

Steeple Aston

June 2024

Issue No. 610

Life



• NGS Open Gardens • SACS Evening at the Opera • Stuart Ferguson 1949-2024 •
• Nature Notes • HMB Endeavour • Cricket Report • Valentine Club • WI Report •

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June 2024: CONTENTS

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

JUNE FEATURES	PAGE	REPORTS FROM CLUBS & SOCIETIES	PAGE
Nature Notes	9	AD&D Photographic Society	31
SACS: Evening at the Opera	24/25	Cricket Report	27
Stuart Ferguson: 1949 - 2024	14/15	Garden Club	23
		Golf Society	37
		Valentine Club	32/33
		WI Report	39
REGULAR FEATURES	PAGE	INFORMATION	PAGE
Arts Page	11	Bus times	45
Church Matters	41	Church Services	43
Editorial	5	Rubbish bin collection dates	45
Gardening Spot	17	Steeple Aston Calendar	46
Have you ever been to...?	35	Steeple Aston Directory	4
Mind Games: Word Builder	13	Steeple Aston Noticeboard	6/7
Poetry Corner	23	Village Hall News	37
Steeplejack PC report	20/21		

Contributions are welcome. Please email editorsalife@gmail.com

Cover: NGS Open Garden - The Pound House (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 July 2024
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WI	President	Julie Hillier	349185



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

Steeple Aston *Life*

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Issue No. 610

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Editorial

"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." (Audrey Hepburn, British actress, 1929-1993)

In 1887, the Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI) was founded as a step in coordinating national standards for district nurses. At a QNI council meeting in 1926 Miss Elsie Wagg came up with the idea of raising money for district nursing through the nation's obsession with gardening. A year later the National Garden Scheme (NGS) was founded and garden owners were asked to open their gardens for 'a shilling a head'. 609 gardens opened and raised a total of £8191.

Fast forward to 2023, when over 3500 private gardens in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands raised over £3.5 million through admissions, teas and cake. Beneficiaries include Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie, Hospice UK and The Queen's Nursing Institute. Steeple Aston has been part of the NGS for almost 40 years. Last year, six gardens and the Church Allotments (below) welcomed around 400 visitors, raising nearly £3200. Details of this year's Steeple Aston Open Gardens on Sunday 2nd June are on page 7.

You are not limited to visiting our village gardens. The website at ngs.org.uk offers a guide to all the gardens and their open days, together with their facilities (wheelchair access, dog friendly, refreshments, plants for sale). You can also buy a complete printed guide (£17) or county booklets (£2 each).

20th June this year sees the summer solstice, a time when the sun reaches its highest elevation in the Northern Hemisphere, providing the UK with its longest period of daylight – almost 17 hours between sunrise and sunset. For many, this marks the beginning of summer. Enjoy it while you can, because autumn arrives on Sunday 22nd September, with winter taking over on Sunday 22nd December. If you feel that we have only just come out of winter, you are not far wrong. It ran from Friday 22nd December 2023 to Wednesday 20th March 2024.

Midsummer day is an anomaly, coming as it does only three or four days after the start of summer. However, it has its roots in pagan times, when summer was reckoned to start on May Day, and is a celebration of the summer solstice.

Robert





Patient Participation Group (PPG) - Deddington Health Centre

During our first meeting in 2024 we learnt that the new online triage system is progressing well. The Practice constantly reviews the system to look for areas to improve – be assured the team is investing time and effort supporting patients to use the available technology where possible.

The number of calls to the Practice has significantly reduced, thus freeing up Patient Services time to speak to anyone who may need help for another reason, such as making an appointment to see a nurse.

GPs are happy with the new service as it provides a continuity of care – during November and December 89% of patients had an appointment within two weeks. The hope is that as the system becomes more embedded it can be expanded and that can only improve the service to patients.

New staff appointments and retention mean that space at the Practice has run out, so look out for new developments to increase consulting spaces.

As a PPG we are keen to communicate the patients' views so there is an email address to contact us: ppg.deddington@nhs.net

We meet again in July and have ideas for new initiatives to improve patient contact. We are always looking to expand the PPG membership to ensure that it is representative of age groups and areas so if you would like to be considered as a member of the PPG please contact us on 01869 338611.

Anne Hunsley

Patient Participation Group

deddingtonhealthcentre.co.uk/surgery-information/patient-group

“BIG THANK YOU” FROM THE ARTWEEKS’ ARTISTS!

As the North Oxfordshire Artweeks Week drew to a close on Sunday 12th May, the artists who took part would like to say a big thank you to the local villagers and those visitors from outside the Astons for coming to see their displays and supporting their venues.

The Steeple Aston Pop Up Gallery (artists: Sue King, Ann Moreland and Ben Downing) moved to the Red Lion Pub for this year's Artweeks Festival where they also had a Private View for the first time which was very well attended. Among the visitors was local MP and Attorney General The Rt. Hon. Victoria Prentis who was impressed by the high standard of art on show. Special thanks go to Harry and Hannah and their staff at the Red Lion for hosting us at short notice and for providing the delicious canapés at the Private View.



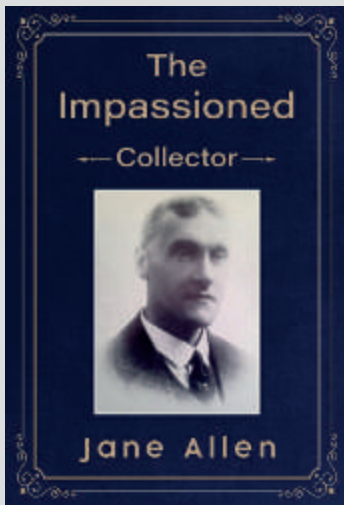
Sue King with Rt. Hon. Victoria Prentis

In Middle Aston House Stables Niki Thomas, Lesley Passey and Nigel Francis had their work on show which included landscapes, portraits and photographs. Niki was also demonstrating her painting skills outside during the sunny weather and holding her art class there. She teaches a weekly art class at Middle Aston House on a Wednesday morning.

Thank you all for your support.



The Impassioned Collector



For anyone interested in life at The Grange between the late 1800s and the Second World War, this book by Jane Allen provides an insight into how things were then. The book also gives an account of the Bradshaw family who resided at The Grange for many decades and adds the story of a man who was possibly the most prolific collector of Fabergé and held his collection at Steeple Aston. For me, it also gives an insight into the life of my grandfather who was Head Gardener at The Grange for 49 years. A great read.

The book, cover price £10.99, is available from
olympiapublishers.com/books/the-impassioned-collector

Richard Preston

Steeple Aston Open Gardens. Sunday 2nd June, 2pm to 6pm £7, inclusive of all gardens

Come and enjoy an afternoon wandering around Steeple Aston and visiting six gardens that are not usually on view to the public. All this for £7 (no charge for under-16s). Proceeds go to the National Garden Scheme (NGS) which supports so many worthwhile charities (see page 5).



The gardens open are the Church Allotments, Longbyre, The Pound House, Combe Pyne, Old Toms and Primrose Gardens. Homemade teas will be served in the Village Hall to help refresh those tired legs.

