



The Parish Magazine for

£1

# STOCKBRIDGE LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD

February 2023





# The Parishes of Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford in the Mid-Test Benefice

**Rector:** The Rev'd Philip Bowden

**Phone no.** 01264 810810

rector@midtest.org.uk

**Website:** <http://www.2day.ws/stockbridge>

**All Enquiries, including enquiries about Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals:**

Please contact our Rector (see details above)

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### **Longstock & Leckford WI**

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Vacancy

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### **Scout Group Explorers**

Andrea Zanchi 07747 720735

Louise Henderson 07436 899054

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### **Stockbridge Church Flowers Sec**

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### **Stockbridge Dramatic Society**

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### **Stockbridge Music**

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### **Stockbridge Parish Council**

Chair: Alex Lawrence

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[clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org)

**Stockbridge Pharmacy** 810624

### **Stockbridge Police Station**

(Non emergencies) 101

### **Stockbridge Primary /Pre School**

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### **Stockbridge Rec Ground**

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Kim Candler (Chair) 811776

*On-line bookings*

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

or phone 513299

### **Test Valley School**

Ms Caroline Lowing (Head) 810555

### **Trout 'n About**

Richard Gueterbock 01264 810966

### **TVBC Councillor**

Cllr Tony Ward 01794 389649

### **Unity Transport (Dial-a-Ride shopping bus)** 356808

## ***From the Rector***

### **Charging your batteries**

The last month has involved a bit of car maintenance for me. The car that I have driven for the last seven years, an early model electric car, is showing its age, and has lost its range. Really, it needs to be upgraded or to be sold off; however, neither of these are easy to achieve and so it is off the road, and I am driving a 'banger' for a while until I work out what to do.

In the meantime, I have been servicing the brakes. However, after doing this work, when I turned the car on (for the first time in several months), the small 12volt battery had gone flat and the car would not start. It seemed ironic that a car with a huge 400volt lithium battery could not function because its much smaller 12volt lead-acid cousin did not have enough power to send the signal that starts the car. I am sure once the 12volt has been charged or replaced we will be back in business!

It made me realise how, when we neglect the small routine things, the big things can stop working. This is a helpful way of viewing our spiritual lives. Often, time for stillness, reflection and prayer get squeezed out by the large, complex and overwhelming realities of daily living. It is only a very few for whom spiritual pursuits are the main substance of daily living, and those people most likely live in a monastery! However, for the rest of us, the small portion of our time we devote to keeping our relationship with God 'charged up' is no less important. If neglected, then we discover that letting that little 12volt battery run flat renders many other parts of our lives inoperable too!

***The Rev'd Philip Bowden***

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*Cover Photo: Nigel Rugman*

*Footers for February celebrate Valentines Day -  
"All you need is Love" . . . preferably with a dash of humour thrown in!*

## From the Editorial Team

This is the first issue of the magazine in 2023, and we are somewhat belated in wishing all our readers a happy new year! We take a break over Christmas, and by the time this issue comes out, all the seasonal excitement is over and the events of 2022 are behind us. But this year we wanted to look back just briefly to thank everyone involved in making Christmas special in our three villages. We are grateful to all who light up our houses and streets and bring such cheer throughout December and into January. In the darkest time of the year it is a particular joy to cross the bridge or navigate the roundabout into Stockbridge and see all the lights and the shop windows decorated so beautifully. It is so encouraging, especially in such a troubled year, that the villages and businesses come together to create something so widely appreciated by the local communities and beyond!

But now we are all looking forward and hoping that this spirit will continue into 2023, not just in our corner of Hampshire but nationally and globally - we all know that there is quite a lot in the world that could be improved with a little more cooperation and understanding.

And we have plenty to look forward to in 2023, with our clubs and societies arranging lots of events and activities, and organisations like the National Trust looking to the future and planning improvements (see page 11). And another church year will bring its reassuring rhythms and with them, plenty of activity!

Frances Candler, Jennifer Kidd and Thea Taylor

## Wherwell History Group

Friday 17 February  
at 8.00pm



### Norman Thelwell (1923 - 2004) Celebrated cartoonist and artist

#### A talk by Tim Craven

A Zoom Presentation

Please book in advance by checking our website at <https://www.wherwellhistory.com>



# Stockbridge Community Cinema



### AZOR (15) Friday 10 February 7.30pm (1hr 40min)

Argentina, the late 1970s in the midst of a dictatorship. Private banker Yvan arrives from Geneva with his wife Ines to replace a colleague who has mysteriously disappeared in military-ruled Buenos Aires.

### MRS HARRIS GOES TO PARIS (PG) Wednesday 15 February 4.45pm and 7.30pm (1hr 55min)

In 1950s London, a widowed cleaning lady falls madly in love with a couture Dior dress, deciding she must have one of her own. After working to raise the funds to pursue her dream, she embarks on an adventure to Paris that will change not only her own outlook - but the very future of the House of Dior.

**Tickets £6.00** (£5.50 + £0.50 booking fee)  
available online via our website  
[stockbridgecinema.org.uk](http://stockbridgecinema.org.uk) or via the  
Ticketsource telephone booking service  
**0333 666 3366** (additional £1.80 fee per booking)  
Refreshments on sale

## Ukraine Fundraiser for generators and humanitarian aid

Friday 17 February at 6pm  
Stockbridge Town Hall

Charity evening to raise funds for Ukraine with speakers giving their first-hand experience

For further details, see pages 20 & 21

## SAVE THE DATE

### Stockbridge Courts Baron and Leet Annual Meeting

Wednesday 8 March 2023  
7.00pm in Stockbridge Town Hall

All welcome

Further details next month

## Stockbridge Town Hall

### Events



#### Weekly

Mon am	Pilates with Paula
Mon am	Pilates Unlimited with Clare
Tues am	Iyengar Yoga with Melissa
Tues am	Michelle Buhl-Nielsen Art Class
Weds am	Yoga with Dionne
Thurs am	Iyengar Yoga with Melissa
Thurs am	Stockbridge Community Market
Thurs am	Su Joy Art Class
Thurs pm	Joga
Fri am	Moo Music

#### This Month

Feb 3-5	Zoe Fitchet Art
Feb 4	Antique Fair
Feb 5	Hampshire Assoc of Cricket Officials
Feb 10	Stockbridge Community Cinema
Feb 11	South Central Makers
Feb 15	Hampshire Assoc of Cricket Officials
Feb 15	Stockbridge Community Cinema
Feb 16	Stockbridge Parish Council
Feb 17-18	Capital Cashmere
Feb 17	Stockbridge & Ukraine Support
Feb 20	Romsey Deanery Synod
Feb 25-26	Antiques & Curios
Feb 25-26	Hawkmoor Books
Feb 25	Jules At No.43
Feb 26	Hampshire Assoc of Cricket Officials
Feb 28	Longstock & Leckford WI



## LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD WI

Tuesday 28 February  
6.45pm for 7pm start  
in Stockbridge Town Hall

### A History of Dorset Buttons

Demonstration by Jan Best from  
Weyhill Craft Centre

*Guests always welcome*  
*Please contact Sue Hill on 811779 for further details*

### Longstock Garden Club Committee

invites you to a talk by

#### Andy McIndoe: 'Planting for Wildlife'

Andy is the well-known ex-Managing Director of Hillier Nurseries; he was responsible for the development of the Hillier's chain of garden centres and for 25 consecutive Gold Medal-winning exhibits at RHS Chelsea Flower Show. He is one of the UK's leading horticulturists and is a Garden Consultant, Planting Designer, Author, Lecturer and Broadcaster.

**Join us on Tuesday 14th February 2023 at  
7.30 pm in Longstock Village Hall**  
(Doors open at 7.00pm)

**All are welcome; tickets on the door are  
£5.00 to include a glass of wine  
(Free to LGC members)**

<https://longstockgardenclub.com/>  
Peter 07881573493



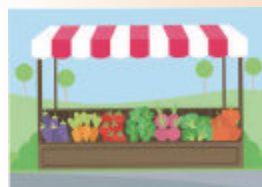
## Houghton WI

Monday 20 February  
Houghton Village Hall

### Tales from Downton Abbey

**Bronda Dossett**

Visitors welcome  
Further information from  
Jane Anderton 01264 810928



## Stockbridge Community Market

**Every Thursday morning  
9.30 - 11.45am**

**in Stockbridge Town Hall**

Selling the very best local and home-made produce

Pies, cakes, breads, soups, eggs and vegetables.  
Handmade crafts, toys, books, plants & bric-a-brac.

Please come along and browse

### Copy for Magazine

Copy date for the March Magazine:

**15 February 2023**

**Please send emails to:**

[editorsstockmag@gmail.com](mailto:editorsstockmag@gmail.com)

or phone Frances on 01264 811776

Jennifer on 01264 811179 or Thea on 07730 964481



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## Stockbridge Amateur Dramatic Society's

### Curtain Calls...

Come and be entertained by readings and performances from plays, poems and novels - and often songs

**Tuesday 7th February  
at 7.30pm  
Stockbridge Town Hall**

You don't have to be a member of SADS to come along (but we'd love it if you'd join). We're always looking for new blood to act, direct and be part of the backstage team.

