

# THE LINK

A COMMUNITY MAGAZINE FOR THE  
SEVEN PARISHES IN THE SOUTH  
WARWICKSHIRE 7 BENEFICE

August 2020

£1



■ BARCHESTON with WILLINGTON ■ BARTON-ON-THE-HEATH  
■ BURMINGTON ■ CHERINGTON with STOURTON ■ LONG COMPTON  
■ WHICHFORD and ASCOTT ■ THE WOLFORDS

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Please note: We are advertising at the request of the business concerned. This does not necessarily imply that they are trading as 'normal'. Please contact them if you are in any doubt and please, support your local businesses and suppliers where possible in these difficult times.



<https://editor794.wixsite.com/sw7link>



# EVENTS DIARY

Contact: The Editor  
Email: [editor@swlink.org.uk](mailto:editor@swlink.org.uk)

## Events Update

Once again, the programme of events across SW7 Benefice has been hit by the restrictions. Some events are planned, but they are not certain. Equally, we cannot guarantee that all events (nor indeed any advertised services), are completely in compliance with any Covid-19 restrictions that are in place. Until normal service is resumed, please admire the view...



*'Conservation Corner' in Parsonage Farm, Great Wolford.*  
Photographs by Jenny Henderson



### **LINK cover: 'Lockdown Joy' the Kestrel.**

Photograph by Doreen Cunnington of Long Compton.  
Read more on Page 22.  
Cover design KMS Litho, Hook Norton.

The LINK welcomes contributions for the front cover or elsewhere.  
Portrait orientation photographs or artwork preferred.  
Please send items to [editor@swlink.org.uk](mailto:editor@swlink.org.uk)

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**Monday 17 August**

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# EDITORIAL

## LINK Talk – Shadows Required!

I'm afraid that my appeal last month for a new Treasurer and new Village Editor for Whichford has produced not one response. You will also see that I have not had any items sent me for Whichford and there is therefore no page. Please do send items to [whichford@swlink.org.uk](mailto:whichford@swlink.org.uk) They will come to me and I will put a page together.

I'm happy to give more explanation of the role of Treasurer and Village Editor, but I'm not sure that the understanding of the roles is actually the main problem. Both jobs can be tailored to suit the individual and, in all honesty, they're not terribly onerous.

This reluctance for readers to volunteer to take on roles is a serious concern I have for the ongoing future of the magazine.

We would like to encourage readers to volunteer to become a 'Shadow', that is someone who can learn what is required in a role before they do it for real. This will help those already doing these roles to know that there is someone they can turn to for help in the future. So do join us as a 'Shadow', most of the learning will be by discussion - probably aided by cups of tea or coffee, or perhaps something stronger! It's enjoyable and satisfying and you will be helping to secure the future of what we believe to be a valued magazine.

'Shadows' required for:

Main Editor	Chair
Village Editors	Treasurer
Distribution Manager	Company Secretary
Advertising Manager	

Of course, this period of lockdown has not been easy for The LINK. We had to go online, copy is very difficult to come by as events are few and far between and retaining and attracting advertisers is difficult. Hopefully, many of these problems will start to resolve themselves as we transition out of lockdown.

If all these issues resolve themselves, we still need people to carry out the essential functions to keep The LINK operating. Without more volunteers, this will be exceedingly difficult going into the future. Please do seriously consider the shadow option we are offering and contact me to discuss how this could work for you.

**Keith Murphy, [editor@swlink.org.uk](mailto:editor@swlink.org.uk)**

## Health Warning...

Please be aware that the events advertised in this publication may or may not comply with any relevant Covid-19 restrictions. The items we receive are published in good faith by The LINK and we wish to make it clear that we cannot guarantee compliance, or otherwise, with any necessary restrictions.

**Keith Murphy, [editor@swlink.org.uk](mailto:editor@swlink.org.uk)**

## SAFAG Update

Shipston Area Flood Action Group (SAFAG) has continued its programme of flood alleviation measures throughout the lockdown period with existing H&S procedures augmented for safe distancing and appropriate use of PPE for contractors.

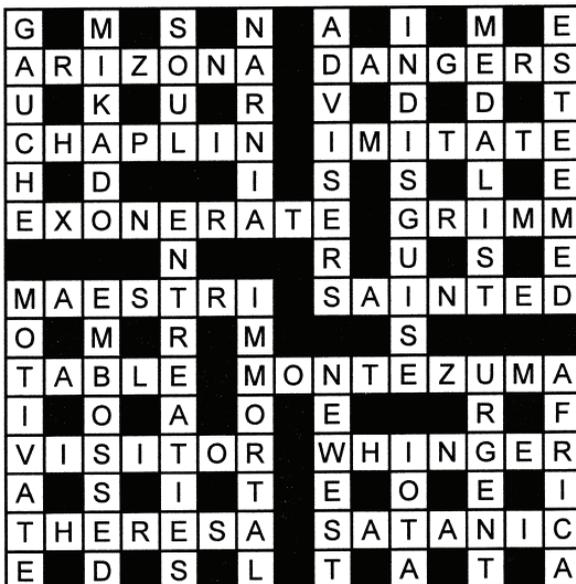
Thanks to the good weather, our progress has barely been affected as we have moved into new parts of the catchment area, upstream of Shipston. Installations have now been completed around the Stourton, Cherington and Sibford areas. Following close liaison with the farmers, landowners and volunteers from Brailes, some 50 interventions have been completed around Sutton Brook with 70 more planned after the harvest period. In Long Compton, where we have worked closely with their own flood group, over 100 installations of different types, such as woody dams, ponds and storage bunds are on target for completion by the end of July. The Parish Councils of both of these villages have also agreed to include funding for long term NFM maintenance within their annual precepts. SAFAG plan to ask other PC's within the catchment to do the same.

We are also scoping out further programmes elsewhere, including further upgrades to existing schemes, subject to securing additional funding. Besides Long Compton and Brailes, other community groups from Cherington/Stourton, Darlingscote and Sutton under Brailes have also joined with us so we really do have 'catchment wide, community involvement.

By the end of summer 2020, our programme should total around 750 interventions on all the main watercourses feeding the River Stour above Shipston. With only 50% of these in place last November when we experienced the heaviest rainfall since 2007, we know that they helped alleviate flood risk to the town and surrounding villages. This further work can be reasonably expected to improve protection still further.