All you need do is arrive at any one of the above gardens where you will be able to purchase a ticket which will admit you to the other five gardens. Signs will be outside the houses and maps available to enable you to navigate the village easily.

Thank you in anticipation for visiting the gardens.

Steeple Aston National Garden Scheme Members

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From David Rogers

I would like to thank everyone from the parish who voted in the recent District Council Elections. I have a hard act to follow in Bryn Williams, but I will do my utmost to continue his excellent work. It will be a privilege to serve and represent you at Cherwell District Council along with Cllr Andrew McHugh and Cllr Eddie Reeves and I look forward to supporting everyone in the Ward.

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Nature Notes



As I write this, there has been a sudden surge in plant growth. This new mass of vegetation provides ideal habitats for many species of wildlife. Take a close look and you should be able to spot many invertebrates.

I'm sure we can all recognise a ladybird. The common 7-spot ladybird pictured here is only one of more than 20 colourful, spotted, 'conspicuous' ladybird species known in Britain. They can be differentiated by the colour of their wing cases and the number and colour of their spots. They all have slightly different habitat preferences so you are unlikely to find them all in one place, but you should be able to find several different ones locally. However, there are also around 20 species of 'inconspicuous' ladybirds. As their name suggests, they are much harder to spot – they are very small, dark and with less distinct markings, if any.



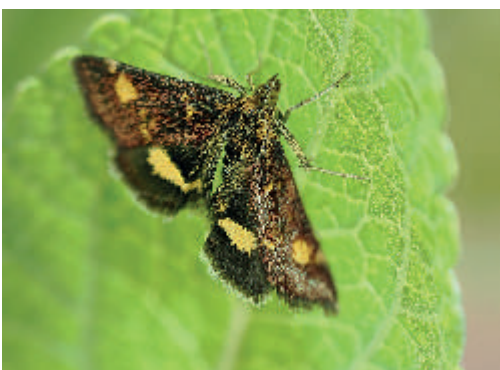
There are other beautifully marked invertebrates such as the shieldbug pictured here. Its Latin name is *Eurydema oleracea*, but it is known by a variety of common names such as the Crucifer, Brassica or Rape Shieldbug.



This multiplicity of common names can lead to confusion when two people know the same insect by different names – use of the Latin name is always to be preferred in such instances. This particular species can exhibit variation in the colour of its markings from red, through pale pink, to white. Not all shieldbugs are so well marked, but they are all striking to look at.

Flitting through the vegetation you may spot small moths such as *Pyrausta aurata* which has several common names including Purple and Gold, Mint moth and Marjoram moth. All are apt names giving clues about the insect, either its colouring or its preferred plants, but again a possible source of confusion.

Another moth to look out for is the Common Plume moth (*Emmelina monodactyla*) which doesn't really look like a traditional moth at all.



Bridget Lewis

Photo credits: 7-spot ladybird © Martin Cooper; Crucifer shieldbug © Nigel Jones; Purple and gold moth © Rolf Dietrich Breche; Common Plume moth © Richard Collier.

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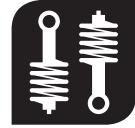
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The ARTS Page



Welcome - put a June smile on your face with: <https://bit.ly/3ULq3wh>

I've chosen a favourite poem this month, but please do let me have your suggestions for upcoming SALs.

The Lake Isle of Innisfree - William Butler Yeats

*I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.
And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.
I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.*

Last month we left off two words at the end of the Paul Simon poem. The last line should read
'A love once new has now grown old'

There are three exciting Steeple Aston performances in June:

Thursday 20th – Alan Stubberfield's jazz trio (likely to be called 'Last Bar One') at the Red Lion.

Saturday 22nd – 'Songs of Bob Dylan' in the Village Hall, led by Richard MacAndrew (details on page 19).

Sunday 30th – After their recent operatic triumphs, the Choral Society presents a 'Summer Concert Party' in the Village Hall, 6.30pm for 7pm (details on page 29), including 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice. (Tim has eventually forgiven me for catching him out for 0 at a Lord's Taverner's Cricket Match at Arundel.) There was at times some frisson between the two, but in a more recent speech said that they got on really well – "after all I went to his last musical, or at least I hope it was".

Oxford Festival of Arts (artsfestivaloxford.org) is already underway, but goes into July with some eye-watering events. From Paul Nash and C.S. Lewis, to politicians Rory Stewart and Alan Johnson, musicians Guy Johnson and Dame Sarah Connolly. An excellent website offers the full picture.

Down the road at Blenheim Palace (blenheimpalace.com) there is 'Icons of British Fashion', their biggest exhibition to date, on until 30th June. Other events include a 'British Living Legends' exhibition inside the Stables Café and 'Nocturne Live' (13th to 16th June) featuring The Sugarbabes, Melanie C, Shaznay Lewis, Chaka Khan, Sister Sledge, Crowded House and other guests.

London Apart from repeating how wonderful is 'Guys and Dolls' at the Bridge Theatre (bridgetheatre.co.uk), on all year, I suggest viewing the exciting Proms programme (royalalberthall.com/tickets/proms/bbc-proms-24) on from 19th July to 14th September and, as always, breaking new ground. Also, look up 'Van Gogh – The Immersive Experience' (vangoghexpo.com), a 360-degree digital show, with sound effects, projection mapping and much more. It has garnered wonderful reviews worldwide!

Oxford Concerts in the Sheldonian (sheldonian.ox.ac.uk/events), amongst many this month:

Saturday 8th – the young, vibrant and international training orchestra, the Southbank Sinfonia – brilliant young talent – plays Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony.

Saturday 15th – Oxford Bach Choir (oxfordbachchoir.org) performs Verdi's Requiem – as the blurb says, 'a shattering experience'.

Thursday 20th – the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra with Sir Stephen Hough playing Rachmaninov's glorious Piano Concerto No.3.

Saturday 22nd – Oxford Symphony Orchestra with two towering British works, Elgar's Cello Concerto, Op.85 and Vaughan Williams' 'A London Symphony'.

Spare a thought for Cardiff. Welsh National Opera has its grant cut by 25% and only have two Oxford performances next year. There are also proposals to close the Junior Department of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Cuts to the Arts continue. "Quel dommage". "The Arts are essential to any complete national life. The state owes it to itself to sustain and encourage them." Sir Winston Churchill.

Nick Cleobury

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???? Mind Games

Word Builder *from Cathy Lawday*

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C	O	T
N	E	H

Answers to every clue:

- are at least five letters long,
- contain only letters from the grid,
- include the letter in the shaded central square.

1. place where tourists stay
2. plant barb, prickly
3. routine task
4. printer ink
5. to breathe noisily whilst sleeping
6. a wading bird
7. a teatime cake
8. an extra, different item
9. fabric, material
10. disdain, mockery
11. strip of land beside the sea
12. cropped short
13. idleness, apathy
14. a shop
15. a person who prefers to be alone
16. a ceremonial chair
17. a brass instrument
18. robbed, thieved
19. to abbreviate, condense
20. selected

Answers
1 hotel, 2 thorn, 3 chore, 4 toner, 5 snore, 6 heron, 7 scone, 8 other, 9 cloth, 10 scorn, 11 shore, 12 shorn, 13 sloth, 14 store, 15 loner, 16 throne, 17 cornet, 18 stolen, 19 shorten, 20 chosen

Stuart Ferguson

29th September 1949 – 25th April 2024

We are very sad to report the death of Stuart Ferguson, a distinguished Oxford academic and a Steeple Aston Parish Councillor for over 25 years. Stuart died of a stroke on 25th April. There was a memorial service for him on Monday 20th May at Steeple Aston Church.

