



Night Sights

Thanks to our readers for sending in photos of nocturnal wildlife in the village. Steve and Sally Lee sent in the still taken from a video in their garden at the beginning of April of a tawny owl, its eyes gleaming. Susan Haines took the photo in her garden late one evening at the end of April of the two hedgehogs having heard them agitatedly ‘barking’ at one another. It’s great to see that both these species are flourishing in the Parish. - *Editors*



Drivers Beware!



The new sign at the Isle of Wight

The Great Brook Road becoming flooded during periods of heavy rainfall is a feature of parish life that has occurred for many years.

A good few drivers both local and not, in vehicles of different sizes have been caught out with stalling engines and soggy interiors over this time. Some SatNav systems also appear to take perverse delight in directing unwary users with a ‘take the next right’ along the Great Brook Road when coming from Buckland Marsh to Aston and Cote.

It is therefore helpful to see that a new road sign has been installed at the Isle of Wight end of the Great Brook to give prior warning. Whether it is observed remains to be seen.

Rihard Haines



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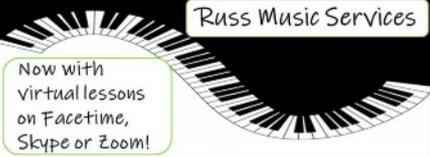
Editorial

It was thirty years ago...



In May 1991 the first edition of Voices was produced! Blur were top of the charts with "There's No Other Way" and the poll tax riots were in full swing with riots at Oxford's Blackbird Leys. What else was happening?

- Tim Berners-Lee introduced the World Wide Web.
- Helen Sharman became the first British person in space.
- John McCarthy, the British hostage held in Lebanon for over five years, was freed.
- Dean Saunders became the most expensive footballer (£2.9million) to be signed by an English club when he joined Liverpool. He played for Oxford United in 1988.
- The final phase of the M40 motorway through Oxfordshire was opened.
- The bells at St James church were restored and re-hung.
- Val Crowson wrote a letter to Voices about dog fouling at the Playing Field!



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Contact **Catrin** on **07795 835750** or email russcat21@gmail.com or check out my website, russmusicservices.co.uk

Our first edition, May 1991, was created on a typewriter, thanks to Gill Ball and prepared for publication, cut and pasted, by Shirley Townley. We had an editorial team of nine, we now have ten, not the same people we hasten to add.

We are always looking for contributors to the magazine - no experience necessary! If you are new to the village and want to get involved in village life why not help with Voices?

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Editors
 Andrew Long and Richard Haines



Dear Editors,

It makes me smile when on the Church clock one face says one time and the other face says another time. I feel sorry if anybody relies on the time to get to work.
 Mike Lelliott



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Not a Normal 9 – 5 Job

Louise Martindale is a most interesting and very unusual young woman. After leaving school she travelled and worked her way around the countries of South America. Then, aged 24, she joined the RAF and started training to be an Aircraft Engineer, which, she described as “the greasiest and messiest” job in the RAF. During her eight-year career in the RAF she was based at RAF Cosford and later at RAF Marham, Norfolk. During that time, she met and became friends with Rob, another RAF Aircraft Engineer working on Tornados.

But, this wasn't as fulfilling and the travel bug had bitten her. After studying a course to teach English to foreign students, she went off to China for a year and a half. Incidentally, although she has a penchant for foreign languages, she learnt very few words in Mandarin. Then she returned to Europe and joined Spanish company, Tucan Travel, for a short while as a tour leader.

This experience prompted her, in 2013, to start her own business, named 'Borderland Travel', as a tour leader in the Balkans. Her clients were principally from the USA, Australia, India and the Far East and she became friends with many of them. This time her talent for learning language meant becoming fluent in Serbian; useful for Croatia, Bosnia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Albania, Bulgaria and Romania as well as Serbia.

Along the way she had met up again with Rob and two years ago, 'out of the blue' he asked her to marry him and they would go and live in Serbia leading a simple 'good life' keeping chickens and being happy ever after. But the RAF didn't want Rob to retire and offered him another seven years working at Brize Norton.

So, they put off the move abroad and moved to Carterton – not quite the same? Then, the global pandemic froze international travel everywhere and Louise returned to Britain – for what she and others thought was going to be a brief spell – to wait for Covid-19 to pass.

Sitting and watching day-time TV lost its appeal and Louise decided to job hunt. A temporary job with Aldi or another supermarket, though possible, was unappealing. Then she spotted a job advertised on Facebook by the Environment Agency for a temporary Relief Lock and Weir Keeper. This looked appealing as she loves outdoor work and is a strong swimmer.

The work entails helping the public (customers) with their boats or varied craft to navigate through the lock as they travel up or downstream along the canals and rivers. In Louise's case the river Thames with local locks such as Shifford, Rushey, Northmoor, Eynsham and Platt. A lock is used to enable a boat to go from the height of the river upstream of a weir to the height of the river below the weir. A weir is needed to manage water flow and levels efficiently so all of the water after rains doesn't flow out to sea too quickly. The locks have heavy wooden gates (often weighing around 2,700 kg) which are operated manually so the lock keeper has to be fit and able bodied. As Louise lives near the Thames, it is not too far to travel to work.

Louise started her training on the 1st April this year, has already completed two weeks of her course and loves it. She finishes at the end of this coming September when the boating public finish their holidays.

Louise recommends the job to anyone who likes the outdoors. She is hoping that because everyone has been in lockdown like her, they can have an uneventful holiday boating this summer.

Lizzie Wood





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Community Trust

Timber!

Those who visited the Village Hall recently may have noticed a change to the skyline in the far corner of the recreation grounds. The tree surgeons were in on 25th March to remove one of the large poplar trees that run along the south border of the site. A second poplar was pared back and a smaller willow felled. It's always a shame to lose established trees, but we have to put safety first. A post-mortem assessment revealed that the large poplar was being supported by only 25% of the trunk. As a result of the work, the older kids' climbing frame has some additional chippings to cushion falls and we're sure the logs warmed up a few local residents on the chilly spring evenings of the last few weeks.



Getting to the Village Hall

Please could we encourage residents of Aston & Cote to cycle or walk when you visit the village hall and recreation grounds instead of parking along Cote Road and the side roads? We are looking to install bike racks, but in the meantime, you can chain bikes to the fence of the new playground, next to the blue 'bicycle parking' sign. We are looking at options for the car park but would prefer to not lose green space just to support the higher volumes of traffic one day each week. Thank you for your consideration.

