

SC SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE



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FEB/MAR 2022



sonningcommonmagazine

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FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

2022 – is this the year we learn to live with the virus and decide our own level of risk in what we do or will it be the emergence of yet another variant?? Let us hope it is the former and we can pick up the threads of the life we used to have?

This issue of the magazine is different again, as sadly the noticeboard pages do not appear as there were no events submitted. I think this is the measure of our caution about the current situation in this January 2022. The 'did you know page' has been transformed into a trail of speech bubbles on 12 pages for readers to follow. Each one is asking where you might find the named item in the village. All is revealed towards the end of the magazine.

CONGRATULATIONS to our Graphic designer Kevin Taplin as the magazine has won a 1st for the Best Design category in a National Parish Magazine Competition. A very significant achievement. Our thanks go to him for his imaginative and eye - catching designs.

It is also a credit to all the volunteers who are involved in producing and delivering this magazine. There is a very large number to whom we are very grateful. I would wish to include our thanks to the advertisers, some of whom have been with us for years, as without their financial support we would not be able to distribute free to all residents. What a team!

A very good way to start 2022! 😊

Diana

Diana Pearman Editor

Email: editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org



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Taplin, proudly displaying the
National Award for Design

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SC SONNING COMMON
MAGAZINE

MEET THE EDITORIAL TEAM



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HEAD'S REPORT



As you read this in February, I realise we may now be through the worst of the Omicron surge or we may well be in a much worse plight. Please bear in mind this was written on Monday, January 3rd on the evening before term resumed.

I had fully intended to write this article on Sunday January 2nd. The day looked relatively free and I thought it would be good to reflect on the holidays and look forward to the term ahead, yet recent history shows us that in education the only thing that is certain is change. I went down for my morning coffee just before eight and caught the news headlines which were all about secondary schools and face coverings. I then checked my e-mail account to see an e-mail had landed from the Department for Education just after seven on that very Sunday morning listing the new regulations and changes.

I am very lucky to work with such a dedicated leadership team and at 10.30am that morning we met via Teams from our various living rooms and kitchens to discuss the new instructions and to make sure we were ready to go with the new term. The start of term already included a round of Covid testing before lessons began so there we had to make sure that staff, parents and students knew what was happening, when it was happening and probably most importantly why it was happening. We also had to ensure that the test centre was set up, our supply of face coverings was ready and our test team was primed (and not absent with Covid!).

One wonders how we would have managed if we didn't have WhatsApp groups to message and rally people together. It would certainly have made the start of term much more challenging. One of the other benefits of social media and in particular Twitter is that other education professionals are so willing to share their experiences and ideas. My Deputy Headteacher had picked up a lovely article via Twitter for teachers on how to manage your voice and teach effectively whilst wearing a face covering. In addition, there was a fantastic piece on how to teach groups together in the hall and other large spaces. This came from a teacher whose school had struggled with staff absences throughout the pandemic and it was wonderful to have his insight into



what may occur in the next few weeks.

As I move into my third year as headteacher the team and I have become somewhat battle hardened to the dynamic shifts and changes of direction as we manage the pandemic and do our best to limit the infection rates. One can only hope this is the last ripple after almost two years of turbulence.

And of course, what we also must do, despite everything else is keep focused on delivering great lessons, ensuring students make excellent progress and meet the highest of expectations along with developing their characters, widening their experiences and preparing them for life beyond MECE. In addition, our work at ensuring the school sits at the heart of the local community is so important to everything we do. In the last half term amongst other things we worked with FISH, and food banks, provided a venue for primary schools' cross country events on two occasions, dug allotments and laid a Remembrance Sunday wreath at Kidmore End. Without a doubt, despite all the 'noise' surrounding everything else, this is the reason we get up in the morning and the reason working at MECE and seeing all the tangible improvements makes my job so satisfying.

Happy New Year! ●

ANDY HARTLEY
Headteacher



CONGRATULATIONS MR NUTT MBE

Huge congratulations to Mr Kevin Nutt (or Mr Nutt as many school children will know him) who has been awarded an MBE in the New Year honours.

He has been supporting our local young people through running the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme locally for years, and organised many primary cross-country events, after working as a PE teacher for many years at Chiltern Edge.

I'm sure many in the village will remember him from their own school days. ●

CHRISTINE ATKINSON

SONNING COMMON PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

by Christine Atkinson



Chris Hirst, head teacher at Sonning Common Primary School is very proud of how the school has managed throughout the last two years of disruption to learning. Children are mainly very adaptable and have coped very well with all the change. This last term the school even managed to have a full Christmas dinner, with crackers!, and a lovely outdoor carol concert.

Mr Hirst told us that the long term vision for the school is becoming a reality.

"In the Autumn term we invested in

- Funding additional hours for our school councillor to run anxiety groups, art therapy groups and have increased our 1:1 counselling
- Creating a new Pastoral Support role for a senior teaching assistant with the flexibility to 'check-in' with vulnerable pupils throughout the day
- Providing additional release time for senior staff to enable them to support colleagues
- Increased focus and time for our SENCo to support some of our most vulnerable children
- Employing a specialist dyslexic teacher to screen pupils who we think have dyslexic tendencies and then writing individual intervention plans if required, approximately 50 pupils so far
- Employing a specialist dyslexic

teacher to work with small groups of pupils following the outcome of their assessment

- A return to three maths groups for several year groups, ensuring each child is supported in the best way possible
- A refinement to our resources for teaching maths, including consolidating a new scheme of work and associated staff development

We are working hard to ensure that our school can be the best that it can be.

Another part of the vision is to be as sustainable as possible. The school has a thriving recycling programme and use its own grounds to plant, grow and use as much produce as possible with the help of volunteers and their fabulous caretaker.

But when is education, ecology, and science fun?

Sonning Common Primary School is proud to be able to use its own school allotment to grow vegetables and fruit through Spring and Summer. But when you have a 'growing tower' in your school you can grow all year round - growing food with very little water and no soil!

The **RETHINK FOOD FUTURES** growing tower is used by schools, business and organisations to help teach the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals alongside a growing programme. It uses only 10% of the water and space, lights on the tower, and no soil to grow plants indoors all year long.

There's less hassle and clean up because it doesn't use soil. You can wheel the tower from the classroom to the playground, or the kitchen to the dining room. The young scientists in the school have already harvested basil and rainbow chard, which can be used in the school kitchen in the meals provided for lunch by Kites Kitchen."



BOXED TREATS FOR THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

70 elderly residents and families of the village, received a box each of 12 treats, including a Xmas pudding and custard, mince pies, sweet and savoury items and a gift. It was organised through the magazine and FISH led by Chrissie, Christine, Julia and Diana and then supported by lots of willing volunteers (too many to mention) who assembled the boxes, filled them and delivered to the recipients. The very loaded FISH bus delivered lots of the boxes to the Food bank and FISH office, thanks to John and Keith.

Generous funding was provided by the Parish Council, CECA, OCC, Henley Lions

and the Poores Land Charity. My thanks to them all.

Many people who received the boxes sent messages of thanks to express their gratitude.

"Thank you so much for the wonderful hamper. Christmas blessings to you all" from Heather

So many people in our village spend Christmas on their own and if you know any of them, and they did not receive a box, please let me know. ●

Editor

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LUNCH IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON CHRISTMAS DAY



With Village Hall Christmas Lunch cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic, there was a real danger that if it didn't take place in 2021, it could be difficult to organise in future years.