Stuart was born in Birkenhead, but grew up in Blackburn, Lancashire. He came south to Oxford to study chemistry at Merton College and stayed on to take a doctorate in biochemistry. He then became a lecturer at the University of Birmingham where he met his wife Tina.

Stuart returned to Oxford to pursue his academic career in 1985. He and Tina arrived in Steeple Aston in 1986, living first in Bradshaw Close and then moving to Merlins opposite the church. Their son Robin was born in February 1991, swiftly followed by George in October 1992. Both boys attended Dr Radcliffe's School.

Stuart was elected a Parish Councillor on 13th May 1998, so was just short of 26 years on the Parish Council when he sadly passed away in office. Members of the council paid tribute to the huge amount of work he put in over the years. They sent their heartfelt condolences to Stuart's friends and family.



Stuart's main responsibility on the council was for transport and he kept a careful eye on local train and bus services, using them both every week to travel to and from work. There was one occasion when the bus timetable changed and the buses came a bit earlier. With his usual straight face, Stuart explained to his fellow councillors that the change was to ensure everyone would miss the bus!

Stuart used to walk down to Heyford station and, such was his dedication to duty, always had a pair of secateurs in his pocket. He would trim back the foliage on this walk, which explains why the path down to Rousham Bridge has been passable for so long.

Recently, as the longest serving member of the council, his detailed memories of what happened in the past were invaluable to newer members. His careful intellectual input was much appreciated.

Richard MacAndrew writes: "When Stuart, among others, twisted my arm to become Chair of the Parish Council, I had been a Councillor for less than a year and was very much, in the words of one parishioner, 'a newbie blow-in'. The key to survival would be to rely on the advice and experience of my colleagues, most of whom knew far more about the workings of both the council and the village than I did. Stuart, of course, knew more than the rest of them put together.

"Over the four-and-a-half years I was in post, Stuart was an absolute rock; possessor of a fund of knowledge, a wealth of experience and a dry sense of humour. To some he was overly cautious, but that was actually one of his greatest assets. On more than one occasion his wise words averted ill-advised courses of action.

"Stuart's commitment to the village was unwavering. At one point he was Acting Chair, not because he wanted the limelight, but because if he didn't do it no one else would and the council ran the risk of 'failing'. Latterly, despite poor health, he stayed on as a Councillor, reasoning that while there were still vacancies on the council, he should not leave.

He worked hard behind the scenes to make the village a better place for us all. He was in the truest sense of the words a 'public servant'. He will be a great loss not only to his family and friends, but also to the council and the village."

Stuart also worked extremely hard in his academic career, progressing to become a Professor of Biochemistry at St Edmund Hall in 1997. Most recently he was an Emeritus Fellow still teaching and pursuing his research interests, which were in bioenergetics and electron transport reactions. He wrote many books and articles during his long career, but one of his proudest achievements was inspiring and nurturing the many younger scientists who worked in his lab. He really enjoyed following their progress in their future careers.

The tribute on the St Edmund Hall website says: "Stuart's service to science was prodigious, encompassing a considerable research output and editorship of at least three prestigious biochemical journals; he was also awarded the Keilin Medal from the UK Biochemical Society for his work on proteins known as cytochromes. In a Spotlight article to mark Stuart joining the board of FEBS Letters, he commented on his enjoyment of tutorial teaching and the opportunity it presented for give and take as well as for genuine discussion of advanced topics between tutor and students. As colleague and friend Professor Robert Whittaker commented, "This was indicative: Stuart didn't just teach his students biochemistry, he taught them to think and to think critically, playing a key role in providing the broader education that is Oxford at its best.

"Stuart's service to the College and University was unstinting and selfless. He represented the Hall in many contexts, in the UK and overseas, and served as Senior Tutor for 14 years, Vice-Principal for six years and, in his final term as Vice-Principal, doubling up as Finance Bursar. Stuart retired to become an Emeritus Fellow in October 2019, but remained an active member of the Senior Common Room."

Outside work, one of Stuart's great interests was football. As well as following the professional game, he was a great enthusiast for football at university and local level. He enjoyed being the senior member of Oxford University Association Football Club, helping to organise Varsity games and events for them. He was also a supporter of Steeple Aston Football Club, often to be seen on chilly winter Saturdays cheering them on from the touchline at Robinsons Close.

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The Gardening Spot

A dripping June puts things in tune

The title of this article comes from an old saying, used by many in days past, and has a lot of truth in it. June is about the centre of the annual calendar and thus might suggest the month to be warm and possibly a bit dryer. It is also the time when everything grows at a tremendous rate, but this can only happen if the plants get some sort of moisture. Hence, a few showers during June will help to bring on those plants that we have nurtured throughout the winter and spring so let us see what the weather gods might send.

Hopefully, summer will have arrived, as this month sees the longest day and everything in the garden is rosy. Talking of roses, this is also the time when those magnificent blooms are prolific and bring a sweet scent to the garden, but unfortunately it is also the time of year when pests and diseases are at their best. Roses can be infested with white and greenfly which will in turn reduce the quality of the flowers and inhibit the health of the plants.

There are very few chemicals which will control bugs these days having been banned, rightly or wrongly, from domestic use. Maybe the misting over of plants with a soap-based spray such as washing-up liquid will help, or you can use one of the few products to be found on the garden centre shelves.

Don't forget to feed your roses along with all other plants as, just like us, plants will not survive for long without food. This applies to all plants, especially those grown in containers. Plant foods can be a bit confusing, but most branded names will do the job. You will find on all plant foods the letters N, P and K standing for nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium with their relevant proportions such as NPK 10-4-2, which would mean a higher level of nitrogen likely to encourage green growth such as leaves or shoots. Phosphorus will encourage a strong root development, so this is ideal for establishing young shrubs and plants. Potassium will encourage plants to set flowers and develop fruit. When you purchase a leading brand of tomato feed it will have a high level of potassium and is suitable for most fruiting plants such as strawberries and raspberries.

Cucumbers, on the other hand, prefer a high nitrogen feed to promote vigorous growth and nice young fruit. If some of your plants have yellow leaves it could well be a sign of nitrogen deficiency, so a moderate feed with a high N content should be the answer. One little trick I learnt when growing tomatoes commercially is that if the plants start to look a bit tired and the leaves yellow slightly, give them a watering of Epsom Salts. That works just like a dose of salts!

Keep mowing your lawns, not too short as this will encourage moss, but regular mowing will make for a better lawn. Don't forget to trim the edges as a lawn with unmanaged edges looks awful. In the veggie garden keep on top of the weeds with the hoe or simply pull them up when passing. Runner beans should be safe outside now and keep your potatoes moulded up to encourage a better crop and reduce the number of 'green' ones. Just to make your mouth water I can tell you that as I write this article before the 15th May I have harvested my first crop of new potatoes. Just boasting, as they have been grown in my polytunnel, but did anyone out there beat me?

