

Steeple Aston *Life*

April 2024

Issue No. 608



• Blandford Fly • Steeple Aston Precept • Red Lion reopening • Arts Page •
• Local butterflies • Nursery rhymes quiz • Community Orchard photos •

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Contributions are welcome. Please email editorsalife@gmail.com

Cover: *The Eye Catcher in spring* (photo by Nigel Francis)

Steeple Aston *Life*

COPY

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

COPY DEADLINES

The copy deadline is the 14th of the
previous month.
This means the copy deadline for the May
2024 issue is Sunday 14th April.

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

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All adverts, and all advertising queries
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$\frac{1}{4}$ page - £8

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Full page (village events only) - £17.50

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		Cllr Bryn Williams	07836 271998
		Cllr Hugo Brown	
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Golf Society	Chairman	Alan Brewer	340423
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Toddler Group		Hilary Clayton-Lyne, Angela Smith	steepleastontoddlergrp@gmail.com
Valentine Club		Richard & Daphne Preston	340512
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Village Website	www.steepleaston.org.uk	Editor: Jenny Bell	943573
Volunteer Connect - Community transport scheme		0300 3030125	
WI	President	Julie Hillier	349185



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

Steeple Aston *Life*

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Editorial

"On April Fools' Day, believe nothing, trust no one, just like any other day." – Unknown

April Fools' Day, celebrated annually on the first day of the fourth month, is dedicated to pranks, hoaxes and practical jokes, where people delight in tricking their friends, family and sometimes even strangers.

The origins of the day are somewhat hazy, with several theories attempting to explain its roots. One popular belief is that the tradition dates back to the late 16th century when countries switched from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar, moving the start of the new year from 1st April to 1st January. Those who continued to celebrate the new year on 1st April became the butt of jokes and pranks.

Or perhaps it goes back to the festival of Hilaria in ancient Rome. Here, people disguised themselves and mocked fellow citizens. And then there is the speculation that the day is linked to the start of spring in the northern hemisphere, when Mother Nature fooled people with changing, unpredictable weather. Plus ça change!

One of the best-known pranks in Britain took place on 1st April 1957. The BBC showed Swiss farmers harvesting spaghetti from trees. At the time, spaghetti was an exotic food and many viewers fell for the hoax.

The BBC was at it again on 1st April 1976, this time on Radio 2. Astronomer Sir Patrick Moore said that at 9.47am, as Pluto passed behind Jupiter, it would briefly cause a powerful combination of gravitational forces of the two planets, noticeably decreasing gravity on Earth. If listeners were to jump into the air at that exact moment, they would experience a floating sensation. Hundreds of phone calls were received from people claiming to have levitated.

In this age of technology, digital hoaxes have become increasingly popular, though fake news stories and social media stunts are now appearing every day of the year, taking the edge off the jokes.

It is important to keep it light-hearted and harmless. In a world filled with stress and anxiety, April Fools' Day can offer a welcome respite, reminding us not to take ourselves too seriously.

Robert



Steeple Aston Noticeboard



Steeple Aston Spring Clean

The Great British Spring Clean is the nation's biggest mass-action environmental campaign. Last year, over 400,000 bags of litter were collected by volunteers around the country. This year, Steeple Aston's Spring Clean litter pick will take place on 13th and 14th April. Litter pickers, bags, gloves and hi-viz vests will be provided.

If you would like to volunteer to remove litter from the verges and hedges around the village, please contact Carl Tomlinson (carltomlinson1967@gmail.com – telephone 07796 698664) for details of where to collect your kit and where to leave the filled bags.

SACS Spring Concert

Steeple Aston Choral Society's next concert is called 'A Spring Evening at the Opera'. It will be on Sunday 14th April at 6.30pm for 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

Secretary Margaret Bullement writes: "Come and join us for a convivial evening of favourite opera choruses, arias and spring music. The programme includes – 'Easter Hymn' from Cavalleria Rusticana; 'Drinking Song' from La Traviata; 'Bridal Chorus' from Lohengrin; 'Chorus of Hebrew Slaves' from Nabucco; 'La Donna e Mobile' from Rigoletto, plus 'Spring' from The Four Seasons. You will know them all and you may even get to join in. Dressing up is optional, but singing your socks off is not."

Table seating (eight to a table). Bar with wine, soft drinks and nibbles. Tickets £12.00 (children under 16 free) can be ordered from SACS members, or direct from Margaret Bullement on 01869 347346 or mtheb749@gmail.com

Tools with a Mission

Caroline Edwards, from Middle Aston, is a volunteer tool collector for 'Tools with a Mission' (TWAM). All donated tools are taken to the Rugby Refurbishment Centre. As many as possible are restored to good working order and packed in kits. They are sent to partner organisations in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Malawi and DR Congo. These kits – gardening, electrical, plumbing, carpentry, sewing and tailoring, machinery, knitting, computing – are given to people who need them to make a living and support their families. Training courses are offered along with the tool kit. For more information visit www.twam.uk

Please have a look in your cupboards and shed for tools which you no longer use. Contact Caroline on 07702 047195, who can collect from you, or bring them to the Plant Sale and Open Garden on Saturday 4th May at Westcott, Middle Aston OX25 5PZ

Steeple Aston Noticeboard



Steeple Aston Light Railway

From Graham Porcas

Last year I set up and ran my 5-inch gauge miniature railway at several village events on Robinsons Close. This was much enjoyed by many youngsters – and some not so young – from the village and surrounding areas. It was such a success that I have been asked to do it again and make this a regular part of village events, which I am more than happy to. Building and running these miniature steam engines is my hobby and although it takes quite some time and effort to set up a temporary track, roughly a day to set up and a half day to dismantle, it is a great pleasure for me, especially as I may be encouraging some future engineers

to take an interest in mechanical engineering. I am required to take out special insurance to run trains on Robinson's Close. This is very specific and outside the realms of the usual policies used by the Parish Council and other village organisations, so I have to arrange this at my own expense. Last year the Parish Council was kind enough to reimburse me and I was hoping they would do so again this year, but they refused my application on the grounds that as an individual I am not entitled to such support! I'm still trying to work out the logic behind this decision, but the obvious conclusion is to form a special interest group so that I am no longer just an individual. So I would like to start a club – The Steeple Aston Light Railway.

Anyone is welcome to join, no age limit, upper or lower; but an interest in steam engines, learning how to drive them, or simply taking part in the joys of riding behind one would be useful. Or just to support me to continue with running days at village events. Please contact me directly grahamporcas@btconnect.com or 01869 347240.



Blandford Fly

Steeple Aston Parish Council is investigating whether a control programme involving spraying the larvae of the Blandford Fly could be used to reduce dramatically the numbers of flies locally – and therefore the number of villagers suffering from their nasty, painful bites. The Blandford Fly (sometimes called the blackfly) is a small 2 to 3mm insect usually found in East Anglia, Oxfordshire and Dorset. It's most common during May and June. It flies low to the ground and normally bites ankles and legs. The painful bites can lead to swelling, blistering, joint pain and sometimes a high temperature. The Blandford Fly is mostly seen in populated areas alongside rivers. It is thought that the River Cherwell is its local breeding ground. The name derives from a major outbreak of people being bitten around the town of Blandford Forum, Dorset, in the 1960s and 70s.