No experience necessary!  
Stockbridgeamdrams@gmail.com  
or find us on Facebook

## Test Villages u3a

Join us on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February**  
in **Chilbolton Village Hall**

### From Cabaret to Conservation

**Shelley Lozano** shares her experiences of life as an entertainer to her current work raising funds for endangered big cats. Discover her passion and enthusiasm as she takes us on a journey from the rainforests of Borneo and Costa Rica, to the South African plains and the exotic Middle East and Asia.

Test Villages u3a meets on the 1st Thursday of each month in Chilbolton Village Hall.  
Doors open **1.40pm** for the presentation followed by refreshments

**New members are very welcome**

Find out more about the National Organisation at [u3a.org.uk](http://u3a.org.uk) and our Test Villages Group at [u3asite.org.uk/test-villages/home](http://u3asite.org.uk/test-villages/home)



## The Royal British Legion Houghton and District Branch

Contact David Williams (Chairman)  
01264 811072

Social evenings are held on the first Tuesday of most months in The Greyhound.



## Stockbridge Music

**Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023, 7.30pm,  
St Peter's Church,  
Stockbridge**

### The Morassi Quartet

*Giving young musicians a platform: the first concert of 2023 in Stockbridge Music's young musicians' series*

**Natasha Humphries (violin), Katie Mazur (violin), Toby Warr (viola), Iza Stefańska (cello)**

Formed in 2018 at the Royal College of Music by violinists Natasha Humphries and Katie Mazur, the members of **The Morassi Quartet** have already had exceptional starts to their musical careers. As well as performing in many RCM concerts, including the annual Chamber Music Festival, the quartet have also performed at the Royal Festival Hall. They have also toured abroad extensively, including to France, Austria, Germany, Poland, Russia and China.

The programme has yet to be finalised, but will include a selection from pieces by Rachmaninov, Puccini, Haydn, Mendelssohn and Bacewicz.

Tickets £20 (U18s £7.50) are available from [stockbridgemusic.uk](http://stockbridgemusic.uk) or on the door



In association with Stockbridge Music



## Mozart Requiem

Simon McEnery conductor

St Peter's Church, Stockbridge SO20 6EU  
Saturday 18 March 2023, 7.30 pm

Tickets £15.00 from [stockbridgemusic.uk](http://stockbridgemusic.uk)  
or on the door (under-18s free)

[salisburychamberchorus.org](http://salisburychamberchorus.org)







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# Stockbridge Parish Council News



## Flooding

January and February is usually a time when there is concern about rising water levels. A resource for flooding matters is now up and running on the Parish Council website:

<http://www.stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk/community/stockbridge-parish-council-12514/flooding-issues/>

It includes the Environment Agency maps of the extent of flooding in Stockbridge in a 100-year event and the likely extent of flash flooding. There is also an article by Mr Roger Tym which explains the protections that have been installed in Stockbridge (and paid for by TVBC and HCC) since the very bad flooding in 2014. Stockbridge is lucky to have the Houghton Fishing Club staff available to monitor the levels of water and to take action should any be necessary. Should levels of water in the Test start to rise this winter, the Clerk will post updates from the Fishing Club on the News Section of the Council website. Please sign up for alerts (right side of the home screen half-way down) to get these alerts direct to your inbox.

Would you feel vulnerable in the event of flooding? There is a form at the bottom of the flooding page for those that would like to be 'kept an eye on' if the waters start rising. Please fill it out and return it to the Clerk by email or via a Councillor.

## Parish Council Precept

At the December meeting of the Parish Council, the Stockbridge Precept of £22,965 was agreed. This means that there is no increase in the Precept this year. The Council believes, that at a time of a cost of living crisis, when residents are being asked to pay more for just about everything else, it would be helpful if the Parish Council did not levy an increase. However, it is highly likely that TVBC and HCC will be increasing their charges this year.

## Rights of Way

Do any of the Rights of Way that you use need cutting back? Please contact the Clerk with any that you feel need some attention. It is very difficult for these paths to be monitored by SPC and meanwhile HCC has dropped some of its annual maintenance cutting, so it is helpful when residents let the Council know what needs doing.

## Riparian Landlords

Are you a Riparian landlord? You must ensure that your stretch of the River Test or its Carriers is kept clear. Rubbish, debris and excessive silt will slow the flow of water which can cause flooding higher up the river. Stockbridge has a number of these carrier streams flowing through the village. If you own a property with a stream running through it or alongside the border, it is possible you are a Riparian landlord and will be responsible for keeping that water free of debris. If you are unsure, you can contact the Clerk with your address and she will be able to check for you.

## Changes to TVBC's collection of bulky waste

From 1 January 2023, TVBC must segregate any waste domestic upholstered seating it collects, as it may contain Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). From this date, non-POPs collections (all the other items TVBC collects as part of the bulky waste collection service) will take place on a Monday or Tuesday, depending on where the customer lives. Wednesday will be the council's POPs collection day – for the collection of any sofas, sofa beds, armchairs, kitchen or dining room chairs, stools or footstalls, home office chairs, futons, beanbags and floor or sofa cushions. The charging structure for the bulky waste collection service will be reviewed, as some customers will receive two collections if they have a mix of POPs and non-POPs items and also the council now has to travel further to dispose of POPs items.

Stockbridge Parish Council will meet next on the 16th February 2023.

*Belinda Baker*

*Clerk to Stockbridge Parish Council  
clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk*

## Trout 'n About Donations Evening

Following a very successful Trout 'n About in August (after 2 years' absence due to Covid), our annual donations evening was held in early December in the Town Hall, when £6,250 was given to local good causes within SO20. These included the Scouts, the Football Club, the Primary School, Old St Peter's Church, Stockbridge



*Tim Lowden, receiving a donation on behalf of Stockbridge Music*

Music, Stockbridge Community Market, Longstock allotments, St Nicholas' Church Leckford, contributions to a defibrillator and the green canopy, all nominated and voted on by volunteers who helped on the day.

This year Trout 'n About will be held on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023, as long as we get Trout 'n About some new volunteers for the organising committee. Last year we had a committee of five, which was too small for comfort, and three of them are not available this year. So we need quite a few new volunteers to help our event organizer, Emily. Trout 'n About has taken 15 years to build to its current state; a great event and a strong brand, but it also requires some new faces and fresh ideas to make it better still. We look forward to hearing from you.

*Kim Candler and Richard Gueterbock (07831 626206)*

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## Happy New Year from the National Trust SW Hants Ranger Team

Our work programme across Stockbridge Down and Marsh continues with a focus on safety and routine maintenance. Annual tree safety management surveys identified several more ash trees requiring work along the boundary of the Down and the B3049. These works are in response to Ash Dieback, a fungal disease affecting the vascular system of a tree, impacting its structural stability and overall safety. We are working with The Tree Management Company, an experienced contractor who is familiar with the site, and we anticipate works to be finished by March with minimal disruption.

Plans are being finalised for scrub cutting at the Down with potential for an area in the south-east corner to be worked this winter. Scrub is an extremely valuable habitat and one on which many species depend for their survival. However, if left unmanaged, it will rapidly take over areas of chalk grassland and impact the species dependant on that. As part of our ongoing management, we regularly rotate areas of cutting so we have a mix of young and mature scrub; this ensures more structural diversity and will appeal to a wider variety of species.

When creating a rotational plan and scheduling areas to cut, there is a lot for us to consider. Much of the Down includes features of historic and archaeological interest which need to be maintained in a favourable condition. Scrub can cause damage through rooting into the ground or shading out the vegetation underneath to a point where there is only bare soil and this gradually erodes, leaving the features more vulnerable to the weather. Dense areas of scrub can also provide protection for burrowing mammals which can damage and undermine buried archaeology.

Large areas of scrub on site can also impact public access and safety. As the scrub matures, it reduces sightlines and creates pinch points used by livestock and visitors. We want to maintain clear and safe access routes, allowing people to explore the site whilst being respectful of livestock and keeping their distance. Keep an eye out for onsite signage detailing any works and please adhere to any safety guidance.

Spring and summer 2022 afforded us another great butterfly count. As well as our regular tenants, totalling 34 species, we had reported sightings of Silver-spotted Skipper, Purple Hairstreak and White-letter Hairstreak. These have been spotted before but are rare for the site. We are carefully considering how we manage the habitats to improve conditions and increase numbers of these species.

White-letter Hairstreak have a relationship with elm trees, spending much of their time high in the canopy. They lay their eggs where new growth joins the previous year's. Due to Dutch Elm Disease, a fungal disease specific to elm trees, there are very few of these trees left in the landscape.



Female White-letter Hairstreak

We are looking at how we can manage those that remain to ensure their future viability and maintain a habitat for the associated butterfly species. This could include clearing competing vegetation to give any saplings or suckers the best chance of survival.