Len Grey

## The LINK Crossword



The solution to the  
July Crossword

# PARISH PEOPLE

## Parochial Church Councils (PCCs)

### *Barcheston St Martin*

Churchwardens David Hodges 664310  
 Secretary Nick Jackson 684846  
 Treasurer David Cleave 666002

### *Burmington St Barnabas & St Nicholas*

Churchwardens Sonia Baker 661459  
 Michael Macdonald 662483  
 Secretary Graham Lancaster 663265  
 Treasurer Sue Bradley 661635

### *Long Compton St Peter and St Paul*

Churchwardens Jill Kirby 684923  
 Secretary Zoë Wrigley 650404  
 Treasurer Walter Sawyer 684755

### *Wolford St Michael & All Angels*

Churchwardens Janet Piller 674396  
 John Wrench 674389  
 Secretary  
 Treasurer Ann McKenna 674009

### *Barton-on-the-Heath St Lawrence*

Churchwardens Hamish Cathie 674303  
 Secretary Gillian Cathie 674303  
 Treasurer Mandy McPherson 674734

### *Cherington St John the Baptist*

Churchwarden Roger Maycock 686404  
 Secretary Paul Levitch 686353  
 Treasurer Rory McLeod 686278

### *Whichford St Michael*

Churchwardens Mandy James 684479  
 Hilary Blakemore 684142  
 Secretary Hilary Blakemore 684142  
 Treasurer Andy Chapman 684652

## Parish Councils

Barcheston  
 Barton-on-the-Heath  
 Burmington  
 Cherington  
 Long Compton  
 Whichford  
 Great Wolford  
 Little Wolford Parish Meeting

## Chair

David Sutton  
 James Coker (674601)  
 Robert Hutchings (661496)  
 Philip Townsend (686529)  
 Bill Cook (684771)  
 Geoff Bromage (684454)  
 Lynn Mathias (674247)  
 Helen Bostock ([chairman@littlewolford.org.uk](mailto:chairman@littlewolford.org.uk))

## Clerk

Ann Batchelor (661527)  
 Colin Maynell (674104)  
 Sara Cole (686250)  
 Elizabeth Gilkes (684336)  
 Sara Cole (686250)  
 Janet Piller (674396)

*If you wish to update information on this page, please email the Editor: [editor@swlink.org.uk](mailto:editor@swlink.org.uk)*



*Happy  
Birthday!*



## August Birthdays

11th	Rosie Cameron	Cherington	17
14th	Katylin Morris	Long Compton	16
24th	Guy West	Long Compton	15
24th	Thomas Collins	Long Compton	10

**SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE CHURCHES – SW 7 - Seven Parishes ~ One Church**

<b>AUGUST 2020 – POST-LOCKDOWN CHURCH SERVICES (ALSO on YOUTUBE "SW7 BENEFICE CHURCHES")</b>							
<b>SW 7 Sunday Worship</b>	<b>St Martin Barcheston</b>	<b>St Lawrence Barton</b>	<b>St Barnabas &amp; St Nicholas Burmington</b>	<b>St John the Baptist Cherington</b>	<b>St Peter &amp; St Paul Long Compton</b>	<b>St Michael Whichford</b>	<b>St Michael &amp; All Angels Wolford</b>
August 2 <sup>nd</sup> <b>8<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity</b>			10:30am CW Morning Prayer* (SPA/BD)			9:00am BCP Morning Prayer* (SPA/BD)	
August 9 <sup>th</sup> <b>9<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity</b>	10:30am CW Morning Prayer* (BD/SPA)	9:00am BCP Morning Prayer* (BD/SPA)					
August 16 <sup>th</sup> <b>10<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity</b>					10:30am CW Morning Prayer* (BD)	9:00am BCP Morning Prayer* (BD)	
August 23 <sup>rd</sup> <b>11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity</b>					9:00am BCP Morning Prayer* (BD/AW)	10:30am CW Morning Prayer* (BD/AW)	
August 30 <sup>th</sup> <b>12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity</b>			9:00am BCP Morning Prayer* (BD/SPA)	10:30am CW Morning Prayer* (BD/SPA)			
September 6 <sup>th</sup> <b>13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity</b>	9:00am BCP Morning Prayer* (SPA/BD)				10:30am CW Morning Prayer* (SPA/BD)		
					4pm Family Service* (SPA/BD)		

SPA = Stuart Allen/BD = Ben Dyson/LM = Liz Maycock/AW = Anthony Wells/CLW = Clare Wells/BCP = Prayer Book/CW = Common Worship/\* = No Hymns/GAP = Informal Service

# SW7 BENEFICE CHURCH NEWS

Dear Friends,

## Churches Re-open!

Some of you will have noticed from the Church Service grid in this month's edition of The LINK Magazine that, wonderfully, many of our churches have now begun to have Sunday services again.

### Which church services?

At the moment, these are services of Morning Prayer only, with the congregation seated at the recommended social distance of 2 metres, and with some organ music, but no hymns. But I'm sure that it will be a very welcome step for many in our villages.

Inevitably, we are having to start back slowly, with only two services per Sunday at this stage: a traditional language Prayer Book service at 9.00 am, and a modern Common Worship service at 10.30 am.

These will move around our seven churches. The only exception for the time being is Saint Michael and All Angels, Great Wolford, whose Joint PCC representative did not feel it was yet safe for them to re-open for services due to the number of vulnerable people in the congregation – a decision I fully support.

The Joint PCC decided not to hold Holy Communion Services just yet, with the added complications of hygiene and social distancing involved in these, but will review this decision when planning for the autumn.

In terms of providing something for those with younger children, the hope is to restart a Family Service on the first and third Sundays at 4.00 pm in Long Compton Church, beginning on Sunday 6 September.

### Why bother with church?

Paul's first letter to the Corinthians tells us that church is a gathering of Christians (1 Corinthians 1:1-3). In fact, the word translated as 'church' in verse 2 is the same word used in chapter 19 of the book of Acts to describe both a crowd of people gathered in protest (v32), and the 'legal assembly' or law court in the city of Ephesus (v39).

So, the word 'church' in the New Testament always refers to a gathering of people. It never refers to a religious building, or a service of worship. That is what Paul is talking about here in 1 Corinthians when he addresses his letter, 'to the church of God in Corinth'. This is a gathering of God's people, those who 'call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ' (verse 2) – that is, a gathering of Christians.

A couple of years ago we went to Cornwall for our summer holiday. Before we went, I asked several different people for recommendations of things we could do as a family. The suggestions included things like the Eden Project, The Lost Gardens of Heligan, Charlestown with its tall ships, and surfing at Sennen Cove. But of course, because I'm a vicar, someone said we absolutely must go to Truro Cathedral. But I must confess that

church architecture isn't something I go out of my way to appreciate on a family holiday! So instead, we went to Fowey Parish church at 11.00 am on a Sunday because they offered something that was truly what the Bible means by church. This is how they put it on their website:

'Whoever you are – sceptic, seeker, doubter or believer – you will find a warm welcome at Fowey Parish Church. There have been followers of the Lord Jesus Christ here in Fowey since at least the early 7th Century. Today there is a lively and vibrant community of Christians here who seek, in our turn, to be faithful to the Biblical message of the rule and rescue of the Lord Jesus Christ.'

We wanted to meet with the local gathering of those who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ when we were in Cornwall, because that is what church is. The main purpose of church is to encourage each other in worshipping God with our whole lives, to build each other up in our faith in Christ, and to spur one another on towards love and good deeds.

I do hope that you will be able to join us at one of our Sunday services in the coming weeks. If you are unable to because you are shielding, or self-isolating, then you will still be able to watch our weekly YouTube services at 'SW7 Benefice Churches'.

**Stuart Allen, Rector**



SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE SEVEN BENEFICE

## Church Services



SW7 Benefice church services have now gone online!