With only 4 weeks to organise, Caroline Cann contacted the amazing volunteers and donors. Community generosity was in abundance. Special thanks to Carl Woods, Julia Whitelaw, Ian McGowan, Henley Lions, The Barn Cafe, Santa on a Tractor, Joyce Brewer, Creed Food Services, Elaine Robinson and Dave Aldridge for the donations. Plus a massive thank you to the volunteers Sue Sutcliff, Diana Atfield, Ollie Jones, Tom Jones, Mike Woods, Jules Cook, Michael Cann, The Parish Council, FISH and Heath and Watkins. We look forward to doing it all again next year. ●

Caroline Cann

LIBRARY OPEN AT LAST

Hours of opening Monday 2 – 5pm; Wednesday 2 – 7pm

Thursday & Friday: 9 – 1pm, 2 – 5pm; Saturday: 9.30 – 12.30pm

Storytimes take place every Saturday at 10am, with 'special' Saturdays every now and then, involving crafts for children and home-made cakes for sale.

Rhymetimes for pre-school children take place in the library on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month from 11 – 11.30am

A consultation was launched at the end of January to ask for the public's opinion on how well the county's library and heritage services are being run, and to find out what the public wants from such services.

For more information, and to voice your opinion, go to:

<https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk> ●

Rosemary Dunstan
Library Manager

SONNING COMMON ANNUAL VILLAGE



FRIDAY 15 MARCH 2019

at

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SANTA RIDES AGAIN WHILE RAISING MONEY FOR GOOD CAUSES



Wow, what a night we had! After two years, Santa on a Tractor and his team returned to the village for an amazing welcome from children, parents, grandparents and everyone who came out to see him on the sleigh pulled by the wonderful Paul Jenkins on his tractor. It was a very cold night, and poor Paul lost the feeling in his fingers and Santa's specs steamed up!

This year Santa was joined by Chief Elf, Brooklyn MacKenzie-Black, while Richard the Elf retired to help collect (not much of a retirement, but once an elf, always an elf!)

The fabulous Matt Hopson ensured that the collectors knew what they were doing and organised the map. There was a lot of background work from people who couldn't help on the night such as a music licence organised by Duncan Bradley, Matt White with his drone and Craig and Kirstin Henderson who gave us a huge wave from their drive.

There were so many helpers who stepped up last minute and I don't want to miss anyone, so thank you to all who came, after the Facebook plea for help.

Then there are those who help every year including Alison Baillie, joined by Mike this year, John Wells and Sarah MacKenzie-Black who spent an afternoon putting up posters.

It was great to have some of the teenagers of the village stepping in with their parents to help (including my own two children and husband), and grandparents too, making it a real inter-generational event.

Santa and his team raised a whopping £843.13 to be split between Daisy's Dream and Sonning Common Youth Club.

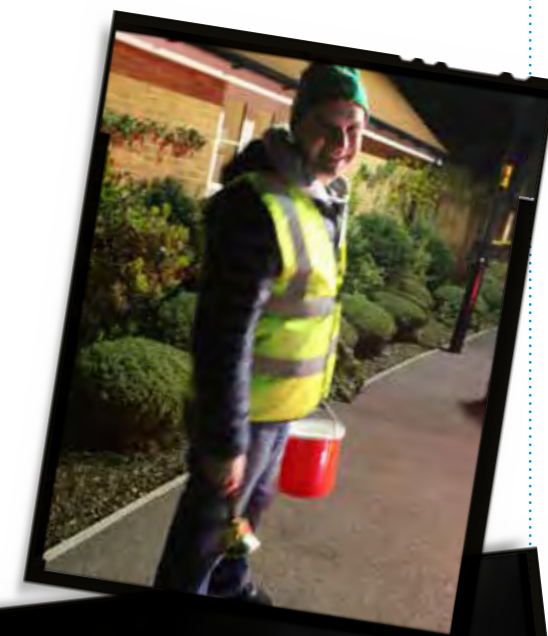
Daisy's Dream offers a support service for children and families who are affected by life threatening illness or bereavement and the Youth Club works hard to entertain the older children in the village. Both are very deserving causes. If you missed us and would like to donate, please contact me and I can arrange to add to the totals and distribute accordingly, or feel free to donate directly to the charities.

I cannot thank the residents of Sonning Common enough for their generosity and kindness. Seeing all the happy faces on the children and

the adults alike is truly heart - warming and uplifting, especially after the last two years. There was dancing in the streets and children screaming with joy. Some of the children came up to Santa at the Hare & Hounds, One Stop and Butchers Arms (who specifically stayed open just for us and laid on mince pies and sausage rolls - thank you) to tell Santa what they would like for Christmas. It turns out, Paw Patrol was very popular as are dinosaurs and toy cars, particularly hot wheels.

Santa thoroughly enjoyed seeing everyone and hopes that some of the newer helpers (and those who sadly couldn't make it at the last minute due to Covid) will join us next year. We always welcome new helpers and there is a lot to do, so please get in touch if you are interested. ●

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Phil Sweetman

BEAVERS

This September the village Scout group welcomed the opening of a new Beavers Colony. 7 new Beavers have started with support from leaders Raya and Sisú. The group has quickly formed a supportive and fun team and the Beavers have already completed some exciting learning and badge work. Since the start of term they have made puppets and performed a show with them; been exploring in the woods and made autumn lanterns; learnt about the history of scouting and learnt their promise; helped complete some science experiments including making lava lamps and exploding powders; cooked lots of yummy food and learnt about nutrition, to name just a few activities!

They have all already been awarded their cooks badge after autumn foraging to make apple and blackberry crumble and then making and decorating their own

Christmas cakes. They also found time to make and eat a few cheese toasties too!

In November they proudly took part in the Remembrance Day parade at Kidmore End church. It was lovely to see them all smart in their uniform and for William to carry the flag so professionally and Luca to bravely lay the poppy wreath.

We are looking forward to getting back together in January to finish off our explosions and creative badges. We are also keen to welcome 5 new beavers to join the team and start learning about space together. Hopefully we will make it out on some night walks in the woods and have some visitors come and share their expertise with us. An exciting start to the new year! ●

Charlotte (Raya)



NEWS FROM SONNING COMMON HEALTH WALKS

Now is surely a good time to get out into the local countryside to enjoy the beauties of nature springing into life! If you want to walk with a friendly group, then join the Health Walkers, and check out our days, times and starting points on the website: www.sonningcommonhealthwalks.co.uk/timetable.

If you'd like to talk to someone first about any aspect of the Health Walks, phone Chris Brook on 0118 924 2515. ●

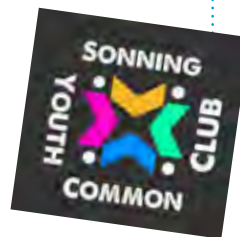
NEW ENERGY, FUN, BAKING AND FOOTBALL - ALL AT THE YOUTH CLUB

We have reopened after Christmas with a fresh energy. We have two new staff members starting in January one of them being a football coach, so it's really exciting.

The club is running from MECE every Wednesday and Thursday from 6.30-8.30pm term time. We have lots of fun things planned but not forgetting the young people's favourite activity which is baking, so come along and try us out if you haven't been before.