Parish councillor Mat Watson has been in touch with researchers at Bournemouth University who say they have found a solution which has reduced the population of the Blandford Fly by 98 per cent in affected areas from the Stour River. Mat told February's Parish Council meeting that it would cost about £4,000 for a local survey of where the fly develops and £6,000 for a wider survey of the whole of the Cherwell Valley. The survey could be done in April this year, but the spraying would have to wait for the following year. Councillors agreed to contact other villages along the Cherwell Valley to see if they are interested in joining forces on this. They already know that two parish councils are concerned. In addition, they are writing to local GPs to find out the extent of the problem. Oxfordshire County Councillor Arash Fatemian has confirmed that Deddington is particularly badly affected by the flies. He has offered to make enquiries and see if any funding may be available from the county council. The spraying programme in Dorset was county-wide and funded by the county council there.

With no prospect of spraying this year, the most important advice to gardeners and walkers during May and June remains to wear long trousers and tuck your trousers into your socks!

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Steeple Aston's Parish Precept

Steeple Aston Parish Council has increased its council tax bill by 8.7 per cent compared to last year. The total cost, which is known as the Precept, has risen from £33,934 in 23/24 to £36,893 for 24/25. That means of a total £2,327.84 annual council tax bill for a property in Band D, the amount relating to the Parish Council will be £84.50. This works out to just £7.04 a month which is an increase of 56p per compared to last year. So less than a pint of milk.

By comparison, some other large villages in the region have seen more significant rises. Adderbury's Parish Precept has gone up 25 per cent while Launton has had an increase of almost 30 per cent. However, some places, like Hook Norton and Heyford Park, have had no rise at all.

So what has caused the £2,959 increase in Steeple Aston's Parish Precept? There have been three key elements. The first is an increase in the insurance premium for public liability. This has gone up from a budgeted £3,500 last year to £4,000 for 24/25. Another relates to new costs for 24/25 associated with the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan for £869. However, the most significant single increase is £2,000 which is for a grant the Parish Council has decided to make to Steeple Aston Preschool to fund part of its plans to renovate its ageing outdoor play area. It was deemed worthy due to the importance of the Preschool as a village asset and the benefit it brings to the community.

But while some costs have had a budgeted increase, some have actually decreased. For example, grass cutting has been reduced from £3,000 to £2,500 due to hotter weather last year resulting in less grass growth. Most maintenance costs have remained the same, though, including the largest single cost – cleaning the village toilet and tidying the playground. This remains at £9,500, which is pretty much a quarter of the entire budget. The playground was built using grant money won thanks to a fundraising campaign led by Richard Preston. However, there are no grants available to pay for tidying the playground nor cleaning of the toilet, so the Parish Council funds this through the Precept.

Anyone with small children, such as myself, will agree the toilet is a really useful facility. But it's a disproportionately expensive one, especially for village residents who never use it. As a result, it has been the subject of several debates at various Parish Council meetings with some suggestions to introduce a pay-to-use system for the toilet or to ask people to make donations with their mobile phones via a QR code system whenever they visit the playground, especially as it is regularly used by people who don't actually live in Steeple Aston. So far, the Parish Council has preferred to stick with the current method of funding cleaning the facilities through council tax. But this regular revaluation does show how the council is committed to ensuring residents get the best value for their money.

And it does everything it can to keep costs down.

For instance, a lot of work – such as tidying in the village, simple maintenance or organising events – is done on a volunteer basis and of course the Parish Councillors themselves don't get paid. The only person who is paid for their time is the Parish Council Clerk, who is employed to manage and run the Council's affairs. Their salary is linked to inflation and the cost has been budgeted at £4,500.

For further information and a breakdown of the costs please view www.steepleaston.org.uk/finance and email any feedback to parishclerk.steepleaston@gmail.com

Matthew Watson, on behalf of Steeple Aston Parish Council

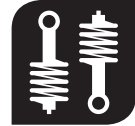
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The ARTS Page



‘April is the cruellest month.’ So T. S. Eliot opens *‘The Waste Land’*, now 102 years old. A wonderful poem, well worth the study, but it certainly needs explanation. Much has been written, but I found two sites worth a look – poemanalysis.com and litcharts.com

Chaucer (*Prologue to Canterbury Tales*) has a more upbeat introduction to April:

‘Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote,
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour’

As does Robert Browning (*Home thoughts from abroad*).

‘Oh, to be in England now that April’s there
And whoever wakes in England, sees, some morning,
unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough,
In England—now!’

Last word from Samuel Johnson: ‘April is a promise that May is bound to keep’.

How about a "Poem for the Month" selected by one of our readers?

Websites these days are usually very informative, but there are so many. This Arts Page can only be a guide through this forest of information, albeit from my perspective. Please send in your suggestions. For example, you may know the Witney Music Festival cited later. A short introduction would be terrific.

Here's a precis of some upcoming events.

- Easter Holiday Activities at banburymuseum.org, ending 12th April.
- ‘I’m Sorry I’ll Read that Again...Again!’ 19th April at chippingnortontheatre.com
- Barbican Quartet play Haydn, Britten and Ravel on 21st April. musicinadderbury.com The website is now up-to-date till July and also has an array of ‘Virtual Concerts’. Beautiful music in beautiful buildings.
- Budapest Cafe Orchestra on 27th April – their infectious music will want you to stay there forever. 23rd May, ‘Looking for me friend – The Music of Victoria Wood’ – an evening of pure joy. themillartscentre.co.uk

Visiting these websites will lead you to a wonderfully eclectic range of entertainment.

Two of the smaller local summer opera companies are well worth a mention.

- Bampton Classical Opera offers Haydn's ‘The Apothecary’ on 6th May at Dorchester Manor Garden and Gazzaniga's ‘Alcina's Island’ on 19th and 20th July. They were finalists in the International Opera Awards twice recently, so do enjoy their pioneering exploration of 18th century rarities. bamptonopera.org
- Waterperry Opera Festival is going from strength to strength. Shows include ‘The Barber of Seville’ and ‘The Turn of the Screw’, with ‘Peter and the Wolf’ for families. Between 10th and 17th August on our doorstep!

waterperryoperafestival.co.uk

- Dorchester Festival runs from 3rd to 12th May with wide ranging events, from ‘Tibetan Cooking’ to the ‘Tallis Scholars’, from a John Rutter ‘Come and Sing’ to ‘Block Printing Workshops’ and much more. dorchesterfestival.com
- The English Music Festival is also in Dorchester, from 24th to 27th May, englishmusicfestival.org.uk In 1904 a German, Oskar Schmitz, called us ‘Das Land ohne Musik’ (‘The Land without Music’). He wasn't entirely wrong, but from Elgar, Parry, Sullivan et al, we have never looked back. This short festival highlights the richness of English Music to this day. Witney Music Festival has build up events from 24th May to 6th June with main events on 7th and 8th June.

witneymusicfestival.com

Mentioned many times on these pages, Oxfordshire Art Weeks (artweeks.org) is a panoply of wonderful local art. Their excellent website alone is a treasure trove. See pages 14 and 15 for details of exhibitions in Steeple Aston and Middle Aston. And last, but not least, is Steeple Aston Choral Society with ‘A Spring Evening at the Opera’ on Sunday 14th April, 6.30pm for 7pm in the Village Hall. Tickets from Margaret, 01869 347346 or mtheb@gmail.com

I am looking forward to the first poem and recommendations for other Arts events.