The SW Hants team depends heavily on volunteers to carry out species surveys across our sites. This data is invaluable to us and informs on the progress of our management and where we need to focus our efforts. The collective effort of our Species Surveyors is amazing and plays a huge part in everyone being able to appreciate these sites and their conservation value.

*Ryan Scott*

*Area Ranger – Mottisfont and SW Hampshire*

*T: 07920 813055 / 01794 344 003*

*ryan.scott@nationaltrust.org.uk*

### Subscriptions 2023

Thank you everyone who has already renewed their subscription to our magazine.

A reminder that copies are available in our local churches for £1.00 each. However if you live in the three parishes you can subscribe to the magazine **and for £10 you can receive all this year's copies delivered to your door!**

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# The Restoration of Stockbridge Town Hall - Part 3

We asked Hugh Saxton to recall the Town Hall restoration project when he was Chairman of the Town Hall Committee. He concludes by describing the extensive building works . . . and their complications.

## The Rebuild

There were two key figures both in the planning stage and during building:

Linda Brown, our architect, had been architect to Longstock Village Hall and was familiar with the needs of such a building. Her design of the annex has stood the test of time and her plans and advice were invaluable. Her stroke of genius was to realise that, as the original hall had been an open market, the planners would accept the idea of replacing the ground floor windows and door with plate glass. This has been a major factor in the commercial success of the hall.

David Baseley was Chair of the Parish Council and Vice-Chair of the Town Hall Committee. After a career in business, he had become a consultant in building. Many local homes had alterations or extensions which he had supervised. So he spoke builder's language, which saved much time, trouble and misunderstanding.

## The Annex

We chose CMS (UK) as our contractors. They set up an office and workroom in the upper hall, with access via the back stairs.



The office is shown on the left and the work area in the right. The panels shown here at the back of the stage were moved to the left of the fireplace in what is now the Barham Room.

## Site clearance and piling

The first stage was to demolish the old cottage and escape stairs and clear the site. Then it was necessary to insert pilings to support the concrete base on the soft ground of the valley bottom. There are different types of piling. Those used here start with a steel tube whose lower end is pinched to a pencil point. This is then mechanically 'hammered' in until lack of movement shows that hard ground has been reached. Usually in Stockbridge, further tubes have to be welded on to make the piling long enough. For the Town Hall site, the pilings were driven in between 8 and 9 metres. Here are five piles already in situ.



## The Lift

Any lift needs a motor, either above or below. A motor above would have caused major roof complications so a space had to be created below



ground floor level. On the left, the reinforcing for the engine housing is being prepared. When it came to applying the quick-setting waterproof concrete to make the 'box' for the motor, the space was

half full of water. We were not allowed to pump the water into the drains (Drainage Authority) nor the river (Fishing Club). We therefore had to pay for four tanker lorries to take the water away and keep the space dry enough.



It was a very stressful day but the team made it.

## The Main Hall

Insulation - The new annex was, of course, well insulated but the main hall was not. The Hurford Room roof was insulated later but the west wall had a false wall built inside, stopping short of the ceiling, and the space was filled with insulation.

Storage - Any building with varying activities needs storage. The back room of the annex upstairs is intended for storage, mainly of stacked chairs. Downstairs, there was a small cupboard next to the lift for cleaning materials and another beside the Barham fireplace. Otherwise, there was only minimal storage capacity. However, there is a large space under the stage which had been filled with the rubbish of ages. Kim Candler cleared it out and built giant trolleys which pull out. They house supplementary staging and other equipment for plays or recitals.

For completeness, I include the artist's impression of plans for a store and paved area behind the hall. This was part of an appeal in 2014. The paved area offered Stockbridge residents the chance to buy a pavier with their name on it. The store was for tables and chairs and there was a glass canopy. This was the last fund-raising needed as the hall became more profitable.





**Windows**

The idea of replacing the ground floor front windows with plate glass was transformative. Not only did it increase immensely the value of the Porter Room to users with goods to promote but it restored the elegant curves of the original open market. Here the window site is cleared for plate glass.



Then, with the opening of the blocked-up windows on the upper floor, the handsome façade of the hall was wholly re-established.



At some stage, the side entry had been bricked up and a fresh window beside it. These changes were reversed. Now people walking past Rosalind Hill House can see into the Porter Room.

**Ground Floor**

The main change here was the creation of the kitchen. It is too small to allow the preparation of substantial meals but is ideal for snacks.

**Conclusion**

We were particularly fortunate in the support we had from Anne Harrison during fund-raising. Linda Brown’s work as architect is seen all over the hall, especially in the plate glass windows. And Kim Candler and his team have taken a promising start and made it the stunning and successful hall we have today.

*Hugh Saxton*

And the result after all that work ... the Town Hall today.



*(And thanks to all those involved, past and present, for making the Town Hall such a successful community asset. – Eds.)*



**Harp Recital  
performed at  
Stockbridge Town  
Hall on 14 December**

Stockbridge Music’s pre-Christmas offering in the Regency splendour of Stockbridge Town Hall was a solo harp concert by Harriet Adie who gave us an enchanting top-level performance, combined with an introduction to the deeper mechanics of harpistry.

Harriet’s repertoire ranged between variations on traditional carols to the *Allemande* from Bach’s Partita No. 4 in D major.

After learning that her magnificent instrument boasts seven separate pedals whose functions include supplying accidental notes at appropriate moments, apparently requiring the skills of a concert pianist allied to those demanded of a top airline pilot, her audience watched and listened in fascinated silence. So ... very much the kind of interesting artiste who delights the sophisticated taste of Stockbridge Music’s audiences.



*Guy Boney*

**Vacancy for self-employed  
Admin Assistant  
Mid-Test Benefice**

The churches in the Stockbridge area are looking to appoint a self-employed Admin Assistant for 8 hours per week, £12-£15 per hour, depending on experience. Knowledge or experience of the workings of the Church of England would be an advantage.

For more information or an informal conversation about the rôle, please contact Philip Bowden: 01264 810810 [rector@midtest.org.uk](mailto:rector@midtest.org.uk)

**Closing date 14<sup>th</sup> February** with interviews on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

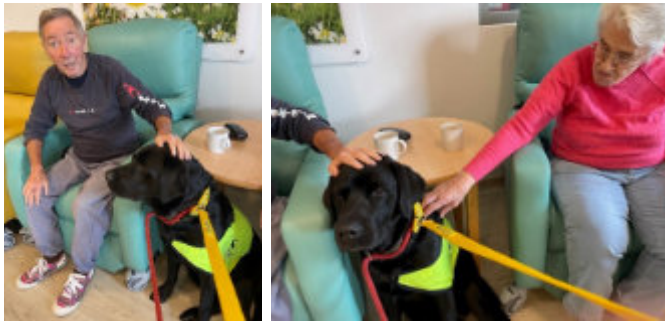
# Help Me If You Can, I'm feeling Down

## Diary of Bentley - a Therapy Dog

*Did you know there are so many benefits to interacting with therapy dogs? From physical stimulation, growing self-esteem, improving memory and problem-solving skills and assisting with pain management, alongside the huge emotional and mental health benefits, there are so many advantages to just spending some time with these wonderful creatures.*

### 2 November

I loved the first day in my new job, it's so easy and I got so much attention. Today I visited our local hospice where everyone was excited to see me and they were so friendly. I went round introducing myself and got lots of strokes and a few treats (although Mummy wouldn't let me have too many). After seeing everyone in the activity room, I went to visit a couple of people in their rooms. They were all pleased to see me, and I was so tired by the time I met the last elderly gentleman that I lay down on his feet at the bottom of his chair so he could stroke my head.



### 8 December

Yesterday, after a busy week, I went back to the Countess of Brecknock Hospice - 'treat city'! I was so excited to be there that I pulled Mummy in, smiling all the way. My 'Elvis smile' didn't go unnoticed by my new friends either. I think they like me there. Although I have only been once before I knew exactly where I was and what to do. After meeting everybody one by one, I was invited into a new ward at the hospital. It was lovely to meet so many more new people there. One man seemed so bored and down from being on his own, I hope I cheered him up.

### 9 December

Mummy took me to Naomi House today. She was going for an interview to volunteer in the kitchen but she took me with her on the offchance someone would want to see me. Of course they did! I was a bit excited because I hadn't been there before, but I soon got the hang of it. I could tell everyone loved having me there, even if some found it difficult to stroke me without assistance. I brought a smile to anyone I spoke to, but I will need to work on their treat offerings!



### 14 December

I had such an amazing day today on my third visit to Countess of Brecknock Hospice/Andover physiotherapy ward. Everyone is really getting to know me and starting to greet me by my name. I recognised a few people and was so pleased to see how much better they were looking. Alongside all the amazing carers, I hope I have helped with that. I got a few treats but Mummy said I have to be more gentle when accepting. That's easy for her to say. I can't help my excitement when I see biscuits, THEY WERE EVERYWHERE! I got my photo taken with Dr Zoe. I was visiting my new friends for nearly two hours until Mummy said I really ought to go as it was getting a bit hot for me. So she dragged me away.