From the 1st of February we are increasing the price to £2 per night to cover costs which have gone up over the last few years. ●

Sunny Smithers
Youth Leader



NEW VENUE FOR WHIST CLUB

The club has commenced again at a new venue. Fortunately we can use the premises of Spring Water Church /Cafe on Blounts Court Road.

We meet on a Monday at 2.30 pm

Provide tea and biscuits and prizes for £3 a session.

We would welcome you to join our very friendly group.

Contact Janet Wright on 0791 0133 789



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CARL WOODS

POPULAR VILLAGE BUTCHER LEAVES AFTER EIGHTEEN YEARS

by Christine Atkinson

Carl Woods is retiring from his shop in Sonning Common after eighteen very successful years. He is a well-known and widely respected figure in the village and he and his staff provide a helpful, friendly service and high-quality produce in a very welcoming workplace. He will be sorely missed.

Carl and his family left their native Wales in search of work when Carl was two years old. They settled in Wallingford and have remained there ever since. By the age of fourteen young Carl had two paper rounds and was then offered a Saturday job in Greys Butchers by Russell the manager. His strong work ethic and enthusiasm was immediately recognised and he was offered a full-time job at the age of sixteen. His career then went from strength to strength, and when Russell retired Carl became manager of the shop at the age of nineteen. By the time Carl was

twenty-three he was in a position to buy the shop as a going concern and was married to Lynda, who he describes as 'his rock and his strength.' Lynda and Carl are a very formidable team with Lynda being responsible for bookwork and administration. Their dream was to retire when Carl reached the age of fifty-five if the shop was a success, so they could travel together and explore new interests.

It was Sonning Common's good fortune when Carl was unable to find another shop in Wallingford after his lease ended. Brian Wells, Lynda's father owned the butcher's shop in Sonning Common but was suffering from poor health. Carl bought the shop and eventually the freehold and it is a truly successful enterprise. Over 18 years Carl has built up a thriving concern with a well-established and strong team. He supplies meat to local schools and restaurants as well as satisfying all the

needs of his many Sonning Common customers. When he retires in January/February 2022 he hopes for a smooth transition with the buyer, Caversham Butchers, which includes having a fifteen-year plan that retains all the existing staff and with Phil, a long-term employee, becoming manager.

Carl has many interests and is a keen angler. He is a Sponsored Angler (sponsored by Nash Tackle) and already acts as a Field Tester/Consultant. His passion for carp fishing has enabled him to make a film for them in Southern France, where he landed a 58lb carp in a carp Pursuit. There are other films to follow.

Carl and Lynda thoroughly deserve a happy and enjoyable retirement. Carl is a true example of someone from very humble beginnings achieving a remarkable career through sheer hard work and commitment. Well done and Good Luck from us all! •



MICHAEL TWYMAN

PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FOR LOCAL MAN



Photo: Henley Standard

Professor Michael Twyman, who has lived in Sonning Common since 1959 was awarded the Gold Medal of the Bibliographical Society in November 2021 for his distinguished service to bibliography and 'outstanding contribution to the development of the subject'. The award is

not an annual event and has only been awarded on about twenty occasions since 1920. Michael is a historian of printing and design and has published many authoritative books and articles on the subject,

Michael was a student of fine art at Reading University from 1953 to 1958 and he met his wife Pauline while they studied there together. Part of the fine arts course entailed a small amount of printing and this sparked his passion for graphic communication and a lifelong interest in it. This led to an invitation to return to teach typography and graphic communication. Later he established a BA Honours course in the subject that would eventually grow into a department widely acknowledged to be the first of its kind in Britain and one of the best in the world.

Michael retired from teaching in 1998 but still continues to work with students as an honorary Director of the

Centre for Ephemera Studies in the University. He is internationally acknowledged for his original research and publications on the history of typography, bibliography, lithography, ephemera and graphic design. The scope and impact of his work has been enormously significant and this has been recognised by the award of the Gold Medal at the meeting of The Bibliographical Society of Antiquaries in London a few months ago.

Well done Michael for such a huge achievement and also for enabling future students to benefit from your vision and success.

Michael asks whether anyone in the area interested in social history and documents might like to volunteer to help with work at the Centre on Wednesdays. If so, please ring 972 3767 •

Joan Grumant

SPECIAL AWARD

MAGAZINE WINS NATIONAL DESIGN AWARD

CONGRATULATIONS to our Graphic designer Kevin Taplin. The magazine has won a 1st for the Best Design category in a National Parish Magazine Competition. Sonning Common was placed 4th out of 330 entries in 2021 for the overall magazine.

Well done Kevin and a big thank you from the magazine team.

A very good way to start 2022!

National Parish Magazine Awards 2021

A4 MAGAZINE CATEGORY

1st and Best Overall Magazine
The Village Magazine (Emsworth)

2nd and Best Editor
Gorleston Community Magazine (Norfolk)

3rd and Best Content
The Parish Magazine (Charvil & Sonning)

4th and Best Design
Sonning Common Magazine (Reading)



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Parish news

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PARISH COUNCIL – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The work of the PC has grown exponentially over the last few years as the size of the village has increased with 100 additional homes and many more demands are made on parish staff. Part of the problem additionally is that the precept money for Sonning Common has always been kept at a very low level, compared with other similar size villages in Oxfordshire. Currently the charge for a Band D home is at £1.78p per week to provide for all the items below.

Listed are the tasks and duties requiring coverage.

Meetings

84 per year involving attendance, agendas and minutes
Full Council, Finance, Planning
Parks and Recreation, Village centre and Environment
MP working group

Communication

Public liaison
Emails from residents
Addressing residents' concerns in person
2 x websites
Facebook page
Principal authority liaison

Miscellaneous

Youth Club
Old Copse
Neighbourhood Development Plan

Grass cutting / hedge maintenance

3 x play areas
Memorial Park
Skate Park
All require equipment repair

Street cleaning

Tree maintenance
34km of kerbs

Buildings

2 x Village Halls
Maintenance and repairs
Parish Office



Philip Collings
Clerk



Becky Jenkins
Deputy Clerk



Sara Underwood

PARISH COUNCIL UNVEIL A NEW BRAND

"I was surprised to learn recently that the SC Parish Council did not have any kind of Logo or symbol to identify it to the outside world. So I decided to pursue this by presenting a motion to the Council in July 2021. The idea was accepted unanimously at the meeting and I asked for volunteers to help me achieve it.

Carole Lewis, ex-chair of PC was the first to put up her hand and between us we have progressed from idea to finished product, also assisted by Ros Varnes in the Parish Office. After producing a brief we needed to find a designer to do the creative work for us. We were recommended to and chose Kevin Taplin from TenSevenNine, having seen his excellent work for the SC Magazine.

We are very pleased with the final result and hope that it will help the PC communicate all the good work that it does" ●

Cllr Jonny Bidgood

Sonning Common
Parish Council

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LOCAL ANCIENT WELLS



The magnificent Maharajah's Well at Stoke Row owes its existence to the generosity of the Maharajah of Benares in 1864. One of his British advisers was Edward Reade, an Ipsden man who mentioned to the Maharajah the difficulties experienced by the inhabitants of Stoke Row in obtaining water, particularly during dry spells.