Paul Farrow on behalf of Aston & Cote Community Trust



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For further information or to arrange a visit please contact:
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 office.3120@aston-and-cote.oxon.sch.uk



Tree surgeons at the playing field and the removed trunk

News from the Community Shop

The shop re-opened as a community venture on Saturday 29th August 2020. Now with eight months of trading behind us we have been able to repay some of the loans required to pay for stock. Thanks to the many supporters and volunteer workers we are still open and making sufficient profit to pay our fixed monthly outgoings with some in reserve to develop the facilities offered by the store. We also continue to add to the stock variety and services (such as the new self-serve coffee machine – do give it a try.)

We had to reduce our opening times because of the unacceptable Covid-19 risk to some of our volunteers, but as restrictions relax, we are hoping to increase our hours by remaining open until 5:30pm or later each weekday. To achieve this, we will need more volunteers to come forward. If you can now entertain putting your name forward to volunteer and keep this community project moving successfully forward, please make contact via our website or Facebook pages.

www.astoncommunityshop.co.uk

www.facebook.com/AstonCommunityShop/

Visiting the Community shop has become a regular activity for some, with daily transactions ranging from 60 to 140. But if you have not visited the shop, please give it a try – we are sure you will be pleasantly surprised! We remain competitive on pricing only because we



do not pay any wages to anyone and would like to hear from you with ideas on how we can try to further develop the shop.

We are proud to have recently received a Five Star rating from WODC for Food Hygiene and for Covid-19 precautions.

Please remember that this is a project run by the community for the community and is legally obliged to not make a loss and to re-invest any profits back into the facilities of the community.

Richard Lincoln, Director, Aston



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Village organizations

Aston & Cote Badminton
Aston & Cote Pre-School

Local Authority

Aston and Cote P.C.



FACS News

Thank you to all those that took part in the Easter Egg Trail; we had 46 Easter eggs hiding around the village so thank you to all those that hosted one. We raised over £80 - thank you to the Aston Community Shop for selling the trail maps and to Aston Repair Depot for donating the prize - the winner was very pleased!

We also had a successful collection for Rags2Riches4Schools and raised over £210 - thank you to all those that donated. We will be having another collection in September and will keep you all up to date with the details.

The money that has been raised recently will be going towards new playground markings at the

school which I am sure all the kids will enjoy using at play time. These little extras really help the school so thank you for your continued support. If you would like to donate funds at any point, this can always be done through our online donations <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/14459> or get in contact with us at facstaston@gmail.com

This term we are hoping to have some ice cream sales at the school as well as a colouring competition over May half term. We will keep you all posted with more details through our Facebook page - "Friends of Aston and Cote School".

Finally, we are looking for new members to join our FACS team. If this is something you might be interested in please contact Kate at facstaston@gmail.com; we are a small team and would welcome



Poppy on the Easter egg trail

extra input and support. I know that people worry about the time commitment, but I promise it isn't overwhelming and we each help with different aspects to share the load. We want FACS to continue to strive and to raise these funds for the school so if you think you can help, please do get in touch.

Kate Norton

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Amelia and Felix spot an egg

You Can't Park Here

During my frequent walks taken around Aston over the past year, I have thought about parked vehicles. I considered three factors - number of vehicles, parking near junctions and parking on footpaths and the results were interesting.



Is the situation worse than it was 20 years ago? No, I do not think that it is, generally speaking. There are more parked vehicles, as would be expected, but there are very few parked near junctions or on footpaths.

Compare this with 20 or more years ago. Around that time the then-editor of *Voices*, Victor Lewis, included an article in an issue which demonstrated that there were many vehicles parked on footpaths. This assertion was supported by a number of photographs.

Today, most vehicles are parked with due consideration to other households and other vehicles. People coming from the Bampton direction used to complain because they had to slow down or stop in High Street because of Tex's lorry. Nowadays there are several vehicles parked in the same area, but this is not a problem as it ensures that the

Bampton traffic usually approaches Aston Square at a reasonable speed. I do wish, however, that people would not park their vehicles adjacent to the bus stop.

Another thought crossed my mind, in a few years' time we could all be driving electric vehicles. These will need charging points (including the self-charging type), which may be difficult to provide for vehicles parked on the highway. I thought that a good idea was mentioned by the Parish Council, in the letter which was enclosed with the recent issue of *Voices*. This suggested that charging points could be included in any development of the North Farm site.

This idea needs careful consideration.

Robert Jones.

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Welcome to Aston

A recent newcomer to Aston was agreeably surprised to learn that he would receive a free copy of the Aston Voice six times a year. As we emerge from Lockdown there must be many new residents in Aston who have not yet had the chance to fully discover the community they have come to live in.

Welcome to Aston!

Thirty five years ago I came to Aston for the first time to introduce myself as a prospective candidate for the local District Council elections. This was perhaps not the most diplomatic way to make friends and influence people. It was snowing and the first person I spoke to told me to b***** off! After this baptism of fire I never looked back. Aston has proved to be the most friendly, welcoming community it has been my good fortune to meet and this you will discover as you venture cautiously out of Lockdown and look around you.

A quick scan of the pages of this village newsletter will give you some idea of what goes on in and around the village.

As a rookie councillor (albeit an interloper from Standlake) I was rapidly absorbed into Aston village life - coffee mornings (Sylvia's raffles), quiz nights and the Fete.

One of the things I found most endearing about Aston was that entire families turned out for village events. We hope you, too, will join in and rapidly become a part of village life.

Lockdown saw the caring Aston spirit at its best reaching out to help anyone in need as it always had done. Setting up the community run Village shop (what a little gem you have here!) is just one example. The village school is thriving. There is a wealth of clubs and societies catering for a wide range of interests. The playing field has a well-equipped play area and all this has been provided by caring people in the community.

Welcome to Aston. Come and join in .You have so much to look forward to!

Brenda Smith

PS. You will know you have really arrived when you get a raffle ticket!

Zooming with my Teams

Not so very long ago, working from home was, for me, an occasional way to focus on an important piece of work away from all the usual interruptions of office life. I'm a people-person at heart and always felt at my most productive when I was in the office, laughing and joking with my colleagues, sharing life's ups and downs and, obviously when time allowed, getting the odd snippet of work done here and there.

Now here we are, in Spring 2021 and for many desk jockeys like myself, the last 12 months has meant a world where home-working is the norm, with all of the changes to the routines of the last 30 years of my working life that this entails. For a start, my sartorial options have taken a somewhat different path – when I open my wardrobe my suits and work shirts now look like something from a bygone age, as I reach past them to select my t-shirt of choice for today – 'Ah yes Sir, the Mickey Mouse one – excellent choice!'. Next comes the commute - goodbye M40 North or Didcot station in the rain, hello slipper-shod shuffle across the landing into my home office. No longer do I wonder if the car will start on those cold mornings, instead I now look at the router, crossing my fingers that it keeps working and that my carefully-laid meeting plan for the day will not be scuppered by the gremlins of BT land.