During the Lockdown we have been uploading videos on to our  
YouTube channel: SW7 Benefice Churches

Each services lasts about 30-40 mins and contains a Bible reading, short talk, prayers, and a couple of hymns or songs. There are also some Bible teaching and craft activities for younger children.

Do log on each Sunday at 9.00 am when the next service is made available.



### South Warwickshire Seven Benefice



Reverend Stuart Allen

Tel: 01608 684207 - [rectorsw7@gmail.com](mailto:rectorsw7@gmail.com) (off duty Thursday)

Reverend Ben Dyson

Tel: 01608 685752 - [pioneersw7@gmail.com](mailto:pioneersw7@gmail.com) (off duty Friday)

Benefice Administrator: Mrs Lucy Simpson

Tel: 01608 684787 - [officesw7@gmail.com](mailto:officesw7@gmail.com)

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 2 – 4 pm

[www.southwarwickshirechurches.co.uk](http://www.southwarwickshirechurches.co.uk)

## Acorns Primary School and Brailes C of E Primary School News

On Friday 20 March, Acorns Primary, Brailes C of E Primary and Shipston Primary School all closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. On Monday 23 March we opened again for the children of key workers, those with an education, health and care plan and those with a social worker. From Monday 30 March, Acorns and Brailes went on standby to families as there was very little demand for critical childcare - all children across the Stour Federation Partnership who needed a place in school, attended Shipston Primary, where staff from all three schools were on a rota of face-to-face work and remote teaching from home, as well as looking after (and teaching) their own children. We stayed open during the Easter holidays and Whitsun half-term in the spirit of supporting our key worker families.

Our staff, parents and children conducted themselves brilliantly during that last proper week of the school year in March when schools and families were facing very challenging circumstances, and they have done so throughout this period.

Our remote learning offer was very similar to what is normally in place for home learning and communication. 'Seesaw' is an app that we have used as a virtual learning portfolio with children and parents for many years, so staff, children and parents were already familiar with the platform. Learning was set by the teachers at the start of the week and answers given at the end of the week for children to self-mark. The content of learning was generally consolidating, reinforcing and building on lessons already covered in school. Research shows that this type of retrieval practice strengthens learning in the long term. Before lockdown was imposed, each teacher sent home a hefty paper workbook of 12 weeks' worth of learning, which was complemented by our regular online homework subscriptions Mathletics, [spag.com](http://spag.com), Accelerated Reader and Times Tables Rockstars/Numbots, and, of course, regular reading.

Right from the start, we decided we would not be teaching live lessons, instead posting work on 'Seesaw' with accompanying paper packs and pre-recorded 'Loom' videos from teachers explaining and modelling learning and providing feedback. Here are the considerations why:

- Some families do not have enough devices for every child or not enough bandwidth/data package to access live lessons at the same time.
- Some parents are working from home or looking after babies/very young children and are unable to support their child with learning at specific times of the day. That's why we set work for the week on a Monday and let parents decide the best timetable for their household.
- Some teachers are having to juggle looking after their own children and supporting their learning from home, so they cannot spend five hours locked away in a study broadcasting lessons.
- Some of our pupils will also have been given childcare responsibilities to enable their parents to work from home.



For both teachers and children, it becomes very impractical if lessons are streamed live. The alternative, prepared materials (e.g. worksheets, video clips, slides with video narration) have the advantage that they can be set at any time and completed at any time. Everyone can work around shared technology. They also need less data to download and access than streaming will. Teaching quality is more important than how lessons are delivered. Research has shown there is no clear difference between teaching remotely through live lessons and asynchronous teaching. In fact, if children and parents are able to rewind a video tutorial and re-watch to help their understanding, this is an advantage. We also used 'Loom' to read stories to the children and lead assemblies.

It does feel intuitive that we would want to best replicate the experience of being in a classroom and that live lessons online would be the closest to this. The problem is, it doesn't take into account all the ways that online lessons will differ from those in the classroom. Super teachers create electricity in their classroom, which is much harder to achieve online. The greatest barrier is feedback; the delicate task of providing feedback relies on relationships, context, tone, facial expressions, body language, scanning the room - virtually impossible in an online classroom.

We set up our own voucher system with the Co-op for families eligible for free school meals before the national voucher system was established. When the list of supermarkets for the national system did not include the most local supermarket to the three schools, we continued to top-up voucher cards for our families each week, including through the Easter holidays and during the various government U-turns. Parents of children eligible for free school meals will continue to receive financial support throughout the summer holidays, before the voucher scheme ends. Our families have also been very well supported by the Warwickshire Welfare Scheme and the local foodbank.

On Tuesday 2 June, Acorns, Brailes and Shipston opened to more children, from Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, in addition to the key worker children already in school. Planning and risk assessing were meticulous, and it was wonderful to welcome more children back to school in bubbles of no more than 15. June and July have run very smoothly indeed, thanks to the wonderful staff, brilliant children and fabulous parents who have followed our new instructions for staggered starts and ends of the day, lining up on spots two metres apart and following all the guidance published by Heads of School via video and booklet. Had the government not imposed a priority order of year

groups, we would have been able to welcome all year groups back for some part of the last half term.

We are now focusing our attention on welcoming all children back to school on Wednesday 2 September. There's more risk assessing and teachers have made lovely transition videos for parents and children, explaining how things will look in the new academic year. It is very sad that we cannot say goodbye properly to the wonderful Year 6 children and have the usual end of year celebrations - bar-b-q, camp outs, musical productions, awards ceremonies. I offer them two pieces of advice - be kind, work hard - then amazing things will happen.

I am so grateful for the loyalty, dedication and expertise of my extraordinary staff across the Stour Federation Partnership. They always have the children's best interests at heart and will continue to do everything they can - in whatever circumstances we are in - to ensure continuity and consistency in educating the children in our care.

**Christian Hilton (Executive Headteacher)**



## Oilseed Rape in 2020

EU rapeseed production has fallen almost 30% in five years. The problems of growing the crop in the EU due to the various pesticide restrictions mean it may well fall further. There are three rapeseed crushers in the UK, the largest is at Erith on the Thames below London. Others are at Bootle near Liverpool and Hull as well as some small on-farm crushers. The progressively smaller crops mean there are likely to be increasing imports to support production.

In the EU approximately 65% of the rapeseed crop goes for biodiesel which is a legal requirement in diesel. Typically 5-10% is meth vester (rape oil derived) blended with diesel. The balance is used mainly for food oils and in the UK the majority goes for food use. As I write this at the end of June, a further complication is that the crushing plant at Erith has just had a large explosion which may put it out of production for some months.

There is a demand in the UK for approximately 2 million tonnes of rapeseed per year and this year the crop looks likely to be less than 1 million tonnes. That's less than the 2019 harvest which was a 16 year low. Until recently the UK produced between 2 and 2.5 million tonnes annually.

Had you been able to drive round the country this year you would have noticed far fewer of the vibrant yellow rape fields, and like many local farmers, we abandoned our rape crop early. It was devastated by flea beetle attack and unable to recover due to the very wet winter. We will not be growing oilseed rape next year as without the use of neonicotinoid seed dressing, it is now very likely to fail. An alternative is to use the older pyrethroid sprays which are not so effective and likely to be far more harmful to insect life.