At Ipsden Church, a lesser Rajah financed the well mechanism but not a canopy. This was in use until 1948, when piped water reached the locality. These, however, are just two of various wells in the area bounded by the loop of the Thames and the Henley-Crowmarsh road. The reason for this lies in the absence of any streams.

Provision of an assured clean public water supply closer to home did not rely solely on the beneficence of faraway potentates but was also financed by public subscription or by public-spirited local worthies.

There was quite a variety of styles and of depths, ranging from a spring out of a hillside to a very deep hole, dug by hand. At 368 feet, Maharajah's Well is the same distance down as St Paul's Cathedral is up!



In Horsepond Road Sonning Common, near "The Greyhound", is a wooden well 274 ft deep and sunk in 1888. A Mrs Stevens of Highmoor (aged 86 in 1994) worked at The Greyhound in her younger days and recalled having to get water from the well when the inn's own supply dried up.

Gallowstree Common boasts a brick-built 190ft well with an ornate tiled canopy.



The 1864 Kidmore End Well (254ft deep) is located by the church and includes a notice specifying how to obtain the key.



There was once a 280ft well at Cane End, constructed in 1876 in similar style to those at Kidmore End and Horsepond Road. Kingwood Common well was sunk 245 feet in 1900 and covered by a brick housing. It lasted only until 1929, the only trace being a concrete pad opposite Well Cottage.



Opposite Rotherfield Greys church is a wellhouse, later converted to a bus shelter.

Some wells served private houses and a notable example can be seen at Greys Court, in its own building and operated by a donkey wheel.

The old Peppard Hospital, now redeveloped to housing, had a deep well, pumping up to a tank atop the water tower.



Finally, there is Sedgehill Spring in Spring Wood, Peppard.

This is a spring rather than a well, i.e the water flows out from the higher ground rather than having been dug down to the water table, and the brick façade was built around the outlet.

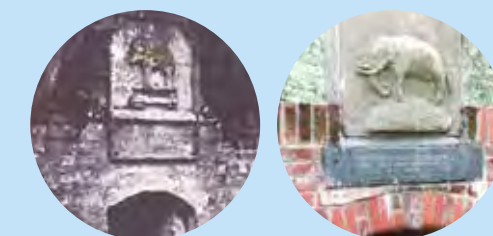


The façade was damaged by evacuees during WW2 and restored during the late 1970s by local volunteers. The elephant & inscription was missing and so was re-created in resin/stone mix by the then craft supervisor of Chiltern Edge School and the iron gate was salvaged by the late Dick Denning from allotments by the River Kennet near Kings Road bridge in Reading. A Peppard Parish Councillor, Mrs Manning who lived at Kibes by Bolts Cross, arranged for framed photos of the restoration work to be hung in Peppard Memorial Hall.

Sedgehill Spring bears a fitting quotation with which to conclude:

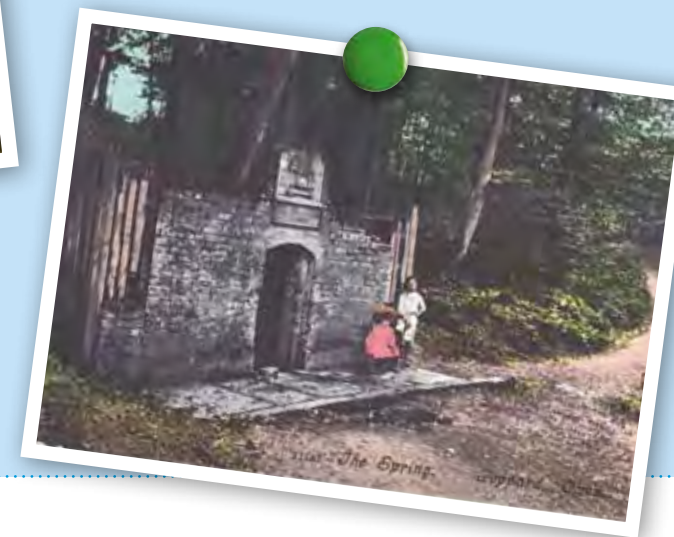
Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst (John IV 13:14) ●

Ken Stevens



The earliest historical reference to it was in 1285 and the name derives from Segga's Well or Secga's Spring. The carving of an elephant isn't for the same obvious reason as for Maharajah's Well in Stoke Row.

The connection is possibly with the Knollys family, who were significant landowners in the area in past times, Sir Francis Knollys' effigy on his tomb in Rotherfield Greys Church being adorned with a heraldic elephant.



MEMORIAL PARK

Memorial Park is one of the largest projects ever achieved for this village and there will be a few more in the coming years once the village centre comes on line.

Many residents will have kept an eye on the progress of the groundworks on Memorial Park and will have noticed that the grass has grown well and the MUGA (multi use games area) is surfaced and fenced.

A decision has been taken by the Parish Council that the land should be allowed to settle and further works will be completed before opening. It was felt that to open and then close down various areas would cause safety and further maintenance issues, so the plan is to open when all areas are useable. The following works are scheduled to be undertaken.

- The play area will be constructed at the cost of £100,000. This amount was awarded through Becky Jenkins writing a successful bid to Tarmac/Lafarge. An additional donation of £2,000 has been awarded by Boshier Hinton for accessible equipment.

Residents were invited to have a look at the layout on the 6 November and the feedback was used to adjust the layout. The site design has been awarded to Kompan after a tender process.

The work should commence at the beginning of February and take at least a few months, depending on the weather. The image here shows what it will look like! 😊

- The MUGA will be illuminated and the lighting will be installed over the next few months. The lights will be allowed until 9.30 in the

evening and the choice of type has been carefully considered to limit the impact on the night sky, wildlife and the surrounding area. Ros Varnes had negotiated the planning application and its successful permission. Wayfaring lights will also be installed around the whole perimeter track.

- Landscape planting, across the whole site, will include Cherry trees and hedging. Native trees and plants have been chosen and again planting times will be weather dependent and probably will happen in the Spring. Leigh Rawlins will be managing this aspect of work.

DO YOU KNOW WHERE?
Subsidised activities ZooLab
(follow the bubbles)

- A second pedestrian route onto the Park will be from Farm Close. This ancient pathway currently overgrown, used to be the tractor route when the field was used for agriculture. It has been gifted to the Memorial Park. Penny Snowden is tasked with managing this accessible route. The first

pedestrian route is already open from Lambourne Road with a walk through the new homes of Sonning Grove. The park when open will encourage pedestrian and walking/cycling access and the cycle racks are already in place.

There will be regular updates in the magazine, and on the Parish Council website, detailing the progress of the work, towards opening Memorial Park, for all to enjoy. ●

Diana Pearman
Chair of the Memorial Park
working group



DO YOU KNOW WHERE?
Jigsaw puzzle lending
(follow the bubbles)

STRONG WOMEN AND A SCARCITY OF MEN

Ada had a sister Ethel, a spinster lady with an abrupt manner and an abrasive tongue, much given to starting arguments on buses and trams. She lived with her own parents, my great grandparents in a grim little terraced house with a lavatory in the back yard. The two women were quite close and frequently took day trips or occasionally longer excursions together. Tales arising from these outings became forged in family folklore. For instance, on a foray to Hathersage in the Peak District, while walking through the village's churchyard, renowned for its being the site of Little John's grave (Robin Hood's henchman) they encountered a man 'wearing nowt but a bowler 'at' who popped up from behind a gravestone clearly bent upon impressing the ladies with his wherewithal's. In this ambition he was to be sorely disillusioned. Instead of the sought-after reaction, both grandmother and aunt burst into shrieks of laughter. His reaction is not recorded but I would imagine that on future expeditions he would select his audience more carefully!