Just one rather sad story. My granddaughter was talking to one of her pet butterflies the other day. The butterfly was very upset because she was not allowed into the dance. It was a MOTH BALL!

Keep smiling.

Richard Preston

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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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Parish Council Meeting *Notes*



What an honour to be asked to deputise for the venerable Steeplejack for the May meeting!

I managed to miss most of the Annual Parish Meeting and AGM which lasted a matter of minutes and involved making sure the officers were formally elected for the year ahead. One point of interest was an old exercise-type book (complete with a sheet of carbon paper) that had been found and had been used for the purpose of signing in councillors since 1907, until it was presumably mislaid in 2011, when it stopped being signed. The tradition was resurrected this evening and duly signed by all the councillors present. It was touchingly noted that Stuart Ferguson had been one of the many councillors to have signed the book over the years (his signature can be found as early as the 1990s).

The actual Parish Council Meeting started with condolences at Stuart's passing in April. He had served as a faithful councillor for our village for more than 25 years. An obituary can be found on page 14.

The Clerk's Report gave a brief update on whether the recycling bins at the Red Lion should be removed, as requested by a parishioner. Having canvassed the pub and neighbours it was felt that removing the bins was at odds with our aspirations of being a sustainable village – plus it wouldn't make much difference to parking anyway! A quote is being chased for dealing with damp at one end of the Village Hall.

Onto the Mid-Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (MCNP) report. Cherwell District Council want all participating Parish Councils to confirm they're happy for a review of the Neighbourhood Plan – which was actually agreed a year ago. Heyford Park PC say they didn't ever agree so CDC now want everyone else to give 'an express approval' in writing that they did in fact all agree.

There was now a lengthy – and actually quite interesting – discussion about 'Local Green Spaces' in Steeple Aston. Any designated local green spaces have the same protection in law as the green belt – which apparently is quite a high level of protection. Criteria for a green space is that it has to be visible to the public, valued as important to the community (with proof) and either tranquil, beautiful or with recreational value (for example, an area used by dog walkers, or the playground – though personally I don't always find the playground to be a very tranquil space). The Allotments, Robinsons Close and Paines Hill field are already designated and the Community Orchard is now being added. Some members of the public had suggested the pond at the bottom of Cow Lane (variously described by councillors as "a manky pond" and "quite a lovely feature"). Owners have to be notified of the nomination. They can object, but some felt it was a harsh process and it was agreed the Council would do their best to make any nominations as smooth as possible. One councillor then mentioned the former Lawrence Fields play area and everyone was surprised this hadn't been nominated before! It is owned by the Parish Council, but that doesn't stop it being added to the list!

The PC will also apply for funding for a 'Housing Needs Survey'.

Next on the agenda – the Community Land Trust (CLT) – with one councillor having so many questions that my pen ran out! Luckily, I had a spare, so in brief CLTs are formed to benefit the community and can be involved in both market housing and affordable housing. Some councillors had visited Hook Norton whose CLT had built 12 flats – four for sale and eight for rent (to be held in perpetuity for the community and never sold for profit). In the coming months we will all be asked if we want to join our CLT (membership likely to be £1). All members will be

Parish Council Meeting Notes



vetted to make sure they are genuine supporters of the project and not 'disruptors' (which apparently can be such a problem there is a whole section on the National CLT website on how to deal with them!).

Onto Highways and Footpaths. The Parish Council had previously agreed to support a 20mph zone. However, there was some shock and dismay when Oxfordshire County Council told us we would be given 18 signs for the village. 18! But too late to back down now! And in any case, there was still support for the speed limit (if not for the volume of signs).

We now moved onto the 'Community Transport Grant' and I completely forgot that I was there as a reporter and briefly became a member of the public and had a short rant about the S4 changing its timetable last year and moving its 7.02am bus to 7.22am (and I know I'm not alone here!). With all the traffic in Oxford, this makes a huge difference! I also mentioned the Oxford Traffic Filters which will come into play this November (as residents in Oxfordshire we'll each be able to apply for 25 passes a year to drive through these filters) which means our bus (and train) service will be increasingly important to our community! The PC wondered if we could use this Community Transport Grant to subsidise the bus service to ensure it continues. They would ask Cllr Arash Fatemian about it.

We've had a 'Play Area' report. This was apparently good with a handful of 'do now' tasks as well as a few things needing a refresh. We have some money to spend on play areas in the village. This is still waiting on community views on what's needed at the Pocket Park, but it was agreed that three contractors would be contacted so we can get some ideas for all facilities at both

areas and whether we'll need any additional fundraising. One councillor mentioned pickleball and whether we could have a court – and the chat went onto ping pong, padel and finally, somehow, to piddle! It's likely that a Playground Committee will be formed – if you'd like to get involved then do get in touch with the PC and volunteer!

Then a subject close to all our hearts (or should I say close to all our legs) – the Blandford Fly! Bournemouth University is going to do a survey here and identify breeding areas ahead of spraying next year (depending on costs and approvals). This is apparently a bacteria treatment which affects the digestive system of the flies with no detrimental environmental effects. One councillor did wonder who was funding Bournemouth University – but this question was soon forgotten when everyone started comparing bites and recounting particularly nasty bites they'd had over the years. Personally, I have looked like a victim of the bubonic plague following bites from these pesky bugs so will be pleased if something can be done!)

The Clerk then said we'd been invoiced for the work to cut back vegetation around the Village Hall – but nobody seemed to know whether the work had actually been carried out. So one brave councillor (it was getting late and dark by now) ventured out to have a look. He soon returned with good news! All done and cut.

Mrs Miggins

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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June

June is bursting out all over
the colour of the leaves
the petals on the flowers
the greenery abounds
the plants that stand like towers
the lengthening of the day
gives rise to life aplenty
the warming of the soil
it's all so elementary

a month to really savour
the joy of June is real
the tip of nature's iceberg
a magical reveal
yet there is also sadness
the problem is with June
the lightness that it brings to us
is over all too soon

Peter Wild

The Easter Bunny

I can resist the lure of gambling
To drugs I'm not a slave
I do not long for alcohol
Cigarettes I never crave.

But when it comes to chocolate
I cannot eat my fill
Where chocolate is concerned,
I have not an ounce of will.

Easter tests my self-control
Chocolate eggs stacked on display
'Buy me', 'Eat me', 'Love me'
I can hear them say.

My mother-in-law gave my baby son
A chocolate bunny all bedecked
In shiny gold foil paper
And with a bell around its neck.

The bunny sat on a kitchen shelf
Exuding rays of temptation
But I was determined to resist
Despite the provocation.

Then one night a week ago
My will began to wilt
I took the bunny from the shelf
Without the slightest pang of guilt.

After weeks of self-denial
The gold paper I tore
I revealed the naked chocolate
And the bunny was no more.

I polished off that bunny
Like a ravenous street beggar
It was all gone before anyone
Could say "Mr McGregor".

My husband asked me later
"How could you stoop so low?"
But I feel no compunction...
...because my son will never know.

Cathy Lawday

Steeple Aston Garden Club



Our May visit to Claridges Barn in Dean hasn't taken place at the time of writing. I will let you know how we found it next month.

