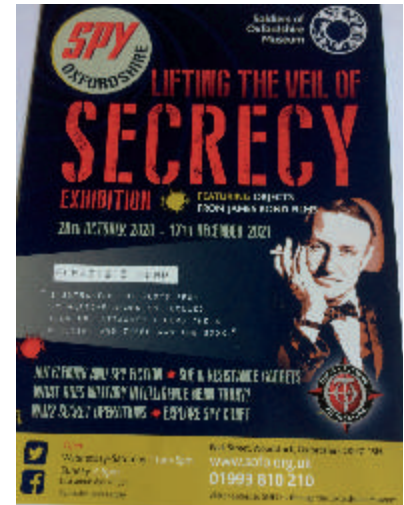
Cook barley until it is al-dente. If it is not quite there, add another ladle of hot water and cook a bit longer.

When cooked, stir in grated Parmesan cheese and stir to combine.

Season dish with salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO.....?

The Spy Oxfordshire exhibition



At Book Club recently, Ben Macintyre's book 'Agent Sonya', about a woman who spied for the Soviet Union for many years, prompted much discussion about the ethics of spying.

The exhibition 'Spy Oxfordshire', at the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock, explores some of the World War Two activities of spies who were connected to Oxfordshire and perhaps does something to put the case from the opposite side in the conflict.

There's a strong focus on Ian Fleming (did you know he was born at Braziers, near Ipsden, in South Oxfordshire?) with a lot of display boards, information and artefacts about his wartime and subsequent work as a spy, as well as about his spy novels and the James Bond films which sprang from them.

For me, there was rather too much about the Bond films as this part of the exhibition seemed to somewhat overshadow information about other men and women from the county who were engaged in secret operations both during and after the war. Some of their Resistance gadgets and equipment on display are fascinating, as are the accounts of the espionage 'work' (is spying work, I ask myself?) of the SOE (Special Operations Executive) and of the surprising number of men and women who were parachuted into France to support the efforts against the Nazi invasion.

Mindful of the vigour of the enthusiastic Woodstock parking warden (I'd only been able to find a one-hour parking slot) I did not have time to watch the whole of a film of interviews and background material which is broadcast on a loop as one enters the exhibition, but I fully intend to return and catch up with that. The Spy Oxfordshire exhibition does make you think about the issue of military intelligence and secret operations against other nations – both during World War Two and today. It's not a huge exhibition, but worthy of a visit, I think.

The good news is that entry to the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum (and thus this exhibition) is free to anyone with a Blenheim Palace Annual Pass. For others, a day pass for adults is £6, for concessions £5 and for children £3. Various longer passes are available and there are reductions for groups. The exhibition is open Wednesday to Saturday 11am to 5pm and on Sunday 2pm to 5pm. It has been extended to April 2022.

Eileen Baglin-Jones

Poetry Corner



Life's a beach

Just prior to the Olympic games this year, the Norwegian women's volleyball team were fined €1500 for not wearing bikini bottoms in their European Championship bronze medal game with Spain. Their (slightly) more substantial pants were deemed to be inappropriate by the sport's governing body (the men's outfit, however, is as modest as tight-fitting Lycra allows). The Norwegian Volleyball Federation was supportive of their women, but they were overruled by the higher-placed European body that governs the rules of beach volleyball. You couldn't make it up!

the women showed to demonstrate their sport
bikini top with hi-leg pants attire
more modest briefs they wore for their deport
but this invoked a consequence quite dire
for longer shorts were deemed to break the rules
bikini thongs were deemed to be more fit
officials with the stubbornness of mules
defining how the women wore their kit
how strange it is that modesty invokes
a penalty for covering one's cheeks
when all's required is ball and net and sand
not kitted out like goddesses with peaks
Olympic spirit wherefore are you now
what morals govern what you try to do
a scanty thong's become a sacred cow
Beach Volleyball, new rules are overdue.

Peter Wild

Writing a haiku

*Haiku: a Japanese poem of 17 syllables,
arranged as 5 syllables, 7 syllables and 5
syllables over 3 lines.*

17 syllables
that's not much space, to comment
on the human race

17 syllables
doesn't give much time, though it
doesn't have to rhyme

17 syllables
a short span, but everyone
does it in Japan

Attempting to write
a haiku is a tricky
test of my IQ

I struggle to write
A form I'm not sure I like
A Japanese haik....

"Writing a haiku hurts my head
It's far too hard", the poet said
"My imagination
Is in consternation,
I'll just write a limerick instead."

Cathy Lawday



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Batteries for electric vehicles



In 2003 a man called J. B. Straubel was a major influence on the launching of Tesla electric cars and specifically their batteries. However, he's now left Tesla and in 2017 set up a factory called 'Redwood Materials'. This breaks down old batteries and reconstitutes them into a fresh supply of materials needed for new batteries for electric cars.

Electric cars do have some question marks over them. Whilst actually driving them they have zero emissions, but the mining, manufacturing and disposal process can be an environmental disaster for the industry, especially in the poorer countries from where raw materials come. What Straubel and other entrepreneurial organisations are doing is called 'urban' mining. At his factory every day three lorries drop off 60 tonnes worth of old mobile phones, power tools and so on. A team separates out the metals including nickel, cobalt and lithium, treats them and re-enters them into the supply chain for new batteries. This is a gargantuan task, but it has some advantages. A car battery needs roughly 10,000 times the material needed for a phone battery, but only 30 times the amount of cobalt. This can be gathered from about 300 old mobile phone batteries. Plus, top grade lithium found in mines today yields only 2 to 2.5% lithium oxide, whereas 'urban mining' provides up to five times that amount. Not bad.