At the war's end and my father's demobilisation from the RAF, he and my mother bought a house much closer to the city centre. Our road was quite respectable and middle class but only a busy road separated it from one of the city's poverty stricken slum areas, the Park district. This was characterised by narrow cobbled streets lined with old, tiny shabby houses which just a few years later were to be demolished in a major slum clearance. Nevertheless, the women who inhabited these homes were intensely house proud and all the doorsteps were worn into arcs by the donkey stoning and the pavements outside the houses were also well scrubbed. Amongst this grim area and down a steep hill dwelt yet another of our family's women, Aunt Ginnie, one of the sisters of my paternal grandfather. She was also unmarried although in her case I'm not sure that can be attributed to the depredations of war but rather to her monumental ugliness. She had a broad, flat face which sprouted hair from various warts and lumps, she was astonishingly short sighted, and her stature was that



of the proverbial brick outhouse. She also, single handed ran the local fish and chip shop, her forearms were like hams and she could hoist hundredweight sacks of spuds ready to empty into an archaic potato peeler in the back yard. Her

appearance was formidable, and she ruled her clientele with a rod of iron. She must have operated some sort of spy network because occasionally she would receive word of one of her regulars who had dared patronise a rival establishment. This was strictly verboten! Upon the unfortunate, and probably unsuspecting culprit reappearing in her shop, she would witheringly castigate them in front of the shop full of customers, advise them that they should return whence they had purchased their 'f and c' last Thursday and would refuse to serve them until they'd had time to reflect upon the error of their ways! However, she actually had a heart of gold and always had a soft spot for me. Whenever I ventured down the hill to visit her, I was assured of a hearty meal and a bottle of lemonade.

Aunt Ginnie had a younger sister, Aunt



DO YOU KNOW WHERE?
Distribution point for Lateral Flow
(follow the bubbles)



Hannah who was softer featured, with the bluest of cornflower blue eyes. This may go some way to explaining why she was the only one of the Miles women with a living husband! Hannah was delightful and, like all the family women, warm hearted and kind. Again, quite poor and living in old, cramped, inadequate conditions, few amenities with, inevitably, the backyard lavatory with just a highish wall separating the yard from the main line railway en route to the Midland Station.

Hannah always had a twinkle in her eye and a mischievous sense of humour. She lived on the southern edge of the city centre and with no telephone, my infrequent visits were usually unplanned and unannounced but as things were at the time, you could generally rely upon housewives to be at home, few went out to work. But however unexpected my visits, my reception was always the same. 'Hello Ian luv, come on in, lovely to see you. Would you like a pikelet or a bit of cake?'

Hannah and Harry, her husband, had two daughters, my father's cousins and so I suppose, my great cousins. Neither Sylvia nor Beryl was married, and both worked, at a local steel works. Both were invariably cheerful with the same mischievous sense of humour as their mother, and both shared a hatred of Frank Sinatra and Sheffield Wednesday FC.



Yes, horror of horrors, they were Blades supporters and regularly attended matches at Bramall Lane which was quite close to where they lived. Now in those days I had no idea who Frank Sinatra was, but I did know about Sheffield Wednesday. I was from the other side of the city and had been born, or is it doomed, to be an Owl. No option really although I have to confess to having had a sneaking fancy for Arsenal 'cos I liked their shirts.

Some very few years later, we moved south and my return visits to Sheffield were infrequent. Relatives sometimes ventured south to visit us in Cheam, and I well recall one such visit by Sylvia and Beryl. I had, by the time of their visit, established routes to the nearest professional football grounds, one of which was Brentford. As it happened, during Sylvia and Beryl's visit, Brentford had a home game versus Sheffield United and of course, they wanted to go. I was reluctant to break the habit of my albeit short lifetime by attending a Blades match, but the options were few. So, a compromise had to be reached. I hit on a solution. Sylvia had a weak spot. She was the only member of the family who smoked, a habit probably acquired from her service in the Women's Land Army during the war. At the time, Turf was the only brand of cigarettes to offer picture cards in the packets, the current set on offer featuring football players, amongst them a couple of the Wednesday team neither of which graced my collection. Usually, the only means of adding to



this collection lay in scouring the streets for discarded packets but I sensed a more reliable source of bounty. I made the proposal, and the deal was struck; Sylvia would

smoke Turf cigarettes during her stay with us and I would take her and her sister to Griffin Park. Perfect. To make things even more perfect, Brentford won 5-1. I tried not to look too happy. I recall Sylvia's verdict on her new, temporary brand of fags, 'They're called turf and that's what they bloody taste like'. Never mind, I got my cards.

Among my Christmas presents that year was a parcel containing a blue and white scarf and an official club photograph of the Wednesday team together with a note. 'Dear Ian, happy Christmas. You won't believe what it cost me to bring myself to buy this lot for you. Hope you like it, lots of love, Sylvia xx ●

Ian Miles
Chiltern Players



CHILTERN
PLAYERS

DO YOU KNOW WHERE?
Subsidised talks by authors
(follow the bubbles)

TOM FORT TURKEY

The great debate goes on. No, I don't mean Brexit good or bad? Or Johnson good or bad? Or should the Queen make way for Prince Charles?

No, I mean the great Christmas debate. Should it be turkey? Should it be goose? Should it be beef? Should it be venison?

We have tried them all and this year it was turkey's turn. The bird in question was obtained at very considerable cost – it must have had a heated coop and been fed on milk pudding and been soothed to sleep by Classic FM – by my foodie brother Matthew, who was in charge of cooking it.

This took eight hours. Yep, I do not exaggerate. Eight hours at around 85

degrees, which required it to go in the oven at 8am on Christmas morning. He actually arrived halfway through the cooking time, armed with a meat thermometer resembling a defibrillator which he thrust deep into the joint between leg and body to check progress.

At the end the heat was whacked up for half an hour to brown the skin, and then the bird was removed, covered in tin foil, and wrapped in a duvet for an hour before carving. I kid you not. A duvet.

In the meantime, the rest of us mere mortals were scurrying around getting ready the roast spuds, red cabbage, sprouts (sliced thin and stir fried with chilli, walnuts and pecorino cheese), bread sauce, pigs-in-blankets and the rest

of it. We sat down at 5 pm. The turkey was perfect, as good as it could get.

But the question remains unresolved. Personally, I would have goose, horrendously pricey though it is. It has more taste, more presence, more substance. But even a big goose will only feed eight at the most, and there are too many of us. Both beef and venison also pack more of a punch than turkey.

However I concede that there is something about a turkey – its succulence and juiciness, its bulk, the ease of carving it, the accessories – which is very seductive. The debate will be resumed next Christmas. ●



WITHYMEAD NATURE RESERVE

As the days lengthen and slowly warm, I expect many of you like me will want to get outside into the fresh air, into nature and away from all the chaos caused by Covid. Well let me tell you about Withymead Nature Reserve.