Manor Farm in June 2018

Australia, Canada and Ukraine are the three countries growing the most oilseed rape outside the EU where they are still able to use neonicotinoids. In the future, a higher proportion of the UK imports may come from outside the EU meaning rapeseed oil used in this country is likely to still have been made from rapeseed using this pesticide.

Oilseed rape was a good break in cereal rotations and although expensive to grow, would in many years, give a good return. Our rotation is likely to change next year with possibly peas or beans in the mix which are normally used in animal feed.

**Lynn Mathias farms at Manor Farm in Great Wolford**

# GARDENING NOTES

Editors:

**Margaret Welsh**, Long Compton Garden Club

**Miranda Arnold**, Whichford Amateur Gardener

One thing most gardeners are bad at is being able to stop, sit and enjoy their garden. This year, with lockdown, many people have had the time to really look at their garden. My family have been sending garden photos and videos back and forth in lieu of visiting them. There have also been lovely videos online of many NT and other gardens.

After the early hot weather and then recent wet spell, gardens are still flowering with an abundance of penstemons, phlox and day lilies and my dahlias are just coming into bloom. Now is a good time to take cuttings of tender perennials such as penstemons and osteospermums which are not reliably hardy. Semi-ripe stems with no flowers should be used. Clematis can also be propagated in a similar way, but these are internodal cuttings, about four inches in length, cut either side of a leaf joint. Both types should be put in well-drained compost, with grit or sand added.

Watering, deadheading and weeding remain top of the list of jobs to be done but remember to collect seed of favourite plants. Nigella, poppy and aquilegia seed is certainly worth gathering and is produced in abundance. Hardy geraniums can be tidied up by giving them a trim to remove old overgrown leaves and they will get a new flush of growth. As soon as the flowers of lavender fade, give them a trim, removing just a little of the greenery with the flower stems. Any gaps in flower beds can be filled with end of season annuals such as nicotiana.

Rambling roses should be pruned after flowering. Prune out one third of the oldest stems at the base and cut side shoots that bore flowers to one, or two buds from the main stem. Other summer flowering shrubs should also be pruned when flowering is over e.g. philadelphus (by also removing one third of older shoots). Tidy up pyrocantha bushes so that its berries are more clearly visible. Camelias and rhododendrons start producing buds now, so water well in dry spells. If roses are suffering from black spot, try to gather up the shed leaves before the spores are spread. Do not compost them.

During August, tomatoes, beans and courgettes should provide a good harvest, as well as potatoes. Sweetcorn will also be ready soon. Keep a close watch on outdoor tomatoes and potatoes, removing any that show signs of blight. If indoor tomatoes are very leafy, remove up to a fifth of the leaves to allow the fruit to ripen better. Water them regularly to prevent blossom end rot of the fruit. Spring planted onions and shallots can be lifted once the foliage yellows and flops over. Dry them in full sun outdoors or in a well-ventilated greenhouse or shed for about two weeks before storing. You can still sow a variety of vegetables for autumn and winter use e.g. chard, kohlrabi and salad onions. Fast growing lettuces such as 'Tom Thumb' and 'little gem' can also be sown.

When summer fruiting raspberries have finished, cut down spent stems to allow room for new canes and mulch with compost. Trim the length of gooseberry and red currant bush stems by about a third, but cut a third of older blackcurrant stems to the ground. Prune espalier and other shaped apples and pears by shortening laterals to three leaves.

August is a good month to order next year's spring bulbs when there is the greatest choice. Most can be planted in September. Happy Gardening!

**Margaret Welsh**

### Burmington celebrates Sue Bradley's 70th

The coronavirus rules restricted Burmington's celebration of Sue Bradley's 70th birthday, but a small group of friends gathered in Michael Macdonald's garden in the evening of Sunday 12 July to celebrate and to drink her health. Her friends recognise her as one of the most warm-hearted, generous and energetic souls around and one who has made, and makes, a tremendous contribution to village and county life.

Her husband John has provided us with this picture of their life:

Sue and John were married in 1971 and their first home was in The Lane, Burmington, later moving to Shipston. They moved back into Burmington in 1989, into the barn conversion designed by architect John. They have two daughters, Becky and Catherine, and are proud grandparents to Jake, Molly and Lola. Sue was a teacher who first taught at Snitterfield School before moving to Whichford and finally, becoming deputy head at Tredington.

Sue has always been deeply involved in local activities (nothing less than total commitment is acceptable!). From making tea for the cricket club, to singing with the Stour Singers, performing with the SHOUT choir latterly, membership secretary of Friends of Ellen Badger Hospital, founder member of the CAMEO Lunch Club, churchwarden and treasurer, and notably active in the village fetes and social activities.

In 1990 she was invited to become a magistrate, rising to become a chairman of the bench. After 30 years of service she will retire from regular duties this year. Nevertheless, she hopes to remain in a non-regular magistrate's role when called upon in the future.

Whilst Sue was a magistrate, she was invited by the Queen to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace, which of course she accepted and took John along for the ride. It was a magnificent day and one which neither of them will ever forget.



John added this moving personal note:

‘Sue is a fantastic wife who I love and am proud to see that others love for her kindness and generous support. She has provided unfailing support for me and her family with whatever decisions we make. Words cannot express the love I have for her.

We share sadness at now leaving Burmington, but know that the smaller house we have chosen in Shipston, close to our daughters, will offer us more quality time and enjoyment together. We have the fondest memories of our years in Burmington and of the many friends we have made in this, to us, very special village which we will continue to support after our move.

We certainly look forward to welcoming our friends at our new home in Shipston.’

## VJ Day 75th Anniversary - 15 August

15 August 2020 will be the 75th anniversary of VJ Day which marked the surrender of the Japanese and the end of the Second World War. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, at the time of writing the Government still has to announce plans to commemorate this important event in a manner to align with the social distancing likely still to be in force at the time.

But, lest we forget.....

It was a particularly brutal war. The allies, the UK, the US and the now Commonwealth countries suffered 82,000 casualties and over 200,000 captured; 130,000 of those on the fall of Singapore, the largest surrender in British history. The rail line built along the Kwai river valley to support the Japanese forces during their Burma campaign led alone to the death of over 12,000 allied prisoners and 80,000 native labourers.

The war ended abruptly after the allied leaders called on the Japanese leaders to surrender under threat of a nuclear attack. Their initial refusal led to the US dropping 20 kiloton atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 August 1945, causing the immediate deaths of up 130,000 Japanese civilians.

There may be a member of the older SW7 community who suffered a personal loss or bereavement as a result of the Japanese war, but the only reminiscences I could glean from those I approached were these:

- A greatly welcomed two-day national holiday was declared on VJ Day.
- A local farmer set fire to two ricks of straw by way of celebration.
- There was a mouth-watering prospect of an immediate end to food rationing. (A false hope - food rationing persisted until 1953, eight years later.)
- A village bonfire celebration was spoilt by the failure of pre-war fireworks to ignite. They were replaced within an hour by friendly army sources with military thunderflashes which provided little illumination but were powerful enough to shake neighbouring houses.
- Many people remained stunned by the ousting of war-hero Winston Churchill and his party in the landslide victory of the Labour party in the general election held only a few days before VJ Day.