### 25 December

Happy Christmas everyone. Such a busy and exciting day! I was rushing around like a mad panting hyena and couldn't wait to get my head into my Christmas sack to see what was there. I got another big squeaky brussel sprout because the one I got three or so years ago has finally had it. I also got some meaty treats but boring Mummy has put them on a high shelf where I can't get at them. We've just come back from seeing the nice nurses and patients at Countess of Brecknock Hospice although most of my friends had gone home to see their family. Unfortunately, I couldn't see my friends on the physiotherapy ward as some were unwell





with this thing called Covid and Daddy said I shouldn't go today. That was a shame, but I really enjoyed having my photo taken with all the nurses round their Christmas tree.

*Bentley is registered with Therapy Dogs Nationwide. He visits health and community organizations to bring happiness or comfort to those he meets. If you would like Bentley to visit you, please message amandal704@icloud.com. Unfortunately, we cannot visit individuals in their own homes but you can follow Bentley via his Facebook page **Bentley – Therapy Dog***

*Amanda Lambert (aka Mummy)*

### **Test Valley Borough Council - Winter Fuel Payments**

Test Valley residents over 66 are eligible for additional Winter Fuel Payment support if they need it.

People above the age of 66 in Test Valley, who may be in need of a little extra financial help, are being urged to come forward.

Towards the end of 2022, Test Valley Borough Council, Unity and Citizens Advice Test Valley launched a scheme where anyone who receives a Winter Fuel Payment, but doesn't necessarily need it, was able to donate it to help other pensioners in the area struggling with the rising cost of living.

At least £1,300 has already been given to Unity, and with TVBC match funding any donations, it currently has around £2,600 to distribute to those in need.

But it's important for people above the age of 66 to come forward and ask for help if they need it.

With the rising cost of living, many people will be in a situation where they need more help than before and may not know how to access support.

Anyone with an older relative who could do with a little extra financial help is encouraged to direct them to Citizens Advice, who are administering the funds.

Residents can contact Citizens Advice on 0808 178 6882 or go to their website [www.testvalleycab.org.uk](http://www.testvalleycab.org.uk).



**Happy New Year!**  
to all our patients  
and  
thank you to all the members of  
our Patient Participation Group  
for all your support.



#### **Dental care**

We would just like to remind all patients that we cannot provide antibiotics or painkillers for tooth problems. Prescriptions should be issued by your dentist. We would encourage all patients to ensure that they are registered with a dentist. If you are having problems finding a dentist to register you, then please contact NHS England's Customer Care Service on 0300 311 2233.

#### **Firearms Applications**

There has been a change to the rules around firearms applications. GPs now have to check the past 30 years of GP records for new applicants, and the past 10 years for applicants making a renewal. We have had to increase our fees in light of this to £60 for a new application and £45 for a renewal. Payment is required with the form.

We are aware that the police provide a reminder for renewals 16 weeks prior to the licence expiry. Please contact the surgery with your form and payment as soon as you receive this. We have had some patients giving us only 1 or 2 weeks' notice and this is not enough.

#### **NHS App**

We have some queries regarding ordering prescriptions on the NHS App. If your prescription request is marked as 'approved', this means that the GP has issued it. After that, our dispensary team have to order the medication, wait for it to arrive and dispense it ready for you to collect.

#### **Text messages**

Recently we sent a text message to all our patients aged 45 years or over to request that, if they had been lent a blood pressure machine from the surgery, they return it after they had finished monitoring. We had a huge response from patients telling us that they had not had a blood pressure machine from us. Sometimes we will send text messages to a large number of patients. We will review the wording we use, but please ignore any messages which do not apply to you.

#### **NHS Health checks**

Recently we highlighted that we were restarting NHS healthchecks. There are specific criteria for patients who should be invited and each individual patient is entitled to one check every 5 years. We were contacted by some patients who had had a check more recently and are sorry that we are unable to offer another check until after five years.

*Ann Spooner*

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## Lindy Lou's Kitchen Recipes & Crafty Corner



It's quite gloomy outside today as I write my first entry for 2023, so a one-pot warming casserole has to be the order for the day. This would be lovely to come home to after a Sunday morning family dog walk. Although a traditional French recipe, this version has been tweaked a little by my husband's family over the years. It's delicious served with warm crusty bread.

### Cassoulet

Serves 6

#### Ingredients

3-4 boneless duck breast portions, about 450g total  
225g thick-cut fatty streaky pork or unsmoked streaky bacon rashers  
450g Toulouse sausages or garlic-flavoured  
3 tbsp vegetable oil  
450g onions, chopped  
2 cloves of garlic, crushed  
2 x 15oz/425g tins of cannellini beans, rinsed and drained  
225g carrots, roughly chopped  
14oz/400g tin chopped tomatoes  
1 tbsp tomato purée paste  
bouquet garni – bag of herbs  
2 tbsp chopped fresh thyme or 1 tbsp dried thyme  
16fl oz/475ml well-flavoured chicken stock  
115g fresh white or wholemeal breadcrumbs  
salt and ground black pepper  
fresh thyme sprigs to garnish

#### Method

Preheat oven to 160°C/gas 3.

Cut the duck portions and pork/bacon into large pieces. Twist the sausages to make them shorter and cut into short lengths.

Heat oil in flameproof casserole and brown the meat in batches. Duck can spit a bit so take care and, once browned, remove and allow to drain on kitchen paper.

Add the onions and garlic to the pan and cook for 3–4 minutes until softened, stirring frequently.

Stir in the beans, carrots, tomatoes, tomato puree, bouquet garni, thyme and seasoning.

Return the meat to the casserole and mix until well combined.

Add just enough stock to cover the meat and beans as it should not be swimming in juices (it is always better to add more stock during cooking if it becomes too dry).

Bring the pan to the boil, remove from the heat, cover tightly and cook in the oven for an hour.

Remove from the oven and adjust stock level if necessary. Remove the bouquet garni.

Sprinkle the breadcrumbs over the top in an even layer and return the casserole to the oven. Cook uncovered for a further 40 minutes, until the meat is tender and the top is crisp and a light brown.

Garnish with thyme sprigs and serve.

#### Tips.

You could easily cook this in a slow cooker. Heat the slow cooker on high and, once the mixture has boiled, pour it carefully into the slow cooker. You could leave it on high and cook for 2 -3 hours or turn to low where it would then happily cook all day. Add the breadcrumbs and cook on high for approx. an hour to brown.

Linda Hotchen

### ... And let's not forget our feathered friends ...

#### Make your own fat balls for the birds

*In the current cold weather spell, here is a timely reminder of this helpful idea from Ryan Bundy's article, first published in the December 2021 / magazine.*



Why not have a bit of fun making some homemade fat and seed balls for your garden birds? It is very easy.

#### Ingredients

- One part solid vegetable oil, beef suet or lard (a fat that is solid when not refrigerated will not melt and make a mess)
- Two parts bird seed mix

#### Method

1. Mix measured ingredients in a saucepan and gently heat, stirring until the fat melts.
2. Use an ice-cream scoop, or your hands, to mould the mixture into balls. If you want them to hang from a tree, thread string through them.
3. Space apart in a plastic container or on a tray and place in the freezer to set firm.
4. Once the fat balls are solid, put in the garden, on a bird feeder or in a fat-ball feeder.

Ryan Bundy



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David Small

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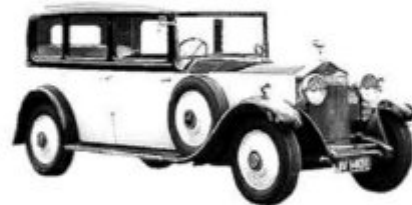
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# The Luttrell Psalter



The Luttrell Psalter was created in 1325 – 1340. It was commissioned by Sir Geoffrey Luttrell, Lord of the Manor at Irnham, Lincolnshire. It is unlikely to have been produced at Irnham as, although one scribe wrote the text, it was illuminated by five artists, who would have been available only in a major town like Lincoln.

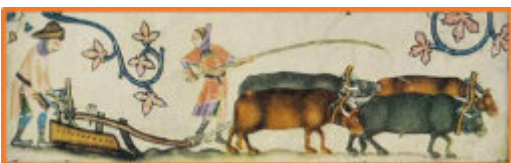
A psalter usually contained the psalms and a calendar of religious festivals and saints' days. Each page of the Luttrell Psalter has a written psalm illuminated by figures and decorative drawings all around the text. The illustrations depict pictures of daily medieval life.

Several of the figures are so distinctive that it is likely that they represent specific people; they are clothed in idealised clean and fashionable garments, probably to shield Sir Geoffrey Luttrell from the realities of a harsh agricultural life. The drawings are used by scholars as exemplars of the clothing of the period.