Our June visit to Bourton House Garden, Bourton-on-the-Hill GL56 9AE, is on Thursday 6th June at 2.30pm – £9 per person, café available. We visited Bourton House several years ago, so it will be interesting to see what changes have been made.

Chris Clarke
S.A.G.C. Secretary

Steeple Aston *Choral Society*



A Spring Evening at the Opera

“La donna è mobile”, declared Paul Badley, as he leapt into a packed Village Hall, memorably starting Steeple Aston Choral Society’s *A Spring Evening at the Opera* with a vivacious rendition of this popular aria (*Women are fickle*) from Verdi’s *Rigoletto*.

Narrator Margaret Bulleyment explained that this very unpleasant Mantuan Duke was just one of the many characters and places that the audience would be experiencing in the course of the evening, as the choir would be covering 250 years of opera in four different languages, with 13 composers from Purcell to Puccini, whilst performing in the guise of wedding guests, seafarers, pirates, gypsies, courtiers, slaves and alpine villagers, to name but a few.

With Paul Badley, now restored to his alter ego as SACS’s conductor, the choir launched into Donizetti’s exuberant ‘Chorus of Wedding Guests’ from *Lucia di Lammermoor* and continued with many much-loved choruses, including the ‘Anvil Chorus’ from Verdi’s *Il Trovatore* (with mini anvil), the ‘Bridal Chorus’ from Wagner’s *Lohengrin* and the ‘Easter Hymn’ from *Cavalleria Rusticana*. The choir sang enthusiastically, coping well with the challenges of constantly changing mood, tempo and language.

Paul then introduced a surprise guest soloist, bass Martin Robson, who gave two characterful performances as Sarastro, from Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* and Colline, from Puccini’s *La Bohème*.

Steeple Aston Choral Society



However, not all opera ‘lollipops’ are choral, as Holly Viner demonstrated so beautifully with her lyrical performance of ‘Meditation’ from Massenet’s opera *Thais*, accompanied by Paul Herrington. Pianist, Paul continued the spring theme with Mendelssohn’s ‘Spring Song’ – his most famous ‘Song without Words’ – and followed that with a virtuoso ‘Folk Song’ from the same collection.

Then it was the turn of English opera, with mezzo-soprano Rebecca Lewin – another talented village musician – giving a heart-rending performance of ‘Dido’s Lament’ from Purcell’s masterpiece, *Dido and Aeneas*. The restrained but fervent mood continued with Verdi’s iconic ‘Chorus of the Slaves’ from *Nabucco* and then soprano Angela Kazimierczuk sensitively performed one of the most well-known soprano arias, ‘O mio babbino caro’ (*My dearest father*) from Puccini’s *Gianni Schicchi*, in which a daughter pleads with her dying father.

After the interval, Paul Badley had transformed into a lovelorn Chinese prince, with Lehar’s, ‘Dein ist mein ganzes Herz’ (*You are my heart’s desire*) and Rebecca became an Italian lady stranded on a rocky shore with some unscrupulous pirates, ‘Cruda Sorte’ (*O cruel Fate!*).

Angela gave a moving performance of one of Handel’s most recognisable arias – ‘Lascia ch’io pianga’ (*Let me weep*) from *Rinaldo* – set during the First Crusade. Then she joined forces with Rebecca for an exquisitely light and airy ‘Flower Duet’ from Delibes’s *Lakme* – otherwise known as the BA advertisement.

The concert finished as exuberantly as it had begun with Verdi and his party song, ‘Brindisi’ (*Let’s toast!*) from *La Traviata*. Everyone joined in with some specially written words about ‘Steeple Aston singing together in harmony, with a toast to music, laughter and song’, which appropriately summed up the evening.

The audience was very appreciative. Local comments included, “*Best SACS concert ever,*” and from two Sheffielders (spending a weekend in Oxford), “*We absolutely loved the concert and you have some amazing local talent to draw upon. The commentary for each piece was both funny and very helpful to us. We always find it makes such a difference to have some background explained*”.

Special thanks to all our soloists, our conductor Paul Badley and especially to Paul Herrington, our indefatigable accompanist, who in spite of being an entire orchestra, was still standing at the end of the performance. Thanks also to Nigel Francis for his photos (if Nigel did not record your event, it did not happen).

Join us to raise your glasses again in the Village Hall, at our **Summer Party Concert** on Sunday 30th June – 6.30pm for 7pm. Wine, strawberries and your favourite medleys. Come and sing your socks off with SACS!

Margaret Bulleyment

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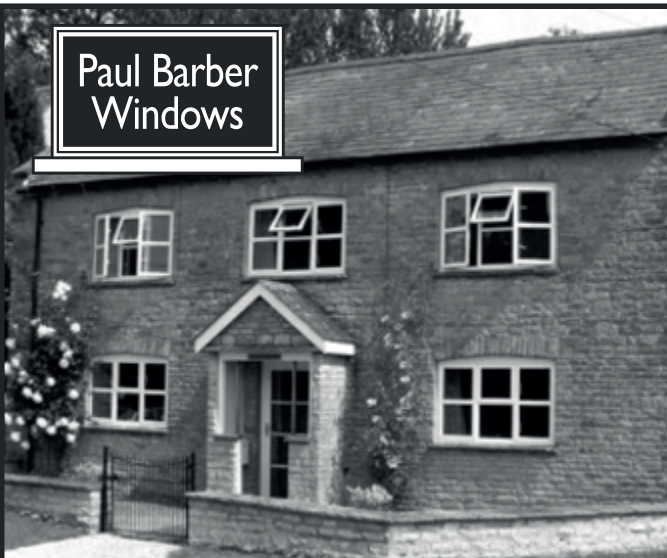
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The Cricket Report



Chairman's XI....Game 19

Steeple Aston Cricket Club has played against the Chairman's XI every year since 2004, missing only two games, one to Covid and the other to poor weather. My team of geriatrics are now 20 years older, but no less enthusiastic, even if the bodies are slightly less willing. The village elected to bat on the sunniest day of the year (so far!) and were soon in trouble at 49-4 despite an elegant 19 from Richard Wilson. With Nige Doggett and Phil Chesser at the crease the Oldies scented an upset. However, Nige and Phil dug in resolutely, until Nige skied one straight to mid-wicket. Agonisingly for the Chairman's XI the catch was put down and with Phil being dropped at fine leg three overs later, our chance had gone. Nige went on to score a fluent 54 with three sixes before retiring. More incredibly, Phil (51*) managed his first 50 since 1978 (school under-11s), including a glorious six off the Chairman himself. I don't mind being hit for six, I just have a feeling Phil may never let me forget it!

After 27 overs we stopped for lunch with the game very much in the balance. SACC were 134-4, but the fielding of the Oldies had begun to deteriorate: I had asked the boys to stop the 'ones', then stop the 'twos', and finally stop the 'fours', none of which came to fruition! To my eternal shame I ate too many pies at lunch and delivered a few 'more pies' in the final eight overs, finishing with my worst ever figures of 0-43. Nick Foster (44*) played with great control, hitting the bad balls and playing carefully against the good ones. Jack Higgins, who was playing for the Oldies and doing most of our fielding, bowled well to take 2-43, but Sam Hatz's belligerent knock of 16 took SACC to 208-8 off their allotted 35 overs. The Chairman's XI would have to bat well to win.