Nick Cleobury

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???? Mind Games

How well do you know your nursery rhyme characters? asks Cathy Lawday

1. Who announced that he was a good boy?
2. Who fell asleep under the haystack?
3. Who scarpered when the boys came out to play?
4. Who was afraid of an arachnid?
5. Who had a row of attractive women in their garden?
6. Who should put on the kettle?
7. Who left with silver buckles on his knee?
8. Who ran up and down the timepiece?
9. Who ran through the town clad only in their nightclothes?
10. Who went to fetch a bone for the poor dog?
11. Who should bake a cake for me as quickly as possible?
12. Who had musical accompaniment wherever she went?

ANSWERS

1. **Little Jack Horner** (...sat in the corner, eating his Christmas pie. He put in his thumb and pulled out a plum and said "What a good boy am I".)
2. **The boy who looks after the sheep** (Little boy blue, come blow your horn. The sheep's in the meadow. The cow's in the corn. Where's the boy who looks after the sheep? He's under a haystack, fast asleep.)
3. **Georgie Porgy** (...pudding and pie, kissed the girls and made them cry. When the boys came out to play, Georgie Porgy ran away.)
4. **Little Miss Muffet** (...sat on a tuffet, eating her curds and whey. There came a big spider and sat down beside her and frightened Miss Muffet away.)
5. **Mary, Mary** (...quite contrary, how does your garden grow? With silver bells and cockleshells. And pretty maids all in a row.)
6. **Polly** (...put the kettle on, Polly put the kettle on, Polly put the kettle on. We'll all have tea, Bobby Shattoe (...has gone to sea, silver buckles on his knee. He'll come back and marry me, Bonny Bobby Shattoe.)
8. **The mouse** (Hickory Dock, The mouse ran up the clock. The clock struck one, the mouse ran down, Hickory Dock.)
9. **Wee Willie Winkie** (...runs through the town, upstairs and downstairs in his nightgown. Knocking on the windows, crying through the locks, "Are all the children in their beds? It's past 8 o'clock.")
10. **Old Mother Hubbard** (...went to the cupboard to get the poor dog a bone But when she got there, the cupboard was bare, and so the poor doggie had none.)
11. **The baker's man** (Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man, bake me a cake as fast as you can.)
12. **A fine lady upon a white horse** (Ride a cock horse to Banbury Cross to see a fine lady upon a white horse; rings on her fingers and bells on her toes, she shall have music wherever she goes.)



Ben Downing



Ann Moreland



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from

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The Gardening Spot

Is this the beginning of spring?

Hopefully, by time you read this, spring will have arrived and the potential for a long warm summer is not just a fantasy. I am hopeful of a really great summer and I'll tell you why. My dear old granddad, who passed away nearly 60 years ago, had some wonderful sayings and most of them come true. He would say at this time of the year that if the rooks nested in the top of the trees, we would have a good summer, if they nested half-way down the trees, it meant we were in for some pretty nasty weather. This year, they are nesting at the top of the trees, so fingers crossed my dear old granddad's observations prove to be right.

However, now for some gardening advice. It is time to tidy up herbaceous plants and feed established plants with a general fertiliser such as Vitax Q4 or, if you garden organically, Blood, Fish and Bone feed, applying a generous handful around each clump. You can take root and stem cuttings from delphiniums to help thin the clump and produce new, vigorous stock.

Give your lawn some well-deserved attention after the wet winter with a combined weed, feed and moss killer. If you have any bare patches in your lawn, there is a great range of lawn seed mixtures available. For shrubs and small trees now is a good time to tidy them up by removing any dead or diseased wood and prune forsythia once it has finished flowering. Broadleaf and evergreen shrubs will benefit from a light spreading of high-nitrogen fertilizer around their bases at this time of the year.

For anyone who grows bedding plants such as antirrhinum, petunia or marigolds, now is the time to sow some seed in the greenhouse, or maybe pick up some plug plants from the garden centre, so that they are ready to be planted out in their final position around mid to late May, when the chance of frost has hopefully disappeared. Check over plants such as geraniums or fuchsias that have been over-wintering in the greenhouse and cut them back to encourage young fresh growth before placing them outside again after the risk of frosts has gone. When the daffodils are over, and let us hope that is not for a while, remove the flower heads but not the foliage and give them a little general fertilizer to feed the bulbs in readiness for next year.

In the vegetable garden it is a busy time when you can plant any seed potatoes you have remaining, sow carrots, beetroot, peas and just about any other annual that you fancy, but hold back with runner beans until late in April or even May as they will not appreciate any cold winds that might hit them on germination. I always sow my French and runner beans in pots and then plant them in their final position towards the end of May at the earliest. Many of us, me included, have a tendency to sow a packet of seed all in one go whereas the best option is to sow a little about every two weeks to 'spread' the crop, giving a continuous supply of vegetables throughout the season.

My greenhouse has been washed down during the winter with a mild solution of Jeyes Fluid to reduce the potential for infection from all those bugs that hide away in the crevices over winter. I have started off some brassica plants in plugs so that they are ready to plant outside during May. My tomato seedlings have just germinated (mid-March) and should be ready to plant out in a cold greenhouse around the middle of April. If you grow cucumbers remember that they like warm, humid conditions so do not be in a hurry to start off plants until such conditions are likely. It is also a bit crammed in the greenhouse at present with young plants, seeds germinating, geranium cuttings, and so on, so roll on May when I can get some of the stuff outside!

If you find any of the above tips useful, but still have failures or disappointments in the garden, then come along to my garden at Primrose Gardens on Sunday 2nd June to see that I too have failures, as that is the way with gardening. Make a note of the NGS Open Gardens on 2nd June in your diary as this is a great way to see private gardens other than mine and have a look around the church allotments, finishing off with some home-made cake and a cup of tea in the Village Hall. All money raised goes to some really well-deserving charities.

Happy gardening – Richard Preston

PS. A little bit of advice! *When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant!!*

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The Cricket Report



Here are the fixtures for the 2024 season. The most important thing you need to remember is that Home Matches are now at Great Tew Cricket Club. Here is the full address: Great Tew CC, Ledwell Road, Great Tew, Oxfordshire OX7 4AG; telephone 01608 683896.