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a Grass Snake wiggling through the meadows, a Kingfisher diving into the river or an Otter swimming swiftly against the current.

Suitable for all ages, the nature reserve is open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10am-4pm during the Spring and Summer Months however during the Winter months they are closed for essential conservation work carried out by volunteers. You can hire the nature reserve for exclusive use. ●

For maps or more information please visit www.withymead.co.uk

Gabriel Andlauer-Turner

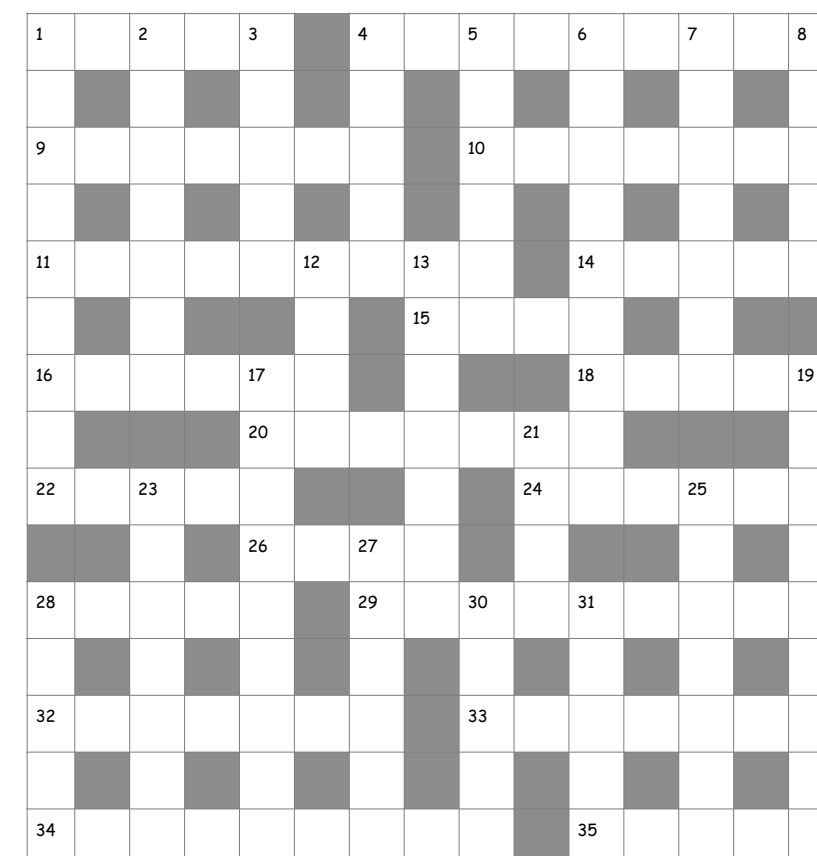


DO YOU KNOW WHERE?
Free use of computers
(follow the bubbles)

PUZZLE PAGE

By SHEILA WALKER

WOMBAT 10



CROSSWORD CLUES:

ACROSS

1. Holy cover-up (5)
4. So behind the times – understandably (9)
9. A person with no arms could hardly be one (7)
10. Making dull flooring (7)
11. One of the 4 (9)
- 14, 34. American bird with left-wing tendencies (5,6,3)
15. Old artist almost managed retrospective (4)
16. Must have the French injection (6)
18. Lamb, though may appear as another animal (5)
20. You won't find one in the pub now (7)
22. Raises floor after floor (5)
24. Join us, we're just as pressured (6)
26. Kind of letter (4)
28. A thousand use this fashionable device (5)
29. Entrances for phoenix? (9)
32. Place for king or fishers in treetops (7)
33. 2 and huge! (7)
34. See 14
35. Packed the joint (5)

DOWN

1. Moving east causes upset (9)
2. She seems to have smart clothes, but rough texture! (7)
3. The wanderer returned (see 30)? Almost a bad thing (5)
4. What they did with the runcible spoon (5)
5. Calling not applicable to Chinese (6)
6. Child works hard for its living (9)
7. One trick pony? (7)
8. She hardly pauses for breath, for example (5)
12. Drinks for sale (4)
13. See 32; Charles' preferred one? (3,4)
17. Time for eleven to get worried? (4,3,2)
19. Good guy was sick, but pulled himself together (9)
21. Excellent lawyer for heroine (4)
23. Wild about French regional set-up... (7)
25. including these, for example (7)
27. High level communication..... (6)
28. could involve him (5)
30. See 3
31. Writer retraced family tree? (5)

CALL MY BLUFF Which of the following definitions is correct ?

QUOKKA (a) a small wallaby (b) a spirit made from fermented manioc (c) a bodyguard (W Africa)

HIRPLE (a) to hiccough (b) to chatter mindlessly (c) to limp

TRON (a) a weighing machine (b) a Swedish dignitary (c) a sub-atomic particle

TATOUAY (a) clam chowder (b) a large armadillo (c) a Maori head-dress

COLLECTIONS What is the name for a group of:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. kittens | 6. beauties |
| 2. partridges | 7. larks |
| 3. crows | 8. rooks |
| 4. starlings | 9. lions |
| 5. foxes | 10. angels |

See answers on page 34

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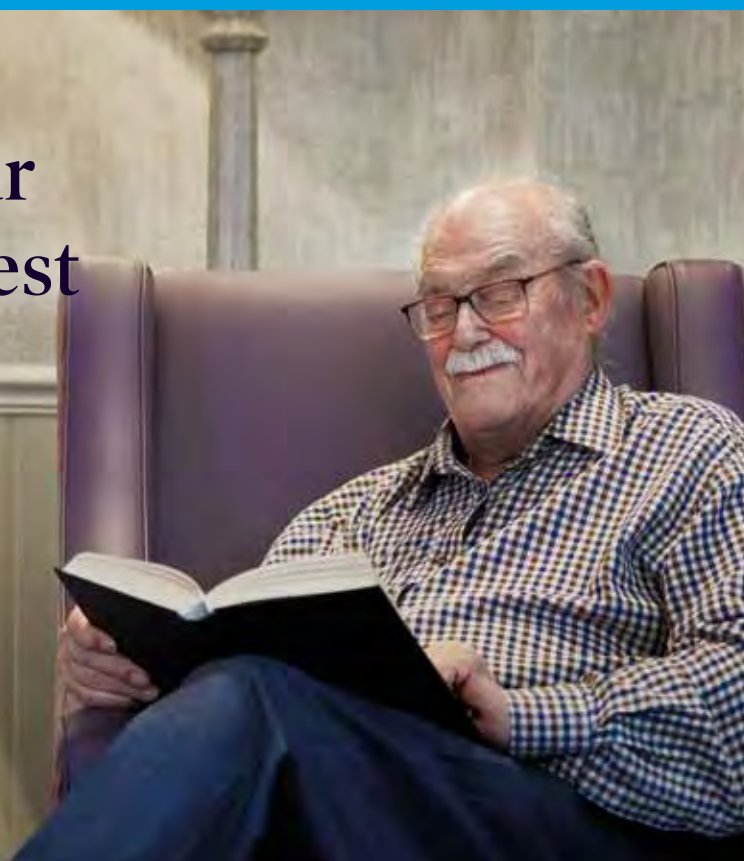
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IT'S IN THE LIBRARY!!

