

Blewbury Bulletin

Number 665 June 2024

FUNERAL FOR PRES WELLS

Pres Wells's funeral will be held at **1 pm on Wednesday June 5th** at St Mary's Church, Long Wittenham, and then onto Fison Barn at the Earth Trust at Little Wittenham.

TOM SAUNDERS MEMORIAL

We are remembering our dear brother Tom Saunders on the fortieth anniversary of his untimely death at the age of nineteen. Our parents Peter and Ann commissioned the external doors on the north porch of St Michael's Church in his memory, and at noon on Saturday 22 June we will place a small memorial plaque there. There will be a short service with readings and music. Those who remember Tom are very welcome to join us. *Robert, Joss and Jamie Saunders*

FAREWELL TO OUR LENGTHMAN

Last month the Parish Council gathered to celebrate David Hollick, who has retired as Blewbury's Lengthman after ten years of service. David was an exceptional Lengthman who quietly got on with the job of maintaining the village footpaths and green spaces, looking after the cemetery, cutting hedges and chopping felled trees, emptying bins, maintaining all the PC's machinery and so, so much more. We are very grateful to him. We're delighted that Iain Wood has taken over the reins as the new Lengthman; he has had an excellent start in the job.

Pictured (l-r): Evi Holroyd (Clubhouse and Village Hall Bookings Administrator), Lydia Inglis, Anne Millman, Liz Cooper (Clerk), Dermot Mathias, David Hollick, Iain Wood, Sheila Austin, Jane Gibson, Julia Saunders, Andrew Calder, Mark Shayler.



BLEWBURY'S NIGERIAN LETTER BOX!



John Rogers, an authority on the history of the UK Post Office, spent a few months living in Blewbury last winter. During his time in the village he was able to furnish us with some fascinating details about our own village post office and its related postal services, some of which might surprise you.

Did you know for example that our village possesses a quite unusual 'Nigerian Letter Box'? This looks impressive and is to be found in Church End close to one of the former homes of our Post Office at Prior's Corner. What makes this a 'Nigerian Letter Box'? Well in the mid 1960s an order from Nigeria was placed with the Carron Company Iron Foundry, which is near Falkirk in Scotland, for a large number of brand new letter boxes. After this contract was fulfilled, there were still some left over and they were then used to meet requests from around the UK. How do we know that this one really is a genuine 'Nigerian Letter Box'? There are two distinguishing features. Firstly the maker's inscription on the back is 'Carron Scotland' rather than the usual 'Carron Company Stirlingshire', which was clearly thought not to be very meaningful for the Nigerian public. Secondly, and some of you may not have noticed this, it is made all in one piece rather than the standard UK assembly which has two parts. Do have a look next time you are going past at another special part of our unique village!

Other things that John told us about our Village Post Office were:

- It first opened on December 19th 1843
- It then came under Wallingford, but later came under Oxford before it came under Didcot from 1885
- It was closed from 1870-1872 before re-opening in Carramores on Church Road
- In the early years the village postmen/women would have been based in our village Post Office, and the outgoing mail would have been date stamped there as well.
- Money Orders and Savings Bank facilities were offered from 1893 and Telegrams began in 1870.

Roger Murphy (with information provided by John Rogers)

BULLETIN STOP PRESS SERVICE

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THE TONY LOY TRUST – CELEBRATORY CONCERT

We are holding a celebratory concert on Saturday June 1st at 7.30 pm at St Michael's Church Blewbury.

The aim of the concert is to celebrate the work of the Trust, celebrate the achievements of the beneficiaries and further promote the work of the Trust and we are inviting beneficiaries, sponsors and supporters to help with celebrations. Several beneficiaries are appearing in the Concert, starring Simeon Lord - Jazz Saxophonist and featuring Angels Performing Arts, Megan Hughes – Singer, Blewbury Brass Band and more. **Tickets are £15 and include a complimentary glass of wine or soft drink. Box Office is open from Friday April 19th. Please visit www.thetonyloytrust.org for further information and to buy tickets.**

The object of The Tony Loy Trust is to support children and young people from Blewbury and the surrounding area in sports and the arts. We have provided **£57,000 in 112 grants** to individuals, organisations and projects. 44% of these have been in the arts: we have purchased keyboards, cornets and stage lighting in local schools; helped young companies stage productions at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival; sponsored people on music and drama courses; and helped a performing arts group send children to international festivals. 56% of our grants have been in sports: to elite sportspeople in athletics, triathlon and motorsport; to a girls' football and boys' rugby club; and to an all-weather goal area at a local recreation area and play equipment in a pre-school. Overall, our support has improved facilities, provided opportunities, strengthened communities and developed skills and confidence.

PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS PLEASE

Many thanks to everyone who prepared reports for and came along to the Annual Meeting of the Parish, facilitated by the Parish Council following the BVS Annual General Meeting. We experimented with a new format this year by grouping activities into different themes of environment, recreation, charities and education, and finance / governance. This enabled everyone to ask questions, chat with each other, meet Parish and District Councillors, and discuss hot topics informally. It's a process we'll expand on in future. One area we certainly need to develop are the channels we use for communicating with everyone in the village, so please send us any ideas about how we can improve on this to blewburypc@gmail.com or come along to one of our meetings which take place on the second Wednesday of each month.

REPAIR CAFÉ

There is a Sustainable Blewbury Repair Cafe on Sunday 30th June, 2 to 4pm. Do make use of our bike repairers. They are very good, and completely free on the Sunday. If you need something complicated done, you will need to pay for the replacement parts. *Jo Lakeland*



VILLAGE HALL NEWS

The trustees were very pleased to see the Village Hall full for the recent BVS beer festival, and for the annual Parish council meeting. We are still working on the outside space and have completed our spring cleaning, so hopefully the hall looks fresher now. There is a trustee meeting at the end of June, so if you have any questions or ideas, please let us know email blewburyvillagehalladm@gmail.com. To book the Hall go to www.blewbury.co.uk/venues/village-hall



FOOD BANK DATES SATURDAY 1ST JUNE – MONDAY 10TH JUNE

The Didcot Emergency Foodbank is still helping a large number of needy families each session due to very high demand and if you can help by giving even one item it will make a difference. Please do help if you are able. The collection boxes are outside the Charity School House on these dates or at The Post Office any time.

All the usual items will be welcome - please make sure that all food is within its sell-by date.

- Tins of meat / fish / potatoes / carrots / peas / soup / fruit / puddings
- Jars of pasta sauces / jam / peanut butter / coffee (small)
- Packets of pasta / rice / packets dried potato / breakfast cereals / biscuits / treats / tea
- Cartons of long-life milk / long-life juice / hot chocolate
- toiletries, toilet rolls, tissues & laundry products, washing up liquid
- Please make sure that all food is within its sell by date.
- Foodbank cannot accept alcohol, razors, medicines, or homemade preserves

CASH DONATIONS HOWEVER SMALL ARE VERY WELCOME - To make a cash donation on line visit <https://churchsuite.co.uk/donate/> and select Foodbank.

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BLEWBURY WINE TASTING

Do you love tasting new and interesting wines, presented by enthusiastic and entertaining experts? The Blewbury Wine Tasting group usually meets on the 3rd Friday each month, in the Village Hall and always welcomes new people. At each event, you can discover new wines, learn more about familiar ones and enjoy sharing the experience with other enthusiasts - no prior knowledge of wine is necessary.

There is no membership, you can just come to the tastings that are of interest to you. We normally charge £22 per person, and typically taste 7-9 wines over a couple of hours, in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. You are welcome to bring small plates of food to accompany the wines.