At the moment cobalt for batteries is largely mined in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. From there it goes to Finland – yes, Finland – where lies Europe's largest cobalt refinery. Then it goes to China where the majority of the world's cathode and battery production takes place. Finally, it goes back to US or Europe for the general manufacturing process. That's a round trip of 20,000 miles before we can place that 'zero emissions' label on our bumpers. There's also a long way to go in the recycling/reusing of old batteries. This largely concerns the disassembly of the original article. It can take up to 30 minutes to take apart a phone or battery-operated electrical appliance. That's uneconomic. What the recycling industry is now calling for – and I think it's getting somewhere – is that all things should be designed with disassembly in mind. This is totally possible, but as can be imagined it will take a while before it's mainstream – or will it? Rumour has it that an effect known as the 'S' curve suggests that electric vehicle production will multiply very fast indeed over the next 10 years. Let's wait and see.

Then there's the life of a battery – and particularly car batteries. This is interesting. Research suggests that 15 years is the normal life of a car battery. So the first wave of batteries for actual re-use will not come on stream for some time. Plus, as cars get older and cheaper they tend to 'migrate' to countries such as Ukraine, Russia, New Zealand and Sri Lanka, which takes the batteries a long way from the reprocessing plants. This information is from the current distribution of first-generation Nissan Leafs.

So what will happen? First there will be a rush for raw materials – this is already in progress, but we consumers haven't noticed it yet. However, it's really affecting those in the industry. It's pretty cut-throat already and you can guess which country is the current winner! This adds urgency to recycling and in ten years' time it's hoped that the fully optimised production of recycled lithium/cobalt, etc., will account for 25% of new battery manufacture. "So it's a contributor not the solution," says Brian Menell, founder of TechMet, one of the larger reprocessing firms. There's also a move afoot in the battery industry to try to make batteries that last 30 years using new technology. This would leapfrog the wait for the 15-year batteries to come on stream. Maybe also, (ah, a pig has just flown by my window)) someone will invent a battery which runs on less precious materials. After all you can run a little motor using a potato! Imagine that ... No perhaps not!

The last thought is...and it's a good one...if 30-year batteries come on stream as predicted we will probably keep the battery and change the car. Think of that. Makes sense.

Martin Dale

50 years ago

Stuart Kendrick remembers his formative years in Steeple Aston in the 1970s

We moved to Steeple Aston from Ardley in the summer of 1971. My family comprised of dad (David), mum (Margaret), Nan (Phyllis Stoker) and sister Sarah. I was five at the time. We moved in to No. 11 Grange Park, which had just been built. There were still some houses right at the top not quite completed and my very first memory of Steeple Aston was looking out on to piles of sand, bricks and the constant movement of builders at work.

The house backed on to a huge field, accessed by a quick climb over the stone wall that ran the length of the back garden and a slide down a bank. The field would become our play area for games of cricket, football and building camps. Sounds idyllic? It was. There were a couple of allotments in the field and I think one of those belonged to Arthur Wadham. He could often be seen pushing his wheelbarrow to and from the allotment. I believe he lived along Northside.

Before starting at Dr Radcliffe's school in the autumn of 1971 I attended a playgroup near Upper Heyford. The house stood all alone on the side of the road. The only other detail that comes to mind is that it was run by a large, tall lady called Mrs Rhodes and for some bizarre reason I have an image of her smoking a pipe! When I started at Dr Radcliffe's, the infant and lower junior classrooms were in long narrow buildings behind the village hall. Mrs Oaks was one of the teachers and Molly Adams was a teaching assistant. The headmaster was Mr Ennis – a formidable man who stood no nonsense and was pretty scary. I remember teachers Mr Smith, Miss Jones and Mr Cowell.

School dinners were cooked on site in the kitchens at the back of the main hall (this was on the other side of the road to where the school now stands). Miss Calver and her team of helpers cooked the usual school fare, some of it nice, some not so! At Christmas we all had to make a hat to wear for the Christmas dinner, probably on the last day of term, and whoever found the 5p in the Christmas pudding had to stand on their chair and sing a carol. I'm not so sure that would pass the Health & Safety criteria these days. The then vicar of Steeple Aston, Mr Hayter, would occasionally come in to school to take assembly.

The Post Office was, and probably still is, the main shop in the village. It was run by John and Eunice Walker. They sold pretty much what you needed on a daily basis. The actual Post Office counter was in a second small room at the back of the shop. There was another shop at the other end of Paines Hill run by Bob Hunt. Again, it sold the basics. The school bus would stop there and we would all pile in to buy some sweets before the walk home. Bob kept two tins under the counter, both containing small sweets, bubble gums, fruit salads, traffic light lollipops and so on. The price of the sweets in one tin was 1p and the other was ½p. I bet he loved us piling in to buy three sweets out of each tin. I can't think we boosted his daily takings by much! There was Waltons the Butchers on Southside just up from the Post Office.



