

The Parish Magazine for

£1

STOCKBRIDGE LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD

November 2024



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

Rector : The Reverend Joe Sweetnam (from 6 November 2024)

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

Please contact the Benefice Administrator, Lois Opperman
Phone No: 07900 927913 or midtestbenefice@gmail.com

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From the Editorial Team

Sandwiched between celebration of harvest bounty and the festivities of Christmas, November always brings a certain poignancy to the shortening days as we remember the sorrows of war both past and, sadly, all-too-present.

It is heartening therefore that, later in the month, World Kindness Day and World Children's Day urge us to embrace more positive elements of humanity. Kindness is such a simple concept, almost overlooked within today's complicated discussion of society, and our footers bring us back to basics. We witness acts of kindness at a personal level all around us every day yet it seems less evident at institutional, national and global levels. Thus, for our children, on p19, we report on what we must do to nurture compassionate, healthy, educated and empowered citizens and leaders of the future who might bring about a more peaceable world. In our own part of the world, we are lucky that our schools put those principles into day-to-day practice and make it such fun (p13).

Here at the Magazine, we join others in extending a very warm welcome to our new Rector, Reverend Joe Sweetnam, and his family. We look forward to working with Rev'd Joe and wish him a happy and fruitful incumbency in which all parts of the community thrive.

Thea Taylor, Frances Candler and Jennifer Kidd

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*Photo credits : Front cover, Field of Poppies - Pexels: Elina Sazonova
Above, Longstock War Memorial - Colin Stokes*

*Our footers this month are prompted by World Kindness Day on November 13th
– though its message holds good for every day.*

Stockbridge Town Hall Events



Weekly

Mon am	Pilates with Paula
Mon am	Pilates Unlimited with Clare
Mon pm	Sing for Fun
Tues am	Iyengar Yoga with Melissa
Weds am	Yoga with Dionne
Weds am/pm	Su Joy Art Class
Thurs am	Stockbridge Community Market
Thurs/Sat	Jo Caley Joga
Fri am	Moo Music

This Month

Nov 1	The Queen of Everything
Nov 2	AnCque Fair
Nov 3	Posh Bric-a-Brac sale
Nov 4-6	Wild Bazaar
Nov 5	Stockbridge Drama Society
Nov 8	Claudia Bradby Ltd
Nov 8	Stockbridge Music Society
Nov 9-11	Jules At No.43
Nov 9	Trout 'n About
Nov 12	re:dress Winchester
Nov 13	Infinito
Nov 13	U3A
Nov 14-15	Peppy Life Ltd
Nov 15	Stockbridge Community Cinema
Nov 16	South Central Makers
Nov 17	Daniel Clayton Art ExhibiCon
Nov 18-10	Wild Bazaar
Nov 20	Stockbridge Community Cinema
Nov 21	U3A
Nov 21	Stockbridge Parish Council
Nov 23-24	AnCques and Curios
Nov 23-24	Hawkmoor Books
Nov 26	Longstock and Leckford WI
Nov 28-30	Stockbridge Drama Society
Nov 29	Infinito
Nov 30	South Central Makers



Stockbridge Community Market

**Every Thursday morning
9.30 - 11.45am
in Stockbridge Town Hall**

Selling the very best local / home-made produce

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

Please come along and browse

Free drop-in IT Help Desk and Wi-Fi access



Stockbridge Community Cinema



IO CAPITANO (15)

Friday 15 November

7.30 pm (2hrs 1min)



Two Senegalese teenagers living in Dakar yearn for a brighter future in Europe. Yet between their dreams and reality lies a treacherous journey

through a labyrinth of checkpoints, the scorched Saharan desert, a fetid North African prison and the vast waters of the Mediterranean where thousands have died packed inside vessels barely fit for passage.

[In Wolof, French, Arabic, with subtitles]

TWISTERS (15)

Wednesday 20 November

4.45 pm and 7.30 pm (1hr 42min)



As storm season intensifies, the paths of former storm chaser Kate Cooper, lured back to the open plains after a devastating encounter years prior, and reckless

social-media superstar Tyler Owens collide when terrifying phenomena never seen before are unleashed. The pair and their competing teams find themselves squarely in the paths of multiple storm systems converging on Oklahoma in the fight of their lives

Tickets £6.00 (£5.50 + £0.50 booking fee)

available online via our website

stockbridgecinema.org.uk or via the

TicketSource telephone booking service

0333 666 3366 (no additional fee)

Copy for Magazine

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15 November 2024

(Please send us material for December and January as this issue combines both months).