Day	Date	Opponents	Venue	Time
Saturday	11 th May	Peter Higgins XI	Home	11.30am
Sunday	2 nd June	Moo Cow XI	Home	2pm
Sunday	9 th June	Hertford College	Home	2pm
Thursday	20 th June	Kings Head CC	Away	6pm
Sunday	30 th June	Blenheim Park	Away	2pm
Sunday	7 th July	Minster Lovell	Away	2pm
Sunday	21 st July	Ascott-u-Wychwood	Home	2pm
Sunday	4 th August	Great Tew	Home	2pm
Sunday	18 th August	Philanderers	Home	2pm

Please note that we serve wonderful tea and cakes around 4pm, so very much hope to see you on the boundary this summer. And it is free!

With best wishes to all.

Peter Higgins
Chairman SACC



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or Ray Clarke tel 01869 347192



Parish Council Meeting Notes



The Parish Council meeting in March began with a discussion of the proposal that we might have a survey of village opinion in order to find out what we care about and how we would like to see the village develop in the future. Lower Heyford has recently done a similar survey, but if we were to do a survey here the questions are likely to be slanted slightly differently to make the scope of the survey wider and less orientated towards traffic issues.

After the meeting I was sent a copy of the results of the Lower Heyford survey and the thing that surprised me most was that only 93% of respondents claimed they used the pavements and footpaths. Are 7% of the respondent housebound? I was not surprised that about 90% were concerned about speeding, but astonished that dog poo was a concern for 61%. Overall, there seemed to be a strong community spirit and willingness to get involved. Let's hope we get the same result here.

There was a discussion of the Emergency Plan. This includes a list of who has what equipment with most of the items being in the public version of the plan, but other things known only to the Emergency Plan committee. No one seemed quite sure how the system is meant to operate and, as in time-honoured fashion, it will be considered again at the next meeting.

The Councillors were pleased to hear that someone doing a Duke of Edinburgh's Award is going to be picking litter round the village for the next six months. This is in addition to the annual spring clean set for the weekend of 13th and 14th April. Carl Tomlinson (07796 698664 or carltomlinson1967@gmail.com) has the details of where to collect the litter picking kit and where to dump the bags of rubbish. Please come and give a hand if you can.

The Councillors were told about a group which is trying to find out if there is support for a Community Land Trust in this village. The group has organised a public meeting for 10th April in the Village Hall to see if there is support (the advert for the meeting is on page 31 of this edition of SAL).

The idea of a Community Land Trust is to both protect and develop the village for current and future generations of villagers. The meeting will be told about other local and successful similar organisations.

Then we got to the description of how the Parish Council expects to spend its 'precept' – the bit of our Council Tax our Parish Council controls. This is about three-and-a-half pence in every pound of our Council Tax. One of the Councillors, Mat Watson, has described on page 9 of this edition of SAL what the Councillors are proposing to spend it on in 2024/25 and compared it to the expenditure in 2023/2024. Allowing for inflation the increase is relatively small.

The horrible Blandford Fly seems to have woken up early this year, along with the more welcome flowers and bugs. Apparently, it is possible to survey where the Fly is breeding in one year and then to know where to spray against it with a nematode the following year. The survey has to be done in April and there were doubts about how the £4,500 cost could be raised in time to start in 2024. Our County Councillor, Arash Fatemian, came to the meeting and said Oxfordshire County Council would help fund the survey of the breeding grounds of the Fly if Steeple Aston and Deddington Parish Councils would each also contribute £1,500, a third of the total cost. Deddington Parish Council is being sounded out, but it looks hopeful that we may get the survey done this year and with a bit of luck the spraying done next year.

The diligence of our County Councillor, Arash, in turning up at our Parish Council meetings is appreciated. It was compared to the total non-appearance of our District Councillor, Eddie Reeves. Initially, Eddie told us he was in London on Monday evenings and that was why he could not come to our Parish Council meetings. Then he said the London meetings had stopped and he would come to some Steeple Aston Council meetings. He has not been once. He said he would write a regular report for us, but SAL and the website have received nothing. After the meeting I looked to see if he is due for

Parish Council Meeting Notes



re-election in May this year, but he isn't, otherwise we could have done our best at the ballot box to show him what we think. I will keep checking and let you know when he is due for re-election.

There was a discussion of the desirability of having recycling bins in the pub car park. The Councillors thought that the pub would have its own method of recycling bottles, but were not certain. But whether or not this was the case they thought the bins should stay because of the commitment among the Councillors to being a sustainable village. One of the Councillors will check with the pub's immediate neighbours to see if there are any reasons in favour of removing the bins.

The residents of Nizewell Head are being canvassed to see what sort of children's equipment they would like in the Pocket Park. The Parish Council will have funds from selling some Parish Council land beside the War Memorial and from the 'Section 106' money from Rectory Homes development at Townend. This is likely to be about £45,000 together, but is not likely to cover the total cost of the play equipment. The Council will probably have to fund-raise for the project. The refurbishment needed in the Fir Lane Play Area was also considered and it was agreed this should include ways of reducing the cost of maintenance. They wondered about employing independent advisers, possibly via the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association, who would be independent of the manufacturers.

The Councillors asked me to thank the public-minded Pre-school parent who unblocked the drain by the Pre-school. The Councillors do not know who you are, but are grateful.

The Councillors decided they needed to have a policy on accepting petitions. They did not go into much detail, but I think the idea was that the Parish Council would not take any decisions at the same time as a petition is presented. This seemed to me to be an over-the-top reaction to something which isn't a problem, especially as any member of the public

can go to any Parish Council meeting and say what they like and expect immediate comments.

There was a brief discussion of the 20mph speed limit proposed for the village. The Councillors think the majority of villagers support a 20mph limit so did not try to overturn the decision. The issue seemed to be whether the signs should only be at the entrance to the village or for additional 20mph signs to be put up within the village as well as at the entrances. The signs are expected to be both at the village entrances and in the village and there was a plea that existing poles might be used for the new signs as far as possible.

The Councillors had been sent a proposal by the grandiosely-named London Oxford Airport to expand the use of the airport. After the Parish Council meeting, I had a go at understanding the proposed changes to capacity and flight paths. The description is complex and I did not study it carefully. I know this is a bit simplistic, but it seems reasonable to assume that more and larger planes will lead to more noise nuisance here. If you would like to know more, go to acp@londonoxfordairport.com and ask to be part of their stakeholder engagement process.

The Community Land Trust meeting is on 10th April and the next Parish Council meeting will be on 15th April. Do come and have your say.

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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shower me with petals that are bright
the greening garden gold as well
jump for joy and ring the bell
every day that passes brings more light

enjoy the rain the wind and sun
that chops and changes in the sky
lifts my mood I know not why
renewing growth has now begun

In the fields the beasts as well
gambol gaily in the light
jump for joy and not from fright
in these pleasures all can dwell

Peter Wild

The Poor Daffodil

Pity the poor daffodil
On sale for just a pound
No cellophane or ribbon
Or other wrapping will be found.

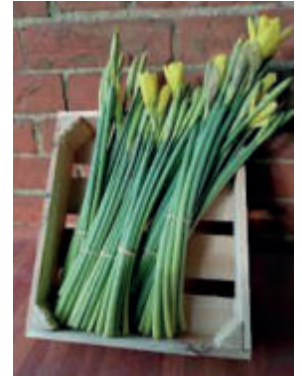
They're all piled up inside a box
Jumbled in a heap
Each bunch costs just a single pound
Oh, daffodils are cheap.