Our tastings are run by either someone from Grape Minds, the Wallingford wine shop, or Tim Syrad who runs his own wine tours, tastings and sales business. Why not book a place and come along to give it a try? We would be delighted to see you! To make a booking or to find out more email blewburywine@gmail.com

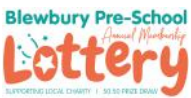


NEWS FROM BLEWBURY PRE-SCHOOL

We have had a lovely term thinking about 'Sounds Around' which includes letters and sounds of the week, together with a range of fun activities and experiences, both indoors and outside, as we explore phonics in the early years. The children have enjoyed planting home grown vegetables in our little garden and learning about the plant life cycle, finding out how our food grows, where it comes from and how the weather plays a part in the natural world. We are preparing our older children for their transition to Primary School and we are delighted that the number of children at Pre-School is growing steadily so that we will have a healthy cohort to welcome back in September.

You may wonder why we need to keep fundraising so much. The level of the government funding early entitlement that we receive, known as free childcare for parents, is actually less than the cost of delivering a place for each child. This is due to the rising costs of energy and utilities, increased inflation on commodities and consumables, rise in the minimum wage, and other increased costs. Each year, in order to deliver sustainable quality care and education, we have to fundraise a substantial amount of money just to break even and some years we do run at a loss. We are always grateful to The Malthus Trust for their support in giving grants for specific pieces of equipment and new resources to help the children with their development. We would like to thank all our lovely village friends who support us in so many ways – from joining up to our Lottery Scheme, buying raffle tickets for our Grand Summer Raffle, to supporting our fund-raising stall at The Blewbury Beer Festival and this Spring, to The Blueberry and The Red Lion for donating some of their fund raising to us from the Charity Football match held recently. **We are so grateful.**

We are always looking for volunteers to help us manage Pre-School while the professional staff deliver the Early Years' Curriculum and if you have skills, particularly in finance or accounting, and would like put your previous experience to good use, we would love to hear from you.



The winning numbers for the May **Blewbury Pre-School Lottery** were as follows: 1st - 070; 2nd - 009; 3rd - 025. In May, the prize fund of £195 was shared (50%/30%/20%) between the three winners and £195 was raised for Blewbury Pre-School. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all our members for their continued support. To be a part of the next draw, email lottery@blewburypreschool.co.uk



My name is SID (Speed Indicator Device) and I recently came to your village to check on drivers as they travel through the village. I guess you are wondering why I am here? When I flash, drivers tend to slow down, which is good for everyone. The roads are used by cyclists and horse riders alike, so keeping to the speed limit is good for the whole community. Did you know that I also keep a record of all the speeds? In the past month before I was illuminated, I recorded a speed of over 100mph on the London Road and over 200 vehicles travelling above 50mph on Bessels Way. Let's hope the figures are better next month, now that I'm here in the village. I'll update you all again next month.

SID on behalf of Community Speedwatch

BRIDGE CLUB

The Chairman represented the Club at the Annual Parish Meeting on 15th May and gave a short report on the Club's activities.

Tuesday evening face-to-face sessions will continue in the Vale Room through June. Our online Realbridge sessions will be held on Thursday evenings at 7pm on June 6th and 20th. We will join the Wantage Bridge Club sessions on the 13th and 27th. Attendance at our weekly online Funbridge sessions on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays seems to be dwindling. *Michael Allen 851870*

DO YOU REMEMBER THE BLEWBURY OPEN GARDENS EPISODE OF GARDENERS' WORLD?

And more importantly, do you have a useable recording of it? It was back in 2002. We have an old DVD of it which no longer seems to work, so if anyone has anything better, on any medium, please call Jenny on 01235 851055.



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BLEWBURY VILLAGE SOCIETY

This year's Beer Festival was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who made it: the sun was shining, and you were clearly in need of hydration as the kegs were almost emptied and the gin bar was drained! Thank you to all our fantastic performers, and to the PTA and Pre-School for running the food and soft drinks/cakes stalls. Most of all, a massive thank you to everyone who helped and supported and made the event happen. Profits will go to the UNICEF Ukraine appeal, Blewbury Pre-School and the BVS, which will help us to continue to put on the many other village events that run on a break-even basis throughout the year.



Summer Dance – Saturday 22nd June - The annual Summer Dance will be held on the evening of Saturday 22nd June in the wonderful gardens of Ashbrook House on Westbrook Street. Local band McFunky are back by popular demand after their fantastic performances in previous years. This is a great evening to get together with your village friends and beyond, to enjoy "bring your own" food and drink in beautiful surroundings, listen and dance to great live music. Gates open at 7:30pm; dancing until midnight. Bring your own picnic and drinks (no bar). Gazebo set-up at 4–5pm; collect by 11am on Sunday. Tickets are £15.00. They can be bought in advance from Blewbury Post Office, via email to blewburybvs@gmail.com or at the gate on the night. See also the separate advert on page 4.

Blewbury Garden Market, Saturdays, 9:15–11:00 - The BGM is back for its 15th year on Saturday mornings at the garage forecourt. It is a community venture, giving local people an opportunity to sell excess home-grown or home-made produce and plants, to promote local food and reduce waste. We welcome all types of produce for sale, including fresh fruit and vegetables, cut flowers, seedlings, bedding plants and perennials, free-range eggs and home cooking – such as jams and chutneys, bread, cakes and biscuits. Producers set their own prices for their sale items; the BGM takes a 10% levy to cover costs. See blewburygm.co.uk for more information.

BVS marquee for hire - The BVS has purchased a marquee that we would like to make available for other groups, societies and individuals in the village. It measures 12m x 6m and has sides if needed. If you were at the Beer Festival, or have supported the Fireworks or Summer Dance you may have seen it in action. We would ask for a small donation to cover ongoing maintenance, and you'll need to put it up and take it down yourself. If you are interested, please email blewburybvs@gmail.com and let us know what the event is and dates.

Thank you to the outgoing BVS Chair - The BVS committee would like to thank Caroline Pettigrew for her hard work, great leadership, tact and patience during her seven years on the committee (four as Chair).

POST OFFICE NEWS

Hello! As summer approaches we hope you are enjoying the warmer weather. Just a reminder that from the 28th May to the 31st of May, during the School Half term, we will be operating our reduced hours of 9am - 12pm, Tuesday to Friday. Thank you for your understanding during this time.

We have tickets for the summer preschool raffle for sale. They have some excellent prizes so please do come along and buy some to support your local preschool. Tickets for the BVS summer dance are also available.

We have fresh kitty's eggs and local honey on sale as the hay fever season kicks in. We have a variety of sweet treats, ice lollies, chocolate and cool drinks available to help keep cool this summer.

As well as sending parcels, you can also do all your banking at the post office, including cash withdrawals, cash deposits and cheque deposits.

We look forward to seeing you in the post office soon. Thanks so much, *Sarah, Karen and Andrew*

COFFEE & KIDS!

