

SC

SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE



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Amazing stories
and Art
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SPECIAL PEOPLE

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GOD SAVE THE KING

KING CHARLES III - SEE PAGES 16-17

JUNE/JULY 2023

What a great start to 2023!

With more people moving into our village. Here's just a selection of the properties we've sold and let agreed for our clients.



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FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

What an exciting month dominated by the Coronation and the extra bank holiday. It is ironic that it is still known as a bank holiday which might suggest that they are open the rest of the year, sadly this is not the case and many people are concerned about their absence from the High street. The magazine recognises the happenings in May 2023 but they do not dominate I hope. By the time this magazine arrives through your door, possibly a few days late this time due to summer holidays, it will be history.

There are a good variety of articles, about the special school and the WI (both interesting features) as well as the usual contributors. I was really pleased to receive the writing from the primary school which can be read in full on our website. An article from the Soldiers Museum missed the deadline for publication but is also posted on www.sonningcommonmagazine.org

On Saturday 10 June there will be A Village Day on Memorial Park from 2 to 6pm. Everyone is welcome so join us for a jam-packed day of summer fun. ●

Diana Pearman Editor

MEET THE EDITORIAL TEAM



Diana Pearman



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While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information printed in this magazine, the editor and the publisher cannot accept any responsibility for the consequences of errors that occur.



MECE NEWS



We spring forward to another summer term and another set of Year 11 students leaving.

This is my thirtieth year of teaching, and it is always a pressured time of year supporting and preparing the students for their exams, ensuring they have secured college, apprenticeship and Sixth Form places whilst keeping an eye on anxiety levels so that they can be in A1 shape for their examinations. However, this year above all others stands out as one of difference and disruption. My headteacher colleagues across the area report the same phenomena of students struggling in a variety of different ways. Oddly, the consequences of the pandemic and lockdowns are now being felt in our young people so I will be keeping my fingers

crossed that our small band of Year 11s can give of their best and understand how important this window is in their lives.

The strikes of recent weeks have presented us with further challenges, but I am proud that we have managed to open for Year 11 students for face-to-face lessons and teaching, on five of the six strike days so far, giving many of our students the opportunity to keep up the momentum in preparation for 15 May and their first written papers.

The prospect of future National Education Union strikes in June and July is possible along with other education unions joining in at a later date. I hope, that for the sake of the students, the government can recognise the issues schools are facing and propose a sensible and proportionate (but most importantly fully funded) pay offer in the next few weeks.

Our plans are afoot for September, and we look forward to growing our roll by approximately 70 students from where it currently stands. In readiness for an increased number of students we are working on the refurbishment of some spaces and the improvement of others. We are also currently holding a waiting list for Year 8 which is pleasing to see (although frustrating for those on it!). Schools will never be perfect entities with hundreds of



hormone laden teenagers working in close proximity to each other however, I am pleased that the news of our calm, friendly but ambitious school has filtered out to the local area and our renaissance continues.

It is a privilege to continue our work of supporting community events and activities. Our Year 10 students followed a sports leader module in their PE lessons which several of them complete by volunteering at the wonderful Active Leaders holiday sports camps led by Amanda Watkins-Cooke. In addition, we have been approached by the community to support the Primary School 10K run in September, opening up our car parks and, in addition, attending the SCPS summer fair in July as we did last year. I am delighted these partnerships we are forging are reflected in our growing number of Sonning Common students attending MECE. The school really is sitting at the heart of the community. Happy Summer! ●



ANDY HARTLEY
Headteacher

50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMUNITY DAY

Rotherfield United FC usually have a special presentation afternoon for the children and parents in June. This year is a special 50th anniversary of the club and so it is opening up to the local community! It will be held at the club ground at Bishopswood, and so easily accessible by foot from the village through the woods in preference to driving.

There will be plenty going on with various zones for kids, football and wellbeing. Also, a great BBQ, hog roast and bar, and

live music too! It is FREE and will be held between 11am and 7pm on 25 June.

Please do come along whether your children are current or ex-players, or just to join in the fun... see the poster on the Noticeboard p12 for more details and follow them on Facebook. ●



BEEES AND THE CORONATION

by CHRISTINE ATKINSON

Since Easter 2023 the preschool has extended their opening hours to include an early drop off at 8.30am, and wrap-around care until 5pm. They are very excited about providing this additional facility to local parents and carers.

There is always fun to be had in the outside kitchen and forest area through the winter, and with summer approaching the children are looking forward to being outside even more.

Bees and their importance in the world are the current focus and some parents have donated bee loving plants for the garden.

The children created some art for the celebration of the King's coronation which is on display in the village hall, and the WI have knitted a coronation scene specially for the preschool children with King, Queen, Archbishop, soldier and even a golden carriage!

Preschools are conscious of being more environmentally friendly in these times of climate change, and high costs, and are hoping to replace their strip lighting with LED lights. They also have some solar panels available which need connecting on the roof to provide power and potentially

some funds could be generated – so if any electricians in the village can help with either of these, the school would be very grateful.

For more information about the extended hours please call the office on 0118 972 4760 or email info@sonningcommonpreschool.co.uk Preschool also have an Instagram and facebook page. ●



BUSY, BUSY, BUSY

by CHRISTINE ATKINSON

School is always a very busy place, and this term is no exception. Easter holidays were followed by year 6 working hard towards their end of school SATs tests. Meanwhile Year 1 have been gardening and planting their own beans, Year 2 and 3 have been creating fabulous artwork

for the Coronation which was displayed in the village hall.

Year 4 started studying a new topic - the Vikings - and have been investigating myths and how they explained the world to ancient societies. Thor and the Giants have been particular favourites.

Year 5 have been investigating recipes for healthy muffins, designing their own, and cooking them...yum yum

All the pupils are looking forward to Sports Day and the Summer Fair.

Artwork from Pre-school and SCPS can be seen on p7. ●



FISH NEWS 1 AND 2 AND 3

Three items to share with residents in this issue, one from the past, one more up to date and finally one very much of our current times.

Some readers may have good enough memories to recall that the FISH Volunteer Centre had its beginnings in 1978. Set up originally under the name of 'The Good Neighbours Scheme' it gained charitable status in 1984 when it adopted the new title of FISH Volunteer Centre. Sometime after this, it affiliated with the minibus services that had been operating under the name SCOPE, the Sonning Common Old Peoples Enterprise. SCOPE had been running minibus journeys for senior residents since 1970. The merger of the two volunteer groups proved a valuable asset for the Sonning Common community. The name SCOPE then stopped being used as it had been registered by a national disability charity (still in operation today).

The forty years and more of FISH as a community support and transport charity will have seen hundreds of clients use its services and the number of volunteers during that time would also have been a multitude. Unfortunately, there is no official, archive of its activities and the people involved during those four decades.

HARMONY

Another Winter term under our belts; exceptional joy and happiness experienced every Thursday afternoon at 1.30p.m. during variable weather by an average of 54 undaunted singers -and over 60% come from Sonning Common

It is amazing how a good sing with friends followed by tea and cakes stimulates the personal enjoyment of life. But we don't just think of ourselves, as this term we collected £1,384 for the DEC Turkey-Syria Earthquake Appeal. To date since our foundation 18 months ago we have collected more than £5,400 for 3 charities.