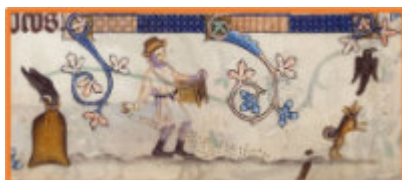
Farming was central to medieval village life and the psalter depicts scenes of the agricultural year, starting with winter ploughing, sowing and harrowing in the early spring to the end of summer harvest when men, women and children all gathered the corn. The miniatures of the harvest accompany psalms of praise for the fruits provided by God, psalm 95, verse 12, 'The fields and all in them rejoice'. These illustrations give an insight into farming practices and machinery used around 1340. They are placed on the bottom of the pages.

As Old St Peter's Church was established as a field chapel before the psalter was written, we intend to use the illustrations to support our seasonal displays during the year.



Ploughing using a team of oxen and sowing.

The sower is besieged by crows stealing the grain. It was a skill to sow evenly by hand into the furrows.



Harrowing, covering the grain with soil. Again the crows are in attendance deterred by the farmer behind the harrow with his catapult. Old St Peter's Church has been plagued with flocks of jackdaws and sparrows. The birds entered the wooden slatted belfry box to build their nests. Efforts to remove the birds are recorded in the old Vestry books, 'The belfry to be made free of daws and other birds by copper wire sieve and wood'.

Harvest was a community effort.



Women are depicted cutting the corn with sickles ...

... and the sheaves are carried to a collection point by men.



The loaded harvest cart, with its spiked wheels, is pulled by three horses and pushed by men.

Harvest in the country is a time to rejoice that the work of the agricultural year is over and to celebrate the gathered fruits and grain. Piers Ploughman, of the medieval fable of the land, written 1370 – 1390, observed that July was when the divide between the rich and the poor became most apparent. Grass was gathered to make hay in June and July as fodder for the animals but the people had to wait for the grain harvest to end the difficult months of famine. 1<sup>st</sup> August was Lammas Day, loaf mass, the day when the hungry gap ended and the grain harvest was gathered. Piers wrote 'We must live until Lammas time, when I hope to reap a harvest in my fields. Then I can spread a feast that I like. I shall provide ... the necessities of life unless the land fails.' People dated their lives by the years when the weather caused great hardship and men were compelled to place themselves into bondage with landowners. Harvest was a time of celebration and relief if the barns were full of stored grain for the winter months.

Jill Goodwin

The Luttrell Psalter is in the British Library.

## UKRAINE – WHAT’S NEEDED NOW

Major-General Tim Toyne Sewell - Commandant RMA Sandhurst 1991-94, will be speaking about the importance of leadership in the context of the Ukraine situation at Stockbridge Town Hall on Friday 17th February, as part of a briefing evening run by the Stockbridge-Ukraine Group.

Tim’s military career (1959-1994) included being Chief of Staff in the Falkland Islands (1983), commanding 19th Infantry Brigade, and creating and training a new army from the opposing Zimbabwean factions at the end of the civil war (1980).



Finally, he was Commandant of RMA Sandhurst with its worldwide reputation for young officer leadership training. As Commandant, he paid interesting visits to the Russian Military Academy and to West Point. His distinguished post-military career made best use of his expertise in this field. He now lives in Nether Wallop. Tim will talk about leadership in the Ukrainian conflict, and take questions.



Second speaker, Charlie Hutchinson, has spent six years in Eastern Ukraine deployed by the FCDO as a military observer to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Charlie will fascinate with his direct experiences in eastern

Ukraine, both in separatist areas and government-held territory (Mariupol, at that time), together with his impressions from a recent return visit.

The evening will finish with inspirational Chilbolton mum, Harriet Asher, telling us why, desperate to help, she travelled to Poland but found herself crossing the border into Ukraine where she quickly identified a need for safe travel for refugees. She set up a *gofundme* page to pay for accommodation, coaches and air travel. Harriet will update us on her ongoing humanitarian efforts, now sourcing items required in Ukraine, which range from generators and medical supplies to warm clothing for orphans.



This is a fund raising event. Tickets are £10 and can be purchased from *Ukraine - what is needed now? Tickets, Fri 17 Feb 2023 at 18:00 | Eventbrite* Doors and bar open at 6 pm, first speaker 6.30 pm. All proceeds from ticket sales and fundraising will be used to fund generators, medical supplies and other items required on the ground in Ukraine. For further information:

Amanda Lambert, 07885889026,  
amandal704@icloud.com

## A Tale of Three Generators by Anna Spencer

Like many, I buy charity cards and sponsor friends entering marathons in aid of worthy causes. However, I had never felt truly involved in any fundraising activities. Then, at October’s Stockbridge-Ukraine Support Group, I was motivated and humbled by Harriet Asher’s heartfelt account of just how much one driven individual can achieve through private fundraising and independent initiatives. I was compelled to get involved and this is where the tale starts.

It was becoming evident that Ukrainians needed generators to keep alive. Mindful of the panic on my local What’s App groups last February when residents were without power for 48 hours, I resolved to do my bit to make a difference and I contacted Harriet. From her humanitarian work, Harriet assured me every penny donated would be used to procure and deliver essential equipment to individuals in need and known personally within her network. Funds were accumulated to purchase three generators and, in the week before Christmas, Harriet sent me photos of one of the donee families near Zaporizhzhia. They would house one generator which would support six families in their village, providing a daily hot meal and dry clothing for up to 30 people.

Yet the most exciting and unexpected turn of events for me occurred on Christmas Eve. I was at the bar, getting the first round in on our annual bicycle pub crawl, when the What’s App messages came flooding in. From an anecdotal conversation some time ago, we had been introduced to Charlie Hutchinson who had independently helped rescue Ukrainians from what subsequently became Russian-occupied territory. Having lived in Eastern Ukraine for over six years, Charlie was still in direct contact with friends fighting in occupied territories. Coincidentally, one such friend had just asked Charlie if he could source a generator for a military unit on the eastern front line; Charlie had heard of our initiative and wondered if we could help.

There ensued an hour of frenetic messaging. I wondered whether this was how it might have felt to be in the Resistance: a request for the drop-off co-ordinates to be given by coded message; a photo of “Sergei” who was to take delivery; confirmation that all concerned had the same secure messaging and translation apps; a diversion while our delivery men received a request from Ukrainian medics for a third generator (which they eventually got after some farcical misunderstandings with predictive text and a lost telephone number); a hitch when we learned they wouldn’t get past the checkpoints and an alternate drop-off location was arranged. From request to receipt on the ground in Ukraine, the supply had taken less than 48 hours over Christmas and Boxing Day.



As I was snuggling into bed under my electric blanket that night, I reflected. Having had the privilege to be involved in this team and see for myself each playing their part was the best Christmas present. Being part of an independent initiative gave a strong sense of personal involvement; it was incredible to see how swiftly a tangible result could be achieved by a network of people on the ground, risking their personal safety to deliver aid to those in need.

We live in challenging economic times. Events in Ukraine make the UK news some days but not others and it is perhaps convenient to consign the war as a conflict happening in another part of the world. However, even those who cannot spare money or time can still make a difference by spreading the word. The chance conversation, which put our local contact in touch with the shipment of generators, may have made the difference between life and death for someone less fortunate than us.

You can donate via [www.gofundme.com/f/help-harriet-pay-for-ukrainian-flights-to-london](http://www.gofundme.com/f/help-harriet-pay-for-ukrainian-flights-to-london)

Hear more about Harriet & Charlie's work on 17<sup>th</sup> February at Stockbridge Town Hall : *Ukraine - What's Needed Now?* (see page 20)

## Generators for Ukraine

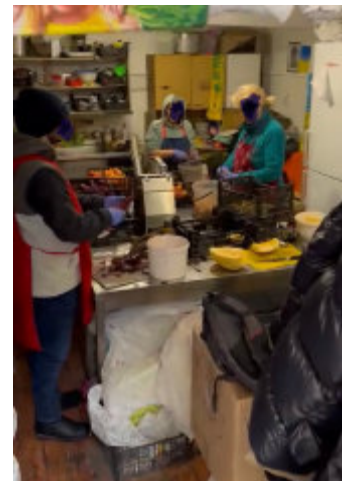
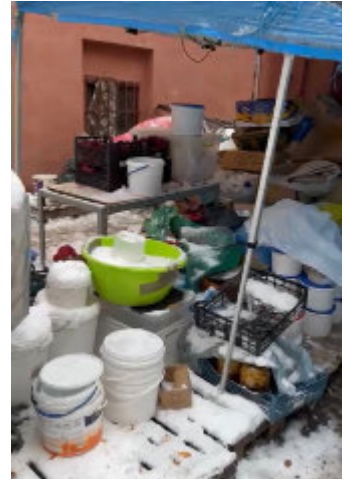


Generators in boot of car, ready for delivery to eastern Ukraine.

Crater in Ukraine caused by Russian Missile (photo taken by volunteer transporting donated generators).