*Left: Arthur Wadham;
Above: the Post Office and shop;
Right: Rev. Hayter.*



Charlie Preston (North Side) had a mobile shop that would do the rounds of the village and surrounding villages. I think Pat Brock maybe worked for or alongside him, as I remember he would drive up Grange Park during the week. I think the van was the size of a transit. but it was crammed with everything you might need. We would do the main food shop in Banbury on a Saturday at either Fine Fare or International supermarkets. I think Mrs Adams helped Royston Kinch with the milk deliveries. Mr Hiron from Somerton delivered the newspapers (or at least he collected the money on a Saturday) and very early on I remember a man called Harry who would deliver fresh baked bread from the back of his big green van. Ernie Steele would collect the pools money on a Thursday evening.

A few other random memories. A circus came one summer. My friend Alan Clifford and I were walking home from school along Northside and a lorry came chugging around the corner. On the side of the lorry it said 'Travelling Circus'. We were expecting a great line of lorries to follow, but no, that was it, one solitary lorry. The circus set up their big top (or not quite so big) in the field adjacent to the village hall. There were probably about three people in the circus. The woman who took the entrance money turned out to be the high wire act. I say high, it was maybe six foot off the ground! A horse appeared at some point and possibly a clown. It's all a bit hazy, but I seem to remember it went down well and was good fun. Heyfordian Coaches took us to school and back. Occasionally they would use a very old bus that we would call the peapod as it was a dull green colour and was actually shaped like a peapod. Now it would be considered almost vintage, but at the time I remember being so embarrassed to get on it.

Mum and dad were involved in the Cricket Club in Rousham. There was a Sports & Social club there as well. Aunt Sally was played on a Thursday night and darts on a Friday. There would be the occasional dance held and quiz nights, etc. I think the groundsman for the cricket pitch was Percy Tuckey. I don't think you could get a more beautiful, typically British spot to hold a game of cricket. Dad would drink in the Red Lion and sometimes the White Lion. Occasionally, on a Sunday I would go with him. I would sit in the car – a Ford Cortina – nursing a bottle of coke and a bag of crisps. I would listen to the 8-track. Eventually the novelty of going would wear off and three cokes later I would be bored stiff and end up walking home. I'm sure a lot of kids of a certain age can relate to that.

One year, the US authorities at the Upper Heyford air base arranged for the villagers to go and watch a game of American football at the base. They sent a bus to the village and again, although the memory is patchy, it was a good day out and did much for community relations. The one thing I definitely remember were the F-111 planes flying over the house, either taking off or getting ready to land at the base. We had a few American families in Grange Park renting houses during their period of duty. My sister would sometimes babysit for a family opposite us. They returned to the States, but unfortunately the father was killed in a flying accident soon after.

I could go on and on with my memories of Steeple Aston. I was sorry to leave in 1981. It was the fourth year of my schooling at Warriner and not ideal. We moved to North Devon. Dad died in 2009 aged 71 and mum in 2018 aged 75. Sarah, after living in Buckingham for nearly 30 years, moved back to Devon last year. I now live in Sandhurst, Berkshire. I would love to hear from anyone that can recall any of these times. My email address is stuartkendrick@hotmail.com

Grange Park. We lived at No.11, my dad's Cortina MkII on the drive.



A May Day parade, Bradshaw Close and American children



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Debunking the myths



Over the past weeks we have been advertising our presence in the village and letting people know that we would welcome new members. We had a stall at the church fete, we invited guests to our garden party and we have a new advertising campaign in production. There has been a good response. So far ten new people have become WI members and we hope for more. Perhaps if I dispel some myths about the WI, more people will think about joining.

- **Myth no. 1** We sing 'Jerusalem' at every meeting. **Not true!** We may sing it once a year, but the Barmy Army cricket fans sing 'Jerusalem' far more often than the WI.
- **Myth no. 2** Members of the WI have to be able to bake cakes and make jam. **Not true!** Members have different skills. Some members are very good at baking and making preserves, but for others this is definitely not their area of expertise!
- **Myth no. 3** You have to be old to join the WI. **Not true!** You have to be over 18. It's true that some of our members are 'mature', so come and find out why they like the WI so much that they have been members for over 40 years!
- **Myth no. 4** You have to be interested in traditional pastimes such as knitting, crochet, etc. It is true that if you are interested in art, crafts or handiwork you may find someone who shares your interest. But our members have a wider variety of skills and interests than you might expect: patchwork, pottery, painting, Pilates, paper-cutting, applique, quilting, cooking, embroidery, tapestry, creative writing, horse-riding, horse-racing, jewellery-making, block printing, bridge, bird-watching, photography, gardening, golf, singing, shooting, silver-smithing, sketching, sewing, star-gazing, and more...

You may think you know about the WI, but you could be wrong. Come and find out what we are really like. You might be surprised! For more information, contact me on 01869 347209 or cathy@lawdaymacandrew.co.uk

Cathy Lawday

Steeple Aston Football Club

After a fairly fraught and unprecedented couple of seasons, the new season is set to commence on the 4th September 2021.

As a consequence of having major disruption to our last two Annual General Meetings due to the privations of Covid-19, we are now seeking to recruit up to four new committee members. All of the key functional posts are secure, so there would be a soft landing for anyone who joined us. The basic requirement would be an interest in supporting and promoting our football club and adding fresh ideas to the way in which the club is run. We meet once a month as a committee – this has been via video link for the last year-and-a-half.

We are a hard-working and open-minded group who just want to be able to continue a long legacy of local football to young and not so young players from Steeple Aston and the surrounding area. Our facilities are the envy of most clubs in the Banbury District and Lord Jersey FA.