Much of the paper records have been 'lost' or disposed of during the various office relocations but there are a few photographs that have survived, mainly of the various minibuses used (there have been at least 8 different vehicles). One of the earliest we have is shown here and is thought to be the second minibus dedicated to SCOPE activities, we think taken some time in the mid 1970's. We would be interested to hear if anybody can provide additional information about the photo and the individuals gathered around the bus.

The second item is more recent and less interesting but actually more important. To run its services effectively FISH uses a computer-based booking system which means we keep the names and addresses of all service users on a data file. To be sure that we are not contravening the General Data Protection Act (GDPR) we are required to have the agreement of all our clients to keeping their personal information in this way. We only hold the information you give us to make the transport bookings you request or to arrange a home visit. FISH does not share this information with any other organisation and it is kept securely. So, if you have not done so already, we

will be asking our clients to sign a consent form to keep us legal. If you use FISH we will get the form to you soon.

Last but not at all least - a very timely item. Assistance for Ukrainian Families: FISH has received a small grant from Oxfordshire County Council to provide, where possible, community transport assistance to Ukrainian families in the Sonning Common area who may be able to access the FISH bus for shopping and/or leisure trips and the car service for clinical or medical appointments. Ukrainian refugees in temporary residence or their host families can get more details by emailing the FISH Office office@fishvolunteercentre.org please use 'Ukrainian Families' in the subject line. Or by telephoning 07794 291776 and speaking to John Pearman. ●

JOHN PEARMAN Bus Manager



We are indebted to Peppard Parish Council for a £300 grant to enable our Christmas Concert to take place and to South Oxfordshire District Council with another £300 grant for training in First Aid on April 1st (although this is April Fool's day we are (deadly) serious about this training.) HARMONY members range from 26 years up to 97 years young, so we need to protect them. We have already undertaken defibrillator training, so I believe that the logo NHS now stands for National Harmony Service!

The future looks bright for HARMONY,

and we go from strength to strength. The Christmas Concert is already booked (HARMONY sings Christmas 2023!) and we already have other bookings with local WI's. However, there is a standing invitation for YOU to come along and join us this Summer Term.... Every Thursday at 1.30p.m. in Peppard War Memorial Hall when you could be strutting your stuff with us! Ring me, Barry Wood 01491 629982 to take up your invitation.

Keep on Singing ●

BARRY WOOD

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I LIKE A CHALLENGE

WHW and GGW, 27th May - 9th June 2023

Back in the dark days at the beginning of January, when all the Christmas lights had been taken down for another year, I was feeling a bit low and decided to find myself a new charity challenge to work towards. I couldn't find anything I particularly fancied abroad, so I looked at challenges in the UK – and decided that I'd like to walk the West Highland Way, being particularly fond of rain, and wind, and mountains. The WHW starts at Milngavie, just north of Glasgow, and ends at Fort William, 96 miles to the north.

It is possible to camp while doing the trail – but I'm too old for camping, and there is a company which has booked all my accommodation (B&B) en route, and will transport my luggage between stops, so all I have to do is carry my day pack (containing waterproofs, layers, water, food, First Aid kit, and maps). I'm not joining a group, so I have to find my own way on the trail – but I am told that it is very well signposted: I hope that's true! I am due to do the 96 miles in 6 days.....

After getting to Fort William at the end

of the West Highland Way, I thought I'd have a little restful holiday before coming home, going with Caledonian Discovery, the company which has hotel barges sailing between Fort William and Inverness. We've had holidays with them before, and thoroughly enjoyed them. However, the activity for the week I'm with them is 'Walking the Great Glen', a trail of 78 miles. I've walked this before, with Lowenna, in 2016 – but in the other direction, so I thought I might as well add to my experience and walk it again.

So that's the challenge: 174 miles in 12 days, travelling to and from Scotland on my own (by Caledonian Sleeper), and hopefully not getting lost or injured, or doing anything silly. I'm actually rather anxious about that last bit!

I'm hoping for sponsorship for my effort, to raise money for the Institute of Cancer Research, based at the Royal Marsden Hospital. I've lost a few friends to cancer over

the years, and the ICR is doing valuable research on the prevention of cancer, and also to find a cure. I've set myself a target of £2000 – will you help me reach it?

I have set up a JustGiving page: www.justgiving.com/page/rosemarydunstan or you can give me cash, or a cheque made payable to The Institute of Cancer Research. Or you can keep your money for other things! ●

ROSEMARY DUNSTAN



National Trust, WWF and RSPB and Sir David Attenborough say 'we must act now' to Save Our Wild Isles

On March 13th, in their first major campaign together, the National Trust, the RSPB and WWF urged everyone in society to come together to halt the destruction of UK nature and take urgent action to Save Our Wild Isles.

Millions of people from all walks of life discovered the wonder but also the fragility of UK nature through the new Wild Isles series, narrated by Sir David Attenborough.

The charities are calling on the public to show their love of nature by committing to "Go Wild Once a Week". That could mean making space for nature in our neighbourhoods by planting wildflower seeds in a window box or green space, eating less meat or getting involved in local community projects, or joining the charities in urging our leaders to act now for nature's recovery. ●



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SONNING COMMON PRIMARY SCHOOL
GROVE ROAD

summer fair

15TH JULY 2023

12.00pm till 3.00pm

The Geoffrey Norris Crest

Some of you will have noticed the Geoffrey Norris crest on the Library wall.
It is a bit of local history?
Are you listed as one of the winners?
Do you know any of those names who are on the crest? Visit the library if unreadable.
Do you think it should be cleaned up and renovated? If so would you be prepared to give a donation for the restoration?
Please contact the library if you know any of the above.
ROSEMARY DUNSTAN



Sonning Common Health Walks

Summer has come, and the Health Walks provide a good opportunity to get out into the countryside to enjoy nature in all its beauty, rain or shine. Meeting places for the start of the walks are on the website, but they will change in July; the up-to-date timetable is always available at www.sonningcommonhealthwalks.co.uk/timetable. To talk to someone about any aspect of the Health Walks phone Chris Brook on 0118 972 2609

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FOOD BANK

THANKS to all of you who are not deterred by the road closed sign on the entrance from Widmore Lane into Blounts Court road and are still providing donations. The gas workings are taking place for 20 weeks so a long-term problem.
Food donations are still needed and gratefully received. Springwater Church can be reached from Widmore Lane and from the B481.

Rhymetime



First and Third Monday of the Month at 11a.m.
Sonning Common Library

Storytime



Every Saturday at 10a.m.
Sonning Common Library

HENLEY AND DISTRICT STAMP CLUB

As we head for summer we wish for warmer and longer days and to be able to get outside in the fresh air, but for the rainy days you may wish to have a good and interesting hobby. Why not go back to your youth and collect stamps?

At the Henley stamp club is a friendly group and we would be delighted to see new visitors or members. If you are interested in facts concerning stamps or postal history, why not come along and find out how you can promote your interest.

Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month in Bix Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.
Visitors and new members are very welcome.
Further details can be obtained by phoning Brian on 01491 681739 or on our website: www.henleyphilatelic.org.uk

Millennium Green Trust

Sonning Common's unsung treasure - the Millennium Green - needs your help if you happen to have experience in financial management or accountancy. The Trust that looks after the green is looking for a new trustee to oversee the finances and advise on their management. The demands are not onerous - a maximum of six meetings a year. If you think you could help please contact me - tomfort3@gmail.com

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KING CHARLES III

THE 40TH KING TO BE CROWNED AND THE OLDEST SO FAR

Compiled by Diana Pearman

So what do we expect from our new King? The following are a selection of comments and opinion gleaned from media reports pre and post coronation.