I was fortunate enough to start a new job back in November. That meant the slightly surreal experience of my entire interview process being conducted via Microsoft Teams. 'What should I wear for the interview?' I thought – a suit would feel a bit daft, a t-shirt a bit disrespectful. In the end, I went for the open neck shirt relaxed yet professional look – I even used the iron for the first time in about six months (not used it since!). In the spirit of complete transparency dear readers, I will admit that I had my interview preparation notes stuck over most of the wall in front of me so that I felt prepared for any question that they could throw at me. I don't think I looked at them once during the interview itself, but they were a reassuring presence should the dreaded interview question block have come to call.

Using video conference software all day certainly has its amusing sides. I had a call with a colleague recently – at one point she told me that if I didn't stop being silly she would send me to bed and tell my Dad. 'A bit harsh' I thought, until I saw her young son appear from camera-right. Expert use of the mute button is a critical attribute of the modern home-worker.

It seems inevitable that some degree of home working is here to stay for many of us, at least in the medium-term. I have certainly managed to adjust to the changes that it brings to daily life and in fairness it does have a lot of positives, but the bigger part of me really looks forward to the next natter at the coffee machine and that slice of coffee cake made by Brenda from Accounts.

Paul Lock

Want New Potatoes for Christmas?

Thanks to Betty Hicks for sending in this clever idea.

When in season cook the new potatoes as normal including salt and mint.

When cooked leave the potatoes in the pan of water to get cold.

Once cold put the potatoes and water in a suitable container and freeze.

Come Christmas thaw out the potatoes and water.

Reheat the potatoes and water in a sauce pan on top of the stove.

As they are already cooked they just need reheating.



AJS

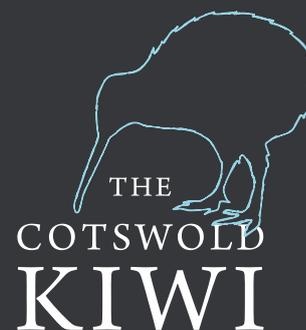
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Becoming a Fix My Street Super User



Trevor measures up to the job

Inspired by a BBC South Today report last September and the unfortunate crash of a motorcyclist near Aston Pottery, I contacted Oxfordshire County Council offering to help out with the pothole problem in the Parish. Nothing was heard for a couple of months but eventually in November I received an email from the County Council acknowledging my interest.

Because of delays caused by the pandemic it took until March before I could undertake the online training course qualifying me to work on the unclassified roads in the Parish. The same day the Volunteer Co-ordinator delivered the paint spray cans and hi viz jacket to our house. Quickly thereafter I was out on my bike cycling around the Parish roads checking the problem areas and identifying likely candidates for my spray can.

My early intervention with the Area Highways Officer resulted in a large number of potholes being identified and marked up very quickly. Potholes marked with white paint (Category 2) should be repaired within 28 days by the County Council's contractor. Red paint signifies a serious problem with Category 1A indicating action to be taken within two hours and Category 1B within 24 hours.

I have often wondered what the criteria are for identifying potholes that qualify for further action. Potholes will be fixed where the depth is greater than 40 mm on a road and 20 mm on a pavement. Overall size is crucial too; small potholes should be at least 15 cm² and up to 1 m². Large potholes should be at least 1 m² and up to 2 m².

So if you see me around the Parish with my measuring tape and spray can by all means wave, say hello, or toot your horn if I'm in the road, but please don't run over me!

Trevor Jackson

Nature Natters

The flowers that bloom in the spring.

It's worth remembering that the greatest joys of spring aren't really for our benefit at all. A bird sings to attract a mate and beautiful flowers evolved to attract pollinators that enable the plant to produce seeds.

That said, lots of flowers don't attract insects at all; they cast their pollen to the wind and rely on the wind to carry that pollen to a female flower. Virtually all grasses are wind pollinated and that includes many of our crops such as barley and maize. Many people don't think of grass as having flowers since they aren't brightly coloured like 'proper flowers'. But the pollen produced by these grass flowers causes hay-fever, so it is worth recognising them for what they are.

Many wind-pollinated plants have the male (pollen producing) flowers separate from the female (seed producing) flowers. This reduces the danger of in-breeding and many familiar flowers have mechanisms to do the same thing.

The most famous example of this comes in the various species of *Primula* – cowslips and primroses. If you look carefully at these flowers, you will notice that each plant has one of two types of flower. In one type, the female parts are large and stick out from the base of the petals looking like a pin and the word 'pin' is used to describe them. In the other flowers the female parts are small, and the male parts (the anthers) stick out and these are known as 'Thrum' flowers. This arrangement means that an insect visiting a thrum flower will pick up pollen and when it visits a 'pin' flower of the same species it is likely to deposit pollen.

Darwin was the first to write about this, and out-breeding is important to the theory of evolution.

James Gray



Aston and Cote Community Church

at the Fellowship Centre

We are now meeting every Sunday, in compliance with government regulations, for family-friendly worship and a short talk. Over the next few weeks, we are exploring the values, faith and vision that underlie all we do. The series is called 'Roots and Rivers' and we invite you to join us on any Sunday, or contact us for more information on acc2021@outlook.com, or via our website Aston & Cote Community Church – Fellowship Centre, Cote Road. Aston OX18 2DU (astoncotecc.org.uk)

As lockdown eases we hope to be able to increase the variety of activities we put on, including Sunday school, various midweek meetings and the return of Chillax (youth group for 11-14s). Watch this space!

Alastair Barnett (Pastor)

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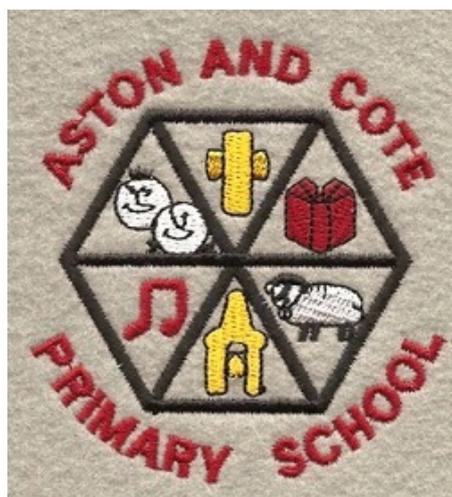
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News from Aston and Cote CE Primary School



The children returned to school on 8th March and thoroughly enjoyed their first week back – as well as getting together with friends again; they enjoyed the STEM Week activities each afternoon (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths).

The term finished with a flurry of Easter themed activities including RE Day on Monday, an outdoor Easter trail around the school grounds and a very popular Easter Egg Hunt – thank you so much to FACS who provided the delicious chocolate eggs at the end.