They don't even have a bucket
To soak their feet in water
They are really badly treated
It looks like floral slaughter.

But when you get these flowers home
And give them a little space
They open up and show
Their lovely golden face.

And then as if by magic
The house is full of sun
And spring is here at last
And winter's almost gone.

Cathy Lawday



Steeple Aston Golf Society



Hello to all you golfers out there. We hope you are keeping well and looking forward to starting another SAGS season. Here is a reminder of the venues for 2024:

17th May – The Wychwood; 14th June – Bicester Hotel Golf & Spa; 19th July – The Springs; 16th August – Wrag Barn; 13th September – Coventry Hearsall Golf Club; 11th October – Ladbroke Park, Solihull. As you can see, we have kept three of our favourites and gone for three new venues which we are excited about and looking forward to playing.

Mike has worked hard in trying to keep the costs down, but like everything else golf clubs have increased their prices dramatically. We have gone for a one-plate meal and knocked the pudding on the head. This might upset one or two members, but hey, they will thank us in the long run!

We usually meet at 12 noon and as always if anyone would like to join us on this our first meeting of the season please give Alan or Chris a ring on 01869 340423 / 347173

Alan Brewer (Chair)

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New Year has been and gone, resolutions have been made (and forgotten already!!?), but have you made the important resolution to book in for the 2024 Broughton Castle Sportive on Sunday July 7th 2024?

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As always this is a Sportive that puts 100% of its profits to charitable purposes in line with the aims and objectives of Rotary, so amongst others in 2023 we donated to

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ROTARY CLUB OF BANBURY CHERWELL OFFICIAL

Harry and Hannah get a warm welcome at The Red Lion

New tenants, Harry and Hannah Dickson, have taken over at The Red Lion and the pub re-opened on 23rd February. It's just as well that they're very experienced at running pubs, as they took over with no notice on a Tuesday and opened on the Friday to a very warm welcome from villagers. In these few days, they managed to do a lot of painting and refurbishing to give the pub a new but traditional look. The carpet in the main dining room has been replaced and the old snug has been reopened and will be available for private dining and meetings.

The Red Lion is the fifth pub in Harry and Hannah's portfolio. This includes The White Horse at King's Sutton, The Roebuck Inn at Drayton (another Hooky pub) and two more at Henley and Stratford upon Avon. After many years working for other people in London and elsewhere, the couple set up their own pub company in 2019. Hannah looks after the finances and marketing and Harry is in charge of operations. In the short term they have been able to call on staff from their other pubs to help out at the Red. Family members are also involved, especially Harry's parents Rob and Ann.

Their long-term plan is that their very experienced manager at the White Horse, John Thirlway, will be in overall charge of both pubs, but a new deputy manager and a chef will be recruited and offered the chance to live in the large flat above the pub. They also expect to recruit some staff locally, especially kitchen porters, and welcome applications from anyone in the village. They'd also like to hear from local suppliers of food and flowers.

Harry and Hannah have recently put down their own roots locally, buying a new-build house in Banbury, where they live with their four-year-old daughter Raeya. They say that The Red Lion is offering a limited menu for the time being, but they did manage to produce a proper Sunday lunch on their first weekend. When the refurbishment is completed, they will also open at lunchtimes in the week offering an affordable two-course set menu. Their food is described as modern British with an emphasis on local. As for the future, they hope to provide what villagers want. The local poker group has already been made welcome. There's no takeaway yet, but it will be considered.

There is a new phone number 01869 389174 and a new website with online booking at theredlionsteepleaston.com. You can also contact them by email at info@theredlionsteepleaston.co.uk and follow them on www.facebook.com/steepleaston and www.instagram.com/the.red.lion.steeple.aston/

These are the current opening hours (as of mid-March).

Monday: Closed

Tuesday: 4pm to 11pm, dining 5pm to 9pm

Wednesday: 4pm to 11pm, dining 5pm to 9pm

Thursday: 4pm to 11pm, dining 5pm to 9pm

Friday: 12 noon to 11pm, dining 12 noon to 3pm/5 to 9pm

Saturday: 12 noon to 11pm, dining 12 noon to 9pm

Sunday: 12 noon to 8pm, dining 12 noon to 5pm



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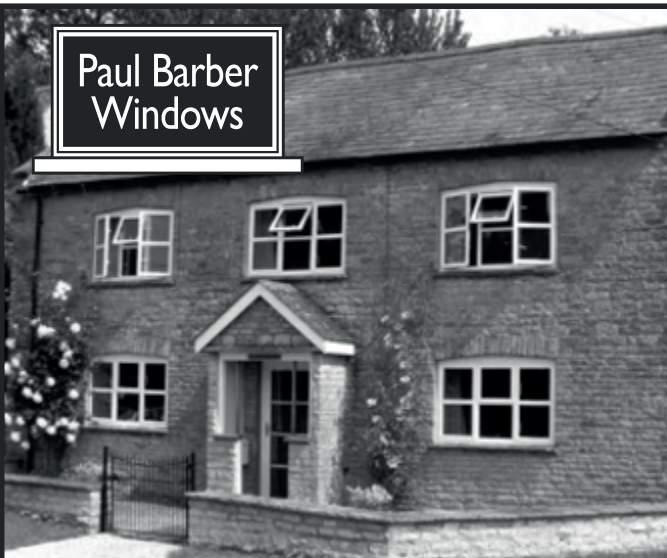
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Nature Notes



Once the spring equinox has passed, and the clocks have been put forward to Summer Time, look out for colourful butterflies as a sign of summer to come.



The first butterflies to appear are those that overwintered in their adult form, hibernating in a sheltered spot such as thick vegetation or within a building. As the days warm up, these insects stir, needing food in the form of nectar from flowers to sustain their flight to find a mate and lay the eggs that will produce the next generation. These early flutterers include the bright yellow Brimstone, the beautifully patterned Small Tortoiseshell, and the easily identifiable Peacock, with wing markings that resemble eyes that the butterfly can flash to deter predators.

Not all butterflies overwinter in the adult form. Different species spend the winter in other stages of the life cycle; as an egg, a caterpillar, or a chrysalis (pupa). This means different species hatch into caterpillars, or emerge as the adult butterfly, at different times of the year. Most species will complete a single life cycle in the year but a few, such as the Small Tortoiseshell, may manage a second cycle so the adult butterflies can be seen not only in spring but also throughout the summer and autumn months.



We are all aware of the importance of providing flowers that are suitable sources of nectar for bees, but providing for butterflies is just as important. Although the adult butterflies require flowers as sources of nectar for energy, their caterpillars also need specific foodplants to feed on, and they are far more fussy than the adult butterflies about which plants fulfil their requirements. Although caterpillars are mobile, on hatching from the egg they really need to feed straight away so having to look around for their preferred foodplant is a waste of energy. It is far better if the adult butterfly can lay her eggs on such a plant.