At the service on 6 May there were representatives of our multi faith country present as he had wished, as well as his declaration that he is the Defender of Faith, not just church of England.

His creative passion is for Shakespeare, fine arts, classical music and architecture. He loves the natural world, wishing to fight the dragon of climate change. His love of gardening is shown in what he created from agricultural fields at his home in Gloucestershire.

Generations of his family have had a devotion to duty and service, seeking to preserve a constitutional model. His strong work ethic has long been evident and in recent times he had access, alongside his mother, to the red box, learning the format of the daily official documents. This ensured a seamless transition of power.

One of his most significant and successful charitable efforts has been the creation of the Princes' Trust, supporting young people 11 to 30 years old from disadvantaged backgrounds, since 1976. Over 400 charities have the benefit of his involvement, and his aim is "to try to find a way of improving things if I possibly can".

Another abiding passion is to protect the countryside and urban environment. This passion for nature is matched by his dismay with architects and he has denounced their plans a few times and changes have been made. He oversaw the planning of Poundbury in Dorchester, Dorset, an ideal village in his view. His creative spirit manifests itself in his water colour paintings and his restoration of Dumfries House. Because Art is no longer taught in schools, in 2000 he set up the Prince's drawing school.

He is a very good listener. "From what I saw he will be brilliant at audiences. Brilliant at listening, brilliant at asking questions and giving wise advice and

sage counsel" Cameron said in 2022. Women are said to find him incredibly funny, charming and persuasive. But most importantly kind.

Charles will become Commander in Chief of the armed services. He served with the Royal Air Force and qualified as a jet pilot in 1971 and as a naval helicopter pilot in 1976. His role with the armed services has been largely ceremonial, but those with whom he has been associated attest to his very real interest and engagement in their professional tasks and personal welfare. No one fears that his commitment to his armed forces will wane.

As an ambassador for Great Britain – visiting 46 countries of the 56 in the Commonwealth and performing a diplomatic role with the Royal family's soft power. He loves cars, now electric and in the past polo in his very brief rest time. His 18-year marriage to, now Queen Camilla, is a relationship they share together with a sense of humour. They laugh, they commiserate, and they work hard. Ultimately relieved to be in it together.



Year 6 pupils at SCPS were set a task to write if 'I were King or Queen for a Day'

MEGAN A In the afternoon I would decide to throw the biggest afternoon tea ever! I would send royal invitations to the whole of London! We would eat sandwiches, teas, cakes, fruit salads, scones with jam and some suggestions from the local citizens. The tea party would start at 3.30pm in the afternoon until 5.30pm then I would finish the day with a delicious dinner.

LUELLE AND LANA If we were Queens for the day we would lower everyone's taxes so everyone can have a better financial life. Also, every month we would donate 15K to every charity so that we can help support people. We would build more homeless shelters to provide people with a better life. We would say that the bigger the crime you commit the longer time you will spend in prison. All education will be free to anyone. If you are racist, sexist or homophobic you get sent to an island where you get taught

what you did is completely unacceptable. You must write handwritten letters to the family/person and pay them a fine.

MILLIE I would focus on the environment and make it my business to help it. I would first of all start off by putting the right materials in the right places. Rubber, metal and plastic can be reused or recycled, toilet waste can replace the rubbish in landfills and I would stop people burning things as it is bad for our lungs. I would make litter picking a common thing and ban cigarettes from public areas like ponds, playgrounds and farming areas, if they want to smoke they can gladly do it in their gardens or houses. I would then recommend starting to put out food and water for local birds or other garden animals to help them I'd encourage my subjects to have more potted plants in their houses and take care of our roads and pavements.

LUCILLE I would feed all the poor and I would help Turkey and the Ukraine. I would make sure that England would win every World Cup Final. I would buy Reading Football Club so that women's football can rise and get more fans. I will prove to people that men's football isn't

better than women's football; women should be equal to men. If I was Queen for the day, I would make sure racism is banned and also sexism.

LILY-MAY If I were Queen for a day I would...

- go and see my favourite animal (elephant) in Africa
- make an animal rescue centre in my garden
- give all homeless people a hot meal and some money
- make a giant theme park for kids

GABRIEL If I were King for a day, I would try my best to help the homeless, feed the hungry and cure the ill. I would appear at events and festivals. I could help people and make fair decisions; I would think hard about solutions

TEGAN I would let everybody have 100 days off work to spend time with all their families and do gardening. Everyone could come and have cake and a cup of tea in my castle. I would make the world better and clear up all the litter.

This work is edited due to lack of space. The original versions are on our website ●

JAM AND JERUSALEM

By DIANA PEARMAN

Making jam and singing Jerusalem is often the public view of what the Women's Institute (WI) does. Little do they know that the WI in Sonning Common is a whole lot more than this.....

The WI, as an organisation, began in 1897 in Ontario to educate women in domestic science. It was the brainchild of Adelaide Hoodless who had lost her baby son to a totally avoidable illness, partly through her lack of education. The first WI in the UK was formed in 1915 in Anglesey and aimed at women in agricultural areas. There are now 6,000 WI groups with over 200,000 members.

The WI has an unrivalled reputation as a voice of reason, integrity and intelligence on issues that matter to women and their communities. Each year there is a new campaign, and some have become household names like 'Keep Britain Tidy' and the National Breast Screening. In support of the campaign in 2020, a leaflet was distributed in the village magazine about the symptoms of Ovarian Cancer. This year the subject has been Autism and ADHD in girls and women, which has educated us about being more aware and to be really inclusive, non-judgemental, friendly, and welcoming, and next year will be about clean rivers for people and wildlife. The WI has a reputation for being a leader and the first organisation to bring a topic of national concern to everyone's attention.

The National Federation of Women's Institutes is a national charity set up to provide guidance and support to local WI. Each WI has its own programme of events and activities and no two are the same. They do share the same constitution so whilst each one is unique, members have the same rights and access to the same educational experiences, to 11 meetings per year, and to the copy of the

magazine WI life which is delivered to each member. The site mywi.thewi.org.uk provides information and describes much more to discover about the institution.

Sonning Common WI officially came into being on 1st March 1956. The 10th anniversary was to celebrate the regular coffee mornings, the first of which was held in March 2013. From small beginnings it has grown and become a monthly feature in the Village Hall. Jackie Million (below) was the first Chair of



SCWI and Sue Frayling -Cork (below) is the current one. She is keen to emphasise the part played, and support given by the Federation. Marion Bayliss is the coffee morning team leader, and Anne



Croxson, who has held the appointment of treasurer for many years, manages the current annual fee of £46. When asked what she enjoyed about this WI she said 'I value the opportunity to meet others, enjoying the events and the annual meeting with other WI groups in the area.'



The SCWI is thriving as it offers a diverse programme to its members - 'something for everyone' - suggests Gill Hayward. Jo Denslow, Gill Hayward and Jane Handley. Gill was host at the coffee morning when the recipients of the donations attended. A committee led by Marion organises the charity arm of the group and Gill led the recent presentation to the six charities who were recipients of the £1,8,00 raised last year. The event was reported in the April May magazine. This money is generally raised at the coffee mornings held regularly on the first Wednesday of the month. There are stalls from Ways and Means, books, tombola, and jewellery (gifted by members), wool and hand-crafted greetings cards. At the meeting I attended £215.50. was raised.