Holidays in May are over and meet again on **Monday 3rd June**. We welcome all bumps! babies & toddlers, along with parents, grandparents and carers. We meet in the Vale Room, Blewbury Village Hall, 9.30am - 11am. A friendly and safe place to enjoy the company of others and have some refreshment as the little ones have fun with toys, learning to play together. We finish the session with songs and action rhymes. A donation of £2 is appreciated towards our costs. Mothers' Union hosts look forward to welcoming you. Louise - 07837 009730

BLEWBURY RESt **Blewbury Resettlement Support Team (ReSt)** is helping support an Afghan refugee family who arrived in the UK at the end of April after many years living in very difficult circumstances, first in Iran and then in Turkey. They have moved into a house in Didcot found by a group with similar aims to ReSt. This group has told us that the family are delighted to be here, have started to feel settled and are attending English classes. They are keen to become self-sufficient as soon as possible. The Didcot group is helping the family in the early stages of integration – registering with schools, booking medical appointments, setting up job centre meetings and so on. The children have joined sports clubs so they can continue with activities they were doing before their move to the UK. The group asked us to pass on their thanks to everyone involved in helping ReSt raise funds. Thank you, too, from everyone in ReSt's core group – we're delighted some of our funds are supporting a local refugee family. *Lydia Inglis, Blewbury ReSt*

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Sustainable Blewbury

www.sustainable-blewbury.org.uk

Nature Reserve. This remains closed while the birds are nesting, except for guided bird-watching walks. The next is on Sat 8 June leaving the village hall at 0930 lasting 1.5 to 2 hours. Reserve your place by emailing the secretary (address below). There are only three places left. During the first two walks, we have seen or heard 28 species of birds, thanks to the help of Martin Latham.

Repair café, Sun 30 June, 2 to 4pm, Village Hall Bring your household items including clothing, electrical, and gardening articles for mending, tools for sharpening and bikes for fixing for free. Refreshments available. Donations welcome to cover costs. Thanks to all our volunteers who come to do the fixing!

BLEWBURY FREecycle FREE ITEMS TO A GOOD HOME	E-MAIL	TEL NO.
Preserving pan, diameter 36cms, depth 17cms.	Anita Rendel	850131
Round, wooden garden table, 5ft. Heavy, sturdy table in reasonable condition. Painted in cuprinol 'stone'.	Rose Buckel	01235 850401
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 walking poles • 30 Dick Francis paperbacks. Dick Francis was a resident of Blewbury, and these crime novels were set in our local racing stables. 	Alison Clark kafenken@internet.com	
To freecycle your item please send a short description, email & phone number to Lydia Inglis (lydandmuz@gmail.com)		

If you want to know more about Sustainable Blewbury and become a supporter who receive occasional newsletters, email secretary@sustainable-blewbury.org.uk



BLEWBURY WI NEWS

Blewbury WI generally meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month in the Vale room. An interesting speaker plus a little light refreshment, what's not to like? Most of all we are a group of friends and support each other at all times. Just look at our packed calendar below – join in as much or as little as suits you.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday 26 June “Dragons and Rescue Dogs – my inspiration to write books” – intriguing! Debi Evans will give us an Illustrated talk. Her books are full of history and loved by children and adults. Rolo, her real life rescue Jack Russell, makes things happen in history, magical!

There is a fantastic new element to the benefits of being a WI member. At no extra cost to members, National WI offer a range of online courses at the “Learning Hub” which will give you the freedom and control to learn anywhere, empowering women to further their ‘learning journey’. Courses are generally 1 hour long and held on Zoom. At the time of writing there were 50 courses coming up and over 60 on ‘catch up’ – they are available for a week after the live course. Topics range from history, travel, craft and well-being to exercise classes, art and business skills.

If you'd like to come to Blewbury WI with someone else or find out more, ring our Secretary, Joy, on 850543 or email blewburywi@gmail.com. New members can join at any time and pay a ‘pro-rata’ rate for the rest of the year.

Calendar of events

Monday afternoons	2.30pm	Mah Jong	Sharon
Wednesday 29 May	2.30pm	Afternoon Scrabble	Judy
June date to be advised	7pm	Evening Scrabble	Joy
Thursday 6 June	10am	Walk	Jane
Friday 7 June	7pm	Craft evening	Karen
Monday 10 June	10.30am	Coffee morning	Trish
Thursday 13 June	2.30pm	Rummikub	Susanne
Tuesday 18 June	2.30pm	Afternoon Scrabble	Jane
Wednesday 26 June	7.30pm	Main meeting	Joy
Friday 28 June	7pm	Book Club	Karen



News from St. Michael's

Rector - The Revd Canon Jason St. John Nicolle
BENEFICE OFFICE - 01235 850267

How to contact us: -

Elaine de Ridder, Operations Manager, is available Monday to Friday from 9.00-2.30 pm on 01235 850267, 07434 686044 or via email office@churnchurches.co.uk. Website www.churnchurches.co.uk

Bookings for Weddings, Baptisms and funerals may be made by contacting the office via email or on the office number.

Father Jason St John Nicolle	01235 850267	office@churnchurches.co.uk
Revd Louise Butler	07837 009730	revlouiseb@aol.com
Revd John Clarke	01235 510073	jphclarke@gmail.com
Revd Dr Mark Rhodes-Smith	01235 850267	mark.rhodes-smith@churnchurches.co.uk

Services at St Michael's Blewbury for June 2024

† Sunday 2nd	1st Sunday after Trinity 8.00 am Holy Communion 10.30 am All Age service
† Sunday 9th	2nd Sunday after Trinity 10.30 am Choir-led Taizé Service
† Sunday 16th	3rd Sunday after Trinity 10.30 am Parish Eucharist 10.00 am <i>MU Holy Communion</i>
<i>Thursday 20th</i>	
† Sunday 23rd	4th Sunday after Trinity 10.30 am <u>NO</u> morning service 4.00 pm Hymns and Pimms Service
† Sunday 30th	5th Sunday after Trinity 10.30 am Village Service

In addition to the services in Church, we continue to have an **online service at 10.30am every Sunday** via the link <https://meet.goto.com/ChurnBenefice/sundayservice>. We also have **online Compline at 8pm during weekdays** via link <https://meet.goto.com/312446493>.

Everyone is invited to the mid-week communion service every Wednesday at 10am at St Andrew's Hagbourne, as well as the Mothers' Union communion service on the third Thursday of the month here in Blewbury. We can also bring home communion to those who are unable to attend a service.



Hymns and Pimms!

St Michael's Church
Sunday 23rd June, 4.00 – 5.00pm



Join us for a glorious summer afternoon of hymns accompanied with a refreshing glass of Pimms. Email a favourite hymn that you would like to sing to office@churnchurches.co.uk so that we can include it. See you there!

Revd Mark to be ordained as priest



The service will be on **Sunday 23rd June at 10.30 am at Dorchester Abbey**, High Street, Dorchester-on-Thames, OX10 7HH. We don't have a morning service in Blewbury on the day, so everyone is invited to support Revd Mark.

There is plenty of parking at Dorchester. Follow signs to car parks as you arrive and please avoid parking on the roads.

What's not to like?

Do you enjoy attending a flower festival? There's a lovely tradition of churches hosting flower festivals. Such festivals are always full of interest. First, there is the beauty of the flower arrangements themselves – the different shapes and designs, the colours and the textures. And then there's the added interest of seeing how each individual flower arranger has interpreted the theme of the festival. And of course there's also the interest of going around the church itself, with its unique history and heritage. And in many cases, there's also the opportunity for a cup of tea and slice of cake. There's so much to be said for a traditional flower festival.



You will be pleased to know that you won't have to travel far to visit a traditional flower festival this month. One will be taking place at St Andrew's East Hagbourne over the weekend of Saturday 8th June and Sunday 9th June. Do come along! There will be other flower festivals taking place in the area, of course, and I am sure any of these will also be well worth a visit.