By the time you read this you should have received news of the arrangements for the national celebration of VJ Day. The British Legion will be asking the Nation to remember.

**Dennis Cummings**

I wrote about otters last month, and hardly had last month's copy of the magazine dropped through my letterbox, I received an email from a reader telling me that whilst walking along the river near Cherrington, he had come across an otter spraint (droppings) atop of a rock on the riverside. Following this, he sent me a photograph of this; undoubted evidence of an otter's presence. Otters will travel up to 25 miles along a river, so perhaps we share this one with our friends on the Avon in Stratford. The name 'otter' derives from the old English word 'wodr', meaning water, and of course it is essentially a creature of the water coming out only to nest under a tree root or in a convenient hole. The male is a dog or bull, and the young are pups. The nest is a holt. Although they will take frogs, toads and perhaps mice, their essential food is fish which of course put them in contention with fishermen. Hunting resulted in a severe decline in their numbers. This was made illegal in 1978, though how anybody can spend a day prowling up and down a riverbank with the intention of slaughtering otters is quite beyond me (though I've seen pictures of otterhounds and they look rather nice!). The reader who gave me this information regarding the otter, has promised to let us know should he see one. So, we look forward to this, but we must also accord him with a title: let us call him our 'Otter Spotter' and wish him the very best of luck!

Last month I wrote about the mystery of plants growing in places where there was seemingly no nutrition to help them. Similarly, I find mysteries in plants growing out of little more than gravel. Last spring, a small cluster of Primroses grew out of a gravelled area in my garden and I thought I may dig them out and put them somewhere else but throughout the summer, several of their progeny appeared all over this gravelly area and I had an excellent show! In another part of the garden, also gravel, a small mallow plant appeared though there is no mallow in this garden. Further down, I know that scarlet pimpernel will flourish for a week or two, whilst 'love in a mist' has already been and gone. Also, I will see the curiously named corn salad which I am told you can eat. So how do they thrive in a gravelly aspect? Well, if there is one thing plants really need, it is moisture which gravel will allow through in quantities. So, providing we have a reasonably fertile soil beneath the plants for the roots to thrive, they really have excellent conditions in which to grow.

Scarcely a week goes by or we open our papers or magazines to read how we are being urged to plant more and more trees. I have mentioned before that we are one of the least forested countries in Europe (13% coverage as against 28%), so there is plenty of room for more trees to be planted both for our own health and that of the natural world with which we share the earth. In the forefront of such efforts of course is the Woodland Trust. Amongst the many tree planting schemes they have, one is called 'More Woods', where landowners are provided with subsidised tree saplings (it should be emphasized that all saplings in their schemes are grown in this country, thus avoiding the risk of importing disease). As a result of these efforts, a total of 800 acres (sorry, but I'm old fashioned and still work in acres!) have been planted. Amongst volunteers for this project are schools and clubs. The Trust is confident that enough seedlings will be ready for further efforts this autumn. Anybody who has available ground or land can apply to

join the scheme. Moreover, city and town councils are to be urged to plant trees rather than in the case of Sheffield to cut them down in a 'tidying up exercise'. Leeds, for example, has allocated three million pounds to plant two hundred thousand trees a year until 2050.

Returning to the kestrel nest I wrote about recently; I was privileged today to be taken to see the four fledgling birds now busy sitting outside their house gazing wisely at us. Fairly soon, their parents will be suggesting that it is time they went to sample the wild world beyond. And our local kestrel population will have an increase of four birds.

I recently read of someone - I know not who - being appointed to a chief executive position of a well-known national conservation body. One of his first pronouncements was that as bears had died out in this country in the 14th century was it not time to reintroduce them. What absolute nonsense! Has he never heard of Winnie The Pooh? Did he not ever play Pooh sticks as boy? Both Eeyore and Piglet will, with hands on their hearts, vouch for the existence of this bear with little brain. And what about Rupert and his adventures in Nutwood? Not to mention Paddington Bear, or the Three Little Bears who had a habit of jumping into the wrong beds? No bears left indeed!

**Tony Partridge**

## 'Buglife'

One of the consequences of the lockdown seems to have been the growth of a wider and deeper interest in the natural world – perhaps because it's been quieter, because the air has smelt cleaner, or simply because we have found more 'time to stand and stare'. A pity that it all seems to be receding, almost like a lost childhood, as economic activity reasserts itself.

However, the insights we have gained may just give us the incentive both to help restore the environment and to renew our own connections with it.

The charity 'Buglife' wants to set up networks or corridors connecting environmentally rich areas to enable insects, especially pollinators, to move about the country. There's a map here: <https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines/b-lines-south-of-england/>

If you enlarge it, you will see that the greater part of the SW7 Benefice lies within one of the pathways. We can help. There's information here about how you can get involved: <https://www.buglife.org.uk/get-involved/>

There's further information at <https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines/>

You might find information and inspiration at <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk> by growing some wildflowers – again, all compatible with what 'Buglife' wants to do.

We are lucky enough to live in a 'Dark Sky' area, so here's an informative site about light pollution, and what we can do to minimise the impact of superfluous light: <https://britastro.org/node/11986>

Try helping our insects and pollinators – it could be very rewarding, on whatever scale you can, from a small garden border to a field edge.

**Harry Dodds, [longcompton@swlink.org.uk](mailto:longcompton@swlink.org.uk)**

# VILLAGE NEWS

## CHERINGTON WITH STOURTON

Editor: Alan Holmes

Email: [cherington@swlink.org.uk](mailto:cherington@swlink.org.uk)

Tel: 686682

### Village Lottery

Winners in the draw for the July lottery were:

1st	Sara Haigh and Jason Caul	£80
2nd	Anita Law	£45
3rd	Jean Bryant	£30

Congratulations to our winners and thank you for your continued support. For more information on joining please contact Steve Allkins.

**Steve Allkins**

### Playing Fields Association

The Playing Fields Committee is looking for a treasurer. Does anyone have a little time to give to this vital village amenity? If you do, please contact Lois Dudfield 07967 630880 [loisdudfield@gmail.com](mailto:loisdudfield@gmail.com)

**Lois Dudfield**

### Brailes Mechanical and Crafts Society

Covid-19 has prevented meetings being held since we last met in March. As the months have passed, it has become evident that no further meetings will be feasible during the remainder of this year. It is difficult to predict the future behaviour of the virus and it is only a hope that we will be able to restart in January 2021. The Committee will give further updates as the position becomes clearer.

**Eric Darvell, Secretary**

### Shipston Link - Announcement

With their silver and green buses, Shipston Link provides a regular, volunteer-run, community bus service from surrounding villages into Shipston Town Square & the Medical Centre with regular trips from Shipston's outlying villages to Banbury, Moreton-in-Marsh & Chipping Norton. There is also a Saturday morning return service from Whichford, Cherington, Stourton, Brailes, Shipston and Ilmington into Stratford.