On Monday 26th April, Westerleigh Class enjoyed an online workshop with the author Struan Murray, who wrote “Orphans of the Tide”, their new book. He was able to give them lots of good tips about becoming an effective writer which will be very useful in the coming months and years as they progress through education and into future careers.



All classes were thoroughly engaged in “World Earth Day” activities on Thursday 22nd April – the children have a great understanding of current environmental issues and what they can do to help in both the short and long term. I think we may have a future David Attenborough or Greta Thunberg in our school! However, we focused very much on the fact, that each of us can make a difference in a myriad of ways every day and that when all of us play our part, it can have a huge impact.

We decided to take part in the Captain Sir Tom Moore Challenge and it has been so lovely to see the wide variety of ideas that the children have come up as their class challenge – from reading 100 pages of a book to dancing for 100 minutes, the children certainly know how to challenge themselves! We are raising money for three good causes (The Tom Moore Foundation, The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and resources/experiences during International Week here at school). The children in Windmill 1 were very pleasantly surprised when they returned to their classroom after the Easter break to discover that it had been completely transformed, with lots of new, exciting equipment to support their learning. The children have thoroughly enjoyed exploring the new areas that have been set up for them. Mr Campbell, our school caretaker, has also begun developing the outdoor area which will enable us to greatly enhance outdoor learning opportunities too. This represents a significant investment in the Early Years provision at the school and will certainly help us to mitigate the effects of lockdown on our youngest pupils.

Fiona Taylor, Head teacher





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WI News

It's been a long time since we have had any meetings or get togethers but I am pleased to say that as restrictions are lifting we believe the end is now in sight. During the last few weeks we have managed some zoom meetings which have not always been successful but we have persevered. We now understand that the hall will be opened sometime soon and provided we stick to the Covid distancing rules etc. we should be able to resume our meetings.

I have been in touch with four of the speakers we had to cancel last year and I am pleased to say that they have responded to say they will come and now all we need is a date so we can book them.

I shall keep reviewing further possibilities. However, any suggestions for any topics gladly received or there could be some new residents who would be willing to talk to us about their hobbies, employment or life experiences. We will be celebrating ninety years of our WI in Aston and Cote in November so hope to plan to go somewhere nice for a meal to celebrate.

theWI

INSPIRING WOMEN

As the village has been growing in the last year there must be some new residents of any age who would like to join us. We are a very friendly bunch and meet on the second Wednesday of the month in the village hall at 7.30 for about 1.5 hours. In addition to different speakers on all sorts of topics we manage a few trips out and from time to time get asked to prepare lunches/afternoon teas for coach parties or other gatherings. You always get reimbursed for the food you have prepared. You don't have to be good at cooking as laying tables and serving maybe all you have to do. We welcome all ages into our social group, so if you are thinking it is something you could enjoy why don't you give us a try, come along and see what it's like. You may be pleasantly surprised.

Lesley Brown



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500 Club Winners

March 2021 Draw

No. 345	£40	Mrs. Parker
No. 238	£30	R. & A. Crossley
No. 41	£20	C. Simmonds
No. 402	£10	P. Taylor
No. 29	£10	M. Sparrowhawk
No. 396	£5	L. Wilson
No. 48	£5	A. M. Pilling
No. 123	£5	S. Cox

April 2021 Draw

No. 388	£40	T. Sparrowhawk
No. 64	£30	E. Anstee
No. 360	£20	M. & J. Wilson
No. 173	£10	C. Maloney
No. 398	£10	K. Woan
No. 103	£5	P. Thurman
No. 333	£5	S. Lee
No. 359	£5	A. Smith

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Parish Council

Also on line at
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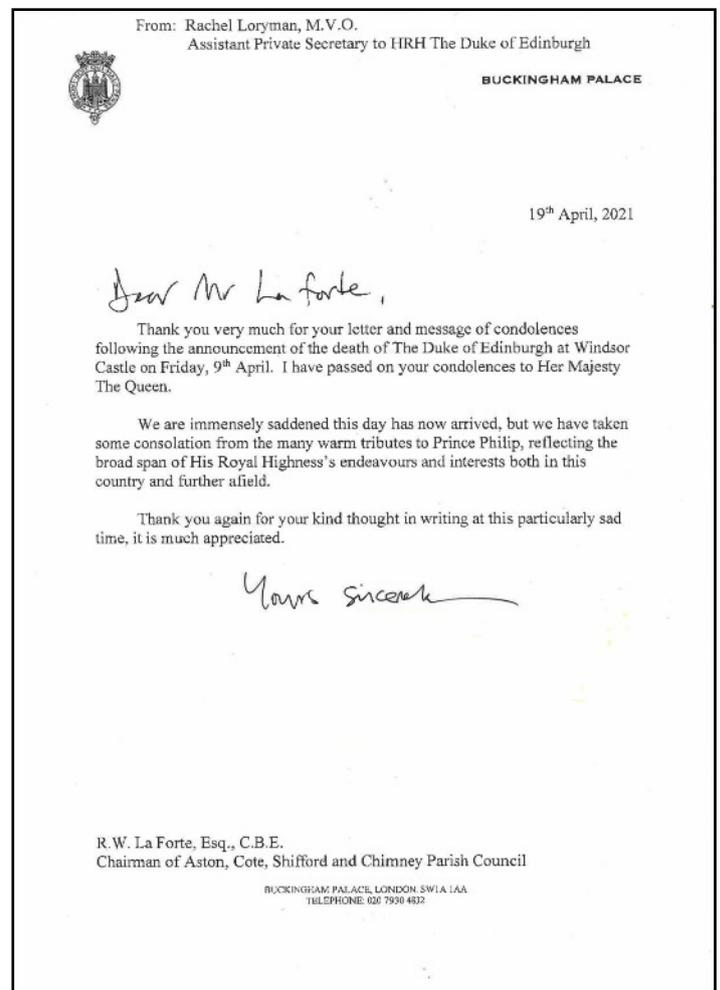
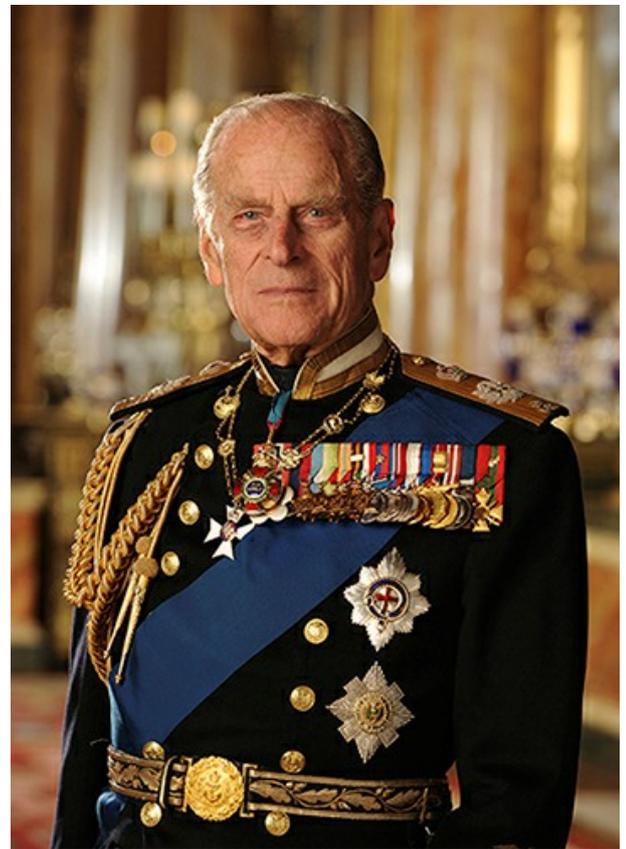
Parish Council News