Some people would say that holding a flower festival in a church is a rather old-fashioned thing to do. Yes, it is old-fashioned, but old-fashioned things can still retain their interest and relevance. And old-fashioned things can still give people an opportunity to connect with God. God likes to draw people together, and a flower festival is a wonderful celebration of community life. God has given each one of us gifts, and the opportunity to use our gifts creatively in order to create unique works of art. Each and every flower arrangement is a celebration of the creative gifts which come from God, who is the source of all beauty. And each and every flower is itself a celebration of God the Creator, who has planned such a wonderful world and allowed it to come into existence over billions of years. And this wonderful world, with its great diversity of life, is still evolving. God's work in Creation has started but it has not yet come to fulfilment. It is a work in progress. A flower festival is an opportunity to pause and give thanks for the beauty and diversity which has been achieved so far, and an encouragement to wonder at the beauty which is yet to be.

I do hope you will get the chance to visit a flower festival this Summer. After all, what's not to like?

- Father Jason

AFTERNOON TEAS IN CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY from 2nd June – 25th August, 3pm – 5pm



We are very happy to announce that our popular "teas in church" will start on the 2nd of June. Please see article elsewhere in the Bulletin. Hope to see you there!

Calling all yarn enthusiasts!

Elaine is planning a craft project for the church for **Remembrance Sunday** and needs your help! **Red poppies**, as many as you can knit or crochet would be much appreciated for the main display. We can also do with a few (+/- 30) purple poppies to remember animals of war. If you would like a nice summer project, please get those crochet hooks out! Finished poppies can be brought to the Benefice office during school hours or left in the box at the North Door. Deadline: mid-October please. Enquiries with Elaine 01235 850267 or office@churnchurches.co.uk



The Drop-In Coffee Morning Every Wednesday 10.30am to 12noon, Benefice Centre ("Church Office"), Blewbury



All welcome to drop in for coffee & a chat. Run by the Churn Branch of the Mother's Union

Food Bank Collection

SATURDAY 1 JUNE - MONDAY 10 JUNE



If you can help by giving even one item to the Didcot Emergency Foodbank it will make a difference. Drop off at the Old School House between the dates above or at the Post Office anytime. **Your generosity would very much be appreciated!** - *St Michael's Action Group*



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• **A change from Shakespeare...**

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The Caucasian Chalk Circle at Orchard Dene Garden Theatre - 17-20 July 2024

Grusha, a maid, flees with abandoned baby Michael and face many challenges to protect him. This is a story as old as Solomon, of motherhood and maternal love. What makes a good mother: a mother by blood or mother by nurture? Is Azdak a drunk or genius - judge or villain? Who will he protect - the landowners or the people?

The Caucasian Chalk Circle welcomes the audience into a world of huge characters, big emotions, and the eternal question of who has the right to claim ownership - who should own what?

Directed by Erica Harley. This adaptation provides an alternative and more accessible version than the more traditional text. Described as a masterpiece of 20th century drama.

Box office – Tickets will be available online at www.blewburyplayers.co.uk. Priority booking for Friends opens 5 June (using a code that will be sent to them). General Box Office opens 7 June. **To become a Friend** and get priority booking for Blewbury Players' productions and an annual entertainment and newsletter, please contact of Roger at bpfriends123@gmail.com. Subscription is £15 and is renewable on 1st May 2024.

Front of House roles. Fancy joining the front of House Team? Please call David Long on 01235 851574 or 07484 360169 or @blewburyplayers@gmail.com

- **Jeff and Peter's Music Quiz – 9 November 2024** More news nearer the date
- **Puss In Boots Auditions – September 2024** We are excited to confirm that we will be performing another pantomime in 2025! This has been written and will be directed by Blewbury's very own Andy Jarvis. More information about auditions soon.
- **For updates on events refer to** www.blewburyplayers.co.uk, Facebook or Instagram. We can contact us at blewburyplayers@gmail.com

NATURE NOTES: THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

Anyone up and around in the village or fortuitously peering through a northern window on the night of the 10th May, will not forget the sight that greeted them. Shimmering hues of purple and pink, infused with fluorescent green, columns of light stretching to the stars: a once in a generation, G5 highest magnitude, geomagnetic storm had reached the southern shores of Blewbury!

The alien spectacle was indeed the Northern Lights, scientifically referred to as the Aurora Borealis. This term was first coined by Galileo in 1619. It derives from the roman goddess of the dawn, Aurora, who renewed herself every morning as she flew across the sky announcing the arrival of the sun. Borealis comes from the word for 'Northern Wind'. We still don't know all the mechanisms involved in the creation of auroras. However, the basic premise is that they are caused by the interaction of the solar wind and the Earth's magnetosphere. The intensity of the solar wind varies on an 11-year cycle. This, coupled with solar flares and mass coronal ejections, all contribute to a body of charged particles hurtling towards our planet at a mind-boggling speed of a million miles per hour. The solar maximum peaks in 2025, so there is plenty still to come for those that missed the historic events last month.

The different colours of the aurora relate to the chemical components of the atmosphere. Oxygen, at around 60 miles altitude, causes the greenish colour. Higher in the atmosphere at around 200 miles altitude, Nitrogen tends to produce the reddish, pinkish colours. Cameras can pick this light up with a longer exposure than the human eye. So, photos can look much brighter than what we can detect with our eyes alone.

Its not surprising to see such an obvious and dramatic natural phenomenon appear in various cultures folklore and mythology. The Norse believed that Odin hand sent his Valkyries (female angels of death!) to carry the souls of those fallen in battle to Asgard. The lights were the reflections of the Valkyries' gleaming armour. Some Inuit tribes thought the lights were the souls of humans playing a sort of ball game with the skull of a Walrus! *Glen Meadows*

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DIDCOT & DISTRICT UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

D&D U3A meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 2pm at Didcot Civic Hall. Visitors are welcome to come to one meeting as a taster before joining. On 18th June there will be a talk entitled **Wildlife Wanderings** by **David Bailey**. For details email chairman@didcotu3a.org or secretary@didcotu3a.org or visit www.u3asites.org.uk/didcot.

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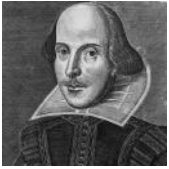


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PROF. EMMA SMITH IN BLEWBURY FOR TALK ON SHAKESPEARE'S 'ROMANCE PLAYS'

In a great coup for Blewbury's newly-formed Shakespeare group (now officially known as The Motley Crew!) Emma Smith, of Hertford College, Oxford, has agreed to give a talk on Shakespeare's late works *Pericles*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*, often collectively known as the 'Romance Plays'. Professor Smith is among the best-known names in contemporary Shakespeare scholarship: a world-leading authority on the First Folio, a regular guest on Melvyn Bragg's *In Our Time* on Radio 4, and the author or co-author of multiple studies of the Poet and his work. She's well known because she's not only a great scholar but also a great speaker, so her appearance **at 8pm on Monday September 30th** in Blewbury Village Hall is a not-to-be-missed opportunity for all local residents who are remotely interested in Shakespeare. Our thanks go to Motley Crew member Sarah Salter for making it happen!

Tickets are a bargain at £7.50, including a glass of refreshment, and are on sale at the Post Office or can be reserved by email at admin@themotleycrew.org.uk. You can also use this address to join the Motley Crew mailing list.



COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH UPDATE

If you've read the article on page 5, you'll already be familiar with SID (Speed Indicator Device). When two of these devices were recently installed on London Road and Bessels Way, they were initially in spy mode, measuring the speeds of vehicles in both directions. This gave a baseline for measuring the effectiveness of the devices and revealed some staggering speeds. After three weeks the signs were illuminated, producing a drop in speed with a couple of exceptions. Whilst there is little effect on the intentional speeder, the accidental speeder is alerted and reduces their speed as they approach the sign. As we all try to see that green 'Thank You', we also reduce the speed of the drivers behind us. Lower speeds result in fewer accidents and help to make our village a safer place for all.