We plan to resume our service on Tuesday 1 September, by which time, all safety measures to comply with government guidelines will be in place, in particular social distancing, therefore with fewer seats available. Passengers are requested to use the service only for essential travel and only if they have no other means of transport.

Up-to-date information will continue to be available from 'traveline' on 0871 200 2233 or <http://shipstonlink.co.uk/>

**Paul Levitch**

### Brailes Picturehouse

It would seem, according to various advisory agencies, that Rural Cinema could resume at the end of July as long as general guidelines are adhered to.

As July and August are our holiday months, September could be our start-up date. In the meantime, an eye will be kept on the situation as things change all time! There are many safeguards to be put in place for all concerned.

Keep safe and see you soon.

Deirdre and Team



## Ellen Badger Hospital and Shipston Medical Centre Development

In May we shared an update on the exciting development plans for the Ellen Badger Hospital. Please visit: <https://www.swft.nhs.uk/our-hospitals/ellen-badger-hospital> to access the update.

It has been great to hear from the local community regarding these plans, so thank you for all your comments. Across eleven *Facebook* posts there were over 600 interactions, including nearly 400 comments from over 200 separate individuals. We really value this input from the public on our proposals and will be using them to shape the project as it develops. It is especially helpful to have this feedback during a time when engaging with the community is challenging due to Coronavirus.

Coronavirus has affected all aspects of healthcare and it will continue to influence future developments. The Ellen Badger Hospital has played a vital role in the fight against Covid-19 and is currently supporting all NHS organisations across Coventry and Warwickshire. It's providing inpatient beds to those recovering from Coronavirus. The Trust, working alongside our GP colleagues, is currently looking into how this might impact the development plans for the Ellen Badger Hospital.

Some of the feedback we've received has queried why we aren't planning to develop the existing site. This has been a big consideration for the Trust and we have explored all options to see if this would be possible. Unfortunately due to the existing building's age, general condition, infrastructure and compliance related risks, then the option to refurbish the existing current hospital facility was discounted in favour of developing a modern purpose designed healthcare facility, which could respond in an effective and timely manner to the constant changing demands in healthcare delivery.

However, the Trust, like the local community, recognises the rich history of Ellen Badger Hospital and the importance of retaining as much of the history of the building as possible. We have done a detailed evaluation of all the historical artefacts within the current building and will be working closely with designers to come up with a way to sensitively incorporate these items into the new hospital. This includes the Badger monuments, which thanks to the generosity of the League of Friends, are going to be restored.

We are currently working with the design team on developing a proposal that supports changes to healthcare delivery due to Coronavirus, creates a sustainable and affordable building that is sympathetic to the local landscape and history, whilst enhancing and integrating healthcare for residents in Shipston and the surrounding areas.

We will get as much information to you as we progress the development and really want to get your feedback at every stage. If you have any further comments or questions, we would encourage you to send them to [EBHdevelopment@swft.nhs.uk](mailto:EBHdevelopment@swft.nhs.uk)

## Long Compton Village Hall

2020 will be remembered, amongst other things, for the many new experiences it has introduced us to - wearing, and in some cases making, face masks, being able to judge 2m by eye, apologising profusely after a hay fever induced sneeze or cough, negotiating our way around a Zoom call ('Unmute yourself, we can't hear you!') and, my personal favourite, the 42 page risk assessment! In many instances, such forms seem to be stating the obvious but, nevertheless, the perceived risks need to be noted and the actions to mitigate them recorded so we are all seen to be doing the necessary actions to get things back to a new normal and a safe way of moving forward.



The village hall committee has done its fair share of risk assessments and is putting in place the measures they can so that when the hall is re-opened, it can once again provide a safe venue for the community. Bear with us and we look forward to welcoming you back through our doors as soon as we can.

**Mo Read on 684130, 07814802814 or [lcvillagehall@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lcvillagehall@yahoo.co.uk)**

## Compton District History Society

Covid-19 suspension of activities - Our committee has recently decided that there will be no further meetings this year and we start again next March, provided things are back to normal by then. Our idea is that we should rebook the same speakers as those we had originally booked for March to June this year. If you have paid a membership subscription for 2019/2020 that will carry forward to cover March to June 2021.

Long Compton village hall is hoping to start letting the hall out from August this year, but we felt that this would not be safe for the membership, especially as we would have to sanitise everything used at a meeting after use. The hall committee would have to trust that those using the accommodation and equipment before had been thorough in doing this. We felt that there were too many risks in taking this course of action. It is also possible that speakers might not be willing to come to us earlier than next spring.

We will of course keep you informed through this magazine as and when circumstances change.

**Diana Cook 684771**

## Long Compton Bridge Club

The Bridge Club will reopen in October, unless it becomes clear that we can safely start before then. We will contact all members by email. Best wishes.

**Chris Galloway 684234**

## Compton Creatives

To find out more about joining this sociable group please contact [jhburras@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jhburras@yahoo.co.uk) or [caroline.nixon@btinternet.com](mailto:caroline.nixon@btinternet.com)

### Lockdown

We, like so many people of our age, 90 plus, with underlying medical conditions, have needed to be careful. We had our sadness, too, when my sister died from the virus a few days after her 95th birthday, but there have been good times too. Our family, friends and neighbours have kept us well supplied with care and all the necessities of life, but the highlight of the last ten weeks has been our family of Kestrels.

Two years ago, a friend of ours, an owl expert, gave us an owl nesting box and last year a tawny owl duly raised three chicks in it. But this year, a pair of kestrels drove the owl away and have used the box to raise four strong fledglings. They have given us endless pleasure watching them hatch, grow and finally fly, which they are doing in front of this window as I type. In fact, they seem to like our garden and are reluctant to leave and live lives of their own. We shall miss them. Perhaps we shall see them again next year.



**One of the kestrels  
(On the lookout for an owl?)**



**Jim and Doreen Cunnington**

*[Ed... Jim and Doreen - Well done with the photos. You have become LINK Cover Stars! ]*

Long Compton  
book club

Our next meeting is on Thursday 13 August at 7.00 pm  
We will be discussing *Becoming* by Michelle Obama  
All Welcome - Contact: Carole Clements 01608 684938  
carole.r.clements@googlemail.com

**Long Compton Chapel**

Butlers Lane

HOSTS

**LONG COMPTON  
INAUGURAL  
FLOWER AND PRODUCE  
SHOW**

**29 to 31  
August  
2020**

**Saturday 29 August**

2pm—6pm

**Sunday 30 August**

12pm—5pm

**Monday 31 August**

12pm—3pm



# Long Compton Inaugural Flower and Produce Show

Saturday 29 to Monday 31 August - Classes for Entries. (Leaflets with Entry forms are available from the Stores or from the plant table outside the chapel).