An important aspect of being a member of Sonning Common WI is the opportunity to attend Members' Meetings. Visitors are warmly welcomed to these meetings. Some attend as a one-off to listen to a

speaker on a topic of particular interest to them; others come who wish to find out more about what their local WI has to offer. The meetings are held in the Village Hall once a month on the third Thursday. Doors open at 7.00 pm with the meetings commencing at 7.30 pm and finishing by around 9.45 pm. There is a varied programme of speakers and entertainment throughout the year, organised by Alison Bishop (below).



Recent talks have been given about the Mountain Rescue Service, Midwifery, Contemporary Design and Illustration, and Lacemaking. The upcoming programme includes a talk on Women in Photography, Scams Awareness and Prevention, Wallis Simpson, as well as talks by a children's author and a folk singer. There is always a meeting to discuss the year's Resolution topics, as well as the SCWI Annual Meeting, which is rounded off by a quiz, created by one of the members - Beverley Porteous. The year is completed with a fun-filled Christmas Party night!

Inclusive, supportive, and progress is very much at the heart of the offer at Sonning

Common WI and there is also a lot of fun.

How about darts in the pub, a game of scrabble 'I am rubbish at scrabble' says Barbara Asher, (below) but she still attends every month. One of her special favourites is the summer trip. This year



the plan is to visit Hilliers Botanical gardens and Nurseries as well as Winchester. We have all seen the knitted offerings which dress our post box. The recent appearance of the post box toppers has raised lots of smiles and many passers-by take photos. Beverly Porteous is making the BIG CROWN ready for The Coronation. (below)



The members who love craft activities meet once per month, sharing and exchanging ideas and undertaking joint projects. Demonstrations and workshops have included patchwork, lace making, willow weaving and knitting for maternity wards at RBH, Radcliffe and Frimley Park hospitals. The latter garments are for premature babies. Another member, Christine Gibson, was born and has always lived in the village says she enjoys being with people, 'it gets me out of the house as it is so sociable' and she particularly enjoys the crafts. The group even make mini mice and dolls for paramedics and firemen who give them out to traumatised children involved in critical incidents.

As with everything 'it is what you make of it', states Sue Hedges who organises the craft group and clearly demonstrates her commitment. She also organises the annual Remembrance Day service held in the hall in November. Every member I spoke to said it is so friendly and sociable, there is always a welcome if you are new. I was welcomed at the door by Marion Bayliss.

Friendship is the recurring theme supported by the following comments from members.

[Continued over ...](#)

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

JAM AND JERUSALEM

continued



One member moved to SC four years ago and was welcomed to the group. She enjoys listening to the speakers and is a member of the craft group. She still feels welcome and says that it fits in with the rest of her life.

During COVID the contacts made in lockdown were really appreciated by one and all, often described as a lifeline. There were regular information sheets to keep everyone in touch and when the meeting of 6 outside was allowed the groups met in various gardens. ●

'The community is supportive, friendly and enjoyable' June Fisher (above)

'Gets me out of an evening for the speakers, The committee are lovely it is like a little family. We are always greeted, and I love the people' Janice Rapson

'If you live on your own there is a need to go out and be involved with other people. It is a very sociable group. I do enjoy the crafts.' Christine Gibson

New! England Rugby and the WI

In March 2023 the WI announced that it is proud to be an active partner in the Rugby World Cup Legacy programme and supporter of the Women's Rugby World Cup in 2025. This announcement was made by Ann Jones National Chair.

An unusual partnership you might think but it does demonstrate how relevant and wide-ranging WI participation and aspirations can be. ●



Test out the welcome at the next Coffee morning in the village hall on Wednesday 7 June at 10.30am to 12noon.



OUTDOOR FUN AROUND OUR VILLAGE

Do you remember the heavy rain showers we had in the Easter holidays? And when I say, "heavy", boy do I mean heavy! Well, despite those, the I-Spy Trail, which was available then, still proved to be very popular.

The route took the intrepid explorers from the library, past the Health Centre, along Green Lane and round to Woodlands Road via Baskerville Road playground. From Woodlands Road they made their way back to the library via the alleyway towards the bottom of Wood Lane. En route they found an octopus, a dragon and many other exciting things. Thank you to all who displayed clues, we couldn't do it without you! And well done to all who completed the trail. Everyone who made it back to the library with the answer sheet was offered a small reward for doing so. Freddie Wright's entry was drawn at random from all the completed forms and he won an Easter egg. Special congratulations to him!

Now, summer's here and the time is (nearly) right for the Big Bear Hunt of 2023. Don't know what I'm talking about? Where were you last year?!!

The Big Bear Hunt is a fun reason for both young and old to get out of the house and walk or cycle around the village. A free map will be available from the library in Grove Road during August and it will have the location of each of the bears marked on it. They will be spread throughout Sonning Common and will include some old favourites as well as some new faces. You will simply have to record the name of each of them on the answer sheet. Feedback from last year was that very young children collected them over a few outings whereas some older ones got them all in one day, some even using their bikes. It's not a race, so it doesn't matter how long it does take. Last year a lady told me that for once her usually reluctant son actually asked to go for a walk. Why? Because he wanted to finish collecting the bears' names!

So why am I mentioning this now? Well, to keep the event interesting it would be great if we could have some new locations. Would you be happy to have a laminated picture of a bear displayed in your window (if it can be seen from the road) or on your garden fence, etc? If so, please email

friendsofsonningcommonlibrary@gmail.com with your name and address. The laminated picture will be provided for you and will need to be displayed from 1st August-3rd September. Oh, and don't worry, all the bears are tame!! Or at least, I think they are...

ALISON SMITH
FoSCL



READY, STEADY, READ

Regular events continue as usual over the summer: Rhymetimes on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at 11am, storytimes on Saturdays at 10am, Social coffee mornings on Fridays at 10.30am, Scrabble on Fridays at 10.00am, and gadget help whenever needed.

But the main event to announce at this time of year is the Summer Reading Challenge! It begins on July 8th and the theme is 'Ready, Set, Read!', a sports and games themed challenge that aims to keep children's minds and bodies active

over the summer break, offering small rewards for reading books and using libraries. We'll be having special events, such as visits from ZooLab and Science Oxford, and storytime and craft sessions on Saturday mornings in August. Look out for more details nearer the time.

For more information about activities in the library for children and adults, contact the library by email: sonningcommon.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk or 0118 972 2448 ●

ROSEMARY DUNSTAN

Coronation storytime, craft and cake sale in the library on 29 April. After listening to stories such as 'The King's Pants' and 'Winnie the Pooh meets the King', about a dozen children, fortified by homemade cakes, amused themselves making crowns, and models of Charles and Camilla (out of toilet roll tubes!)



BISHOPSWOOD SCHOOL

A PROMISE FOR IMPROVEMENT



We are delighted to debut in the Sonning Common Magazine and share the exciting news from Bishopswood School, which has recently undergone some changes.

Bishopswood School is for up to 75 pupils with identified Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), ages 4 – 16. As the new Headteacher of Bishopswood School, I come with almost 20 years of experience as a teacher and leader in mainstream and SEN schools. I am passionate about identifying and removing barriers for our pupils to ensure they reach their full potential as learners and develop the skills to access and navigate the community around them.