Please send emails to:

editorsstockmag@gmail.com

or phone Frances on 01264 811776

Jennifer on 811179 or Thea on 07730 964481



Patron Professor David Owen Norris MA (Oxon) FRAM FRCD

STOCKBRIDGE MUSIC

Friday 8th November, 2024 at 7.30pm
Doors open at 6.45pm
St Peter's Church, Stockbridge



Nadine Benjamin MBE
soprano
Andrea Kmecova, piano
"Puccini and More
The Joys and Challenges of Love"
Tickets £20 (U18s £5)
from stockbridgemusic.uk
or on the door, if still available

The Amici Singers 'Songs of Solace'

St Peter's Church, Stockbridge
Saturday 16th November at 6pm
Conducted by
Mark Williams
Admission Free
Retiring collection for Marie Curie Charity

The Amici Singers are a group of experienced singing friends who have come together to present this one hour concert of reflective, contemplative and beautiful choral music from the Renaissance to the 21st century, including pieces by James Macmillan, Thomas Tallis, Bob Chilcott, Ola Gjeilo and others.

They are directed by the eminent Winchester based conductor Mark Williams. The concert is presented by writer and journalist James McConnachie.

The concert is free to attend with a retiring collection going to The Marie Curie Charity.

Rebecca Downes Band Next Up at The Somborne Sessions



Somborne Sessions in **King's Somborne Village Hall** continues on **Saturday 16 November** with **The Rebecca Downes Band**.

Emerging Artist of the Year 2016 and Female Blues Vocalist of the Year 2018, Rebecca creates original blues/rock music with co-writer, Steve Birkett, on her own Mad Hat record label. Her latest album (2022), is 'The Space Between Us', a collection ranging in style from big, bold blues rock to darker, moodier and atmospheric material delivered with a very personal vocal conviction. Rebecca will bring her full band to the Sessions.

Tickets are £16 in advance from www.ticketsource.co.uk/sombornesessions or £18 on the night.
Doors open 7.30pm for 8pm start.
(Photo: Mal Whichelow) Peter Duncan



LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD WI

Tuesday 26th November
Stockbridge Town Hall
**'Heart of Oak' -
the 18th Century Naval Timber
Crisis and the New Forest**
by Dr. Gale Pettifer
6.45pm for 7pm start
Guests always welcome.

Please contact Sue Hill on 811779 or Selina Musters on 810459 for further details



The Royal British Legion Houghton and District Branch

Contact David Williams (Chairman)
01264 811072
Social evenings are held on the first Wednesday of most months in the Greyhound on the Test





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LAURA LEXX



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*Lincoln subject to change



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DIRECTED BY JO FRY

PRESENTS

THE INAUGURAL CONCERT

SATURDAY 23RD NOVEMBER 2024 AT 7:30PM
ALL SAINTS CHURCH, UPPER CLATFORD

ADULTS £10 CHILDREN £5
(DOORS OPEN 7PM - CASH BAR)

ALL FUNDS RAISED WILL BE SHARED BETWEEN ALL SAINTS CHURCH
AND ABCD BETHLEHEM

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OR BY SCANNING THE QR CODE BELOW:



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Star in the east

A concert for Christmas

7:00 pm Saturday, 21 December 2024
St Mary's Church, Andover

Tickets £15 (incl. refreshments) on the door or £13 in advance from Newbury Building Society, The Lights and choir members
Under-16s admitted free

In aid of the Boaz Project
www.andoverchamberchoir.org.uk




Mayor of Test Valley Charity Appeal

BURNS NIGHT SUPPER & CEILIDH

SATURDAY, 25th JANUARY 2025, 6.30PM

CROSFIELD HALL, ROMSEY.

TICKETS £55, but no money required now.

Includes welcome drink and 4-course traditional Burns' Supper with wine.
Piper from the Wiltshire Caledonian Pipe and Drum Band.

Raffle prizes. Bar open 6.30 - 10.30pm

FOR TICKET AVAILABILITY - email burnsnightsupperandceilidh@yahoo.com
(No payment required at this stage)

.Black tie, suit or Scottish dress.

IN AID OF
THE HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT
AIR AMBULANCE AND OTHER CHARITIES

**Stockbridge Amateur Dramatic Society's
Curtain Calls . . .**

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

Tuesday 5th November
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 also 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

Thursday 7th November
at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall

AGM

followed by
**'The work of two local
support charities'**

Presentations by
Thomas James, Operations Manager from
Citizens Advice Test Valley, and
Hannah Scott from **Trinity, Winchester**.