Only a brief update on Parish Council business for this edition, following a relatively quiet period of consolidation over the Spring. The local elections scheduled for 6th May will see the retirement of two of our longstanding representatives – Charles Mathew (OCC) and Hilary Fenton (WODC). Both have been passionate advocates for our Parish as well as sources of sage advice to the Parish Council over very many years indeed; we are indebted to them both and wish them well for the future. We look forward to welcoming and working closely with their replacements, once the public have decided on 6th May who they will be! The current round of public consultation on North Farm continues until 6th May; Parish Council meetings with OCC occur shortly thereafter so we hope to provide more informed feedback to residents towards the end of the month. In the meantime, we are extremely grateful to those many residents who have provided comments, ideas and offers of assistance thus far. Your interest and support are very much appreciated – please keep them coming!

The Death of HRH Prince Philip

Following the death of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh on 9 April, the Parish Council wrote to the Palace to express our condolences. The letter and the response from the Palace are reproduced below:

*Russell La Forte,
Chairman Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council*





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Recipe
Indian Masala Carrots with
Coconut Lentils

This recipe elevates the humble carrot to a whole new level by the use of kitchen cupboard spices.

Vegetarian dish. Serves 2

Ingredients:-

- 500g carrots, chopped into 3 cm angled pieces
- 2 onions, peeled and chopped into wedges
- 1 tbsp Garam Masala
- Oil for roasting and frying
- 2-3 garlic cloves, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 tsp black mustard seeds
- 1 tbsp curry leaves
- 1 chilli, halved and deseeded
- 2 tbsp medium curry powder
- 150gm red lentils, rinsed and drained
- 1 tin coconut milk
- ½ tin chopped tomatoes (or two fresh tomatoes, diced)
- Bunch of fresh coriander, chopped
- 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper

Method

Pre heat oven to 200 C/gas mark 6.

Toss carrots, onions, garam masala and 2 tbsp of oil in a roasting tin. Season and roast for approx 20 minutes until tender and coloured at the edges. Meanwhile, heat 2tbsp of oil in a pan and add the garlic, mustard seeds, curry leaves and chilli. Fry gently for 1 minute until mustard seeds pop. Tip in the curry powder, lentils, coconut milk, tomatoes and 150mls water. Bring the lentils to a boil and simmer for 15-20 minutes, until soft. Add more water if they start drying out; you are aiming for a loose porridge-like consistency. When the lentils are cooked, season to taste and fold in half the coriander. Add a squeeze of lemon juice to the carrots. Serve the lentils in a shallow dish. Spoon the roasted carrots and onions on top and finish with the remaining coriander.

Monica Read



Aston, Cote, Chimney and Shifford Runners,
Ramblers and Riders Group

If you like to move it and shake it, then this Facebook group may be for you. Whether you walk or run, swim or cycle, kick a ball or wave a racket, or even if you're at your happiest when in downward dog, everyone is welcome to join and share your stories, your successes and failures. But most of all we love a shameless selfie showing what you've been up to. Whether you've just started C25K or are training for a marathon, perhaps you're aiming for your first triathlon, or maybe you're committing to walk the block daily. We'd love to hear from you. Please visit the Facebook group via the link below and get sharing.

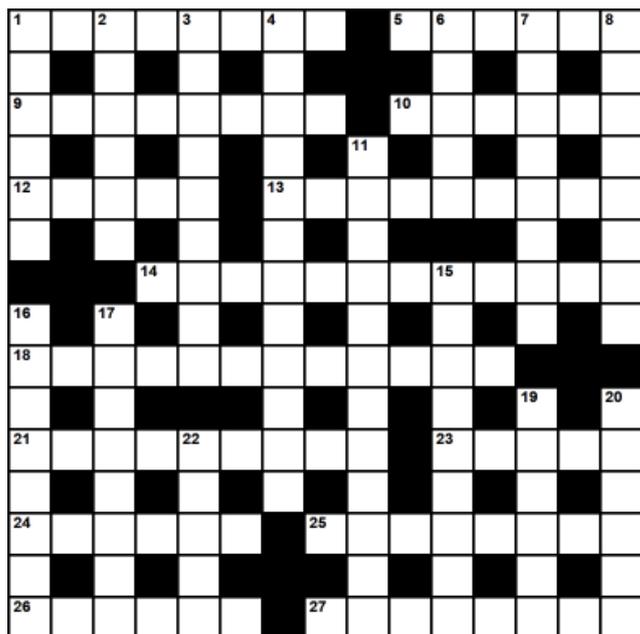
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/793397554943309/>

Simon Hoskins



Cryptic Crossword

By Caroline Gray



Quiz

The weather in early spring seemed completely bonkers. Who thought on the 12th of April our little ones would be making snowmen? Is it part of our character to be obsessed by the weather?

Why not try our Weather quiz.

1. "*St Swithin's day if thou dost rain
For forty days it will remain
St Swithin's day if thou be fair
For forty days will rain na mair*"



The weather saying might be an old wives' tale, but when is St Swithin's Day?