Bishopswood School joined the Propeller Academy Trust, a Multi-Academy Trust with three SEN schools within Oxfordshire, on 1st January 2023; our new CEO is Tom Pegler;

"We are thrilled to welcome Bishopswood School to Propeller Academy Trust (PAT). PAT has 2 other community special schools in Oxfordshire and is committed to offering the best

possible education for children and young people with SEND and their families. Our aim is for Bishopswood to become an outstanding SEND hub for the community it serves, including the development of a new building on our secondary site. We are delighted to be working with such a skilful and dedicated team, and we are looking forward to the school moving from strength to strength."

Bishopswood School has been a part of the Sonning Common community for many years, providing a safe and nurturing learning environment for children with a wide range of special educational needs. However, as with any organisation, there have been challenges that we have needed to address. As a new leadership team, we are committed to making improvements that will benefit our pupils, their families, our staff, and the community.

I am ably supported by a committed leadership team consisting of a Deputy Headteacher and two Assistant Headteachers. We are experienced educators and professionals with a wealth of special education knowledge and expertise. We are passionate and relentless in our dedication, with a vision to create an inclusive and welcoming school where pupils can thrive and reach their full potential. We are championed and supported by the Trust, as well as our Chair of Governors, Mark Winch;

"I am delighted to have been asked to be the new Chair of Governors at Bishopswood School. The school is now part of the Propeller Academy Trust and has a new leadership team which has brought a new energy to the school. The school is committed to building links with our wider community, and we are really interested if you are part of a community organisation and would like to link with

the school on some joint work. The school is currently on an exciting journey of improvement, and we are looking for new governors to join our newly formed Board. If you are interested, please contact the school office, who will put you in contact with me."

Following the OFSTED inspection in November 2021, The school has been on a journey, and we have been surprised to learn that many local community members commented that they didn't even know that we were here! Co-located with Sonning Common Primary School and Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge, it is understandable that we can get a bit lost - but it does provide fantastic opportunities to promote and celebrate integration and inclusion for all!

As we have been focused on re-establishing our presence in Sonning Common, we have re-designed our school logo, invested in new signs around the school buildings, and designed and funded a school uniform for our pupils, including polo shirts, sweatshirts, and fleece. Our pupils have loved coming into school, pointing to the signs and are very proud to model their new uniform.

Whilst our school has always been a place of warmth, compassion and inclusivity, there has been much work on reviewing our curriculum, improving teaching, and learning and raising aspirations for our pupils. We are better equipped to help our pupils reach their potential, as we have reviewed and invested in high-quality resources, creating a more purposeful and aspirational learning environment. Our biggest resource is our staff, who are superb in their dedication, ambition, and support of our pupils each day.

With all this hard work from all and drive towards improvement, we have

enjoyed many holistic enrichment projects and activities, which have been hugely enjoyable for our pupils (and staff!). We have enjoyed dog therapy, art and play therapy, music therapy, Physical Education, relaxation and breathing sessions, and many trips into the local community. We have also celebrated British Science Week, inviting "Oxford Science" and "Zoo Lab" into school, providing exciting sessions of 'awe and wonder' for our pupils. To develop our community spirit, we invited the Sonning Common Pre-School children to make friends and share the experiences with us.

We have arranged some work experience opportunities for our older pupils in our local library and at the vets. We welcome links with local businesses and organisations to continue creating opportunities for our pupils; to develop their skills and independence and support them in preparing for adulthood. We will also deliver this very Sonning Common magazine to the local community – using GPS and google maps to navigate around the local area, so we look forward to seeing you!

Many of our parents have noticed the



positive difference in the school, the high aspirations, and increased opportunities for their children. We are thriving. External colleagues, consultants, and School Improvement Partners noted progress made within a short time.

The changes that are happening at our school are inspiring.

We look forward to continuing to work with our community to ensure all our children and us, as adults, benefit from continued education and collaboration to create a sense of belonging for all.

Look for our brand-new signs and gleaming royal-purple and navy-blue uniform, and please do say hi when you see us! ●

PRIYA BHAGRATH
Headteacher

www.thepropelleracademytrust.org.uk/
<https://www.bishopswoodschool.co.uk/>



The
Propeller
Academy Trust



PARISH NEWS

The content of this page is the sole responsibility of, and is paid for by, Sonning Common Parish Council

Carole Lewis Standing down from parish after 10+ years



I was co-opted onto the Parish Council in February 2011 (along with other Village Gardeners) and was subsequently elected to the Council in May 2011.

During my time I have held most of the positions in the Parish Council. Chairman from 2017 to 2021 and I also Chaired the Planning and Finance Committees . . . as well as doing a stint in Parish Office for holiday cover!

Before joining I had no idea quite how much the Parish Council contributed to the running of the village and just how hard my fellow councillors worked to support the residents.

It is true to say that during my time we have faced many challenges.

Dealing with issues related to planning has been an eye opener! We seem to be always staving off the threat from one developer or another - some more usefully than others. A mix of highs and lows - the euphoria of the refusal of SODC's Planning Committee to grant planning for Gladman and Gallagher for their mammoth projects, which would not have been achieved without the

huge support from the village. I have fond memories of the coaches from the village transporting us to the Council offices, our protest and the excellent presentations by our representatives.

The ultimate low must clearly be the recent debacle of the 'Inspired Villages' planning appeal which was successful despite our best efforts.

Although not directly involved I would like to thank the teams, some of whom were volunteers and not council members, who worked for so long and diligently on our Neighbourhood Development Plan and without it and them who knows where the village would be. Regrettably, I am sure that we will continue to face such challenges.

From a personal perspective I am most proud of piloting the skatepark project, which opened in 2015, with financial support from Lafarge/Tarmac. Getting the grant of £70,000 was not easy but the rewards for young people are still evident today, from the wide range of ages of young people walking past our house with skateboards and scooters en-route to the Skatepark. It is gratifying to see it so well used after many years.

I would like to acknowledge the Working Party and the Council for their hard work over nearly five years which culminated in the magnificent Memorial Park which is clearly a major asset for the village with benefits for all age groups.

In conclusion, I am very pleased to see the influx of new parish councillors and am confident that the village will remain in very capable hands. ●



Carole has contributed to the parish in a whole range of areas. She has been an invaluable member of the Planning Committee; always diligent, thoughtful, well prepared and unfailingly generous with her volunteer time. We will miss her!
District Cllr Leigh Rawlins

I can't quite remember when I first met Carol Lewis but I do remember being impressed by her efficiency and powers of organisation. At my suggestion she agreed to join the parish council and what a fine job she did. She came to every meeting having done her homework, with the planning rules and regulations at her fingertips. She brought the same skill set to The Village Gardeners and could always be relied on to tackle the job full on. She had personal tragedy in her life, but many people would have never known. professionalism was her watchword. She will be missed on the parish council.

Chrissie Godfrey ex.Cllr.