Was an upset still possible...?

In all truth...NO. Jonty Renk, who we were delighted to welcome back to the team after university, bowled with an unerring rhythm to finish with 1-7 off five overs, ably supported by Paul Longman (1-22). Nick Entwistle (1-28) chipped in with another wicket and soon the Chairman's XI were 36-3. Fortunately, our two youngsters came to the rescue, putting on 47 for the fourth wicket, with Josh Drennan a majestic 36 and Jack a solid 10. Despite being incapable of picking Richard Wilson's outswinger, the Chairman (33*) managed a few lusty blows before the back gave way and Dr Mutley, who was wicket keeping, ordered me off the pitch. Nige Doggett (3-14) bowled accurately to deliver the *coup de grâce*, ably supported by Hatz who bowled a tight line to concede only 14 runs. The Chairman's XI subsided to a still creditable 157-7 to give the SACC a deserved 51-run victory.

One of many highlights in the field was Mutley's stumping. He was standing up to Nige's bowling and took the bails off before Simon McGrath had even thought to replace his bat. hilariously in the next over the Oldies managed to run a bye to Mutley, who was still standing up to the stumps. He had fallen over as he caught the ball and could not get up in time! From the sublime to the ridiculous.

Back in the Red Lion...

Perhaps, best of all, we were able to celebrate the undoubted camaraderie that existed during the game back in the Red Lion after an interregnum of some 15 years. Sitting on the back terrace in the evening sun recounting "How we could have won it!!" with a few cold drinks followed by a delicious supper was a joyful experience. At 11.15pm, suitably refreshed, all the 60 year olds were calling for "One more year". Well, I guess we do have to play the 20th game at the very least. It is now 12-7 to the Village.

Next home game...

Our next home game is on Sunday 2nd June at Great Tew CC against the Moo Cow Cricket Club, which is nothing to do with Jeremy Clarkson! We start at 2pm, so please do come and support. At the very least you can enjoy free tea and cake.

Peter Higgins
Chairman SACC

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Tim Pile, an accredited photographer from Birmingham, showed the Society a continuous array of fantastic images that he had taken around the world. His need to find venues requires him to spend a huge amount of time researching them.

Tim carefully plans the composition and lighting of his photographs. He uses natural light on his models, creating backlighting, side lighting and soft or hard lighting. He checks the direction of light at the time of shooting to produce exquisitely artistic images.

The models work in partnership with Tim, forming rounded or jagged shapes, echoing formations in the landscape around them. They mould to the landscape and become part of an image, not always the focus of the photographs, but inclusive within it. The mirroring of shapes around them is part of their technique.

Back in 2008, with his Canon G9 camera, he joined his first camera club – ‘The Aston and Erdington Photographic Society’ and later ‘The Smethwick Photographic Society’, entering competitions and learning new techniques and forming his style. He joined up with a small group of friends who explored nude portraiture taken in studios. At this point his preference was to shoot images with natural light.

His photographic journey has included learning from others, including developing techniques from Irene Froy, which was evident in some of his shots where he desaturated images, blurred layers and produced white layers, producing images like this one that he is famous for – ‘Pearls’. The image won gold medals and was in the Edinburgh Salon.

Architecture was our slideshow title for the second part of the evening and many of our members showed their interpretations.

We welcome new members to our Society nights on the first Wednesday of each month. On 5th June, Graham Marek will be speaking about the ‘Camera Obscura’.

Website: addphoto.co.uk or find us on facebook.com/add.photosoc

Courtney Killpack



THE VALENTINE CLUB



What now seems like a lifetime ago, in April 40 members of the club travelled by road and water to Norton Grange on The Isle of Wight. As they say, the sun shines on the righteous, which added to the enjoyment of our return to this sunny island. I think everyone enjoyed themselves and whilst there we visited Quarr Abbey, a working monastery, and St. Mildred's Church which Queen Victoria frequented during her time at Osborne House.

We baked in the sunshine whilst visiting Ryde and caught up with our old friend Galentine at the island's donkey sanctuary. There must be something about donkeys as we adopted two more this year – Jimbob and Woody (above).

At the end of May we visited Saville Gardens and had a river cruise along the River Thames, with a cream tea of course!

Our meeting in May was all about 'Medical Detection Dogs' and how they can identify problems way before we can. Fraser Liversage gave us an insight into how these wonderful dogs can 'pick up' on diseases way before we know anything about them.

June is going to be a busy month as we welcome back to the club Neil, who must have one of the best voices in the country – his rendition of songs by Matt Monroe from back in the 1960s has to be witnessed to be believed.

At the end of the month we are going to travel south to Painshill – ‘a masterpiece of garden design’. Then, hopefully with enough energy remaining, we move on to Denbies Wine Estate for a meal and some wine tasting. The idea is to bring back as many passengers as we take and hopefully this will not be a problem, even if some travellers have tested the grapes in liquid form whilst at Denbies!

We have holidays arranged for Eastbourne and Norfolk later in the year and, of course, lots of speakers, entertainers and information along the way. Although we have around 100 members and a waiting list, if you feel you might like to join this merry gang of more mature hippies, just let me or a member know and we can add you to the list and if places are available on any of the trips, you would be the first to know. I did get asked the other day if we were planning a day trip to Margate. When I asked why, he wondered if his old Lambretta might still be chained to the promenade railings that he left there in the 60s!

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, have a go at 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 – telephone 340512

June facts and fancies

June's birthstones are the pearl, moonstone and alexandrite.

- Pearl is a hard object produced within the soft tissue of a living shelled mollusk, such as an oyster. It is composed of calcium carbonate in crystalline form, deposited in concentric layers. We think of pearls as round and smooth, but other shapes can occur. The finest pearls are highly-valued. Because of this, the word can be applied to something rare, exceptional and precious – ‘pearls of wisdom’.
- Moonstone is a variety of the feldspar-group mineral orthoclase. During formation, orthoclase and albite separate into thin alternating layers. When light falls between these layers it is scattered producing an effect called adularescence – similar to the shimmering appearance of the moon on a cloudless evening
- Alexandrite is often described as ‘emerald by day, ruby by night’. It changes colour from blue-green in daylight to purple-red in incandescent light and is typically more expensive than diamonds. The stone is called the ‘magic barometer’, with a multitude of meanings given to the colour change. It is named in honour of the son of Emperor Nicholas II Alexander of Russia.

June's birth flowers are the rose and the honeysuckle. You should see both in Steeple Aston gardens opening to visitors for the National Gardens Scheme on Sunday 2nd June (see page 7).

Each year, no other month begins on the same day of the week as June. Weird.

It is thought that June is named for the Roman goddess Juno, patroness of marriage and the well-being of women. The Greek equivalent is Hera, the wife of Zeus and worshipped as a marriage goddess.

The early part of June was considered by the Romans to be an ill-omened time for marriage. However, June is now considered one of the best months – possibly because of the good weather. "Oh they say when you marry in June you're a bride all your life and the bridegroom who marries in June gets a sweetheart for a wife..." – from the movie ‘Seven Brides for Seven Brothers’.