**Sonning Common Library, Grove Road,
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It's all change among the Friends of Sonning Common Library. After five years as officers (and several more years as committee members), Jill Hutchinson, Jenny Jones and Helen Fort are standing down from their respective roles as Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Fortunately three excellent new officers came on board at the Friends' AGM in November. Alison Smith was voted-in as the new Chair, while Gordon Haigh will be Treasurer and Bev White will be Secretary. Many of you may know Alison, who has lived in Sonning Common for over 25 years, and is one of five new volunteers who enabled the library to open safely under Covid restrictions. "The library has played an important part in my life", she said. "Not least because of the money it saved me as the mother of two children who both read frantically while growing up. It became a place for me to meet people who wanted to talk about something other than babies, so I have experienced first hand what a crucial role it can play in the mental well-being of villagers. Now I finally have time to give

something back to the Library." Gordon has been helping out for some time as one of library gadget advisers while Bev has been a volunteer on Saturday mornings for more than three years. Long-time friend of the library, Elaine Govett, also kindly volunteered to join the committee.

Please get in touch if you would like to help in any way.

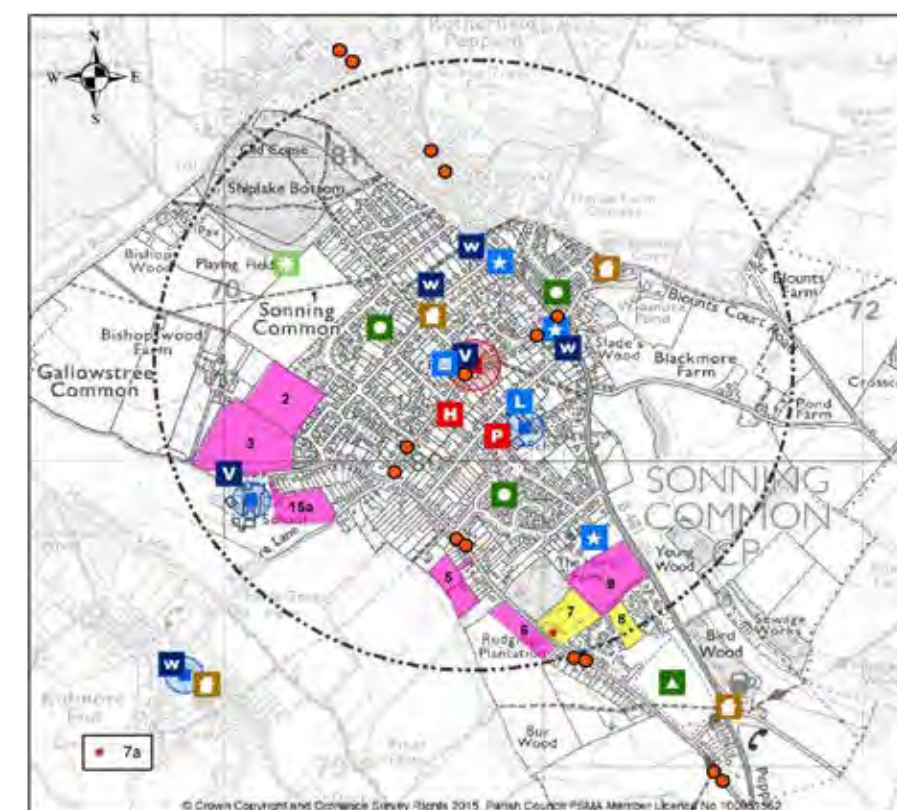
Keep an eye out for events in the library – especially during the school holidays. If things improve over the coming months, there should be another chance to see the Zoolab team in action in the February half term. Please pop into the library or see our website for more details/tickets.

www.friendsofsonningcommonlibrary.org.uk

Helen Fort



THE LIBRARY LOCATION



- Allocated Sites
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- 1km radius
- Bus Stop
- H Health Centre
- P Police Office
- W Place of Worship
- V Village Hall
- L **THE LIBRARY**
- PO Post Office
- R Retail
- PH Public House
- P Playground
- OS Open Space/ Recreation
- SP Skate Park
- S Schools
- VC Village Centre



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SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE



COVID & FLU vaccinations up to 21st December

Sonning Common Health Centre patients have received a total 20,469 doses of a COVID Vaccination either directly from the Practice or at a Mass Vaccination Site:

1st Vaccination = 7316 – 92% of our Adult population

2nd Vaccination = 7203 – 90% of our Adult population

Booster = 5285 – 66% of our Adult population

SCHC have administered a total of 14886 vaccinations:

1st Vaccination = 5874

2nd Vaccination = 5573

Booster = 3439

We have further COVID Clinics planned at Sonning Common during January 2022 but dates are yet to be released. Patients can also continue to book COVID vaccination appointments via the National Booking service.

We ran our last big Flu Clinic on Wednesday 8 December and below is an overview of our vaccinations. We are still offering Flu vaccines to our patients through mini clinics.

2138 out of 2379 patients 65 and over have received a Flu vaccine (90% of patient population), 806 vaccines to our 18-64 at risk patients (69% of patient population) and we have also given 1504

Flu vaccines to the 50-64 age group (64% of patient population).

Omicron Update

Urgent work is ongoing to fully understand how the Omicron variant may change the behaviour of the virus with regards to vaccines and transmissibility. Vaccines continue to remain the best line of defence. The Government has good reason to remain confident that our current vaccines will provide protection against the new variant but the extent of this continues to be investigated.

All adults who have not yet received their first or second dose of the vaccine, or those who are eligible for their booster are encouraged to come forward to help protect themselves and others. This can be done through the national booking service.

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) now advises:

- All adults aged 18 to 39 years should be offered a booster dose, in order of descending age groups, to increase their levels of protection.
- Booster doses should be given no sooner than three months after the primary course.
- All severely immunosuppressed individuals should be offered their booster dose no sooner than three months after completing their primary course of 3 doses.



- Young people aged 12 to 15 years should receive a second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, no sooner than 12 weeks after their first dose.

Whilst taking part in the initial two phases of the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, Sonning Common Health Centre has delivered over 14,000 doses. This could not have been achieved without the brilliant effort of all our staff and a long list of volunteers and supporters.

If you still need to get a Covid vaccination it isn't too late you can book COVID vaccine appointments via the National Booking service: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/> or proposed clinics at the Health Centre in January 2022

Staff News

We were sad to see Lisa Grainger, a practice nurse leave at the end of December. Lisa had worked at SCHC for 6 years but has been nursing in NHS for more than 30 years. We wish Lisa all the very best in the future.

The health centre is recruiting for a new nurse. ●

Sue Litchfield for SCHC

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER (SAD)



Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that occurs at particular times of the year, most often in the winter months.

Many of us are affected by the changing seasons. The colder weather and darker evenings can affect our mood and energy levels as well as our sleeping patterns and appetites. But if this is impacting your daily life, you may have Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

SAD can affect you at any time of year, although it's more common in winter. However, some people have symptoms of SAD in summer and feel better in winter.

What are the symptoms of SAD?

The symptoms of SAD are similar to those of depression.