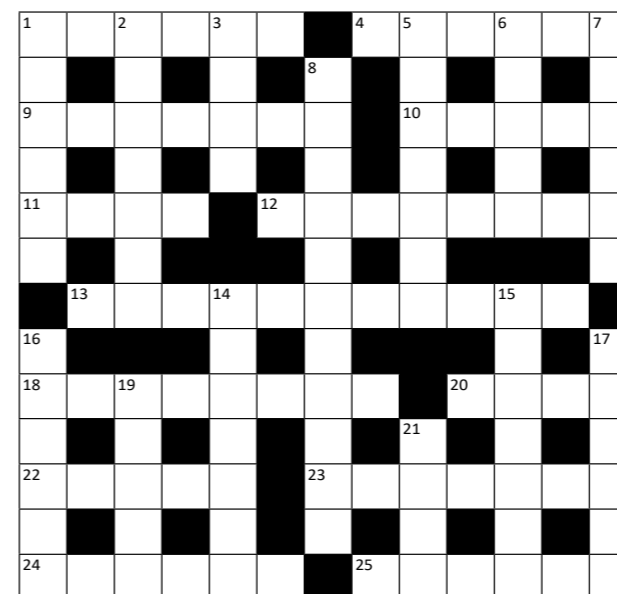
During her tenure as Chair of the PC, Carole was always professional and unflappable. She built on her previous, wide experience of council work and grew into the role always being aware of the best interests of the community she served. She was a pleasure to work alongside.

Chairman John Stoves

PUZZLE PAGE

By DAVID DUNSTAN

Cryptic crossword



ACROSS

- Pay up and relax (6)
- After five Annie gets lost in capital (6)
- King has old obsession for country (7)
- Frenchman takes wine initially to revitalise (5)
- 11&3 down. Court German with renewed elan in village street (4,4)
- Article about remoulded tyres shows pedigree (8)
- 13&20. Arabs killed over disturbance in village street (11,4)
- 18&25. Beth mistook pal in confusion in village street (8,6)
- See 13
- This type of crossword loses current copyright in underground chamber (5)
- Exclude definition of 'lure' (4,3)
- Making well going topless in London suburb (6)
- See 18

DOWN

- Astute Kate died (6)
- Draw cat with student in scarf (7)
- See 11 across
- I confused earls with current Middle Easterner (7)
- No-one has time in musical group (5)
- Albert means forever (6)
- Bankers prowl endlessly confused for money lenders (11)
- Explosive force of king with lotion mixture (7)
- Watchman not at home after inspection (7)
- Clumsy spy with revolutionary soul (7)
- Unsteady tumulus contains inner shrine (6)
- Pastoral scene in which I would yell losing energy (5)
- Singer improvised a lot (4)

Sudoku

Grading: easy-medium

4	1		6	8					
	8	9				3			
7		5	3						
	3		9	5	4				
	4		6			9			
	5	6	4		1				
		6	7				1		
	8			4	3				
		5	8			9		4	

Cryptogram

The following quotation has been encoded using a simple letter substitution. What does it say?

EBN NAN DRITU HUUD AB EBFAUBD DACU ,
MEWL OKIB UBWPWBNT CIOBDEABT PSUUB -
MAWWAEC GWELU

Quiz: Towns in Oxfordshire

- Home of the MG car factory from 1929 to 1980.
- Home of the River and Rowing Museum.
- Home to a collection of Great Western Railway locomotives and rolling stock.
- Lies at the foot of a 240 m (790 ft) hill on the western edge of the Chiltern Hills.
- Location of a designer outlet shopping centre, opened in 1995, popular with Chinese tourists.
- The home of Agatha Christie from 1934 until her death in 1976.
- The location of Blenheim Palace, birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill.
- The setting for the Inspector Morse novels by Colin Dexter.
- Used to represent the fictional town of Causton for the Midsomer Murders drama series.
- Where you can "see a fine lady on a white horse".

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MEET SHEILA MAUGHAN A WOMAN OF VISION AND DRIVE

By **JOAN GRUMMANT**



Sheila came to live in Sonning Common with her husband Dennis in 1967 and she is well known in the community for her ability to get things done with good humour and speed.

She was born in W. London and attended Ealing Grammar School for girls but was unsure of her career path when the time came to leave school. She was fortunate enough to find work that really stimulated her with Glaxo, initially in the post room and then via various routes that led to her to becoming personal assistant to the deputy director of the company. He eventually went on to become Managing Director of the company and Sheila's secretarial, organisational flair and bookkeeping skills were fully recognised as she continued working for him. Sheila continued in this role for many years and has certainly made good use of this skill set when tackling other projects in her life.

In 1967 Sheila and Dennis moved to Sonning Common and started a family. They sadly lost a son when he was nearly five, but she also had a daughter who presently works in the Parish Council Office. Sheila needed to channel her energies and expertise into work and started off by working as a lunch time supervisor at Chiltern Edge School where she loved the work and stayed

for two years. Various opportunities for other secretarial work followed including time at the Catherine Wheel in Henley as Personal and Banqueting Secretary and at the Henley Golf Club. Sheila also managed the books on a part time basis for the Crown pub at Playhatch and for a local electrical engineer. An especially important part of her working life happened by chance when she met a friend at the building site of Henley Rowing Museum and later at the INVESCO Perpetual Building. From this she was engaged to manage the finances and admin of a very wealthy gentleman who had eyesight issues and lived in a retirement home in Henley. She stayed with him for four years until he died in 2011. She liked to keep busy and feel useful and this drive continued into her retirement.

When retired she worked as a House Volunteer at Greys Court for thirteen years and enjoyed playing bowls for Peppard Bowls Club for fifteen years until back problems intervened.

In 2008 Sheila met Reg Foster, Bus Manager for FISH and was persuaded to volunteer and organise trips to National Trust properties. These proved to be extremely popular and in 2010 she was

invited to join the Committee for FISH and later became Treasurer where her organisational flair and business acumen proved to be a huge asset. During this time, she continued to work with the Bus Manager to organise monthly trips to places of interest and does so to this day.

Covid proved to be an extremely tough time for us all and. Sheila was asked to set up a local prescription service through FISH for those unable to leave home. She worked closely with the local chemist, and had the scheme running like clockwork with her volunteers picking up and delivering prescriptions to the most vulnerable in our community. Now, thirteen years later Sheila is still a FISH Trustee.

Sheila has a quick eye for spotting an opportunity where some help could enable change to enhance lives and mental health in the community. At one of the monthly FISH tea parties Sheila recognised that only three men turned up amongst the much greater number of women. After some investigation she discovered that opportunities for men to meet, learn and socialise were severely limited, so her Men's Shed project was born. Sheila established a small committee of four people and has managed to secure a 25-year lease on a plot of land for a peppercorn rent from the Trustees of Peppard Memorial Hall. The two portacabins, once in situ, will offer a place to learn new skills as well as offering a much-needed opportunity for social contact. The fundraising has been very successful and local generosity has enabled Sheila to sign the lease.

To have achieved so much requires a great deal of determination and the varied and exciting work undertaken by Sheila has obviously given her a unique set of skills that have served the village extremely well. We can only wonder what she will attempt next but can be assured that she will see it through with good humour and with her eyes firmly fixed upon the welfare of all! ●

SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE



Covid vaccination update and Staff News

COVID vaccine clinics: The COVID Spring booster programme started on 17th April. The cohorts that are eligible for the vaccine are:

- all patients 75 years and over (or who will turn 75 by 30th June 23)
- care home patients
- housebound patients
- patients who are immunosuppressed.

Our vaccine clinics have started with our first big clinic on Saturday 22nd April. Invitations are being sent to patients for them to book their appointment online, they can also call our vaccine appointment line Tuesday – Friday 1000-1500. Please visit our website for details of future planned clinics.