There are two star signs for June. If born on or before 20th June you are a Gemini – passionate, adaptable and smart. If born on or after 21st June you are Cancer – loyal and with emotional depth. Allegedly.

June was called ‘sera monath’ by the Anglo-Saxons. It translates as ‘dry month’.

June is a gender-neutral given name – popular for females, though less common for males (and mostly outside English-speaking countries).

SAVE THE DATE!

Steeple Aston Church Fete

Look Forward To -

- Fire Engine's, Tractors!*
- Beer's and BBQ!*
- Brass Band!*
- Raffle!*
- And More!*



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July 13th
14:00 - 16:30
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toys, books to 7 town end, 07748182227*

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO.....?

The HMB Endeavour

During several visits to our family in Australia in the 1990s we watched with fascination the building of the replica of Captain Cook's ship the Endeavour – originally a coal ship from Whitby. He and his crew (including the botanist Joseph Banks) sailed in her via Tahiti to New Zealand to claim the east coast of Australia for George III in 1770.

The replica was made using the kind of tools, materials (a lot of jarrah wood instead of English oak) and ways of working which made the original Endeavour. Once the ship had been completed with its 28 huge sails, miles of ropes and hundreds of pulleys, visitors could go on board and glimpse something of what life would have been like for Captain Cook and his crew.

It was perhaps less noisy, cramped and smelly than it would have been in the original, but one could imagine something of the danger, hard work and bravery of the men who sailed in her, uncertain of when and if they would ever see their homes and families again.

The Endeavour replica has visited London. Watching Tower Bridge open to allow it to travel up the Thames in full sail was a wonderful sight. This ship is now moored next to the Australian National Maritime Museum on the Pyrmont Bay wharf, near Sydney and is well worth a visit.

There are other tall ships which still sail the seas, mostly thanks to enthusiasts who keep them in good repair, and from time to time it is possible to see and often board them. The bi-annual Gloucester Tall Ships Festival will sadly just have taken place when you read this (25th to 27th May). However, several of the mighty sailing ships can be seen at various seaside places during the summer. The sight of them, especially if they are under sail, is truly magnificent.



HM Bark Endeavour (replica) entering the Port of Freemantle, Perth, Western Australia. Photo by John M. Wheatley taken on 12th October 2011 (from Wikimedia Commons)

The Galeon Andalucia will be in Great Yarmouth in May and June, in Whitby and Scarborough in July, and in Poole and Southend-on-Sea in August. The Esmerelda will be in Portsmouth in July and the Gloria will sail into London in July. What evocative names they have! Maybe a SAL reader will be in one of those places and will see one of these monarchs of a past age and will feel the same astonishment and amazement as I do at the bravery and skill of our sea-faring ancestors.

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Village Hall News



The Annual General Meeting of the Steeple Aston Village Hall Management Committee was held on the 13th May 2024. The full committee is listed below, showing which group they represent.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| • Barbara Brewer | Tuesday Badminton (Chair) | • Torquil McLusky | SRT Co-ordinator |
| • Margaret Bulleyment | Choral Society (Secretary) | • TBN | Village Rep |
| • John White | (Treasurer) | • Chris Clarke | PCC |
| • Alison Moran | Thursday Badminton | • Stuart Cummins | Archive |
| • Deborah Morris | Village Rep | • Richard Preston | Valentine Club |
| • Sally Cooper | WI | • John Coley | Garden Club |

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

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

Teas in Village Hall. The Church allotments plus five gardens open. Admission £7 to all gardens. The Village Hall Committee are once again organising refreshments for the Open Gardens. The money raised goes towards Macmillan Nurses and other cancer charities. If anyone would like to bake or supply a cake, help serve teas in the afternoon (for approximately one hour, for a time to suit you), please contact Barbara on 01869 340423. Cakes can be brought to the hall after 10am on the Sunday morning or dropped off to me before the event.

Tuesday 5th November: 'Fireworks spectacular'.

Sunday 8th December: Wassail evening.

Saturday 18th January 2025: Annual Quiz Night.

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
Collect keys from 'Mijas', South Side, Steeple Aston OX25 4RU.

Barbara Brewer – chair
savh.org.uk

Steeple Aston Golf Society



Hello to all you golfers out there.

Our first match of the season was at 'The Wychwood' on Friday 17th May. The results will be published next month as we played after the deadline for this issue.

The next meeting is on Friday 14th June at the Bicester Golf and Spa Hotel, Chesterton, Bicester OX26 1TE, telephone 01869 241204. This par 71 parkland course boasts 36 newly-designed tee structures, freshly remodelled bunkers and seven lake systems, combined with nine fully reconstructed undulating green complexes, offering the complete test of golf – difficult yet friendly and a joy to play. If you want to come along call Alan 340423 or Chris 347173.

Happy golfing.

Alan Brewer

If I hit the ball left, it's a hook. If I hit the ball right, it's a slice. When I hit it straight, it's a miracle!



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Our May meeting heralded not only the first pleasantly warm evening, but also our magazine and book sale evening when our avid readers shuffle their latest book group favourites around!

The latest WI Resolutions were discussed and our chosen one was 'Say no to Gambling', but this was rejected as the majority of our group WIs had chosen to go with 'Dental Health Matters'. Julie will be the group's delegate at the Royal Albert Hall in London this year and we gave her the option of the 'discretionary' vote as the speakers on the day may well sway the vote!

The WI summer outing this year is on 11th June. It will be a tour of the Hook Norton Brewery including sampling of various brews followed by a lunch at the brewery Malt House café. A good turnout for this one is a certainty!



Our May speaker was Hugh Warwick, an ecologist and writer with a particular fondness for hedgehogs, who is also a spokesperson for the British Hedgehog Preservation Society. Quite a good title for an extremely erudite, humorous, exciting and all-round great speaker! His knowledge of the once common hedgehog is second to none. He started off with the expected problem of why are they endangered and why the colossal drop in numbers? It is, of course, down to loss of habitat, mono crops and all the spraying. A 'hog' lives in a hedge – the clue is in the name! Hedgehogs need hedges and these have been disappearing or so ruthlessly flailed and cut back too hard to render them hospitable. Roads are also huge barriers across their territories – road kill!

But Hugh told us some amusing things about the hedgehogs. Did we know that a hedgehog frowns? They raise their spines from their eyebrows to their tails! Their reaction to danger starts with the frown, then they curl into a ball – no flight or fight. We should remember this before bonfire night! Their courtship rituals involve the male circling the female for hours, creating flattened circles on the ground – a little like mini crop circles!

How can we save the lovely little critters? By forming hedgehog corridors between our gardens. Dig holes under the fence or a hole in the base of the wall. Add a little plank for the hedgehog to escape from a pond or from under a cattle grid.



Did you know that badgers sometimes eat hedgehogs because they compete for the same food source – roots and invertebrates?

Our next speaker meeting in the Village Hall is on 9th July and is entitled 'Oxfordshire beekeepers making 100% natural skincare products, with a little help from their bees'. Sounds intriguing! Care to join us? You could contact our President Julie on 349185 or just turn up at 7pm on the night.

Merrill Bayley



THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK

The Great Big Green Week is the UK's biggest ever celebration of community action to tackle climate change and protect nature.