However, the SIDs have not replaced Community Speedwatch. SIDs are about improving the safety of our main roads, and cannot identify individual offenders. Community Speedwatch targets individual drivers and can report them to the Police. The Community Speedwatch group is still active but we need more volunteers please. If you could give up one hour a month it would be a great help.

For details, or to join part of a session to see what is involved, please contact Jill Ingoldby jingoldby@btinternet.com



SAVE THE DATE

Saturday 23rd November

There's something in the air tonight...

LETTER FROM SOUTH AFRICA

On every highway (and most byways), the lamp posts are festooned with what looks like cheerful bunting: in fact, the country is gearing up for a very significant election at the end of May and it feels like every political figure, alive or politically dead, is being dusted off and wheeled out in front of a camera to claw a share of the vote.

Loadshedding (planned powercuts due to insufficient electricity being generated) has abated for now, with many saying that it's a vote-garnering tactic by the ANC ahead of the elections. In reality, the ANC has capitulated on its promise to keep Eskom, the state power producer, as the electricity monopoly. President Cyril Ramaphose has now opened the floodgates to allow the private sector much more access to the energy market in South Africa and this, to an extent, is working, for now at least. The power crisis is widely believed to be the biggest issue in the coming election so it's vital for the ANC to literally keep the lights on as much as it can until election day. However the bigger issue is what the power crisis has done to the economy: the official unemployment rate is close to 40% but unofficially it's much higher and in some towns it's over 70%. In the simplest of terms, it's very hard to attract investment when you can't guarantee electricity supply. Growth has slowed to a pathetic 0.1% which is far below where it needs to be (around 6%) to pull the bottom 50% of the country out of grinding poverty.

So what can we expect out of the election? The official opposition to the ANC, the Democratic Alliance, a centre right party, controls the Western Cape and according to the affluent residents there governs well. The DA has for years tried to garner more of the black vote but with its 'business first' and 'top down' policies, it's been a tough road for them. They have around 20% of the national vote and have therefore formed an alliance with a broad church of smaller parties ahead of the election promising that should the ANC lose its sole mandate (and there is a distinct possibility that this could happen), they will go into coalition with them and their partners.

Following the recent ruling by the country's top court that former president Jacob Zuma cannot run for election, the wildcard in the mix is now the ebullient Julius Malema, the marmite of South Africa. Promising the moon (and the earth) to his supporters, Julius with his party the EFF, purports to be ultra left, promising rivers of money, opportunity and land to the mostly disaffected youth in the country. He's made considerable inroads into the national vote eyeing perhaps as much as the DA in this election. A former ANC cadre, he's consistently denied ever forming a coalition with the ANC but he could very well be the kingmaker the ANC needs this year. *Philip Rendel*

TEAS IN ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY 2nd JUNE – 25th AUGUST 3pm – 5pm

We serve teas in St Michael's Church, Blewbury every Sunday from 2nd June until 25th August between 3pm – 5pm. £3.00 for a delicious piece of homemade cake and as many cups of tea as you'd like! 50p Squash and Biscuits for children. Everybody is welcome – come with a group or by yourself and join a friendly group – we are always pleased to see families and children can occupy themselves in the children's corner while parents enjoy their tea. Well behaved dogs welcome too.

There is always a very happy atmosphere so do come and join us and we look forward to seeing you in our lovely old Church. All funds raised from Sunday Teas are for St Michael's Church. Thank you. *Pat Mattimore and Team*

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A PLACE TO SIT AND THINK... OR JUST TO SIT

The village is looking glorious and the countryside has definitely blossomed after the rain and the sun. At every turn there is something beautiful to observe or birdsong to tune into. Taking a moment to stop and look and listen is something we all know we should do, but in the busyness of the day we often press on. If you feel like a moment to yourself, why not pop into the church? It is open every day and is certainly a place of quiet, and peace. It may be that your dog-walk takes you round the church, so why not go through the church as well? Both doors are unlocked every morning. The space in the south-east corner (to the right of the altar) has been arranged as a space for all to sit and enjoy. There should be a light on there. You are invited to sit and simply listen to the sounds of the village as people walk past, hear the bird-song outside, see the sunlight shine through the glass, perhaps meditate, or pray. Everyone is welcome. Be kind to yourself and take time to stop and refresh before returning to the bustle of your day. It will make you feel good! *St Michael's PCC*

D-DAY'S UNSUNG HEROES – MORE TALES FROM THE MILITARY

Seeing that the celebrations for the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings are almost upon us, I thought instead of writing about my experience in the army, I would write about what happened on D-Day to the survey unit that I would join as a young surveyor sixteen years later. This unit is Y Survey Troop, part of 4 Survey Regiment Royal Artillery attached to 50th (Northumbrian) Division.

On D-Day the 6th of June 1944 began the largest seaborne invasion in history to bring about the liberation of German occupied north-west Europe from Nazi control. The invasion force was made up of two Army Groups, the British 21st Army Group under the command of General Bernard Montgomery and the American 1st Army Group commanded by Lieutenant-General Omar Bradley. The 50-mile invasion front west to east was divided into five landing beaches, Utah and Omaha where the American troops came ashore and Gold, Juno and Sword beaches where the British and Canadian troops landed. 50th (Northumberland) Division led the assault on Gold Beach under the command of Lieutenant-General Horrocks. The task given to 4 Survey Regiment was that on the first day of battle the regiment had to provide survey information to all the Royal Artillery regiments. The information required was to give the gunnery officers in each regiment the bearing and distance to the enemy targets.

Y Survey Troop, comprising twelve men commanded by Captain Hamer, came ashore at 08:20 hours alongside the troops of 50 Division. The survey party was made up of four pairs of observers and bookers, a sergeant compiler, two soldier computers and a dispatch rider on his motor-bike. The observers would use their theodolites to observe the sun to calculate a bearing and their assistant the booker would write down the angles in his book. This information would be collected by the dispatch rider from the observing pairs and taken to the sergeant compiler who would collate the results. He would then pass the results on to the two computers who would then calculate the information independently using mechanical calculators. This information showing the bearings and distance to various reference objects would be put on a bearing picket card and delivered by the dispatch driver to the gunnery officer commanding the guns. The gun crews would now know the distance and bearing to their targets. Sadly for the surveyors on landing, the visibility was virtually nil because of the grass fires and smoke caused by the initial bombing. Their first task was to establish survey points using a lighthouse, the only trigonometrical point available, a measured base line and a bearing from sun observations. This was not achieved until mid-day, some four hours after landing on Gold beach. Can you imagine a cartoon of a soldier surveyor with his tin helmet on, wading through the waves carrying a theodolite and tripod over his left shoulder and carrying a rifle with his right hand trying to dodge the bullets whizzing past? No. it was not like that. The surveyor would be pulling a handcart carrying all his instruments and personal gear along with his rifle.

Y Survey Troop as part of 4 Survey Regiment Royal Artillery would provide the survey information for all the artillery units of the British Army that fought from the Normandy beachhead through France, Holland and Germany and to ultimate victory in May 1945. The troop would remain stationed in West Germany as part of the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) to protect West Germany against any surprise attack from Russia and their allies in East Europe. However, Y Troop was disbanded in 1975 due to the introduction of GPS that you are all familiar with in your cars. This was fourteen years before the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War in 1989. *Pat Warn*

If you're interested, there's a postscript to this story on page 20.

BLEWBURY CROQUET CLUB - OPEN EVENINGS

Have YOU ever thought about having a go at croquet? Whether you want a social afternoon with friends, or are looking for a new competitive sport, our club caters for everyone from complete beginners to elite players. Blewbury's courts are rated amongst the best in the country, as evidenced by the England internationals who've trained here. But we're first and foremost a village resource, and would love to get more Blewburians involved.