New partner: Dr Michael Weeks is already a familiar face at Sonning Common Health Centre as he has been a salaried GP for some time. We are pleased to announce that since the beginning of April Dr Weeks has become a partner of the health centre.

Lyme disease

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that is spread to humans by infected ticks. It should be treated early to reduce risk of Lyme disease which can be a life changing illness.

Symptoms of Lyme disease

A circular or oval shape rash around a tick bite can be an early symptom of Lyme disease.

The rash usually appears 1 to 4 weeks after being bitten by an infected tick. It can last for several weeks.

The rash can have a darker or lighter area in the centre and might gradually spread.



It's not usually hot or itchy.

The rash may be flat, or slightly raised, and look pink, red, or purple when it appears on white skin. It can be harder to see the rash on brown and black skin and it may look like a bruise.

The rash may look like a bullseye on a dartboard. Sometimes the edges of the rash may feel slightly raised.

Some people also get flu-like symptoms a few days or weeks after they were bitten by an infected tick, such as:

- a high temperature, or feeling hot and shivery
- headache
- muscle and joint pain
- tiredness and loss of energy

If a GP thinks you might have Lyme disease, you will be prescribed a course of antibiotics.

The antibiotics you're given will depend on your symptoms, but you may need to take them for up to 28 days. It's important to finish the course, even if you start to feel better.

Most people with Lyme disease get better after antibiotic treatment. This can take months for some people, but the symptoms should improve over time. It is not a disease to be taken lightly.

People with symptoms of Lyme disease that last a long time after treatment may be referred to a specialist in hospital for advice and more blood tests.

Tick-borne disease in the UK: stay safe this spring and summer

As we head into spring and summer it is worth remembering to be 'tick aware'. Ticks enjoy the great outdoors.

Ticks can carry infections and while Lyme disease is more common in the UK, it is also in Europe so take care when abroad. Cases of tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) in England have been confirmed.

Where are ticks found?

Ticks live in many different outdoor environments but they are particularly common in grassy and wooded areas. You are therefore more at risk of being bitten if you take part in activities such as hiking, cycling or camping, but they can also sometimes be found in gardens.

How to avoid tick borne infections

Before going into tick habitats, spray your skin with a tick repellent. Ticks are repelled by certain chemicals which limit their chances of getting on your skin or biting you. Common repellents include

- Picaridin
- DEET, and
- Essential oils.



Of these, picaridin and DEET work best because they last longer. Research shows essential oils only work up to 20 minutes after application. Picaridin 20% can last 12 to 14 hours depending on whether a spray or lotion is used. The length of effect of DEET depends on the concentration. DEET 30% can last for 8 hours - while DEET 98% in Backwoods OFF can last for 10 hours.

While walking in green spaces, consider wearing clothing that covers your skin to make it more difficult for ticks to access a suitable place to bite.

Use insect repellent such as Picaridin or DEET and consider wearing light coloured clothing so that you can easily spot ticks and brush them off.

After spending time outside, check yourself, your clothing, your pets and others for ticks. Remove any attached tick as soon as you find it using a tick-removal tool or fine-tipped tweezers.



Is Picaridin more effective than DEET?

It may work as well as DEET in repelling insects, and it may protect against mosquitoes for up to 7 hours. Picaridin is odourless and does not feel sticky or greasy. It is less likely to cause skin irritation than DEET. And it does not damage synthetic fabrics or plastics.

Actions Right After Coming Indoors

Once you are inside take actions to remove any ticks that might be on your clothing or attached to your body. You could remove your clothes and place them in a hot drier. The drier can blow any attached ticks off and the heat can kill them. With your clothes off, you will have an easier time seeing any ticks on your skin. Some suggest taking a shower. The idea behind this action is while naked showering, you will have an easier time seeing the ticks. The shower water itself does not kill a tick. There is also a potential that showering can dislodge ticks from your skin.

Pets

Your pets may also pick them up when out for a walk and in turn pass them on to humans. It is important to check and remove these safely.

Safely Remove an Attached Tick

If you find a tick attached, remove it safely. The best way to remove a tick is to grab the tick at the head using tweezers or a special tick remover. Pull up slowly and carefully. This method limits the chances that an attached tick will vomit Lyme and related germs into the tick bite area. Other methods, like burning a tick off, increase the chances of germ transmission from an infected tick. ●



CHURCH NEWS

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2023 - TAIWAN: KINGDOM OF ORCHIDS

It was with reverence and feeling very honoured that I joined the WDP service at St John the Baptist Church for the first time this year. The service is written by Christian women around the world, each year by a different country. This year, it was Taiwan's turn. Taiwan's history is fraught with conflict and has been caught in a superpower tug of war for many years, has been isolated internationally for decades and has only been recognised as a sovereign country since April 2022 by thirteen of the 193 UN member states and Vatican City.

Christianity was brought to Taiwan more than a hundred years ago by missionaries, and the word was received by many Taiwanese people. According to statistics from 2017, about 6% of the Taiwanese population are Christians, of which 50% Catholics and 50% Protestants. This year's sermon was prepared by the Taiwanese women during the COVID-19 epidemic in 2020. The sermon took the form of letters of encouragement to women who suffered injustice, abuse and harsh working situations while earning very little. It also highlighted the injustice done to the Earth and the hard work the women put in to save our earth. Yet despite the challenges they face every day, these women have been steadfast in their love of God and their faith, trusting and overcoming many obstacles.

As it was my first time, I did not know what to expect. I was chosen as one of five ladies to read out a letter of encouragement. From the start, I was captured by the beautiful hymns chosen – one a hymn composed by a

Taiwanese lady - the scripture reading and the plight of Christians in Taiwan. The faith the Taiwan women have is so encompassing and wonderful that it gives hope for the future. If a small country like Taiwan can work towards protecting their natural resources as well as attempting to become totally nuclear free, whilst working to gain more people for Christ, what stops us from doing it? I felt enriched and full of respect for the Taiwanese ladies!

What a wonderful way of bringing the plight of Christian women all over the world to the fore.

Make sure not to miss out next year when the service will be at St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church on Friday 1st March. It will be prepared by the women of Palestine. For more information on the World Day of Prayer visit: www.wwdp.org.uk.

Submitted by a representative of Springwater Church



ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH,

This year, the Church celebrated the great feast of Pentecost on 28th May, bringing the Easter season to a close. Pentecost recalls that moment when the initial followers of Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit, enabling them to make sense of the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus and emboldening them to take his message to the world. Over the Easter season we as a Catholic community reflected on the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. During our Easter services (Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday) the pandemic was forgotten as the church filled to numbers not seen since before the Covid outbreak. It was wonderful to see old friends return and to welcome many visitors. Our hearts were lifted in thanksgiving as we celebrated these services together. On the Friday we joined with the other local churches for the Good Friday walk of witness around Sonning Common. A simple reminder of why Good Friday is a public holiday.

At our 10.30am Sunday Mass we have now restarted our Children's Liturgy, where children have their own activities for part of the Mass before returning to their parents.

As we enter the summer months, we are looking forward to our young people making their first Holy Communion or being Confirmed. These events remind us that the Holy Spirit is still active in the world today. Processions are part of the Catholic culture that have been somewhat neglected in this country over recent decades and so we hope to revive a simple procession soon. If you wish to know more about the Catholic church or want to return,

please contact the parish office. Details and our weekly newsletter can be found on our website: www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk

CIRDIC (CHURCHES IN READING DROP-IN CENTRE)

Can you help?