Each caterpillar species has a very limited range of suitable plants, sometimes just a single species. In order to maximise the chance of a butterfly finding a suitable plant at the time of laying her eggs, these foodplants need to be fairly close to where she has been feeding around the time she finds a mate. In the countryside, if you find a foodplant of a particular caterpillar species then, at the right time of year, you are very likely to find the adult butterflies of that species there too. This can be appropriate for your garden too; plant the necessary foodplants for the caterpillars, as well as a source of nectar for the adult butterflies, and you have a good chance of having a garden full of colourful butterflies during the summer.

Useful guidance on what to grow to encourage butterflies to your garden can be found on the Butterfly Conservation website (<https://butterfly-conservation.org/how-you-can-help/get-involved/gardening/gardening-for-butterflies>).

Bridget Lewis

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THE VALENTINE CLUB

April brings that hope of good weather, great days out and with the holiday season approaching our members are starting to plan their next few months of trips away with friends. We are starting off in mid-April with a holiday to the Isle of Wight where 42 of us are taking over part of Warner's Norton Grange Hotel. Before then we will be welcoming Tom Coker to the club on Tuesday 9th April to tell us about 'Leadership in Testing Times'. **Please note this is one week earlier than our usual meeting date!**

At our meeting in March, we put on our Stetsons and made our way to The Steeple Corral for a touch of Country and Western with a bit of rock-and-roll thrown in for good measure. All courtesy of Ridgeway Country making his first visit to our club.

During September we are off to Eastbourne for five days and during November to Thursford in Norfolk for three days. These holidays are by coach with local pick-ups and are proving to be very popular – yet another reason to be a member of The Valentine Club or at least on the waiting list, as these offers are circulated to everyone who might be interested.

To find out more about The Valentine Club, simply visit our website at www.valentineclub.wixsite.com/aston or keep up-to-date by looking on the village website www.steepleaston.org.uk or use that old-fashioned thing called a telephone and call me on 01869 340512.

If you would like to support The Valentine Club and all the great things we do, why not have a go at the CherwellLottery.co.uk/support/the-valentine-club where you can participate in the Cherwell Lottery and hopefully, like many of our supporters, become a winner.

Richard Preston – Group organiser
Richard.preston5@btopenworld.com

Steeple Aston Garden Club



For our March meeting we welcomed speakers Stuart 'Wildman' Mabbutt and William Mankelow on 'Going Wild with Wildlife'. There was quite a lot of interaction with the audience and I suppose the main things we took away from the talk were that 'humans' are part of the environment and their needs should be taken into account when considering nature. However, it is also our responsibility to ensure we keep and indeed create suitable habitats for all wildlife. We need to remember that diversity of plant life in our gardens is essential, but it is our larger community that should be taken into account when looking at sufficient variation for the stabilisation of our endangered species. This, I think, confirms very much the importance of our 'Steeple Aston Structure Plan', ensuring we maintain the bio-diversity of this unique village.

Our next meeting is the AGM In the Village Hall on Tuesday 7th April, commencing at 7pm please, as we need to sign up for the next year and pay subscriptions (£10 p.p. or £15 per family). Tea and coffee will be available. The formalities will be followed by speaker, Chris Day, Publicity Manager of Buckingham Garden Centre. His subject is 'Year Round Gardening', which I am sure will be useful to us all.

Anyone interested in joining the Garden Club will be most welcome – just come along.

Chris Clarke
S.A. Garden Club Secretary

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Steeple Aston Church

Refreshments Available

PUBLIC MEETING to launch A COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

Wednesday, April 10th at 7.30pm

Steeple Aston Village Hall

It is proposed to form a Community Land Trust, open to all residents of Steeple and Middle Aston parishes, with the aim of providing homes to meet specific housing needs of the local community: not-for-profit, and community-owned.

There will be a presentation from Hook Norton Community Land Trust (CLT) about how they have put together their project for 12 sustainable homes and community facilities, currently completing on site. The meeting will provide information about how CLTs work, with experts from Oxfordshire specialist support groups available to answer your questions.

Please join us.



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Community Orchard

Spring has finally started to show its face at the orchard in Steeple Aston village. There has already been a stunning show of snowdrops followed by primroses and daffodils, giving the area lots of colour and early nectar for our newly resident bees.

Although it is a dormant time of year, we have managed a gentle tidy up and installed a new bat box and tawny owl house bought with kind donations of village friends of the orchard, so a big thanks go out to them.

The orchard has moved on in leaps and bounds since we took it on last year and the volunteer team is looking forward to seeing the pond come alive from its winter slumber. The old village notice board has been recycled so visitors can be informed on what they can see in the orchard and any further projects that are planned.

The team encourages anyone with an interest to keep an eye out for new wildlife. If you would like to help keep this lovely area alive and kicking, pop along on one of the team's working days – usually the first Sunday of each month – or just come and enjoy this wonderful space we were so lucky to be given.

Nigel Francis

Photos by Nigel Francis and Ben Wade-Martins





Steeple Aston Choral Society

invites you to

An Evening at the Opera

*Enjoy a convivial evening listening to your favourite opera choruses,
solo highlights and spring music - and even join in.*



Steeple Aston Village Hall
Sunday 14 April 6.30 for 7pm
(Table seating 8 to a table)
Bar with wine, soft drinks and nibbles



Tickets £12 (Children under 16 free) from Margaret Bulleyment
(01869) 347346 or mtheb749@gmail.com

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO.....?



Dorchester Abbey CELL

I know that I have written before about Dorchester Abbey, Oxfordshire's Saxon cathedral, and encouraged people to visit this place which is peaceful, beautiful and heavy with the weight of fascinating history. In particular I wrote about the reconstructed shrine of St. Birinus, which became a place of pilgrimage after his death in 650AD. I also urged visiting the Abbey to see and reflect on its various treasures, such as the Jesse window and the ancient but amazingly well-preserved lead font which dates from before the Reformation.

All this history is wonderful to see, but the Abbey is always keen to emphasise that it is also the parish church of Dorchester serving its community of today. It is a large venue used for all sorts of events such as concerts and exhibitions, as well as all the things which go on in our own church – weddings, funerals and regular services. So alongside the history of the Abbey, one is encouraged to think about the issues of the present day. I recently came across the art exhibition which was in the Abbey between 11th February and 12th March - it was as challenging and thought-provoking as any piece of art could be.

Entitled CELL, this was a life-size, three by two metre reconstruction (yes, another reconstruction in the Abbey!) of the prison cell in which Alexei Navalny was sentenced in January 2021 to solitary confinement. Attached to that sentence was the order for him to undertake 28 years hard labour – and this was for the crime of opposing corruption in the government of Vladimir Putin.

During the training of members of the judiciary in this country, one is taken to see prisons, to experience what it might be like to be locked into a cell – and I have heard of youngsters thought to be at risk of becoming offenders being taken on similar exercises. I do not think that any of these experiences compares with the Cell in Dorchester Abbey. Visitors were invited to spend three minutes alone in the Cell – timed by an hourglass. The Team Rector at the Abbey said, “It was an invitation to us all to contemplate how we spend the time that has been given to us”. It was a sobering experience, but also renewed one's admiration for people who are or who have been imprisoned for what they believe in. The outside of the Cell has illustrations of men and women who as prisoners of conscience have been incarcerated in the cause of human freedom. It makes you wonder what you'd be prepared to suffer for in this way.