We're currently offering free open evenings, on Mondays (5:00-6:30 pm) from now until 1st July, for any adults (or accompanied teens) who want to give it a go. Please wear flat-soled shoes (e.g. trainers), but otherwise just turn up as you are and we can supply all the equipment you need.

If you want to take it further, full membership costs £200 a year (April-March). But we offer family discounts and, in this sport, anyone under 25 is classed as "junior" and only pays £40.

There's a lot more about the club on our website, but feel free to give me a call if you've any queries.

David Long (07484 360169) secretary@blewburycroquetclub.org.uk

LETTER FROM DAVID JOHNSTON MP

I have had a number of meetings in the last month to progress various local campaigns that are a priority for me and my constituents. I met with the Health Minister to again push my campaign for better local health services and for our infrastructure to keep pace with all the new housing that is being built. This is a priority for the Government, too. For the year ending October 2023, there were 50.9 million more GP appointments compared to October 2019 - but there's more to do. Improving our health services is a key campaign for me and I am pleased the Minister has agreed to write to the local health leaders on our behalf.

I met with the Water Minister to again raise constituent concerns about the proposed reservoir and to call for public scrutiny of the proposal. In December, I wrote to the Environment Secretary about this, echoing GARD's call for public scrutiny and have been regularly raising concerns with Thames Water and the Environment Agency, who I took to Steventon recently where I discussed it with them. This meeting came just before we got the great news that Wallingford Beach has officially been designated as a bathing water site by the Government. This is something that residents have long called for and the Water Minister has rightly recognised the strong show of local support. I took Niamh Dernie, from Grove, to meet the Minister for Victims and Safeguarding so she could tell the Minister about her campaign against the sexual harassment she and her friends have experienced and what she would like to see happen. It was also great to welcome the Science Minister to meet with and take questions from our great local science and technology organisations at my latest Wantage and Didcot Science and Technology Forum. I was glad to hear the Minister confirm that the Government will spend £20 billion on investment in science and research this year which is welcome news for our local sector.

In other news, I had the pleasure of hosting a reception at Number 10 Downing Street for people working in our great early years sector and was pleased to bring Julie, a childminder from Didcot who spent 14 years fostering around 30 families, as my guest to recognise her incredible efforts. It was a really uplifting atmosphere as MPs from across the country brought people they wanted to thank for the work they have been doing to shape young minds as well as to help deliver this Government's record expansion of childcare.

Didcot TRAIN works with young people, especially those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable and provides various essential services including youth clubs, mentoring and outreach programmes. They are doing great work to empower young people. Thank you to Ben and the team at Didcot TRAIN who I visited recently to see the work they are doing. Visit their website at www.trainyouth.org.uk.

As ever if I can help with anything please contact me at david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk

BLEWSHED NEWS

BlewShed products: have been very popular this month and sales of garden trugs in particular have been booming at Savages. One of our range, a horseshoe handled wooden tray, was even posted on Blewbury Village Society's FaceBook page by its proud new owner! As with all our products this was made from useful and valuable materials that would otherwise have been binned or burned. The horseshoes were salvaged from our village farrier's skip and most of the wood from broken or non-returnable pallets from Savages or local building projects. With a bit of work such items can be repurposed for useful and attractive items. If any of you have been disappointed because items have sold out at Savages, please be patient as we are currently catching up with demand and you can always place an order for them either with Savages or with BlewShed when we are open.

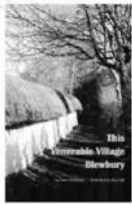
DIY for beginners: Our next DIY workshops are in planning and will focus on helping DIY beginners with their individual projects using techniques they learned over the winter. More experienced members have been using the workshop facilities for progressing their own projects of varying levels of ambition ranging from a replica 'Studley' tool chest, making replacement boat parts, designing electronic measuring devices, renovation of a late grandfather's tool chest, restoration of antique tools, carving traditional wooden spoons and many other items.

Community Projects: Recently BlewShed made and fitted a replacement turned wooden handle for the Blewbury Allotments Association garden roller, and several new projects are currently being planned, more news later.

Meetings: Members enjoyed a convivial social evening at the Blueberry and those who attended agreed this should be repeated more often. Watch this space. The next BlewShed club night will be Tuesday 11th June, 7.30pm at BlewShed, when member Mike Wrottesley will give a talk on rocking horses. All welcome.

BlewShed opening times and membership: Tuesday, Friday and Saturday afternoons 1.30-4.00 pm and Thursday afternoons 2.00-4pm for electronics, non-dusty work and a chat. BlewShed annual membership subs are £25 for individuals, or £37.50 for a family. This includes expert advice from members and use of a very well-equipped metal-working, woodworking and electronics workshop. BlewShed is here to help members and DIY beginners learn various woodwork, metal-work and other practical techniques, so come along and acquire some new skills, or just have a cuppa and chat. Everyone is welcome to club night meetings on the second Tuesday of the month.

Mike Wrottesley, BlewShed secretary <https://blewshed.home.blog/news/>



BLEWBURY LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

The Blewbury Local History Group's next meeting will be on Tuesday 11 June in the History Room behind Robinsons at 8pm. If you would like further information about our group please contact Audrey Long (audreyrosettalong@gmail.com) or Mary Gaines (m-gaines@outlook.com 01235 850728).

We have ambitious plans to reactivate our Group's somewhat dormant website. Is there anyone who might be prepared to work with us to develop a new website, which we hope will be a place where we can showcase some of our recent projects including the oral history interviews that we have been doing over the last year with longstanding Blewbury residents? We would certainly appreciate some help with this project. Please contact Roger Murphy (roger.murphy65@gmail.com 01235 851244) if you would like to be involved.

FROM OUR CANADIAN CORRESPONDENT - BC BIRDS

On the face of it, we seem to have a lot of birds that are similar to the UK, such as the wren and sparrow, and the large crow family (the Corvids) but often they are different species. The local sparrow is the **Dark Eyed Junco** that has a distinctive dark head and white tail feathers and is the most abundant sparrow in the province. The **Bewick Wren** looks just like the European wren, being tiny and with the familiar very loud song, but it is just one of many different species that live here. The **American Robin** is in fact a member of the thrush family but gets its name because of its reddish brown breast plumage. More unusual is the **Northern Flicker**, a member of the woodpecker family, this one having the very annoying habit of drilling its beak onto metal posts or chimneys as a way to attract to mates and mark its territory. Another striking (haha) bird is the **Stellar's Jay** that is the provincial bird of BC; it has similar vivid blue plumage to the English Jay but has a distinctive dark head crest.

The most popular of all BC birds (in a recent poll) is **Anna's Hummingbird**, native to the province. The males are brilliantly coloured in emerald and rose with a stocky shape and straight bill, and well accustomed to living in urban areas. Many residents have hummingbird feeders so they can watch these fascinating tiny birds up close. Also popular, the **Black-capped Chickadee** has a distinctive call (similar to wee-woo) and is reminiscent of the tit family. Bird sounds are used at pedestrian crossings to aid the visually impaired: currently North/South – chirp chirp, East/West - cuckoo. The largest and most famous local birds are the **Canada Geese** and **Bald Headed Eagles**. The goose, with its distinctive long black neck, is a familiar site in parks and open spaces where it deposits large amounts of droppings, and makes a loud honking sound; it is native to North America, but can be found in all parts of Europe, Scandinavia and even as far afield as the Falkland Islands! The Eagle is a sea eagle (bird of prey), native to North America, with a distinctive white head; it is so called because of an old English word "balde" meaning white. They are commonly seen along the Pacific coast, and we have a large population that live near the highway to the coastal ferries. The Eagle has been the national emblem of the United States since 1782, and a spiritual symbol for indigenous people for far longer than that.