2. "Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head" was a song written for which 1969 film?
3. Helianthus annuus is the botanical name for which flower?
4. In what year was the the Boxing Day tsunami, the deadliest in recorded history, taking a staggering 230,000 lives in a matter of hours?
5. From which Shakespeare play do these lines come?
"Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! Rage! blow!
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!"
6. What are the chances of being struck by lightning in the U.K...?
a) 1 in 200,000 b) 1 in 600,000 c) 1 in 1,000,000
d) 1 in 2,000,000
7. Which American duo sang "It's Raining Men"?
8. What name is given for the amount of water vapour present in the air?
9. Which BBC weatherman's prediction that the Great Storm of 1987 was a false alarm is celebrated as a classic TV gaffe?
10. Hurricane Higgins was a champion at which sport?
11. What is the centre of a hurricane called?
12. Which county is England's wettest?
a) Cornwall b) Oxfordshire
c) Cumbria d) Lancashire



Across

1. Confused, she is surrounded by a bird to be rounder (8)
5. It sounds as if the cry of a kitten and veil fabric are reciprocal (6)
9. Topsy roo drunk without axes (8)
10. About the sea and stay behind (6)
12. Piece has echoes of the dark (5)
13. Festival of exotic art schism (9)
14. Optimise NASA explosion to become aroused (12)
18. Sounds rather low in a band (8,4)
21. Pointless Finn's glogg administered to sailors (9)
23. Song of praise about pseudo Spanish poet (5)
24. Rubbish learner following what he's learning to do (6)
25. A ship ran around over snapping fish (8)
26. Put shilling in bingo and became unavailable (4,2)
27. See gross warped vile giants (8)

Down

1. Right into a devil to become a chum (6)
2. A French pig swill is adequate (6)
3. Emit shard thrown on difficult periods (4,5)
4. Predictions top nice sex at explosion (12)
6. Boletus erstwhile contain poisons for addicts (5)
7. Pink pees sue maria perhaps (8)
8. Football officials rigged Nine Elms (8)
11. "But its." grunts worried man dissolving business (5-,7)
15. Beseech chaotic coarse bet (9)
16. Back cover from craze found in spring (8)
17. Gut on knees heard in overseas dependencies (8)
19. Hot manuscript under underwear for scorer (6)
20. Florida briefly enquires of bottles in lab (6)
22. Much admired but has been heard to jar (5)

Answers on page 21

Where in the Village?

Where in the Village can you find this blocked up entrance?



Wayne Austin

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Chimney Meadows Wetland Restoration Project Summer/Autumn 2021

Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) are undertaking a project at Chimney Meadows Nature Reserve, which aims to restore river and floodplain habitats, as well as opening up routes for fish and improving spawning opportunities around Chimney Meadows, currently restricted by barriers in the river, especially in low flows.



Duxford Ford

1. Duxford Ford - construction of a fish easement:

BBOWT have planning permission to create a fish easement on the southern, downstream edge of Duxford Ford. This 'submerged, rock pool step' will help fish over Duxford Ford in times of low flow. You may start to see contractors in the area in May, preparing for the construction works, which are scheduled to take place through the summer, completing in September.

To enable the works to take place safely, a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) will be in place (24hr Mon-Fri) from 1st June for 6 months (until 1 Dec 2021), closing the bridleway across Duxford Ford and Chimney Island. In addition, there will be a period of 4-6 weeks mid-summer, when the bridleway over the ford will be permanently closed.

2. Great Brook Ford – addition of baffles:

Baffles (small wood, plastic or metal strips) are due to be fitted to the existing downstream face of the submerged concrete structure, leaving the structure surface unaltered. In low flow conditions, the baffles direct the flows to pass over one half of the submerged concrete structure, thereby slightly increasing the depth of flow, and aiding fish passage. The works at this location do not need planning permission.

Members of the public will be able to continue to use the footpath during the works, but the ford crossing will be controlled by the contractor during the works.

3. Duxford Ford – creation of native wet woodland:

The poplar trees at Duxford Ford were planted as a crop and are now over-mature and collapsing, causing a hazard. The project gives us the opportunity to safely remove the poplars and create a woodland for the future, comprising native broad-leaved trees which thrive naturally in such riverside locations. The plants will be protected by tree tubes which will help them establish more quickly and reduce the numbers eaten by

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deer. Some cut material will be used to create habitat piles and some lengths of timber will be left to create dead wood habitat on the ground.

As a wildlife charity we are very conscious of the value of trees in the landscape, for people and for wildlife. Knowing bats were present, we employed an ecologist to undertake detailed surveys of the bats and trees, to inform our plans. We will retain the main roosting/displaying area, other trees of importance (including some dead ones) and the weeping willows. As part of the mitigation we are planning to convert the pillbox into a bat hibernaculum, whilst retaining the heritage interest.

To help protect the new trees that we will be planting and to address issues of antisocial behaviour in the area (which were particularly bad last summer and caused considerable distress and inconvenience to Duxford residents), a new fence has been erected along the bridgeway, in consultation with the Public Rights of Way Officer.

This work has been approved by the Forestry Commission. Felling of most of the poplars and subsequent replanting will take place from 1st September. Poplars south of the river will be felled as part of the fish easement works. Bats are a legally protected species and we are awaiting permission from Natural England to enable us to undertake the work.



Aerial view of Duxford Weir

4. Shifford Weir – creation of bypass channel and restoration of river and floodplain habitats

Planning permission has been granted to create a new ‘naturalised’ bypass channel, which will enable fish to access potentially good spawning grounds on the Duxford Loop, from the main channel of the River Thames and move around Shifford Weir. The bypass channel will be approximately 550m in length, incorporate wetland habitats and provide optimum passage for slower swimming course fish.

The new channel has also been designed to re-naturalise floodplain operation on Duxford Old River, meaning this part of BBOWT’s nature reserve would flood earlier and retain water for longer into spring, whilst not increasing flooding on neighbouring land. These conditions would restore natural floodplain habitats and boost biodiversity.

More information about the Chimney Meadows Wetland Restoration Project can be found online at www.bbowl.org.uk/chimney-meadows-wetland-restoration-and-fish-passage-project. For general queries regarding Chimney Meadows, contact 01367 870904.

Lisa Lane (Upper Thames Living Landscape Manager)



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Gardening Notes

This has been a very stop/start Spring with plenty of frost to catch you out, if your tender plants are out in the cold. I have been covering up every night in my greenhouse, with plenty of fleece and bubble wrap. It really is not safe until the end of May to plant out seedlings and bedding, or you may have to sow or buy twice!

I have only just seen the first swallow, at least two weeks later than last year. In mid-May you can put tender veg seeds such as runner beans or French beans direct into the ground, but make sure you keep rows well-watered to ensure germination.