I'm sorry if my account of this art installation is rather sober, following on from the contrast of all that is good and of value in the Abbey – but perhaps it is good to reflect on tough issues from time to time and it seemed to me that this was an imaginative way of helping people to do so.

Eileen Baglin-Jones

A few facts about April

Name origin The name 'April' is believed to have originated from the Latin word 'aperire', which means 'to open'. This is fitting as April is often associated with the opening or blossoming of flowers and trees in many parts of the world.

Birthstone and flower The birthstone for April is the diamond, symbolising strength and everlasting love. The birth flower is typically the daisy or the sweet pea, both of which represent innocence and purity.

Signs of the Zodiac Aries (21st March to 19th April) is represented by the ram. Taurus (20th April to 20th May) is represented by the bull.

Historical events Significant historical events which have occurred in April include the sinking of the Titanic on 15th April 1912, the signing of the Declaration of Arbroath in Scotland on 6th April 1320, and the anniversaries of notable figures such as William Shakespeare (born April 1564, died 23rd April 1616) and Leonardo da Vinci (born 15th April 1452).

Earth Day Earth Day, observed on 22nd April, is an annual event dedicated to raising awareness about environmental issues and promoting sustainability. It serves as a reminder of the importance of protecting the planet for future generations and often involves activities such as tree planting, recycling initiatives and community clean-up efforts.



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Village Hall News



Forthcoming events

Village Hall AGM: Monday 13th May at 8pm

NGS Village Open Gardens: Sunday 2nd June
2 to 6pm

Fireworks spectacular: Tuesday 5th November

Wassail evening: Sunday 8th December

Annual Quiz Night: Saturday 18th January 2025

Our letting agent is Mrs. Angela Smith – 07734
112967. Please do not call this number between
6pm and 8pm unless urgent.

Email steeple-aston-village-hall@hotmail.com
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Barbara Brewer – chair
<https://savh.org.uk/>



AD&D Photographic
Society



For our March meeting we asked members to present their favourite photos or photography style to the audience. We saw a variety of presentations on fabric and textile printing, film photography, portraiture (which included ballet, use of gel lighting, flash and blur techniques, and flour dancing), street photography, printed landscapes, inside flowers, 'looking up from the ground' which included reflections, and abstracts and UV photography (which uses ultraviolet-induced visible light fluorescence and produces astounding flower and fern photos!)

Our monthly topic was 'Fine art: Found' which pushed members to photograph found objects in a fine art style.

Next month is our AGM and our topic is 'What is it?'

We welcome new members to our Society nights on the first Wednesday of each month.
Website: addphoto.co.uk or find us on facebook.com/add.photosoc for further information.

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Over the past month, Steeple Aston WI (SAWI) has been busy with walks, lunches, trips to the ballet, coffee mornings and walking netball. These have been well attended and enjoyed.

On Tuesday 11th March SAWI celebrated its birthday and 106 years of unbroken existence in the village. We marked the occasion with a toast, the singing of 'Happy Birthday', a selection of nibbles courtesy of the committee, and a birthday cake baked by Alysson Jaycock.

President Julie Hillier then dealt with the business of the evening: passing on apologies from several members, giving details of upcoming events – walks, coffee get-togethers, pub meals – appealing for someone to step up and run the WI Book Club and also someone to act as the WI Representative on the Village Hall Committee. We then settled down to hear the speaker, Steeple Aston resident Yoni Kinory, talk about his experiences as a film extra.

Yoni has appeared as an extra in blockbusters such as the *Wonder Woman* films and *Paddington II*, Netflix series including *The Crown*, television programmes like *Midsomer Murders*, as well as promotional and training films. Thanks to his unruly white hair and beard he often gets cast as a professor, but has also played a wide variety of other roles, including a carpenter, a prison inmate, a care-home resident and a werewolf.

Being an extra, or Supporting Artist (SA) to use the proper name, is not as easy as you might think. Filming can start as early as 6.00 in the morning and end at 7.00 in the evening and you have also to get yourself to where the shoot is taking place. This might be on one of the huge purpose-built sound stages located around the country, or might be on location, such as at Blenheim. Like the principal actors, SAs have to go through wardrobe and HMU (Hair & Make-up). But on the plus side, you are paid for your time, you are fed (and the food is free and generally good), you meet interesting people and visit places you might not otherwise go to. One quirky detail we learned is that you get paid more if you are required to have a haircut for your role.

The golden rule for SAs is that you must not bother the principal actors. Some principals are approachable and friendly, others are more distant, and one (who was not named) was rumoured to be positively rude! Yoni explained that you get paid more if you interact with a principal character on the screen, even if this interaction is very brief, such as saying "Hello" as you pass them in the street, posting a letter through their letterbox, or handing an item to them. So next time you see a silver-haired character on the edge of the screen, take a closer look. It might well be Yoni Kinory. After he answered questions from the audience, Julie Smith gave a vote of thanks for a most interesting talk.

Yoni Kinory



UPCOMING EVENT

Tuesday 9th April

This is the **AGM**, with voting for President and Committee.

Hildy Frenken will talk about her long-distance walk, retracing the steps of Lady Anne Clifford.

Do get in touch with any member of the committee if you would like to join the WI. Or just come along to a meeting. You will be made very welcome.

Cathy Lawday

**Future Steeple Talks
In the Church at 7.30pm
Save the date!**



**Thursday May 23rd with John Orridge
A Slightly Comedic Talk about the Hour
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that keeps one fitter than a fiddle!

**Thursday June 6th with John
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John will reveal the history of the Commission and its work to
increase the influence of science and art upon productive
industry



Welcome glass of wine and retiring collection

St Peter and St Paul's Church, Steeple Aston

Thursday 11th April 2024 at 7 pm

Ding, Dong!

Who Keeps the Bells Ringing?



An illustrated talk by Graham Clifton

Refreshments available
Donations invited – Proceeds to the Parish
Church Funds

Church *Matters*



Happy Easter everyone.

I hope that you all had a lovely Easter weekend and are looking forward to the longer days and brighter evenings. With the change in clocks, hopefully warmer, drier days will follow. I've enjoyed watching the turning of the seasons throughout my first year here in the Benefice. We are blessed to live in beautiful countryside and yet within such easy reach of Oxford, Banbury and Bicester.

The turning of the seasons, spring into summer, also brings about changes in the sporting seasons. I'm hesitantly looking forward to the Cycling Time Trialling season, which officially started on the 16-17th March, and for John and myself on the 23rd March. For anyone unfamiliar with Time Trials, it's generally a solo event that puts cyclists up against the clock. Events are most commonly held over set distances and riders traditionally set off at one-minute intervals.