If you would like to find out more without obligation, contact the Secretary, Peter Wild, on 07950 837773 or via email at wild.peter54@gmail.com

Village Hall News



Welcome back to our re-opened Village Hall after the restrictions were lifted. We look forward to welcoming back all our user groups, societies and private hirers.

We will leave all Covid measurements and notices in place for those as they see fit to use, as we have a responsibility to everyone who uses the building.

Different groups have different needs and so we are asking groups to think how they would like to function when they return (bearing in mind that most groups will not normally be functioning during the summer). So we shall still have the hand sanitisers for those that want to use them; a one-way system for those that want it; groups can socially distance as they would like and wear/not wear masks and all relevant notices will remain in the hall.

It is the hirer's responsibility to ensure compliance with any regulations currently in place at the time of hiring.

Provisional dates;

Annual fireworks evening, Friday 5th November

Wassail evening, Sunday 12th December

Annual Quiz, Saturday 29th January 2022.

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)

Steeple Aston Walking Group



Despite a poor forecast, seven intrepid members of the Steeple Aston Walking Group (SAWG) set out from Sturdy's Castle on Friday 30th July for a 7.3 mile walk. We were lucky, as the weather held out for us (mostly), with only a couple of slight showers!

The walk took us east along the route of the old Roman road of Akeman Street to Pigeons Lock, where we turned right along the canal towpath past the forlorn-looking Rock of Gibraltar pub at Enslow, having been closed for some time now. Then over the bridge and up past the Whitehill Satellite Earth Station to avoid the very busy Bunkers Hill, and back across to a little-known bridlepath crossing the Oxford/Banbury Road. To complete the walk we continued westward and back round onto Akeman Street to the pub for a well-earned lunch.

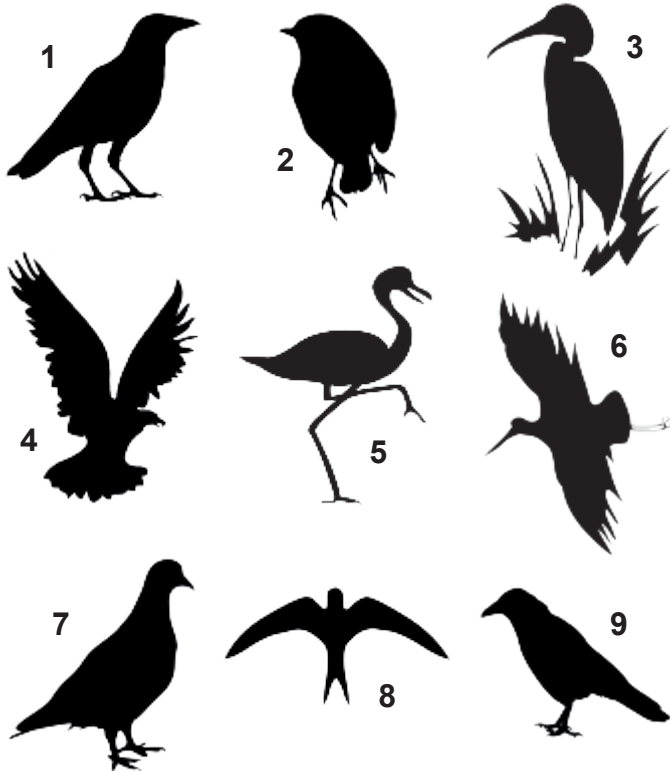
If you would like to join the group, please email [**sawgos25@gmail.com**](mailto:sawgos25@gmail.com) and we will add you to our monthly email. The walks take place on the last Friday of the month.

Penny, Stuart, Sue and Graham

Birds in black

Can you identify these birds from their silhouettes?

Answers on page 37.



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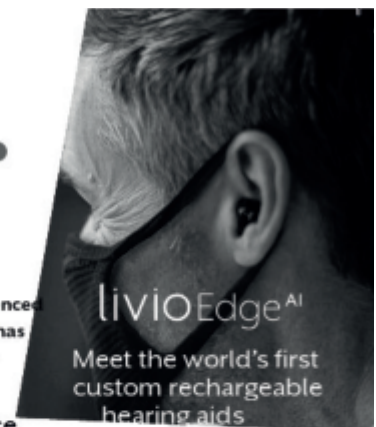
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Consuming the Planet!

The recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) ahead of COP26 made for very stark reading and left me feeling temporarily both depressed and powerless to effect significant enough change to make a real difference. However, it also got me really thinking about what more I can do – and therefore, that everyone has the power to do, irrespective of governmental policy/practice. For me, the biggest single thing that we can do as individuals is to change our attitude towards consumption.

In May this year, Amazon reported its figures for the first three months of the year, with sales up 44% on the previous year (which were already significantly higher than the previous year) and an increase in profit of 220% (NY Times). When Primark (other stores are available) reopened after lockdown, people queued from 7am on opening day and their opening hours were increased to 7am–10pm to cope with the volume of people trying to get through their doors. One shopper was quoted as saying that the reopening was “the best day ever” and that she had been “just desperate” to get back to the shops.

Now, I like shopping as much as the next person (although I would like to put it on record that I would NEVER queue to get into a shop), but over recent months I have been shocked to realise just how badly consumerism has taken hold of us all. We are not helped by the fact that we were being encouraged back to the shops to ‘help the economy’, that it has never been easier or quicker to buy things (order in the morning, get it in the evening) and that, increasingly, we are the victims of ‘greenwashing’ (where organisations overemphasise their green credentials), leading us to believe that our consumption is having a positive impact on the planet rather than just a slightly less negative one.