## Handicrafts Classes

- H1 Painting – any medium
- H2 Greeting card – any medium
- H3 An item to wear
- H4 An item to display

## Baking Classes

- B5 A Classic Victoria Sponge
- B6 5 decorated cupcakes
- B7 A savoury tart
- B8 5 cheese scones

## Preserves Classes

- P9 Jar of jam
- P10 Jar of pickles
- P11 Jar of chutney
- P12 Jar of marmalade

## Fruit and Vegetables Classes

- FV13 A basket of five or more vegetables
- FV14 Collection of culinary herbs
- FV15 5 tomatoes (matched or different varieties)
- FV16 A dish of soft fruit
- FV17 5 Runner Beans
- FV18 2 Courgettes

## Flowers Classes

- F19 A vase of garden flowers
- F20 One specimen bloom
- F21 Vase of roses
- F22 Fragrant rose

## Floral Art Classes

- FA23 In the Green – leaves and flowerheads
- FA24 An English Garden
- FA25 Five flowers and pebbles
- FA26 Arrangement in a teacup and saucer

## Primary School Children Classes

- C27 Miniature Garden
- C28 A painting – my favourite place
- C29 Decorative item from recycled materials
- C30 Greeting card

[longcomptonebenezerchapel@outlook.com](mailto:longcomptonebenezerchapel@outlook.com)

or Sally 07870 545431/ Elizabeth 07791 621778

## Long Compton and District Garden Club

The committee is meeting soon to see if, within guidelines, we can do any trips this year. We will let you know as soon as we have some news.

Not all is lost. Many gardens have opened and will be very happy to see you. These include gardens under the National Gardens Scheme, National Trust and English Heritage. They have worked hard to make their gardens the best that they can be and, as there are fewer visitors, they are a joy to visit. Of course, there are no delicious teas as yet, but you should check as this might change.

For obvious reasons, we have no confirmed speakers as yet but there are other things we can do together. We are preparing a 'Gardeners Question Time' for 2021 with a stellar local cast.



We have done some work on the Lychgate Garden and the hollyhocks are looking really good and the creeping thymes are doing a super job filling the cracks in the paving. We look forward to seeing you all again.

**Lesley Roberts**

## The Comptonians

The Long Compton village hall could open in the autumn, but due to the present uncertain and changing situation, we feel that we should not meet until it is safe to do so.

We hope that we might be able to hold the end of year lunch in November and we shall keep you informed about any arrangements. Looking forward to when we can all meet again. Take care.

**Margaret Welsh**

## 100 Club News

Due to the present restrictions and to be on the safe side, the monthly 100 Club draws will be suspended until such time as we can all gather in the village hall again. There will then be a grand draw to cover those that have been missed.

There are ten draws left this year, so if anyone would like to join in at a cost of £10 (or buy another ticket!), please contact me on 684234.

**Chris Galloway**

## Long Compton Neighbourhood Watch



Our local co-ordinator is Jordan Boswell, who would very much welcome reports of suspicious behaviour. Do let him know about anything that seems to you to be out of the ordinary. Your information might just be the little piece of the jigsaw that helps solve a problem. All calls and emails are completely confidential – your name will not be made public.

Contact Jordan on 07795 008998, or at [jordanboswell@hotmail.com](mailto:jordanboswell@hotmail.com)

## Long Compton Short Mat Bowls Club

Meets when it can at the village hall on the first and third Tuesdays of the month, 2 - 3.30 pm. New members especially welcome. Contact Adrian on 684024 to learn more.

## Village Organisations

Long Compton and District Garden Club - Contact Anthony Wells 684337 or Lesley Roberts 684545 or [lesleyroberts46@gmail.com](mailto:lesleyroberts46@gmail.com)

Compton and District History Society - Contact Diana Cook 684771

Comptonians - Contact Margaret Welsh 684238

Village Hall - Mo Read on 684130, 07814802814 or [lcvillagehall@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lcvillagehall@yahoo.co.uk)

Compton Creatives - [caroline.nixon@btinternet.com](mailto:caroline.nixon@btinternet.com) or [jhburras@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jhburras@yahoo.co.uk)

Long Compton & District Walkers - Jan Treadaway 684553

Long Compton Short Mat Bowls - Club Contact Adrian on 684024

Long Compton Bridge Club - Chris Galloway 684234

Friends of Long Compton Church, our information and contact points:

e: [friendslcchurch@gmail.com](mailto:friendslcchurch@gmail.com) f: @friendsoflongcomptonchurch

[www.friendsofloncomptonchurch.com](http://www.friendsofloncomptonchurch.com)

# VILLAGE NEWS

## THE WOLFORDS

Editor, Little Wolford Email: [littlewolford@swlink.org.uk](mailto:littlewolford@swlink.org.uk)

Editor, Great Wolford: Lynn Mathias

Email: [greatwolford@swlink.org.uk](mailto:greatwolford@swlink.org.uk) Tel: 674247

## Car Booting

As the August Bank Holiday car boot sale at Moreton has been cancelled, we now have to put on hold our collection of goods to sell. A big thank you to everyone who has supported this fundraiser for Wolford church in the past and we look forward to letting you know we'll be back in action next spring, ready for a sale at the end of May.

**The Wolford Car Booting Team**

## The Wolfords Village Hall One Hundred Club

The July winners were as follows:

1st prize – Jane Revere    2nd prize – Jane Hobbs    3rd prize – Carol Keven

Many congratulations to the above. Please let me know if you would like to have more shares as the club is still short of 100 shares. All proceeds go to help with the upkeep of the village hall. Please note, there will be no draw next month so the next draw will be in September.

**James van Helden**

## Thank you to Simon

The Wolford PCC would like to say a huge thank you to Simon for all the work he has done in the churchyard. Following lockdown which saw him working from home in his teaching job he has spent his spare time tidying up the churchyard, removing ivy from the gravestones and even rebuilding part of the wall. We are extremely grateful for all his hard work.

PS... Natalie tells me she wishes to express her heartfelt thanks to the PCC for providing Simon with the opportunity for a project that's kept him out of the house during lockdown!

## Little Wolford Parish Meeting

Little Wolford Parish will be holding their Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 11 August at 7.00 pm. This is a public meeting.

L W	Little Wolford
P M	Parish Meeting

Please contact Helen Bostock - [chairman@littlewolford.org.uk](mailto:chairman@littlewolford.org.uk) or on 07904 411593 - if you wish to attend in person (numbers will be restricted due to government guidelines and venue tbc) or would like details on how to join via Zoom. Agenda will be emailed to those on the mailing list and it will also be posted on the village notice board. Past minutes can be found at [www.littlewolford.org.uk](http://www.littlewolford.org.uk)

## Parsonage Farm – Scheduled Ancient Monument

The top corner of our front field has been left to grow to benefit wildlife. We used to grow the whole area then mow for hay, but part of this field is a 'Scheduled Ancient Monument' and the relevant authorities have requested sheep-grazing to show up the earthworks. However, as someone with a little knowledge of physical geography, (A and degree level), I have doubts as to how much of the feature is actually man-made.

The area is a series of large flat terraces of varying heights with a shallow drainage valley far too vast to have been man-made except for perhaps a little modification for drainage or pond creation. I believe the terraces to be 'beaches' formed when Lake Harrison was retreating. This was a vast glacial lake formed between the northern ice and the Cotswold scarp. As the weight of water increased, there were breaches of the dam, forming gaps such as at Edge Hill, with the retreating water leaving these terraces or beaches.