Volunteers delivering generators



A generator has been donated to this Lviv kitchen where it is used to cook and dehydrate food which is then sent to Eastern Ukraine where they are without power. The food can be reconstituted and heated with the simple addition of hot water.

This is Nadiia, a patient of the Kherson Regional Oncology Center.

She is getting cancer treatment procedures under the light of flashlights 📢 The hospital faces problems with electricity, water supply, and heating because the Russian army on the other bank of the Dnipro river (on which Kherson stands) regularly shells the city.

Ukrainians are unbreakable! ❤️

📷 Photo: @raybaseley.raw

Two generators went to this hospital.



For details of the Stockbridge-Ukraine group <https://sites.google.com/view/slhuk/home>

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# Potting Shed Cuttings for February



**'Yellow Book' gardens open this month -**  
Chawton House, Alton; Welford Park, Newbury;  
Little Court, Winchester; Manor Farm, Wimborne;  
Bramdean House, Alresford..

## General Maintenance and Preparation

With one of the wettest of Januaries on record, culminating in icy temperatures, it's difficult to judge the state of our garden soil which will still be holding a large amount of water. However, sections of vegetable plots should still be warmed up for early spring planting and sowing with black plastic or fleece. If you haven't done so already, make cleaning and disinfecting the greenhouse or cold frame early in the month a priority; you'll soon need it for sowing early vegetables and planting summer bulbs. Make sure pots and tools are clean and in good condition too, and check fleece and cold weather protection put around tender plants last autumn.

## The Flower Garden

Once snowdrops have finished flowering, divide congested clumps whilst they are still 'in the green' and replant to increase your stock. Prune dogwood and winter flowering shrubs such as mahonia, jasmine and viburnum once flowering is over and prune wisteria summer side-shoots to 2 or 3 buds. Cut back deciduous grasses before they start to shoot again and simply comb out dead leaves from evergreen varieties. Late-flowering clematis (also known as Group 2) should be cut back to strong buds about 12"/30cm from the ground. Continue dead-heading winter pansies to encourage new flowers once the weather improves; if containers are looking dejected, early, hardy spring bedding such as wallflowers, primroses and forget-me-nots can be planted now to give some much-needed early colour over the coming weeks. If you intend to sow pelargonium or begonia seeds, they should be started now as they need a long growing season to make good flowering plants. Annuals, such as lobelia, cosmos, bedding dahlias and nasturtiums can also be sown and dahlia tubers saved from last year can be started off under glass in trays of damp compost. Once shoots have appeared, these can be used as cuttings to increase your stock of plants.

## The Vegetable Garden

Start preparing beds – weed and add compost and protection. Garlic bulbs should be planted before the end of the month. Don't be in a rush to start seed-sowing too early; concentrate on the more hardy types such as beetroot, spinach, salad leaves, broad beans, turnips, early peas and spring onions; under glass, sow carrots, early celery, leeks, shallots and onions; celeriac sown under glass towards the second half of the month will benefit from the longer growing period. Chit first early potatoes in a light and cool, but frost-free, spot. Empty egg boxes make good supports for these small seed potatoes. Check your seed packets and replace any which have passed their use-by date.

Remember, seed viability can vary from one to several years, depending on the type of vegetable.

## The Fruit Garden

Divide congested or old rhubarb clumps and replant the younger, outer sections in well-fed soil. There is still time to force sections for an early rhubarb crop; use a large, upturned bin or bucket weighted down with a brick. This is your last chance to prune apple and pear trees and soft fruit bushes such as autumn raspberries, gooseberries, redcurrants and blackcurrants. Autumn raspberries should be cut back hard to the ground; the gooseberries and currants should have about 1/3 of old and weak shoots removed. Give strawberry plants some protection from the frost to encourage an earlier crop of berries.

## The Lawn

The best advice is to keep off the lawn if at all possible in frosty weather. Tidying lawn edges will keep everything looking neater and raking up the last of the leaves will encourage blade growth when the temperature warms up.

Micki Nadal



If cooking or shopping for food is becoming a struggle, then the *apetito* meals-on-wheels service delivers delicious lunchtime meals, hot and ready to eat. The Winchester-based company provides the service across the Hampshire County Council area 365 days of the year, 7 days a week. Every meal is carefully developed by *apetito*'s in-house chefs and dietitians to support a healthy and nutritionally-balanced diet.

In 2019, *apetito* won the 'Queens Award for Enterprise in Sustainable Development'; the 100% sourcing of its fish and meat through British and Irish farmers played a key factor in this win. The company also played a vital role in delivering meals to residents during the Covid pandemic.

*apetito*'s fully-trained drivers provide wellbeing checks to help customers or their loved ones to continue living independently and safely at home, providing peace of mind for those recovering from an operation or illness, or those needing an extra helping hand.

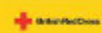
Hampshire County Council residents can order a two-course meal for just £5.67 and for an extra £1 customers can receive a three-course meal. A full afternoon tea costs £3.25.

Delivery on all meals is free and customers do not have to sign up to a contract or subscription.

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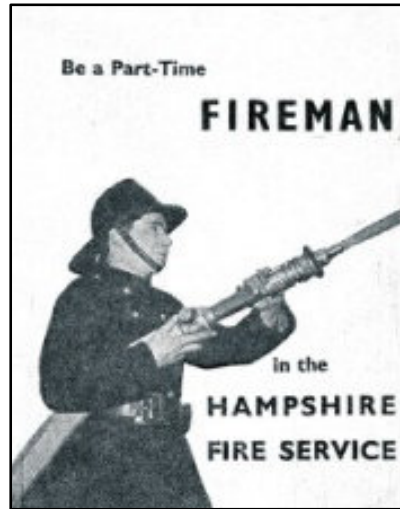
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# I was a Stockbridge Firefighter 50 years ago

by Geoff Merritt



In November of 1971, on being asked if I would like to join the Stockbridge Fire Service, I applied and was asked to attend a medical with Dr. Johnson at his Seven Gables surgery as soon as possible. 'So you want to join the fire service do you?' asked Dr. Johnson; 'I see no reason why not' he said after examining me.

On Christmas Eve, I received a letter from the Chief Fire Officer, A. A. Winning, informing me that from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1972, I was to be a retained Fireman in the Hampshire Fire Service at station C34 Stockbridge; my number would be 3017. Sub Officer J. Turton was the officer in charge of the fire station and I was to attend the weekly drill nights every Monday for two hours (1900-2100 hours).

I was also informed that I would be paid a retaining fee of £84 a year and for each turnout I would receive £1.50 and for each attendance 0.85p, all taxable. If the turnout was longer than an hour I would receive an extra 0.70p. This was raised to an hour and a quarter soon after.

I was obliged to attend three consecutive Sunday training courses at the Divisional Headquarters in Eastleigh soon after enrolment.

At first I was to be issued with full fire fighting gear and, if successful after the course, I would then be given full dress uniform. On completing the course, I would be expected to attend the fire station promptly in response to a call from the siren.

Stockbridge was one of 47 fire stations throughout Hampshire, separated into four divisions A,B,C and D, Stockbridge being in C Division. We had the largest area in the division to cover, some of our 'shouts' were 20 minutes away and we were the nearest pump!

On Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> January, I met the rest of the Stockbridge crew for my first drill night. As Sub Officer Jim Turton had just retired, the new officer in charge of the station was now Sub Officer Jim Perry. Just for the record, the Stockbridge Firefighting crew when I joined were: Sub Officer Jim Perry, Leading Fireman Ray Standfield, Leading Fireman Rodney Malcomber and Firemen Freddy Carpenter, Blondie Darby, Jonathan East, Ivan Gibson, Stan Holdaway, John Standfield and John Wrayton.

I had missed the first Sunday of the course but firemen were desperately needed because of the shortage of day cover so I was asked to attend the last two Sundays to catch up on what I had missed on drill nights thereafter.

A couple of days before I was due to drive down to Eastleigh Fire station for my course, I was taking a girl home to Longstock House on dodgy roads as it had been snowing all day. I came round a corner and a car had stopped in the middle of the road with the driver chatting to someone. I applied my brakes, but they did not respond as they would have done on a dry road and I skidded on the snow into the back of the car, bursting my car's radiator.

With my car now out of action, this meant that the Fire service had to pick me up from the fire station on the Sunday morning. The van picking me up was late, which meant that I was half an hour late when I eventually found the classroom.

After the first break in the lesson I approached the Sub Officer in charge, John Barratt, whose face was familiar and asked him if he had attended school at Stockbridge, 'Yes' he said. He had been in my class 15 years ago.

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## Stockbridge Football Club News



Welcome to 2023 everyone. Is it too late for Happy New Year? I hope not.