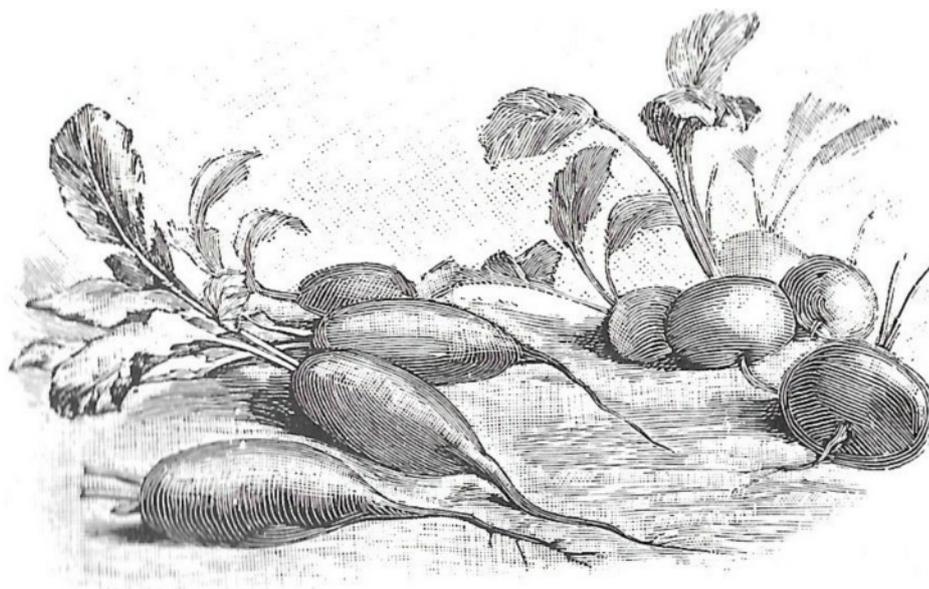
Hardier veg such as carrots and parsnips can be sown late April or early May, but again keep rows well-watered. Sow both very thinly. I have seen Monty Don inter-sow parsnips with radish, for a quick crop and this seems a good idea as they mature very quickly, before the parsnips get to any size. However, don't do this with carrots as the dreaded root fly will smell out any disturbance to carrot seedlings. If you can erect a fleece wall round your carrot patch about 18" high you may not be visited by the fly as they cannot fly so high.

As herbaceous perennials grow make sure they are well supported with whatever you have to hand, twiggy sticks, etc. to prevent flopping when they are larger – growth will soon cover the supports.

If you can get hold of any mulch, bark compost etc. put on a good layer two inches between and around border plants; it suppresses weeds and keeps in moisture.

As clematis grow strongly now, tie in shoots with string to your chosen support, they are very brittle so do it gently!

Goldfinch



ASTON & COTE BADMINTON CLUB

We are a friendly club
which would welcome new
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Adults: £2.00



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Thanks to our printers Oxuniprint Limited | Oxford University Press
Unit 10, Oxonian Park, Langford Locks, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX51FP Thanks
also to our distribution team and
the Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council for the grant.

Aston's Book

On Saturday 24th March the book, "Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney- a Parish History" went on sale. Would it sell, or would the History Group be left with lots of boxes of unsold books? We were relieved when Liz Wilson from Aston Community Shop told us that it was flying off the shelves. The printers, Oxuniprint, could now be paid the £3,550 we owed them.

The majority of copies have been sold through the shop, but there are other points of sale such as Aston Pottery. We have sent copies to Australia and America and the feedback we have received has been very encouraging. Sales are good and we may need a reprint!



An illustration of an Aston carrier.

This picture was reproduced on page 81 of the book. It was drawn by Martin Way and was one of eleven sketches that Martin produced for the book.

Resumption of History Group Meetings

We are looking forward to restarting our monthly meetings in September, subject to Covid restrictions. The money generated from the sale of the book will go towards promoting the study of history within our parish and further afield and we hope to have some interesting activities, visits, socials and speakers in the coming months - something for everyone...

Andrew Long

Answers to the puzzles



Answers to the Weather Quiz

- 15th July.
- Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.
- Sunflower.
- 2004.
- King Lear.
- c) 1 in a million.
- Weather Girls.
- Humidity.
- Michael Fish.
- Snooker.
- The eye of the storm.
- Cumbria

Where in the Village?

Answer

In Bull St. by Richard the Postie's bench

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What's On or Not!



Community Trust & Fellowship

Village Hall:

The Community Trust is following the current guidelines and the hall will re-open when permitted.

Vicky Fuller 851649 vicky.fuller@tiscalli.co.uk

Fellowship Centre:

Lettings to resume in late June..

Andrew Long 850271 ag.long@virgin.net

Church Services

Aston and Cote Community Church

16th May	10:00	Worship & teaching
23rd May	10:00	Worship & teaching
30th May	10:00	Worship & teaching
6th June	10:00	Worship & teaching
13th June	10:00	Worship & teaching
20th June	10:30	Worship & teaching
27th June	10:00	Worship & teaching
4th July	10:30	West Oxon Celebration

St James

1st and 3rd Sundays Holy Communion 9:30

2nd and 4th Sundays Family service 9:30

Shifford

2nd Sunday Holy Communion 9:15

4th Sunday Evensong 6 pm

Football

Mon - U7s 5:30 - 6:30

Tues - U10s & U13s 6:30 - 7:30

Weds - U13s Girls 6:00 - 7:15

Thurs - U9s 5:15 - 6:15 & men's 6:3 - 7:30

Fri - U8s 5:15 - 7:00 & U11s 5:00 - 6:00 & U9s

extra sessions

6:30 - 7:30

Sat - Mini Dribblers (4-6 yrs) 9:00 - 10:00

Men's firsts and reserves train every Thursday 6:30-7:30.

Parish Council

The Parish Council will be held on the first Thursday of each month at 7.30. Currently meetings will be held using Zoom until further notice and details can be found on the Parish Council website www.astonoxon.com

W.I

Hoping to meet in August with a social meeting. Normal meetings hopefully in September.

Wednesday Club

No meetings until further notice.

Brownies

There are no meetings at the moment. However Brownies are still very active albeit on Zoom.

Information :07887974468 or

karenthegardener123@gmail.com

History Group

Meetings will resume in September

Aston Community Shop

Current opening hours are:

Monday to Thursday 8.30am – 2pm

Friday 8.30am – 7pm

Saturday 8.30am – 2pm

Sunday 9am – 12pm

Post Office

The Post Office at Aston Community Shop.