**Possible lake terraces and beaches at Parsonage Farm**

Further evidence of this is that the contour heights of the terraces match those above Nethercote Brook, near Long Compton, and other terraces are visible higher up on the hill above the village. Many of these formations have disappeared under cultivation but looking at old maps, I suspect our field has never been ploughed, leaving more prominent features.

Further investigation is needed, such as the search for matching beach pebbles on equal-height terraces. It would be a great subject for a student to write a thesis on, or contribute to a PhD. I fear my brain has declined too much for such study nowadays.

**Jenny Henderson, Parsonage Farm, Great Wolford**

## The Wolfords Village Hall

The hall at present is closed, but please be aware that it will open again for you to use as soon as restrictions ease sufficiently. If you are thinking ahead, please do not hesitate to contact us so we can at least 'pencil in' something for you and your event.

<https://www.thewolfordsvillagehall.org.uk/>

I have found a poem by Thomas Hardy for this month. *An August Midnight* conjures up a vision of Hardy writing one of his masterpieces by the light of his midnight oil. He probably just interrupted his flow for a few minutes whilst he dashed this off!

Thomas Hardy was interested in 'natural history' and the importance of the relationship between man and nature. Hence, this can be read into *An August Midnight*. The poem presents the meeting of a man with four insects. The man and the insects are described as equals, generating some empathy with even these smallest of creatures.

## *An August Midnight*

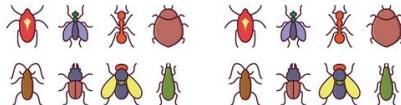
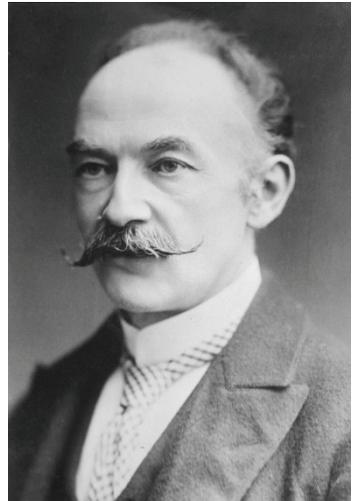
I

A shaded lamp and a waving blind,  
And the beat of a clock from a distant floor:  
On this scene enter—winged, horned, and spined—  
A longlegs, a moth, and a dumbledore;  
While 'mid my page there idly stands  
A sleepy fly, that rubs its hands...

II

Thus meet we five, in this still place,  
At this point of time, at this point in space.  
—My guests besmear my new-penned line,  
Or bang at the lamp and fall supine.  
"God's humblest, they!" I muse. Yet why?  
They know Earth-secrets that know not I.

(Thomas Hardy 1840 – 1928)



Please keep your poetry suggestions coming; writing them for us would be even better! Please be sure to submit your suggestions in good time bearing in mind that more recent poems will often be protected by copyright and if this is the case, the publisher's permission will need to be obtained.

Keith Murphy, [editor@swlink.org.uk](mailto:editor@swlink.org.uk)

# Chairman's Corner

## Don't Pooh-Pooh Puglia

Plans for a summer getaway this year were well and truly scuppered, thanks to the coronavirus, and many holidays either had to be cancelled outright or deferred until 2021. With the recent easing of lockdown measures, and lifting of quarantine requirements for several EU countries, it seems that trips abroad may now be back on the agenda for some people after all.

A few weeks ago, I should have been enjoying the delights of sunny Italy, but due to that country (and ours), being amongst Europe's pandemic hotspots, flights, accommodation and car hire were all out of the question.

When mentioning Italy, one normally thinks of the usual tourist destinations, such as Rome, Milan, Florence, Amalfi Coast, Venice and the Lakes. For this holiday, however, having discovered the place a couple of years ago, I intended to return to Puglia, the south-eastern region often referred to as the heel of Italy's 'boot'. Puglia is less affluent than its more fashionable neighbours, but it's still worth a visit. As it's off the beaten track, the region is unspoilt and less crowded, and you'll receive a warm welcome from the pugliesi. I would say that Puglia, a beautiful, diverse and underrated area, is a hidden gem and well-kept secret (until now).

Puglia is known for its trulli (dry-stone dwellings with conical roofs), primitivo (a spicy red wine whose grape is genetically identical to zinfandel), ancient gnarled olive trees (from which, world class olive oil is produced), and delicious food, especially seafood, traditional orecchiette pasta dishes, and creamy burrata.

Trulli are a common sight in rural areas, but the best examples are found in the town of Alberobello, a UNESCO World Heritage site, where these buildings are preserved in their full glory. The local church is even built in the shape of a trullo. Travelling east, the coastal resort of Polignano a Mare is one of the hosts of the cliff diving world series, where spectators can marvel at daredevil diving and acrobatic feats from the tops of sheer vertiginous cliffs. Adding to the spectacle, a hotel and restaurant are set into a natural cave overlooking the sea.



Continuing south, Ostuni is known as the 'White City', due to its whitewashed houses, which loom above you as you approach this hilltop city. The cathedral is a combination of Gothic, Romanesque and Byzantine architecture, while the city itself is a labyrinthine maze of narrow streets, alleyways, steps, and dead ends. Further south lies the distinctive

Baroque city of Lecce, where there is a plethora of 17th century buildings, including the Basilica di Santa Croce, giving rise to the term barocco leccese (Lecce baroque).



On the west coast, there is a different feel altogether. With natural dunes, fine sandy beaches and crystal-clear shallow waters, the shores near Porto Cesareo, Torre Lapillo and Punta Prosciutto would almost convince you that you are in the Caribbean or the Maldives, rather than Salento. Jutting out on a peninsula in the southwest is the fishing harbour of Gallipoli (not to be confused with its namesake in Turkey). Gallipoli is divided into two parts, the Old

City and the new town, which are linked by a bridge. New Gallipoli is just like any other modern town or city, but Old Gallipoli sits on its own island, boasting a 13th century castle, quaint streets, a wealth of cafés, bars and restaurants, and several historic churches.

So, that's Puglia in a nutshell, but it offers so much more – it trulli is an amazing place.

Simon Lewis-Beeching, [chairman@swlink.org.uk](mailto:chairman@swlink.org.uk)



## WE ARE RE-OPENING!

The Country Markets of the Cotswolds will be opening again in September.

**MORETON-IN-MARSH  
WI HALL, NEW ROAD**

**OPENING THURSDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER  
10am – 12pm**

**CHIPPING CAMPDEN  
LOWER TOWN HALL**

**OPENING FRIDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER  
9am – 11am**

- Fully COVID-19 compliant
- Contactless card payments now accepted
- Pre-ordering available for collection on opening day

The layout, and the way we operate, may be slightly different than before – but we promise the same high standard items of produce, preserves, sweet & savoury items, and craft.

We look forward to welcoming customers old and new, and to serve you once again.

Check out the Country Markets website for more information – [www.country-markets.co.uk](http://www.country-markets.co.uk)

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