CIRDIC is a safe and welcoming drop-in centre for homeless people living in the local community. Originally set up over 30 years ago by a group of Christians from a number of churches in Reading, it is run with passion and efficiency by Mabel Boyd and her team of around 70 volunteers.

The centre precludes no person in need of care and food, regularly providing 60-70 homeless people with breakfast and lunch. However, in addition to providing food and drink, its visitors can have a shower and are given fresh underwear and clothing before they leave. There is also medical help on hand in the form of two visiting nurses.

This is an excellent charity which offers practical help to those in need, but it can only continue to do this effectively if it receives support. In particular CIRDIC is looking for donations of clothing, including men's and women's underwear and socks, toiletries, and tinned and non-perishable foods.

Should you be able to contribute any of these items, collection boxes will be available throughout June and July in the porches of St John the Baptist in Kidmore End, and Christ the King, Sedgewell Road, Sonning Common. Alternatively, financial contributions are most welcome, and a cheque made out to 'CIRDIC' and posted in the church collection boxes, the church post box outside Christ the King, or sent directly to St Saviour's Hall, 1 Berkeley Avenue, Reading, RG1 6JT would also be much appreciated.

You can be sure that any support you are able to give will be well used.

[Karen Broadbent](#)

CHILTERN EVANGELICAL CHURCH

www.cecuk.church

No serious historian doubts that Jesus of Nazareth was a real historical figure. From Josephus & Tacitus (first century AD) to today's history scholars – all affirm the reality of Jesus. Whatever you think of Jesus, his existence cannot be ignored. World religions claim to worship great & powerful gods, seeking to reach them or please them. But Christianity is not about us 'doing,' it's about responding to what has already been done!

Are you genuinely searching for meaning in life? Do you want to know if God exists, and if he does, how you can possibly relate to him? At Chiltern Evangelical Church, we believe that God created everything – including us! He gives us the ability to think & reason, and to have faith in him – even though we cannot see him directly. God is not hiding from us...and those who really seek him will find him.

At the heart of what we're all about is Jesus, and the good news that he came into our world to offer forgiveness and hope to all those who believe in him. Wherever you are in your faith journey, you are always welcome to our Sunday services at 4.30pm

[Susan Judge](#)

MEET OUR NEW ASSOCIATE PRIEST, REVD SARAH VAN DER WATT

Greetings, Friends.

I (Sarah) am the Associate Priest in the Benefice of Rotherfield Peppard, Kidmore End & Sonning Common. I am married to Andrew, and we have three children: Abigail (11), Jessica (8), and Peter (6). We flew over from South Africa six weeks ago.

In the early 2000s I studied a year of Corporate Communications, before switching to Theology. While studying, I worked as a youth pastor at a local Anglican church. I was ordained deacon

in 2007 and priest in 2008, at St Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg. I did my training years at a big parish in Jo'burg, and then moved to be the Rector of two different parishes over the next 10 years. We have done a lot of learning and unlearning!

We have loved our years in South Africa, surrounded by family. The rhythm of African worship is part of who we are. The history of injustice in South Africa has shaped our hopes and commitments for this world.

Moving overseas has been a big adventure, and we are so enjoying exploring this beautiful area and settling into our new home. Along with my parish involvement, I am also doing three years of training in Spiritual Accompaniment. This will enable me to accompany people as they navigate times of joy and grief, and to discern what God might be up to in the busyness of ordinary life.

We are delighted to be part of this community, and look forward to meeting many of you over the next months.



TOM FORT PAST AND PRESENT

By the time anyone reads this, my new book – Rivets, Trivets and Galvanised Buckets: Life in the Village Hardware Shop – will have been published and will, I hope, be flying off the bookshop counters (well, a chap can dream).

As part of the publicity, I did an email Q&A interview with a magazine called This England. Among the questions was one asking which age, past or present, I would have liked to live in. I replied 'the present age' without thought, but I have been pondering it more deeply since.

Of course, there are obviously awful things about life today. For one thing, I do not think we have in my lifetime been worse governed than we are now. Politics has been debased appallingly. Hatred and bitterness and lies fly around social media. Opinions are polarised, people are much ruder than they used to be.

Add to that – pretty much at random – Brexit (hands up who still thinks that was a good move), potholes, atrocious parking, the decline in village shops, the closure of pubs, climate change, flood, drought, famine and horrible wars.

All very bad. But think about the good. Take ice cream. When I was a lad there was vanilla, chocolate (which didn't taste of chocolate) and Neapolitan which had three colours all tasting of nothing. The arrival of Raspberry Ripple was a sensation, but now the range of delicious ice cream in every supermarket makes homemade ice cream redundant.

Beer. When I started drinking it, real ale seemed doomed to extinction. Now there are micro-breweries everywhere, and the beer is generally superb (as from the Loddon Brewery in Dunsden). Sausages are better. Bread is better. TV is miles better. Rugby union and test

match cricket are vastly more entertaining than they used to be.



But in all seriousness, the biggest single advance is in health. We may bemoan the state of the NHS, but the fact is that as a nation we are far healthier than we used to be. Diseases that were a death sentence are routinely cured. We live longer, and the elderly are far fitter and more active than they were in the old days.

We have much to be grateful for. ●

ARE YOU ONE OF THE 10% OR ONE OF THE 1%?

Do you know, 90% of Sonning Common residents live within half a mile on foot from the village centre, and 99% live within 1 mile? How often do you drive there? How often do you go "Exhaust-free"? (On foot, mobility-scooter or pedalling.)

A half mile walk takes an average person 10 minutes. An average 80 year old might take 15 minutes. People have told us that they would cycle to the shops if they felt safer.

A UK university study shows that the risk of death from cycling injury is "far outweighed by the decreased risk of death that comes from the increased physical activity and lower BMI from cycling". ●

PAUL W



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PUZZLE PAGE ANSWERS FROM PAGE 25



Quiz: Towns in Oxfordshire
 1. Abingdon 2. Henley 3. Didcot [Didcot Railway Centre] 4. Watlington [Watlington Hill] 5. Bicester [Bicester Village] 6. Wallingford [Winterbrook House] 7. Woodstock 8. Oxford 9. Thame 10. Banbury [Banbury Cross]

WILLIAM BLAKE

AND DID THOSE FEET IN ANCIENT TIME,
 WALK UPON ENGLANDS MOUNTAINS GREEN. --

Cryptogram

6	1	5	8	3	2	9	7	4
2	8	7	1	9	4	3	6	5
3	9	4	6	5	7	2	8	1
9	5	6	4	7	8	1	2	3
1	4	2	3	6	5	7	9	8
8	7	3	2	1	9	5	4	6
7	6	9	5	8	3	4	1	2
5	2	8	9	4	1	6	3	7
4	3	1	7	2	6	8	5	9

Sudoku

W	O	T	T	O	B	G	N	L	V	E
U	Q	U	T	S	O	L	H			
T	U	O	E	R	U	P	C	R	A	H
Y	K	A	E	O	D	Y				
D	A	R	O	K	E	L	A	P	H	S
A	O			O	I	L	H	S		P
					B	A	S	K	E	R
S					L	L				D
					C	E	S	T	R	Y
W					A	W	B	E		E
L					R	E	N	E	W	R
A					S	O	P	A	O	H
V	I	E	N	N	A					S

Cryptic crossword

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