Well, I have to say it has been an inauspicious time in the league for The Robins' both before and after the Christmas break. Although we are blessed with a fantastic grass pitch at the Recreation Ground, and it is expertly maintained by Stuart Mawson and Pete Savage, it is not an all-weather pitch. Far from it. Along with many grass roots teams, The Robins have lost fixtures over the winter due to the weather. Back in December, it was due to the pitch being so frozen we could really only play fixtures against Siberian teams and there aren't many in the Hampshire Premier League. And now, with the seemingly endless rain, it certainly hasn't been dry January on our pitch. It simply gets too waterlogged to play on and takes too long to get the ducks off the penalty spot. You can sing in the rain but you can't play football in it on a soggy pitch. Yes, the weather certainly has resulted in an unscheduled stop for The Robins' promotion locomotive . . .

So last weekend, knowing our home pitch was unusable and we needed to run off a few mince pies, find our stamina and re-establish our team spirit, our ever-resourceful manager, Fran Mathers, managed to hire a 3G artificial pitch over in Salisbury for the Reserves match. Fantastic to see the team play again and get some momentum back. The upshot was, in a fiercely competitive game, The Robins beat a very good New Milton side 2-1. A blend of both first team and reserve Robins teams got a very good run out. There was some pretty heavy blowing, as the lads say!

Fran also told me some terrific news this week; Sam Howe will be moving on from Downton FC and joining Stockbridge FC. Sam has an excellent goal-scoring record of 31 goal in 38 matches so we are delighted that he is becoming a Robin as we push hard for promotion to the Wessex League. On that note, our application to the league is in. Exciting times.

So, hopefully we won't see much more rain now and we can get back home to The Rec. We need to. We have some very hard matches coming up against our fellow promotion rivals and every point will be hard won. When we do finally get a home match, I do hope you'll come down and support The Robins. If it does rain a little you can always shelter in the stand or the clubhouse with a nice cuppa. But it won't rain again, will it? This is sunny Stockbridge, home of The Robins!

**Come On You Robins!**

*Bob Powell*  
Chair Stockbridge FC

## Stockbridge Community Cinema Annual Report 2022

The Annual Report on the year's activities was presented after the film on 13 January. This was the first year since 2019 that a full 3 seasons of films had been presented – 23 films in all and 33 individual screenings (taking into account matinees and evening shows). Audiences were more than double the 2021 number with over 1,600 tickets sold in 2022 which included some former 'regulars' returning for the first time since the pandemic.

From January 2022, the socially-distanced seating arrangements ended though the audience capacity is being maintained at 75 seats, which is 88% of the maximum. This will continue for the foreseeable future. The average audience per film was 72, despite the restricted seat numbers, which is the highest since 2018.

The film programme included two special events with Q&A sessions after the screening – *Secret Spitfires* (Norman Parker) and *Chalk* (Simon Cooper) which were among the best-attended events of the year. We also took part once again in the Into Film Festival in



November with a free screening of *The Return of the Railway Children* for 60 pupils and teachers from Stockbridge Primary School.

Feedback after each film is now obtained via an emailed form which also allows audience members to comment on the film and how they found their cinema experience. This showed that 91% of those responding thought the films were 'good' or 'excellent' and their film comments are now put on to the Film Archive page on our website. It is heart-warming to read the many additional comments received which repeatedly comment e.g. 'very comfortable and excellent service for refreshments', 'grateful thanks to the volunteers' and 'a huge asset to Stockbridge'.

The Community Cinema made a surplus of £4,000 in 2022, donating a similar amount to 7 local causes, and still has £4,500 remaining in reserves. Those benefiting from our donations included Stockbridge Football Club, Stockbridge Music, Stockbridge Longstock and Leckford Homes and Support for Refugees, the Explorer Scouts International Jamboree appeal and St Peter's Lantern Arch appeal.

This is all possible thanks to those who come and enjoy our films and buy refreshments and the work behind the scenes by our cohort of volunteers.

*Paul Kidd*

## Pilgrimage to the Holy Land by The Rev'd Sue Kipling

*In her preface to the order of the special Eve of Epiphany service held at St Mary's Church Broughton, Rev'd Sue Kipling explained that the bible reading set in the lectionary for that evening was about Jesus' encounter with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well and that it had a special significance for her. She writes:*

When I went on Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, we visited the church on the site of Jacob's Well. We descended to it and gathered around it singing a hymn in harmony. As we began to pray a collect, we were interrupted by a man and woman bursting in noisily down the steps. The man pushed his way to the well, grabbed the chain and wound the bucket to the surface with great clattering. Then he gave the woman some of the water to drink, telling us that they were both Samaritans. After much ado, presumably in Arabic, they left, leaving us in stunned silence.

I stayed behind while everyone else returned upstairs. Then I moved over to the well, sat on its side and drank some of the water. There I was, as a woman, where the historical Jesus had actually been and thought of the scene of him with the Samaritan woman. I imagined Jesus talking to me, him giving me the water from that actual well and felt



*Icon depicting the woman at Jacob's Well*

a realisation that the historical Jesus and the Christ, the 'I Am', were the same. I was where Jesus the Christ had been and had talked about the water that gives eternal life.

Later, I approached the man and woman. They told me how important that well was to them, how it was where Jacob had met Rachael. I mused how the God I worship was part of that ancient faith of which Jesus was part.

*Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not envy. It does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered. It keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes. Always perseveres.*

*1 Corinthians 13:4-8*

## Church News

### From the Area Dean

My time as Area Dean (or Rural Dean) has just been extended for another 5 years (sorry about that!). So it is a time to remind myself of what part I have to play in that role. It has certainly involved helping parishes in vacancy (the time between Vicars/Rectors) and helping all of the parishes to work together more closely.

Probably my favourite part of the Bible is 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 where the Church is described as 'One Body but Many Parts':

*<sup>12</sup> There is one body, but it has many parts. But all its many parts make up one body. It is the same with Christ. <sup>13</sup> We were all baptised by one Holy Spirit... <sup>14</sup> So the body is not made up of just one part. It has many parts...the parts of the body will not take sides. All of them will take care of one another. <sup>26</sup> If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part is honoured, every part shares in its joy. <sup>27</sup> You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it.*

This is a good description of our Deanery – all people and parishes being part of the Church, the body of Christ. I hope that this year we can do more to care for one another and all play our part in the life of the Church.

*Your Area Dean, James*

*Revd James Pitkin - romseyareadean@gmail.com*

### St Nicholas' Leckford

#### Plough Service



Leckford Church was comfortably full for the annual Plough Service which alternates between Longstock and Leckford. This year it was the turn of Leckford on 15th January, and how lovely it was to have so many folks come and support it! The plough was brought into the Church by Ian Smith (son of Geoff Smith now deceased, who was a national champion ploughman and supported the service for years) and the seed by Chris Reynell; both the plough and the seed were blessed.

Many thanks to all who came out on a cold dark night, and to everyone who helped with the service, especially to those who had to carry the plough!

Services for February are:

Sunday 5th 8.00am Said Holy Communion

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> 6.00pm Evensong.

*Dawn Williams, Churchwarden*



## Church News

### St Peter's and Old St Peter's Stockbridge

Since the last magazine was published, we have celebrated Christmas. The village was officially 'lit up' when Lawrie McMenemy, former Southampton Football Manager, turned on the Christmas lights on Saturday 3rd December. Angela McMeekin and many other helping hands provided mince pies and mulled wine in St Peter's and the choir sang carols. The Carol Service was held on 16th December as a joint service with St Thomas More, the Roman Catholic Church. Our Team Minister, Sue Kipling, officiated, accompanied by the Roman Catholic Bishop, Peter Doyle. The Church was full and everyone enjoyed the Bishop's address.

The Christmas Story for young people on Christmas Eve was led by our Rector Phill accompanied by Patrick Melville and many children and their parents came from around the Benefice. Midnight Mass was also well attended and led by our Team Minister Sue.

On December 15th, we said goodbye to Tony Hales at his Funeral Service held in St Peter's. He was an active member of the Stockbridge community for many years and he and his wife, Wendy, used to sing in the choir. Our thoughts and prayers are with Wendy and with Tony's family.

Many thanks are due to everyone who pulled out all the stops to make the Christmas events such a success. It is fitting at this time to thank all those who work behind the scenes, quietly cleaning both our churches when needed, those who arrange and maintain the beautiful flower arrangements, those who support the clergy during the services by performing sacristan duties, reading, intercessions, welcoming the congregation and providing tea and coffee afterwards. And special thanks to Dawn, our tireless organist, who not only plays at as many services as she can, faithfully accompanied by Mollie her collie-dog, but also leads the choir and encourages them to learn new pieces and to sing heartily at all the Christmas services and at least once a month at Eucharist services. Thanks also to our wonderful bellringers; and to those who take care of opening and closing both our churches throughout the year. We are lucky to have so many volunteers supporting our churches and our PCC would always welcome any new volunteers in whatever capacity they might be able to help.

On January 5th, the Eve of the Epiphany, a special service was held in St Mary's Church, Broughton, for the Licensing of the Rev'd Sue Kipling as Associate Priest in our Benefice of Mid Test, the blessing of our Ministry Team and the re-dedication of all the people of God in this benefice to his service. The Rev'd Canon Gary Philbrick, Assistant Archdeacon of Winchester, led the service. It was

an opportunity for us all to welcome Sue in her new rôle and to feel grateful that she has felt God's call, confirmed by our Rector and the wider church, to be such an important part of our community.