However, the fact is that, if we want to do our bit for the planet, then we need to consume less and when we do consume, wherever we can, we should choose not to consume virgin/newly made products but opt instead for second hand/vintage/antique products that are ‘new to us’.

I’m pleased to say that, whilst I like shopping, my preferred haunts have long been charity shops, car boot sales, recycling centres, flea markets, antique shops, and the like, but I also accept that I need to do more (or rather less!). I have started this process already and being very honest, it’s not easy, particularly when you are not a ‘standard’ shape or size, and you are in the middle of renovating your house.

It takes more thought, time, and patience to mend/reuse what you already have or to buy second-hand. You have to be much more flexible/creative in your thinking and be prepared for the fact that sometimes you won’t find what you are looking for on a particular trip. However, it can also be great fun, teach you new skills and mean you end up with something that is unique to you! I have never been great at sewing, but recently I spent a couple of hours mending a favourite pair of trousers (five years old) which had given up at a seam and now I will get to enjoy them for a few more years! I also took an old skirt, which I bought in a charity shop a couple of years ago and had started to look a bit tired, and gave it a new lease of life by block printing it (see photo). Now it feels like new and I love wearing it again.



In the house, we are reusing as much as possible, with the floorboards from upstairs being used as the new kitchen floor and the panelling that has been removed from some of the rooms being refashioned into built-in storage and skirting boards. Even our old secondary double glazing is about to get a new life as cold frames for our allotment! We have also had a great time scouring flea markets and antique fairs for various things we need, including doors and light fittings and will be well occupied as the evenings get darker in putting together our very individual ‘rusty chandelier’!

We’ve only just made a start, but will be continuing our journey to both consuming less overall and second-hand where we can and would love to hear from you if you are already doing the same or are interested to change your consumer habits. Please share your thoughts via email to amanda@sustainablesteeple.com or call on 07793 553150 and we will share progress in next month’s article.



THE VALENTINE CLUB



The weather was in our favour when we met at Rousham House on Tuesday 17th August for our second event of the year. Tea was provided by Ann Starling and her team of volunteers and a big thank you to them for what is always a superb spread. Also, a thank you to Charles and Angela Cottrell-Dormer for making us so welcome to their estate with the opportunity to have a look around the magnificent gardens.

For our meeting on Tuesday 21st September, we are back in the village hall where we will be entertained by one of our favourite entertainers, Donna Chalcraft, who will bring us songs from our younger days to songs of today.

Following on from our first get-together since the pandemic we have been able to welcome some new members and have decided not to charge a membership for the remainder of the year.

We would like to encourage members, new or old, along with supporters of our club, to participate in The Cherwell Lottery. Half of all proceeds come directly back to the club, making such a difference to our finances and enabling us to move forward with a sound financial backing. Details can be found on our website as to how to join. To date we have had numerous winners of £25 and one winner of £250!

Much to the disappointment of many supporters we have decided not to hold the annual jumble sale this year as the event brings with it some congestion and no social distancing in the village hall.

We have, subject to any last-minute hiccups, managed to reserve 40 places for the Snow Ball at Nailcote Hotel in Warwickshire on Wednesday 17th November and should be able to confirm details at our September meeting.

Finally, Christmas is coming fast, but do not worry, we are ready! The meal is booked along with the village hall and a top-line entertainer has confirmed his presence so, provided you are a member of The Valentine Club, save the date of Tuesday 14th December for a superb afternoon of food, wine and laughs galore.

For more information about the club go to www.steepleaston.org.uk or visit our own website www.valentineclub.wixsite/aston or simply call me on 01869 340512.

Richard Preston – Group organiser

Richard.preston5@btopenworld.com or 01869 340512

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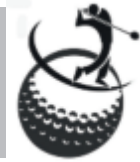


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SAGS' match at the Wychwood on Friday 20th August was played after the deadline for this issue, so a full report will appear next month. If you can't wait until then, visit www.steepleaston.org.uk

September's meeting is the choice of Martin Kay, our Captain, and is being held on Friday 17th September at Kirtlington, OX5 3JY. This is an inland-type links course with challenging greens. The course incorporates many natural features and has 102 bunkers designed by Graham Webster. 6107 yards, par 70. If you would like to join us, as it's just down the road, we will be meeting at 12 noon for bacon baps and coffee, 18 holes of golf then a two-course meal. Call Chris on 01869 347173 or myself 01869 340423.

Stay safe & play well.

Alan Brewer (Chair)

Things you never knew about golf

- Golf is so popular because it is the best game in the world at which to be bad.
- They say golf is like life, but don't believe them. It's way more complicated than that.
- The ardent golfer would play Mount Everest if somebody put a flagstick on top.
- Golf is a lot of walking broken up by disappointment and bad arithmetic. To some golfers, their greatest handicap is the ability to add correctly.
- Golf is an awkward set of bodily contortions designed to produce a graceful result. If you hit to the right, it's a slice. If you hit to the left, it's a hook. If you hit it straight, it's a miracle.
- Golf and sex are the only things you can enjoy without being good at them.
- A golfer's diet – live on greens as much as possible.
- Golf can be best defined as an endless series of tragedies obscured by the occasional miracle.
- Golf is a game that is played on a five-inch course – the distance between your ears.
- Golf combines two favourite British pastimes – taking long walks and hitting things with sticks.
- They call it golf because all of the other four-letter words were taken.