- **feel sad, tearful or hopeless**
- **have no energy**
- **feel anxious or worried**
- **find it hard to concentrate**
- **be unable to enjoy things that usually bring you pleasure**
- **lose interest in sex**
- **not want to see people**
- **feel suicidal.**

As well as this, you may feel sleepy during the day and find it hard to get up in the morning. Your appetite might change – in particular, people with SAD can crave food high in carbohydrates.

What causes SAD?

While the exact causes of SAD are unclear, it's often linked to the reduced amount of sunlight in winter. This can affect:

- your body clock. Your body uses sunlight to regulate your sleep, appetite and mood. Lower light levels in winter can disrupt your body clock, leading to depression and tiredness
- your production of melatonin, a sleep hormone. People with SAD may produce much higher levels in winter
- your production of serotonin, a hormone affecting your sleep, mood and appetite. Reduced sunlight can lead to lower levels of serotonin, making you feel depressed.

SAD is more common in women: they are three times more likely to be affected than men.



When to see a GP

You should consider talking to a GP if you think you might have SAD and you're struggling to cope.

The GP can carry out an assessment to check your mental health. They may ask you about your mood, lifestyle, eating habits and sleeping patterns, plus any seasonal changes in your thoughts and behaviour.

Ways you can look after yourself

It can be difficult to live with SAD, but there are things you can do to help yourself.

- Light, especially natural light, can have a huge effect on your overall mood. Spend some time each day outside if you can and open your curtains to let as much light in as possible. Avoid sitting in dark or dimly lit rooms. Use lamps & mirrors to brighten up anywhere that is particularly dark.
- Some people find it helpful to use a light box – a special lamp that mimics natural light. Talk to your doctor before using one, especially if you have any eye or skin problems.
- Exercise and spending time in green spaces are helpful for everyone's mental health. Physical activity can boost your self-esteem and help you concentrate, sleep and feel better.

Which? Magazine have reported on the best **SAD lamps** or **light boxes** to purchase and have an informative article on SAD. These magazines can be read at Sonning Common library. ●

Church news



ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Despite the surge in Covid infections during December we were able to celebrate Christmas as a parish community and welcome a few visitors. Attendance was limited to ensure social distancing while doors and windows were opened wide. Fortunately the weather was very mild. We were fortunate to have Fr Jiji, an Indian priest, from Campion Hall in Oxford to celebrate our Christmas morning Mass. Gifts left under the Advent tree were distributed to the sick and housebound of the parish with the remainder being given to CIRDIC along with cash donations.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity falls in January so by the time this issue of the magazine is published we will, Covid allowing, have gathered with the other Christian communities in the locality to pray for the unity Jesus desired.

The first Catholic church in Sonning Common was erected in 1947, meaning 2022 is the 75th anniversary of that

event. During this year a brief outline of the parish's history will be given, though compared to other churches in the area we are relatively new.

Before 1947 Sonning Common and the surrounding country areas were part of the parish of Our Lady and St Anne in Caversham. To attend Mass, Catholic families living in these areas had to make the journey to Caversham or Henley when very few people had cars. In addition, the Caversham parish also served the spiritual needs of the Catholic staff and patients at both the TB sanatorium and Borocourt Hospital in Peppard. The parish priest at Caversham, Fr Michael Williams, would make a weekly bus journey to celebrate Mass at Borocourt Hospital. En route to Borocourt the bus stopped alongside an area of ground where animals grazed and was owned by Josey the Coal Merchant (hence Josey Close). Fr Williams thought this would be an ideal place to build a church. The ground was purchased in 1946 by which time Fr Williams was joined by a curate Fr William Ford. It was Fr Ford who took

on the responsibility of establishing a church in Sonning Common as well as becoming chaplain to the two hospitals. Fr Ford was himself a TB sufferer.

More of the story will follow next time but if you want to know what is going on today, check the weekly newsletter on our website: Website: www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk

ST JOHN'S AND CHRIST THE KING

After the disruption of Christmas 2020, it was a great joy that we were able to have more or less "normal" services for 2021, and now at the start of another year, we are beginning to look ahead to the next few months – still not straightforward, given the unpredictability of the current situation. As ever, so much is uncertain – but what is certain is the reality and generosity of God's blessing. Together with the lengthening days and (hopefully) milder weather, February and March will bring further reminders of God's goodness

as we begin Lent on Wednesday 2nd March (Ash Wednesday) and prepare hearts and minds to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ at Easter in April.

At Christ the King we are continuing to trial a service pattern according to which there are morning services (Eucharist/Holy Communion) on the first and third Sundays of the month at 9.30am, and afternoon services (sometimes also Communion, but once a month "something different") at 4.00pm on the second and fourth Sundays. St John's sees the reverse of the pattern, with Sung Eucharist at 11.00am on the second and fourth Sundays, and evening services (Communion or Evensong) at 6.00pm on the first and third. We appreciate this is difficult to remember (!), so do please check our church pages at www.achurchnearyou.com for up to date information; and if you would like to receive our weekly e-bulletin, which contains details of services plus much else interesting besides, please do drop me a line:

revjstickings@gmail.com.

James Stickings (Rector)

SPRINGWATER A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU

At the time of writing this, we are able to meet together but wearing masks except when having coffee and a chat after a service or in the café during the week.

We had a great outdoor carol service on Christmas Eve which was well attended and we enjoyed seasonal refreshments, very warming!

The Ark parent/toddler group; the Aspire women's group; Compassionate Loaf breadmaking and the Steering Wheel Fellowship are all flourishing

and Judy Parker has continued her valuable bereavement course.

The Food Bank is still very much in demand and thanks to the support of several generous local donors, was able to distribute a large number of special and delicious Christmas hampers.

We would really love to welcome you at 10.30 on a Sunday morning to one of our friendly family services – Covid regulations permitting, do give us a call or check our website for up to date information.

Wishing you a blessed and healthy 2022.

Chris Girdler

www.springwaterchurch.org.uk

email: contactspringwaterchurch@gmail.com

Tel: 01189724519

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER, 2022 PEPPARD AND DISTRICT BRANCH

An advance date for your 2022 diary:

Friday 4th March, at 6.30 pm. at All Saints' Church, Rotherfield Peppard, RG9 5JN.

This is a one hour interdenominational Service prepared by the Christian women of England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Scotland prepares its own Service) followed by a light supper. A chance to celebrate all that is good about our nations as we emerge from winter into spring. Everyone is welcome. Should you need further information or transport to the event, please ring 0118 972 2741. We look forward to seeing you there, unless Covid restrictions are still in force.

CHILTERN EVANGELICAL

A new year - a new start. What does that mean to us? Is it simply that we want to promise ourselves that we will eat less chocolate, do more exercise or maybe start a new hobby?

One promise we can be sure of is one that God makes to each of us - if we trust in His Son Jesus we will have eternal life. Why does God promise this? He promises this because we live in a fallen world; we are full of sin and we need saving. God can and will save us from this world and all our sin. He knows our struggles and hardships. Knowing we have a kind, loving and merciful God gives us confidence and a future certainty.

Want to know more? As a church we meet every Sunday at 4:30pm at our church building at the bottom of Grove Road opposite the Vauxhall garage. Everyone and anyone is welcome and we would love to see you.

We host many activities within our church, from toddler groups, youth groups, Bible studies, and our annual Christmas carol service which was a joyous occasion for all who attended. For more information please see our website: www.cecuk.church

Laura Bonner



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