Monday 9.30 -12.30

Wednesday 9.30 - 12.30

Friday 12.00 - 3.00

Produce and Craft Show

Craft and Produce Show schedule on the next page

The Seventh

Aston and Cote

Produce and Craft Show

Sunday 12th September

2.00pm – 4.00pm

Next Edition: Last date for articles Wednesday 30th June 2021, Publication Saturday 17th July 2021

Articles may be emailed to astonnewsletter@hotmail.com, delivered to 11 Southlands or Penny Black House, The Square

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Categories

Vegetables

- 01 Beetroot x 3
- 02 Carrots x 3
- 03 Potatoes White x 3 (Any Variety – Washed)
- 04 Potatoes coloured x 3 (Any Variety – Washed)
- 05 Onions white x 3 (Trimmed and tied)
- 06 Onions red x 3 (Trimmed and tied)
- 07 Shallots x 6 (To be displayed on paper plate, after loose skin and roots have been removed)
- 08 Cucumbers x 2
- 09 Runner beans x 5 (with stalks)
- 10 French beans x 5 (with stalks)
- 11 Sweet corn x 2 (With silks, and husk folded back to show 1/4 of grain)
- 12 Chilies x 3
- 13 Squash x 1
- 14 Garlic x 2 (Roots cut off close to bulb - tops trimmed to 2" / 50mm)
- 15 Sweet pepper x 3 (Any colour)
- 16 Cabbage Green or white x 1
- 17 Cabbage Red x 1
- 18 5 vegetables in a seed tray
- 19 A bouquet of fresh herbs

Fruit Classes

- 20 Cooking apples x 3 (All with stalks - any foliage to be trimmed to 3" / 76mm)
- 21 Eating apples x 3 (All with stalks - any foliage to be trimmed to 3" / 76mm)
- 22 Pears x 3 (All with stalks - any foliage to be trimmed to 3" / 6mm)
- 23 Raspberries x 6
- 24 Plums x 5
- 25 Tomatoes x 5
- 26 Cherry tomatoes x 8
- 27 Any other fruit not in the schedule x 3
- 28 6 Eggs (with a saucer)

Flower Classes

- 30 Chrysanthemums, mixed varieties x 3 (In a vase)
- 31 Decorative dahlias x 3 (In a vase)
- 32 Pom-pom or ball dahlias x 3 (In a vase)
- 33 A single rose in a vase (Judged on scent only)
- 34 Cactus or succulent
- 35 Marigolds x 3 (In a vase)
- 36 Gladioli x 3
- 37 A single stem any flower

Homebrew Classes

- 40 Bottle of red / white wine
- 41 Bottle of cordial
- 42 Bottle of Gin any flavour
- 43 Bottle of beer or cider

Cooking Classes

- 44 Victoria Sponge (3 egg recipe)
- 45 A vegan cake
- 46 An afternoon tea on a cake stand with minimum of 3 different cakes
- 47 Something tasty for Christmas!

- 48 An apple cake any recipe
- 49 A loaf of White or Brown Bread (not made in a Machine)

Preserve Classes

- 50 Jar of marmalade
- 51 Jar of chutney
- 52 Jar of jam
- 53 Jar of piccalilli
- 54 Jar of honey
- 55 Jar of jelly
- 56 Pickled! In a jar

'Art in Isolation'

- Art produced during the lockdown
- 57 School years 4 and under including pre-schoolers
- 58 School years 5 and over
- 59 Adults

Children's Classes

School years 4 and under including pre-schoolers

- 60 A Christmas card
- 61 6 Cheese Straws
- 62 An item made from recycled materials
- 63 Your favourite animal, in a collage

School years 5 and over

- 64 A Christmas card
- 65 6 Cheese Straws
- 66 An item made from recycled materials
- 67 A Poem about your favourite animal

Craft Classes

- 70 Patchwork/Quilting or needlework
- 71 Acrostic Poem 'Seasons'
- 72 An item made from recycled materials
- 73 Item made from yarn
- 74 Any craft item not in the schedule (not furniture)

Photograph Classes

- 75 A treasured moment
- 76 A new dawn, a new day, a new life
- 77 Pets behaving badly
- 78 What's the time?

Flower Arrangement Classes

- 80 A nostalgic flower arrangement
- 81 An arrangement to welcome a new baby
- 82 An arrangement in a glass
- 83 An arrangement using flowers from a supermarket, with the receipt

Fun Classes

- 90 Largest sunflower head
- 91 Largest pumpkin
- 92 Longest runner beans combined length of three (3)
- 93 Heaviest marrow
- 94 An amusingly shaped vegetable
- 95 Biggest leaf
- 96 Tallest weed in a pot and supported

1st Aston Brownies



Hello Everyone, I hope all Brownie Families are keeping safe and well.

We are still currently holding meetings on Zoom, however there is now finally talk of moving back to face-to-face which will be great, so please be patient and just as soon as we have permission to do so we will let everyone know.

Thinking positively, we plan to go to camp this year. We are extremely fortunate to be able to use the County Headquarters Camp facilities at Jubilee House which is about a 30-minute drive away close to Stanton St John, Headington, which is very exciting. We did put it to the vote with a show of hands as to going for one day or two days with a sleep over, and every girl wanted to do a sleep over, so we definitely know what they would like to do. Clearly we need to wait and see how the next few months go with government guidelines etc. etc., but we will do all that we can to make this happen for the unit this year.

The Astonbury 2021 Music Festival very kindly said yes to us getting involved last year, however, we all know what happened last year! However, it is something we are all very much looking forward to for this year, more details to follow.

I just want to point out to parents that the girlguiding.org.uk site is well worth checking out as there is so much information and ideas there with plenty of badges to earn and lots of ways to develop new skills while at home. Also, remember we have the unit's private and secure WhatsApp page, if you have any queries/comments you can always leave a message there.

Finally, just a reminder that the unit is in a position to accept new girls, for more details please get in touch with me on 07887974468 or karenthegardener123@gmail.com

Meanwhile, stay safe.

Karen Stay. 1st Aston Brownie Unit.

Happy 60th Anniversary



Roger and Eve Bendell

Every picture tells a story and so it is with these three photos. On the 6th May 1961, Roger and Eve celebrated their wedding day; as with the other photos they portray happiness.



Roger Bendell (79) and Evelyn Dorothy Bendell (80) met by chance. Roger then 17 and Eve 18 ½ never looked back. Roger was in the Royal Tank Regiment and Eve was training to be a nurse at the Ham Green Hospital, Bristol. Roger's deployment took him away to Aden for thirteen months, then Germany and on to Singapore. This was all a test for Eve to manage their small children – eventually growing to a family of four. She was posted with him to Singapore from 1964 – 1966 and the second picture shows them partying. Roger in a comical hat.

Returning to Germany in 1966, Roger retired from the Army in 1971. The family then began to grow – there are thirteen grandchildren and eight great grandchildren (Eve and Roger's hallway display lots of happy family photos – how do they remember their birthdays?) Now, building up to the diamond wedding anniversary, is an interim photo of their 50th celebration (more smiles) and my task is to ask the inevitable question "What makes for a happy marriage?" The answer from Eve, "We've always been there for each other".

Eve, as well as being mother and grandmother, fitted in a nursing career. She retired after working at the Churchill Hospital with cancer patients, describing several very moving experiences.

Aston is their home now after leaving a very flooded Northmoor six years ago. Celebrations are on hold at the moment as Roger has recently had an operation and the constraints of Covid-19 in 2021.

Three words to sum them up – love, dedication and service (smiles too!).

Lizzie Wood