And let's not forget the **Loon**, a species of waterfowl that has the distinction of appearing on our \$1 coin, known locally as a Loony (and the \$2 is called a Toony!). It is an expert swimmer because of its legs set far back on its body, but very awkward on land. **Angela Hoy** (angelahoy23@gmail.com)



WALLED GARDENS OF WALLINGFORD

The very popular Walled Gardens of Wallingford are opening again this year on Sunday 9 June. Last year, the first, was a sellout. There are twelve gardens to see, including three which are new this year. Come along and have a fun day out. There will be teas, trips on the river in an electric boat and stalls where you can buy glasses of wine, strawberries and cream, flowers (from Green & Gorgeous), a local artist, plant sales, the World of Mint and a craft table for children. All proceeds will go to charity including Style Acre and the Corn Exchange, Wallingford.

The event is generously sponsored by **Root One Garden Centre, PureBoating of Wallingford, PC Technicians and NP Design & Print**. Visit www.walledgardensofwallingford.co.uk for details. Advance sale of tickets at £6 available from Root One, KP Stationers and online. You will also be able to buy tickets on the day at £8 from 13 Wood Street.

SUMMER GARDEN OPEN DAY IN AID OF CPRE OXFORDSHIRE

Wednesday 5 June, 3pm-7pm College House, Stanton St John

The 800-year old St John the Baptist Church forms a unique backdrop to this wonderful garden, complete with fruit trees, walled garden and even the odd guinea fowl! June should be the perfect time to see the herbaceous borders in all their glory.

Tickets £10 per head, £5 for under 16s, under 10s free. Teas will be available – donations welcome. Places limited so please reserve in advance – see www.cpreoxon.org.uk

TIME TO TRY AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE CAR CLUB?



Want to drive an electric vehicle (EV) without the cost or commitment? Join an EV car club! A cleaner, greener, more affordable alternative to car ownership. So convenient, you can use them on a pay-per-use basis - from one hour up to a few days.

The Oxfordshire EV car club pilot scheme (started in April 2023) is being extended, giving you even more time to experience driving fully battery electric vehicles. With exclusive offers for new members, now's the perfect opportunity to driver greener and give electric a go.

Wallingford: our nearest club

Co Wheels: Use promo code 'Wallingford10' when you join and you get FREE lifetime membership (no £5 monthly fee). You also get £10 driving credit on your account. A total saving of £95 in your first year of membership (full T&Cs on their website).

Find out more: <https://www.co-wheels.org.uk/wallingford>

STYLE ACRE SUMMER SOIRÉE

Friday 28th June, 6.30pm - 11pm at The Manor House, Howbery Park, Wallingford

Come along and enjoy an evening of food, music, dancing, silent auction, raffle, and lots more all whilst raising money for Style Acre.

£30 per person and includes a welcome drink, a food voucher for Goujon Monkey's iconic vintage Citroen food truck, live music, wine tasting and much more.

Dress code: Summer/Lounge suit and summer/smart dresses

Tickets are selling fast, get yours now! <https://styleacre.org.uk/events/summer-soiree/>

HEALTHWATCH OXFORDSHIRE: SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES OF LEAVING HOSPITAL

Have you, or an adult that you look after, stayed in hospital during the last 12 months? If so, Healthwatch Oxfordshire would like to hear from you!

The county's independent health and social care watchdog would like to hear about your experience of leaving hospital, and any care and support you got in the first few weeks afterwards.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire would particularly like to understand what worked well and what could be improved, so it can help shape the support people receive when they leave hospital. You can share your views and experiences by completing this anonymous survey www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/leavinghospital

The survey also includes an option to leave your contact details so that Healthwatch Oxfordshire can get in touch with you for a more in-depth conversation about your experience.

If you would like a paper copy of this survey to complete, would like it in another format or language, or would prefer to speak to someone about this, please contact Healthwatch Oxfordshire on **01865 520520** or at hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

D-DAY POSTSCRIPT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17)

At a Y Troop Reunion in 1997 I met a gentleman from Newcastle who was our guest of honour. He was a mining surveyor aged 23 when he joined Y troop on the outbreak of war in 1939. He served with Y Troop in the Western Desert and Sicily Campaigns before the troop returned to England in January 1944 to prepare and train for the invasion of France. He told me he was one of the observers who came ashore on June 6 1944 and he was grateful that he returned home unharmed after six years of war in July 1945.

For the record there were eleven Royal Artillery Survey Regiments in World War 2 and they operated in all theatres of war. Seventy surveyors were killed in action and twenty-five members of X Survey troop were drowned. This happened after the men were captured at Tobruk in May 1942. In November 1942 814 allied prisoners of war embarked on to the Italian ship SS Scillin to be taken to POW camps in Italy. However the ship was intercepted by a British submarine HMS Sahib. When the ship failed to stop when ordered, the submarine fired two shells at the cargo ship and then launched a single torpedo which hit the ship in the centre and it rapidly sank. Prisoners below deck had little chance of surviving. Over a thousand people were aboard the ship but the submarine could only rescue sixty-two: the ship's captain, thirty-four Italian crew and twenty-seven POWs. When the crew of the submarine heard the survivors speaking English, they then realised the terrible mistake they had made.

At the time the Royal Navy submarine commanders had been ordered told not to attack enemy civilian ships *en-route* from North Africa to Italy. At the Court of Enquiry the submarine captain was cleared of culpability, since he claimed that the ship had borne no lights and he believed the ship was carrying Italian troops and had not responded to the initial shelling (two rounds).

PARISH COUNCIL

Notes of Blewbury Parish Council's AGM: 7pm, **Wednesday 8 May 2024**, Melland Room, Blewbury Clubhouse.

Present: Dermot Mathias (chair), Sheila Austin, Andrew Calder, Anne Millman, Lee Robinson and Julia Saunders. Also present Elizabeth Cooper (clerk) and Iain Wood (lengthman). Apologies were received from Mark Shayler, Lydia Inglis, county councillor Sally Povolotsky and district councillor Hayleigh Gascoigne.

Spring has sprung and along with it lots of newly sprouting vegetation...If you have a garden which bounds a footpath or pavement, please maintain these areas so we can all enjoy walking around our beautiful village.

Further information on www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/roadside-trees-hedges-and-ditches

The new speed indicator devices (SIDs) on London Road and Bessels Way are collecting data. Early evidence is that 'accidental' speeders are reducing their speeds. However, some vehicles are still being driven through the village at very high speeds (and not just at night). Disappointingly, OCC has removed the proposed A417 pedestrian crossing near Savages from its workstream without any consultation with the PC, which officially requested it. We will lobby to change this, but we're frustrated that our councillor, Sally Povolotsky, has not been to a PC meeting for nearly a year. We hope she will be at the June meeting – if anyone feels strongly about a crossing to make the London Road safer for pedestrians, please email her to let her know, or come to the meeting to say so in person. Discussions are at an early stage about the replacement of both the skate ramp and small cycle track at TFF.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

All Blewbury planning applications, decisions and BPC responses, including items under consideration, can be found in the 'Parish' section of the Blewbury website (www.blewbury.co.uk/parish/planning/), updated monthly. This also has links to the Vale's planning site, with full details and plans for all applications.