The sport enjoyed a somewhat unusual inception, formed by a bunch of cycling enthusiasts in 1890 after the National Cyclists' Union announced new legislation that forbade 'bunched' racing on open roads. These cyclists sought innovative ways to still enjoy the social and competitive side of their sport, and so time trialling began – with events held at dawn, on 'secret' courses, and with staggered starts. The idea of individuals riding 'against the clock' and ignoring any other rider who they catch or who catches them still holds true for the majority of events today. But there are also events for teams of two, three or four cyclists who ride together known as Team Time Trials. These are even included in the bigger grand tours such as the Tour de France, where the clock stops once the last rider in the team crosses the line.

I said 'hesitantly', as last summer John gifted me with lessons from a cycling coach for my birthday. All winter they have been sending me cycling workouts to do and each week I email back the data from the workouts with comments about how well I think I did and how hard or easy I found them. It has been an interesting winter, with time spent in the garage (on the turbo trainer) plus, when the weather allowed, going out on the road for a long ride on a Saturday. I apologise to anyone who has been stuck behind me as I cycle slowly up Heyford Road on my way home. My hope is that this hard work over the winter will bear fruit this coming summer, with some new personal best times. Though we won't know what if any improvement the training has made until I start racing, hence the hesitancy. Will the work done in secret be seen in the light?

Summer brings with it the exam season, where students who have studied, completed homework and assignments, hope that their efforts over previous months and years will be rewarded with good grades. It is when we are tested that the fruit of our earlier efforts can be seen. We all face moments when things are difficult and stopping seems like a good, sensible choice. There have definitely been moments like that this winter, when sessions were hard, or conditions uninviting, for example when Islip was flooded and I couldn't do my usual ride. In such moments, when stopping is so appealing, we need to remember what our longer-term goal is and stay focussed, finding alternative ways to achieve the short-term objective, like doing shuttle rides across the high ground, to complete the day's training.

So as the seasons of the year turn, I'd like to invite you to pause and think about what 'fruit' you would like your life to bear? What words would you like people to use to describe you? Then to think about what work you can do today towards achieving that aim. What work, training in secret, do you need to do, so that your life can bear good fruit?

Harriet Orridge

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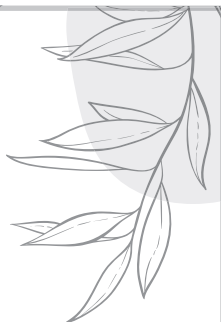
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Church Services



	North Aston	Steeple Aston	Tackley
Sunday 7th April	9.30am Holy Communion (BCP)	11.00am Holy Communion (BCP)	5.30pm Evensong
Sunday 14th April	9.30am Family Service	11.00am Family Service	5.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 21st April	9.30am Holy Communion	11.00am Holy Communion	5.30pm Family Service
Sunday 28th April	9.30am Morning Prayer	11.00am Morning Prayer	9.30am Holy Communion
<p><i>www.sntchurch.com</i></p> <p><i>The church buildings are open every day. Feel free to visit at any time.</i></p>			



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Saturdays

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0809 0909 1019 1619 1729 1834 1932 2022 2147 2253

Sundays and most public holidays

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0953 1123 1253 1423 1553 1723 1852

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0837 0947 1045 1545 1703 1809 1909 2006 2053 2142 2242 0009

Saturdays

0758 0908 1008 then hourly to 1608 1718 1828 1927 2025 2113 2213 2341
0837 0945 1045 1645 1755 1905 1958 2053 2142 2242 0009

Sundays and most public holidays

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See <https://ourbusbartons-org-uk.stackstaging.com/> for details and times.

Steeple and Middle Aston rubbish bin collection day is Thursday.



April 2024

4th Blue and brown
11th Green
18th Blue and brown
25th Green

May 2024

2nd Blue and brown
9th Green
16th Blue and brown
23rd Green
30th Blue and brown

Food caddy is collected weekly

Batteries and small electrical items packed in clear plastic bags and placed on the top of any bin lid are collected weekly.

Steeple Aston Calendar

Check the village website at steepleaston.org.uk/home/calendar for any changes.

Please send details of events for May and June to editorsalife@gmail.com

April			
Tuesday 2nd	Garden Club AGM. Speaker: Chris Day 'Fool-proof year-round Gardening'.	Village Hall	7pm for 7.30pm
Wednesday 3rd	AD&D Photographic Society AGM. Monthly topic: 'What is it?'	Adderbury Institute	7.30pm
Tuesday 9th	Valentine Club. Speaker: Tom Coker 'Leadership in testing times'	Village Hall	2.30pm
Tuesday 9th	WI. AGM. Speaker: Hildy Frenken 'Retracing the steps of Lady Ann Clifford'.	Village Hall	7pm for 7.30pm
Wednesday 10 th	Community Land Trust launch meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
13th and 14th	Village Spring Clean (see page 6)		
Sunday 14th	SAL May 2024 copy and advert deadlines		
Sunday 14th	SACS: An Evening at the Opera	Village Hall	6.30pm for 7pm
Monday 15th	Parish Council meeting	S&R Building	7.30pm
15th to 19th	Valentine Club. Holiday to Isle of Wight.		
Saturday 27th	Deddington Farmers' Market	Deddington	9am to 12.30pm
Saturday 27th	Sustainable Steeple	Deddington Church	9am to 12.30pm
SAVE THE DATE!			
2nd June	NGS Village Open Gardens		2pm to 6pm
30th June	SACS: Summer Party Concert	Village Hall	6.30pm for 7pm
5th November	Fireworks Spectacular	Robinsons Close	
24th November	SACS: Autumn Concert	Church	7.00pm
8th December	Wassail Evening	Village Hall	

Choral Society Rehearsals. Village Hall - 7.45pm - Mondays
Badminton. Village Hall - 10am -12.30pm - Tuesdays
Bell Ringing practice. Church Tower - 7.30pm - Tuesdays
Walking Netball. Village Hall - 10.15am - Wednesdays
Brownies. Sport & Rec Centre - 6pm - 7.30pm - Wednesdays
Toddler Group. Sport & Rec Centre - 9.30am -11.30am - Thursdays
Badminton. Village Hall - 8pm - Thursdays
Village History Centre (SAVA). 10am - 12 noon - Saturdays

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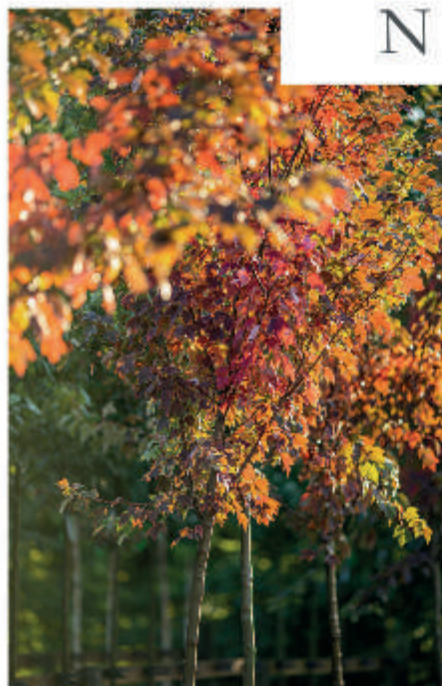
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