Steeple Aston Community Orchard

8th June 2024

1-4pm

Family Fun Event

Pond Dipping
Nature Hunt
Tea & Cake

Meet the Bee Keeper
Replenish Stall
Kids' activities



Church Matters



Hello.

May has brought with it some lovely days and warmer weather, which has been glorious. I hope you have been able to get out and enjoy the sunshine.

The warmer weather tends to draw us into the garden and many of us have, I suspect, been busy planting the seeds we have been nurturing on windowsills. This is where I have to confess to cheating somewhat and instead of growing things from seeds I went along to a local plant sale and stocked up!

We now have several tomato and mangetout plants potted up and (thankfully) growing in the garden. For things to grow they need nurturing. In the case of plants, this is good soil (with nutrients), light, water and air. For us we too need food (protein, vitamins and minerals), water, and air, plus a source of energy, which for us is carbohydrates (sugars) rather than sunlight. These are the basic things we need grow, to provide us with the energy and resources to repair and remain healthy.

However, to thrive, we also need support and help. In the case of my tomato plants and mangetout this is supplied by canes and string, or a trellis up which they can grow. We though need the support and encouragement of others. Having dreams is a good thing and my daughter's secondary school headteacher used to talk about "aiming for the moon, because even if you miss you'll end up in the stars" as a way of inspiring them. Sometimes though, our dreams are very big and to reach them we need to break the dream into smaller, achievable chunks.

To put a man on the moon, NASA didn't repeatedly launch a rocket at the moon, instead they broke the dream down into smaller parts. They initially aimed at getting a rocket into orbit, then a dog into space, and then men. To achieve these things, they needed teams of people, many of whom have for years gone unnoticed and uncelebrated, yet their contribution was invaluable to achieving the dream of putting a man on the moon.

As we watch our gardens grow this summer, I invite you to take a moment and think about your dreams, thanking those who have helped and supported you along the way. What is the next target you are aiming at and what support do you need to help you achieve it?

*May God give you the desire of your heart
and make all your plans succeed. Psalm 20:4*

Harriet Orridge

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Church Services



	North Aston	Steeple Aston	Tackley
Sunday 2nd June	9.30am Holy Communion (BCP)	11.00am Holy Communion (BCP)	5.30pm Evensong
Sunday 9th June	9.30am Morning Worship	11.00am Family Service	5.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 16th June	9.30am Holy Communion	11.00am Holy Communion	5.30pm Family Service
Sunday 23rd June	9.30am Morning Prayer	11.00am Morning Prayer	9.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 30th June		10.30am United Benefice Service	
<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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"Everything has beauty but not everyone sees it" - Confucius



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Others	£17 (up to 3hrs)
plus Refundable Deposit	£200

Committee Room

Represented Clubs	£6 (up to 3hrs)
Others	£12 (up to 3hrs)
Letting Agent	Angela Smith (07734-112967)
Chairperson	Barbara Brewer (01869-340423)
Secretary	Margaret Bulleyment (01869-347346)

Represented Clubs must nominate a trustee to attend Village Hall committee meetings.

Discounted rate for represented clubs – 15% for six block bookings.

Steeple Aston Sports & Recreation Centre Letting Charges

Social Function peak times: £55.00
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Social Function off-peak times: £27.50
(Daily up to 5 hours, up to 6.00pm)

Meeting of represented clubs: £11.00
(Daily per session, max 2 hours)

Caution money for Private Lettings: £100.00

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BUS TIMES

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0703 0817 0920 1020 1620 1737 1840 1932 2022 2147 2253

Saturdays

0721 0821 0931 then hourly to 1531 1641 1746 1849 1937 2037 2216
0809 0909 1019 1619 1729 1834 1932 2022 2147 2253

Sundays and most public holidays

0907 1037 1207 1337 1507 1637 1806
0953 1123 1253 1423 1553 1723 1852

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Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays)

0758 0910 1008 then hourly to 1508 1624 1732 1835 1933 2025 2113 2213 2341
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

0917 1044 1214 1344 1514 1644 1814 1944
0956 1122 1252 1422 1552 1722 1852 2022

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

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OurBus Bartons offers services through Steeple Aston to and from Lower Heyford Station (Monday to Friday), to and from Chipping Norton (Wednesdays) and to and from Bicester (Fridays).

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

Steeple and Middle Aston rubbish bin collection day Is Thursday.



June 2024

6th Green
13th Blue and brown
20th Green
27th Blue and brown

July 2024

4th Green
11th Blue and brown
18th Green
25th 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 July and August to editorsalife@gmail.com

JUNE 2024			
Sunday 2nd	SACC v. Moo Cow Cricket Club	Great Tew CC	2pm
Sunday 2nd	NGS Village Open Gardens. Teas in Village Hall.		2pm to 6pm
Wednesday 5th	AD&D Photographic Society Graham Marek: 'The Camera Obscura'	Adderbury Institute	7.30pm
Thursday 6th	Garden Club. Visit to Bourton House Garden, Bourton-on-the-Hill		2.30pm
Thursday 6th	Church Talk. John Lavery MVO 'Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851'	SA Church	7pm
Tuesday 11th	WI. Tour of Hook Norton Brewery		
Friday 14th	SAL July 2024 copy and advert deadlines		
Friday 14th	Golf Society	Bicester Golf and Spa Hotel	
Monday 17th	Parish Council meeting	S&R Building	7.30pm
Tuesday 18th	Valentine Club. Neil with songs from the 60s and 70s	Village Hall	2.30pm
Wednesday 26th	Valentine Club. Painshill Estate and Denbies Winery		
Saturday 22nd	Deddington Farmers' Market	Deddington	9am to 12.30pm
Saturday 22nd	Sustainable Steeple	Deddington Church	9am to 12.30pm
Sunday 30th	SACS: Summer Party Concert	Village Hall	6.30pm for 7pm
SAVE THE DATE!			
25th July	Church Talk. 'Travels in Mongolia'	SA Church	7pm
5th November	'Fireworks Spectacular'	Robinsons Close	
24th November	SACS: Autumn Concert	SA Church	19:00:00
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

Steeple Aston Life is published by Steeple Aston Life Committee

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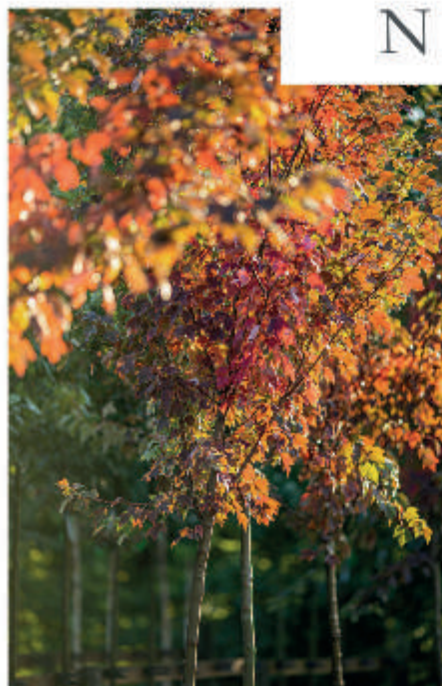
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