Harry Wheeler-Brand spoke enthusiastically about the 'Magic of Long Exposure' at our last meeting. A young professional photographer, Harry runs workshops and promotes all things landscape around the East Coast counties of Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk. He published his own guidebook to photography around the East Anglian coast during lockdown. He spoke at length about his techniques, his equipment, and his love of drama in landscapes taken with long camera exposures.

Harry stressed the importance of doing homework to plan and check the location for weather, position, and composition. He also emphasized how many images he took to achieve the final shot that he was pleased with. Long exposure achieves those dreamy seascapes and cloudscape. It can be a good technique, along with filters, to eliminate people who might wander into the shot.

Harry also introduced us to infrared photography that in post-production can be turned into intense black-and-white images. One of his tips was to buy good quality filters since expensive camera equipment deserves a quality engineered filter to maintain the image superiority. Do check out www.harrybehindthelens.com for his images.

Our next meeting will be at the Adderbury Institute on Wednesday 1st September at 7.30pm. Covid-19 protocols will be in place. You are welcome to join us to hear Andreas Klatt talk to us about his photography in China. Check the website for further details. Finally, we are celebrating the 15th anniversary of the beginning of the Society – more about this next month.

Anne Hunsley
www.addphoto.co.uk



These photographs of blossom and a tree peony are by Colin Lamb and should be on display at the AD&D Annual Exhibition – Saturday 25th September, 10am to 5pm, at The Adderbury Institute, and Saturday 23rd October, 9.30am to 12.30pm, in the Living Room at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Deddington.



The Cricket Report



Great Tew 20/20...

Great Tew won the toss and put us in to bat on a sunny Wednesday evening. Stan Owen, in only his second game of the year, hit a gallant 34 with a number of boundaries, but not many quick singles! Jon Scotchbrook struck a more elegant 29, but other than that we were frankly a bit rubbish, though Alex Hatz did chip in to help us get to 96-7 in our 20 overs. After four overs Tew were 35-0 and it looked like an early trip to the bar. Somehow, Peter Higgins cranked up his groaning body to take 3-12 in four overs, including one sensational catch by Jonty Renk on the boundary to remove Great Tew's 1st XI Captain for 1. Tom Chesser piled on the pressure with four tight overs and then the key moment as their opener spooned a catch to short Third Man – ouch, sadly the ball spilled in the evening sun as James Babbage (he was out for nought when he played for Steeple Aston!), finished on 63, winning the match in the 17th over.

Ascot-under-Wychwood...

Ascot are new opposition for us and what a beautiful ground, though with a bit of a slope! More alarmingly it was 30 degrees in the shade, but fortunately Nigel Doggett won the toss and chose to bat – phew! Nige was in full flow before being unluckily run out for 19. Then Tom Chesser (107*) stroked a beautiful unbeaten century and together with Arthur Higgins (29) put on 96 for the second wicket. Tom's timing and placement around the field was a joy to behold. Sadly, Arthur played across the line of a straight one and was replaced by Jack Higgins, who also scored 29. The pair took the score to 200 before Jack was caught on the boundary and Tom finally retired exhausted. Paul Nicolaides (14*) and Tim Jones (7*) played some delightful shots to take us to 222-3 off our 35 overs. Surely enough?

Ascot started in belligerent fashion and, with only ten fielders, we suddenly found ourselves in trouble as Ascot raced to 59 without loss in the first ten overs. Anxiety was seeping into the team, until Tom Chesser stepped up and produced the best all-round performance by a Steeple Aston cricketer EVER, taking 5-28 off his six overs. He also took three catches. The first SACC player to hit a century and take five wickets in the same match. WOW! Tom was ably supported by Hector Higgins, who only conceded 23 runs from his six overs and it was left to Arthur Higgins (2-27) and Jack Higgins (1-0) to wrap up the tail. So Steeple Aston won our first game against Ascot-under-Wychwood by 41 runs.

Another club record...

There was also another (lesser) Club Record in that four members of the same family played in the team for the first time, as far as I know. Cricket can be a cruel game, so there was always bound to be one unhappy Higgins, if not four, but fortunately all contributed in some way and beer and chips were enjoyed by all in the pub afterwards. We are after all a Village and Family team, having had three members of the same family in the team on numerous occasions – the Doggetts, Brewers, Powles and Longmans, though Bob might have been umpiring, but it still counts. Does anyone know any more? My only wish now is that we can have some fathers and daughters in the team, or even mothers.

All are welcome.

Best wishes

Peter Higgins – Chairman

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Saturday 21 August 2021

Saturday 4 September 2021

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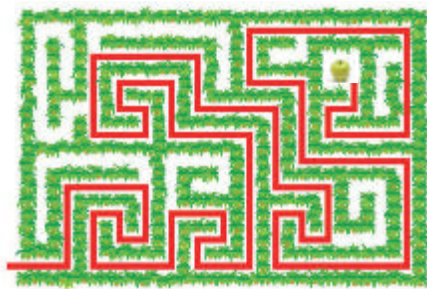
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Solution to apple maze (see page 12)



September puzzle (see page 12)

Here are the 40 words we found. Have you done better?