Responses to the District Council:

P24/V1018/FUL & P24/V1005/LB Ashbrook Mews, Westbrook Street Application for inset PV roof panels. No objection.
P24/V0956/FUL & P24/V0958/LB Abners Barn, Church Road Proposed renovation, conversion and extension of grade II listed barn, pursuant to planning consents P21/V0405/FUL & P21/V0406/LB (July 2021). BPC has no objection to the proposed rear extension. We object to the numerous small, square windows on the large roof facing Church Road, and the 'French doors' in place of the original barn entrance. In line with P7 of the NDP, all alterations to historic buildings (such as this) should be sensitive to their context in terms of design, scale and mass. In this highly visible location in the conservation area, longer rooflights (i.e. with a vertical emphasis) are preferred, and less subdivided expanse of glass would better reflect the scale of the original barn doors.

P24/V0945/LB Corrydon House, London Road Various alteration works to cross wing of listed building: Creation of ensuite and associated plumbing, restoration of mullion window, remove modern gallery mezzanine and ladder stairs, remove modern kitchen wall to enable structural intervention, restore timber frame posts, lay new limecrete floor with underfloor heating, install new French doors and wood burning stove. BPC has no objection.

P23/V2635/FUL Land at the end of Coffin Way Construction of a single dwelling and associated external works. Appeal registered 24.4.24. BPC has no further comment.

Decisions from the District Council:

Correction: P24/V0249/PIP Workshop adjacent to Upperton, Pilgrim's Way. Permission in principle has been granted for conversion of existing buildings for residential development (as amended by description agreed 21 March 2024). Last month it was incorrectly reported that permission had been granted for residential development on the site.

P24/V0533/HH Lowmans, South Street Rear extension, internal alterations, new rooflights, external wall materials changed. Granted.

P24/V0405/FUL Open space in village centre called the Playclose Community artwork sculpture made of stainless steel and corten steel, with a corten steel base. Granted.

P23/V1169/FUL Blewbury Service Station, London Road Retrospective application for a 3m rear extension. Granted. The applicant has been informed that the extension built means that they cannot implement the extant permission for new houses at Ridgeway (P21/V1626/FUL) as per the approved plans. A fresh application or an amendment to the permission will be needed to enable the development, including (potentially) changes to the layout.

Enquiries regarding planning in the parish may be sent to blewburypc@gmail.com

NEED TO CONTACT YOUR PARISH COUNCILLORS?	
Sheila Austin 3 Ladycroft Park	Lee Robinson 6 Chailey Gardens
Andrew Calder Trefagus, Chapel Lane	Julia Saunders Charity School House, Church Road
Lydia Inglis Chapmans, Nottingham Fee	Mark Shayler 2 Eastfields
Dermot Mathias The Old Mill, Berry Lane	
Anne Millman Brook Cottage, Church End	Elizabeth Cooper (Clerk) 07968 772935 or blewburypc@gmail.com

The next PC meeting will be at 7pm on **Wednesday 12 June 2024**, in the Melland Room at the Clubhouse.

Autumn Leaves The dates for June Bingo Sessions in The Vale Room at Blewbury Village Hall at 2pm are June 4th and June 18th. For further information call Cilla Maguire (01235 851966). If anyone would like to join Autumn Leaves, please contact Cilla on the above phone number. We would welcome new members to come and join us.

Astons Online supports people who want to be digitally confident on the Internet, with smartphone apps or online services like health and banking. Astons Online events and support are free of charge and open to everyone. Our Zoom webinar about car parking apps is at 10:00 am on Tuesday 18 June - email theastonsonline@gmail.com to join. We're available for Zoom, Facetime, WhatsApp or telephone one-to-one sessions on Tuesday mornings between 10:00 and 12:00.

BLEWBURY FLYING SQUAD is a volunteer hospital car service for Blewbury residents. We cover appointments in hospitals, doctors' surgeries, dentists, opticians, chiropodists, physio etc. As the Flying Squad is a voluntary service which relies entirely on people's personal time and vehicle availability, we need as much notice as possible to arrange a driver. Please note that journeys to the Horton Hospital in Banbury are not available from the Flying Squad. To make a booking, telephone **07891 768197**. If the Flying Squad telephone holder is not available, you will be prompted to leave a voice message. Wait for the beep at the end of the BFS phone message then give your name and telephone number. Please speak clearly. You will be phoned back as soon as possible.

BLEWBURY POST OFFICE OPENING HOURS
(as from Monday June 3rd – see page 7 for late May hours)

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays - 8.30 am - 12 noon and 2.30 - 5 pm. Wednesdays - 8.30 am - 12 noon.

VILLAGE DIARY for June 2024

				Page
Saturday	1	7.30 pm	Tony Loy Trust Celebratory Concert, St Michael's church	3
Sunday	2	3-5 pm	Tea at St Michael's – served every Sunday until August 25th	11,16
Monday	3	9.30-11 am	Coffee & Kids!, Vale Room	7
Tuesday	4	2 pm	Autumn Leaves Bingo etc., Vale Room	22
Friday	7	10 am	<i>The Caucasian Chalk Circle</i> online box office opens	13
Tuesday	11	7.30 pm	BlewShed club night, The Shed, Recreation Ground	18
Tuesday	11	8 pm	Local History Group meeting at Robinson's, Parsonage Lane	19
Wednesday	12	7 pm	Parish Council meeting, Melland Room	21
Tuesday	18	2 pm	Autumn Leaves Bingo etc., Vale Room	22
Wednesday	19	7.30 pm	Deadline for July/August Bulletin – Swallows, Church Road	
Saturday	22	7.30 pm	Summer Dance, Ashbrook House	4,7
Sunday	23	4-5 pm	Hymns and Pimms, St Michael's church	10,14
Wednesday	26	7.30 pm	WI Meeting and Talk: "Dragons and Rescue Dogs", Vale Room	9
Sunday	30	2-4 pm	SB Repair Café, Village Hall	3,9

HOW TO ADVERTISE IN THE BULLETIN The Bulletin welcomes advertisements from organisations and individuals based in Blewbury and immediately neighbouring villages. Space permitting, we also welcome ads from further afield if they do not duplicate existing local services, are not widely advertised elsewhere and are likely to be of interest to residents. Acceptance of advertisements does not imply endorsement of the products or services offered. Display advertisements **must** be submitted in one of three rectangular sizes:

- 60mm wide x 40mm high (cost: £2.00)
- 60mm wide x 85mm high (£4.00)
- 90mm wide x 65mm high (£6.00)

Please note that artwork is printed in black and white only. You can also send plain text for us to fit into an appropriately sized box. If you are advertising a village event you can also present it as plain editorial, i.e. not highlighted in a box, for no charge. All advertisements should be submitted to the Editor in the first instance, either emailed to editor@blewbury.co.uk as a Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, JPEG or PDF attachment, or typed/handwritten and delivered to **Swallows, Church Road, Blewbury OX11 9PY**. If your advertisement is accepted, please note that payment **must** be received before the Bulletin goes to press. If you require repeat insertions over multiple months, you will be referred to the Advertising Manager to make the appropriate arrangements.

WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS We are always happy to receive editorial contributions, which can be submitted in the same way as advertisements – see above. We ask for a maximum length of 500 words (closer to 400 if there is an accompanying photo). Anyone supplying information for publication must be responsible for its accuracy. We require name and contact details in all cases, although if requested these will not be published. The editor reserves the right to reject submissions. Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Bulletin.

To see the Bulletin online visit www.blewbury.co.uk.

The Blewbury Bulletin is published at Swallows, Church Road, Blewbury, OX11 9PY. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of published information, the Editor and Officers accept no responsibility for the consequences of any errors. **Problems receiving your Bulletin? Call 01235 850337.**

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