Epiphany in the Gregorian Calendar is observed on January 6th. It commemorates the manifestation of Christ to the gentiles in the persons of the Magi, who came to Bethlehem twelve days after the birth of Jesus. The word 'epiphany' means 'an appearance or manifestation, especially of a deity', and in the Greek Orthodox Church this festival is called 'Theophania' or the 'appearance of God'. The day is also marked in that branch of Christianity by the 'Blessing of the Waters', reflecting Christ blessing the River Jordan. All over Greece near the sea on January 6th, you will see dozens of young men in swimming trunks, lining up during outdoor Epiphany services, waiting for the local priest to throw a metal cross into the sea, whereupon they all dive in, whatever the weather, and one of them hopefully emerges successfully holding the cross. He then becomes a privileged member of the congregation for the following year. The Russian Orthodox branch follows the Julian calendar so celebrates Christmas and Epiphany on later dates to our own.

A Benefice Service to celebrate Candlemas was held on the last Sunday of January, at St Mary's Broughton.

Micki Nadal has worked hard to promote the Church Bookshop since Briar handed it over to her. It has been very popular this year and raised over £900. This large sum was added to further money raised through church fund-raising activities and the PCC was able to donate £1000 to Crisis at Christmas, and £1000 to the Andover Food Bank. Carey Huckle, one of the Admin Volunteers at the Food Bank, wrote expressing their grateful thanks for all the support we provide them, both in financial donations and food boxes. She pointed out how much busier they have been in recent months with the increase in cost of living pushing many families into crisis. The Food Bank has now formed a partnership with the Fuel Bank to provide energy top-ups to people's accounts where needed which gives those affected a means to get some extra heat, a chance to do some laundry and to sit down to a hot meal, things that so many of us take for granted. So let us all continue throughout 2023 to do what we can to support our friends in Andover.

Looking ahead: We welcome those who live alone to tea in the Church at 3pm on February 5<sup>th</sup>.

*Janet Williams*

*Love gives naught but itself and takes naught but from itself.*

*Love possesses not nor would it be possessed;  
For love is sufficient unto love.*

*When you love you should not say, "God is in my heart," but rather, "I am in the heart of God."*

*Khalil Gibran On Love 'The Prophet'*

# Church News

## St Mary's Longstock



The preparation time during Advent was busy, but good – we enjoyed 'Carols in the Peat Spade' on 8 December. Many thanks to Lois for organising this and to the children and adults who led the singing and music. The Pub was very full, the singing quite loud and the mince pies excellent. This excitement was followed by 'The Christmas Story' held in the Barn belonging to Paul and Loz Harding. Many children helped to tell the story in the atmospheric barn laid out with hay bales and fairy lights. This was great fun but very, very cold as we were in the middle of the very cold snap in December. After the little service - and it was lovely having Helen King return to play for us - we all enjoyed mulled cider and many delicious nibbles. Thanks to Paul, Loz and Arthur for their hospitality.

The traditional Crib Service took place on 18 December. A full church saw the empty crib being filled with pottery people and animals during each carol. The church was beautifully decorated, complete with tree, so the event was colourful and festive. Thanks to Boo Milne and her team for the wonderful display of festive flowers and to Rik and Sarah for decorating the tree. The crib outside was looking good, as it should, as the crib had been decorated inside and all the people and animals refreshed.

On Christmas Day, it was good to have Rev'd Bob Green return to lead the service. He was one of the retired clergy who helped us regularly during our long interregnum. 75 adults and children came to celebrate Jesus' birth - a wonderful way to start Christmas Day. Anthony Burns-Cox was with us once more to play the organ and treated us to a magnificent voluntary at the end of the service.

So many people help at Christmas, so a big 'thank you' to you all.

The church depends upon many volunteers so 'thank you' to all of you who deliver magazines, clean the church and open and lock the church each day.

On 5 January, Rev'd Sue Kipling was licenced as Assistant Minister to the Mid-Test Benefice. She has been assisting Philip for some time, but this service made it official. In addition, the Ministry Team was recognised with the inclusion of eight Lay Worship Leaders, who regularly take services in the various parishes, and it was good to see Rev'd Dr John Rennie on the list of team members. John

and Sheelagh moved to Longstock a couple of years ago and now he has retired; it is lovely to see him listed on the rota to take services or preach at St Mary, Longstock and to help across the Benefice.

A PCC meeting took place on 17 January. The accounts for 2022 were presented and approved and the date set for the Annual Meeting - 25 April 2023. Also discussed were:

- Safeguarding – ensuring that we are up to date with requirements
- Fabric – a report on progress with the work recommended by the five-yearly inspection. Much has been achieved, the most expensive item being repairs to the windows. The PCC is grateful for the help of the fête income and the contribution towards our annual expenses.
- The budget for 2023

The PCC discussed how much we all appreciate the many volunteers. So much so that a date was agreed when we will have a wine and nibbles evening in the churchyard and Church. All the many volunteers will be invited, with their partners. The date set is Friday 23 June 2023.

Our quest for an 'Eco Award' continues, the first level being bronze. Silver and gold awards will follow if we meet the required criteria. The list of things we need to do include:

- Include 'care of creation' in the pew sheet prayer topics
- Care for environment in preaching
- Guest speakers to speak on environmental issues
- Creation-care in bible study
- Look into energy efficiency of church building and heating system
- Consider solar panels in the valley gutter
- No-mow May to encourage wild flowers
- Arrange an annual 'green-fair' event
- Direct church-giving (ie. PCC giving to charity) to environmental charities
- Congregation Christmas card scheme
- Find someone to run a Fairtrade stall (could be benefice-wide initiative).

If anyone would like to volunteer to help with this, please contact either Philip (810810) or Maddie (810284).

The end of the Christmas season will be Candlemas, which falls on 2 February. The cribs will be put away for another year. We then have but a couple of weeks of 'ordinary time' after which is the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, 22 February. There will be a service at St Mary, Longstock in the evening starting at 7.30pm. It would be wonderful



## Church News

if this service attracted a good congregation. It is a very good way to start Lent.

Mothering Sunday this year is 19 March, with a service at 9.30am. There will be a group of us making the posies for the service at The Old Vicarage, courtesy of Sophie Hill. If you would like to join us, or make a contribution of flowers from your garden, please phone Maddie (810284) or Sophie (810864).

Kindness is the oil that keeps communities together. I am grateful to David Fakes for his kindness. Before Christmas he was busy making wooden sheep for his grandchildren. I admired them. He rang me the other day saying he had two sheep rampaging in his garden!

He had made me two sheep which are lovely. An early birthday gift he said. Proudly on display at home.



Maddie Hedley

If you have any questions on 'the news', please contact Maddie on 810284 or email [mjh723@btinternet.com](mailto:mjh723@btinternet.com)

### The Column for December and January

#### Baptisms and Weddings

There were no baptisms or weddings.

#### Funerals

Thursday, 15 December at 12 noon. The Funeral Service for Tony Hales took place at St Peter's Church, Stockbridge.

### Hampshire Downs RC Parish St Thomas More

Services are held on Sundays at 9.00am



### February Services for Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford

#### 5th February (Proper 1)

- 08.00 **Leckford** Holy Communion BCP
- 09.30 **Longstock** All Age Worship
- 11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist

#### 12th February (Second Sunday before Lent)

- 08.00 **Old St Peter** Holy Communion
- 09.30 **Longstock** Parish Eucharist
- 11.00 **Stockbridge** All Age Service

#### 19th February (Sunday before Lent)

- 09.30 **Longstock** Morning Worship
- 11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist
- 18.00 **Leckford** Evensong

#### 22nd February (Ash Wednesday)

- 10.00 **Old St Peter** Holy Communion with Ashing
- 19.30 **Longstock** Holy Communion with Ashing

#### 26th February (Lent 1)

- 11.00 **Stockbridge** Morning Worship

### Prayer for February

The bright, crisp, clear days of January are interspersed with wind and rain.

Lord, help us to be grateful for each new day, no matter what the weather.

The Christmas Season ended with Candlemas – your presentation at the Temple, Simeon and Anna both recognising you as the Messiah, the longed-for promise from God.

Help us also to recognise you as our Lord and as our friend. Guiding our steps each day. We pray we will make time for you, for conversation, praise and help.

Lord, the New Year did not bring a cessation of the war in Ukraine, so we continue to pray for peace, for the bombing to stop, so that the people can once more live in peace and harmony.

And, Lord, we have not forgotten our role as stewards of your world.

Help us to be aware of our use of resources and use things only when we need.

We know things are bad, so help us restore a proper balance, ensuring that all your creatures have enough room and food.

Thank you, Lord, for our blessings – help us to be good disciples and neighbours.

Amen.



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