bee, beep, beer, beet, beret, beset, best, bet
ember, esteem

meet, met, mete, meter, metre,

peer, perm, pert, pest, pester, pet, peter

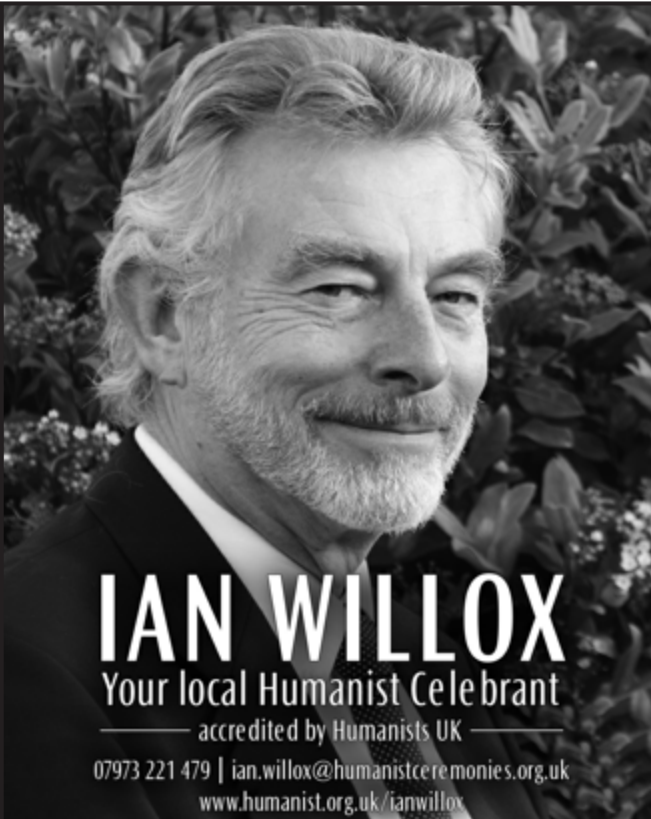
reset, rest

see, seem, seep, set, spree, steep, steer, stem, step

tee, teem, temper, tepee, term, terse, tree

Birds in black (see page 28)

1. Crow; 2. Robin; 3. Heron; 4. Eagle; 5. Flamingo;
6. Stork; 7. Pigeon; 8. Swallow; 9. Jackdaw



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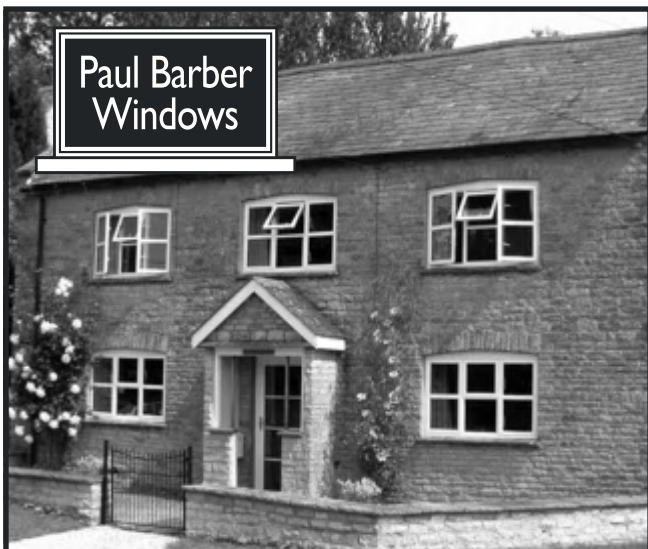
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Church Matters



Are we daring to get out the pens yet? We've been making plans in pencil for so long, it feels scary when we begin to feel that the future might be getting back to normal. Disappointment we can cope with; it's the hope that gets you!

I'm not sure my diary is entirely written in ink for the months ahead, but I am very grateful for some very solid highlights in the weeks past. Last month in these pages we looked back at the Fete – but just after the Fete we also had a Summer Concert in church, when Nick Cleobury and the Aston Singers, together with the amazing Cassandra Wright (and amazing accompanist Eunji Han), gave us a terrific evening of music. The madrigals were wonderful and Cassandra's Handel was truly a thing of awe and wonder. Look her up on YouTube – there is a super video of her singing Samuel Barber with the orchestra of the Royal Academy of Music.

As a church community we are beginning to get used to 'sort of normal' once more. All three of our congregations are up and running every week. We are singing hymns again – which is every kind of glorious. And if (for now) we maintain some empty pews for distancing, and keep wearing facemasks (especially when numbers are high) for the care and safety of everyone, we still are managing a pretty good go at regular church life. It was great to have Bishop Gavin, our new Bishop of Dorchester, visit in August to affirm us in all we are seeking to do, and bless us as we seek to love and serve everyone here.

And our hearts and love go out to James and Tish and to Rob and Katie as they prepare for their wedding days this month. It is so brilliant to be celebrating weddings again in church and to pray God's blessing on these wonderful couples as they begin their married lives.

We are hoping that regular after-church coffee and fellowship will start again soon and (when we sort out the details) our weekly Bible Study might soon be back in the diary too. That plan is still a bit in pencil, but let's see how it goes!

Looking forward, Harvest is coming at us fast. Our Harvest Service will be just into next month, falling on Sunday 3rd October. Though we aren't putting on a supper in the village hall this year, we are still going to make a point of really celebrating the Harvest Weekend. Harvest is a time to be grateful – to say thank you for all the gifts that make our lives so special and for the people who bring them to us. So this year we are inviting lots of village groups and organisations to make Harvest displays and to put them around our beautiful village church so that everyone can see them. We'll have a special open day on Saturday 2nd October, with teas available, and a special service at 11am on Sunday 3rd October where we'd love folk from all of those groups (and everyone else too!) to come and help us simply say Thank You.

After all these months, we are still here and all of us sometimes just need to put that gratitude into words. Let's do this together at Harvest.

Though – and feel free to ink this in your diaries right now – we are here every Sunday at 11am and you are always welcome to join us at any time to offer your own prayers and thank yous!

More news is always available at www.sntchurch.com

Revd Marcus Green



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Church Services

	North Aston	Steeple Aston	Tackley
Sunday 5th September	9.30am Holy Communion <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> Rev'd Marcus Green	11am Holy Communion <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> Rev'd Marcus Green	5.30pm Evensong Rev'd Marcus Green Canon Robin Gibbons
Sunday 12th September	9.30am Family Service Rev'd Marcus Green	11am Family Service Rev'd Marcus Green	5.30pm Holy Communion Rev'd Marcus Green Canon Robin Gibbons
Sunday 19th September	9.30am Holy Communion Rev'd Marcus Green	11am Holy Communion Rev'd Marcus Green	5.30pm Informal Service Rev'd Marcus Green Canon Robin Gibbons
Sunday 26th September	9.30am Morning Prayer Richard Bailey	11am Morning Prayer Rev'd Marcus Green	9.30am Family Communion Rev'd Marcus Green
Sunday 3rd October	9.30am Harvest Festival Rev'd Marcus Green	11am Harvest Festival Rev'd Marcus Green	5.30pm Harvest Festival Rev'd Marcus Green Canon Robin Gibbons
www.sntchurch.com			

Local Info

Steeple Aston Village Hall

	Hiring Fee	Caution
Hall (meeting night)		
Represented Clubs.....	£9	
Non-Represented Clubs.....	£17	
Hall Only (social occasion)		
Represented Clubs.....	£32	
Others.....	£53	
All Facilities (social occasion)		
Village Residents	£65	£200
Represented Clubs	£65	£200
Others - up to 6 hours	£110	£300
Others - over 6 hours	£160	£300
All Facilities (off peak - 4 hours)		
Village Residents	£30	£75
Represented Clubs	£30	£75
Committee Room		
Represented Clubs.....	£6	
Non-Represented Clubs.....	£12	
Discount for represented clubs – 15% for six block bookings		

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

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

Rubbish bin collection day is Thursday

September

2nd green
 9th blue & brown
 16th green
 23rd blue & brown
 30th green



October

7th blue & brown
 14th green
 21st blue & brown
 28th green

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

STAGECOACH S4 BUS SERVICE

This timetable is effective from 7 March 2021.

From Steeple Aston (outside Post Office) to Oxford (arrival time in italics)

Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays)

0624 0702 0746 0920 then hourly to 1520 1621 1721 1821 1932 2047 2217
 0702 0800 0844 1003 1603 1702 1802 1902 2010 2125 2255

Saturdays

0704 0804 0919 then hourly to 1819 1932 2047 2217
 0746 0846 1002 1902 2010 2125 2255

Sundays and most public holidays

0903 1033 1203 1333 1503 1633 1803
 0944 1114 1244 1414 1544 1714 1844

From Steeple Aston (outside Post Office) to Banbury (arrival time in italics)

Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays)

0752 0855 0957 then hourly to 1457 1600 1700 1800 1900 1955 2107 2222 2352
 0835 0935 1035 1535 1638 1738 1838 1929 2024 2135 2250 0020

Saturdays

0759 0857 0957 then hourly to 1557 1657 1757 1855 1955 2107 2222 2352
 0835 0935 1035 1635 1731 1831 1924 2024 2135 2250 0020

Sundays and most public holidays

0917 1037 1207 1337 1507 1637 1807 1937
 0953 1113 1243 1413 1543 1713 1843 2005

Times subject to change. Before starting your journey please check the timetables at www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables E&OE

OURBUS BARTONS

OurBus Bartons has returned to their 'Pandemic Timetables'. It offers services through Steeple Aston to and from Chipping Norton (Wednesdays) and to and from Bicester (Fridays). See <http://ourbus.co/bartons/> for details and times

Steeple Aston Calendar

Check the village website at www.steepleaston.org.uk (Home > Calendar) for any changes.

September			
Tuesday 14th	'Verse and Converse'. WI social evening with games, poems, quiz. Wine and nibbles	Village Hall	7.30pm
Wednesday 15th	SAL October copy and advert deadline		
Monday 20th	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Tuesday 21st	The Valentine Club (p31)	Village Hall	2.30pm
Saturday 25th	AD&D PS Annual Exhibition (p34)	Adderbury Institute	10am to 5pm
Saturday 25th	Farmers' Market (p9)	Deddington	9am to 12.30pm
October			
Tuesday 12th	WI. Speaker from Blenheim Palace: 'The Ladies of Blenheim'	Village Hall	7.30pm
Friday 15th	SAL November copy and advert deadline		
Monday 18th	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Saturday 23rd	AD&D PS Annual Exhibition (p34)	Deddington church	9.30am to 12.30pm
Saturday 23rd	Farmers' Market (p9)	Deddington	9am to 12.30pm

Due to coronavirus some clubs and societies might still be meeting online.
Please contact the organisers for the most up to date information. Contact details
can be found on page 2.

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). 10am - 12pm - Saturdays

Steeple Aston Life is published by Steeple Aston Life Committee

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