Doors open at 1.40pm for the presentations followed by refreshments.

New members are very welcome to attend our meetings.

Thursday 5th December
at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall

Christmas Social

A members only afternoon of festive fun, food and drink.

Tickets £5 available at the November meeting or from Mary Coleman *mescoleman@gmail.com*

u3a is a UK-wide network of groups that provides the opportunity to socialise and learn for fun.

Find out more at *u3a.org.uk*
or see the latest on our
Test Villages group at:
testvillages.u3asite.uk



Longstock Garden Club

**Please join us at our
special fundraising meeting
in aid of**

Horatio's Garden
on Tuesday 12th November
at 7.30pm in Longstock Village Hall
(Doors open at 7.00pm)

Horatio's Garden nurtures the wellbeing of people after spinal injury in beautiful, vibrant sanctuaries within the heart of NHS spinal injury centres.

Lucy Thorpe

**Head Gardener and Garden Therapist,
from Horatio's Garden in Salisbury**
will give a presentation on the gardens, their designs and plants and how they benefit the patients they support.

Raffle and Horatio's Garden sales table.
Wine and soft drinks will be available to purchase.

Tickets £5 (free to LGC members)

Further information at
<https://longstockgardenclub.com/>



Houghton WI

10am Monday 18th November
at Houghton Village Hall

Steve Herra

will give a talk on
**'Coco Chanel - her Life,
Loves and Lies'**

Visitors welcome. Further information from
Jane Anderton 01264 810928

**Wherwell
History Group**

Friday 15th November
at 8.00pm



Christmas - A Festive History.

A Zoom Presentation by
Andy Thomas

Please book in advance by checking our website:
www.wherwellhistory.com/about/programme

Respiratory Syncytial Virus vaccination

We have over 800 patients who are eligible for an RSV vaccination. We will invite all eligible paCents over the coming months.

Covid and flu

If you haven't been able to arrange appointments, local pharmacies offer flu jabs and, for Covid, please call the Hampshire Covid Helpline on 0300 561 0018.

Why don't you have any appointments to book online?

If you try to book online and are told we don't have any appointments for 15 weeks, this is not actually the case. As a surgery, we are working hard to ensure patients can see the same doctor for ongoing problems which means we contact patients to book them in and cannot therefore release appointments for online booking.

The receptionists are best placed to help you to get the right care at the right time and ensure you get the right type of appointment. For example, some patients may book a routine appointment when we would prefer to see them sooner or book an appointment for something for which they can self-refer e.g. vasectomy, breast lump, hearing check. Information about this can be found online at: www.stockbridgesurgery.co.uk/do-i-need-to-see-a-gp-1

Dr Rosser, GP Partner, has created a care navigation tool for our receptionists to use to support this process. Training on the new tool started in October and is ongoing throughout November.

Continence service

You can self-refer for this service for help with bladder and bowel problems by calling 023 8231 1690. More information at: hiowhealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/a-z-list-of-services/continence

Target afternoon

Please note that on 21 November, local services will be closed for the afternoon to allow staff training.

*Ann Spooner
Practice Manager*

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Crime Cuttings

We have no wish to cause distress or alarm to our readers with tales of criminal activity - we are, after all, lucky to live in one of the safer areas of the country for physical crimes. However, prompted by last month's Anti-Cyber Crime seminar, we thought a few reminders of what we can all do to avoid being caught out might be useful.

What's a 'Safe Phrase' and how can you use it?

There are all sorts of telephone scams but the so-called "Hi mum" message works by tricking a parent into sending money to someone they believe to be their child. They are asked to save a new mobile phone number and then convinced to send money to a third party. The scammer may say their phone is broken, lost or stolen so they can't pay bills or need emergency money.

If your child calls begging for money, would you really question their identity even if sounds like them but out-of-character? It could even be an AI voice-cloning scam. This is where a 'Safe Phrase' is invaluable - a previously-agreed phrase or word that you and your inner circle can use to verify yourselves to each other. It should be:

Simple yet random

Easy to remember

Different from your other passwords

Shared with friends and family in person

Just be sure to change it every now and again, and immediately if you think it's no longer private.

WASTE CRIME

Suspect ALL waste carriers

Check with the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506 that the provider taking your waste away is registered

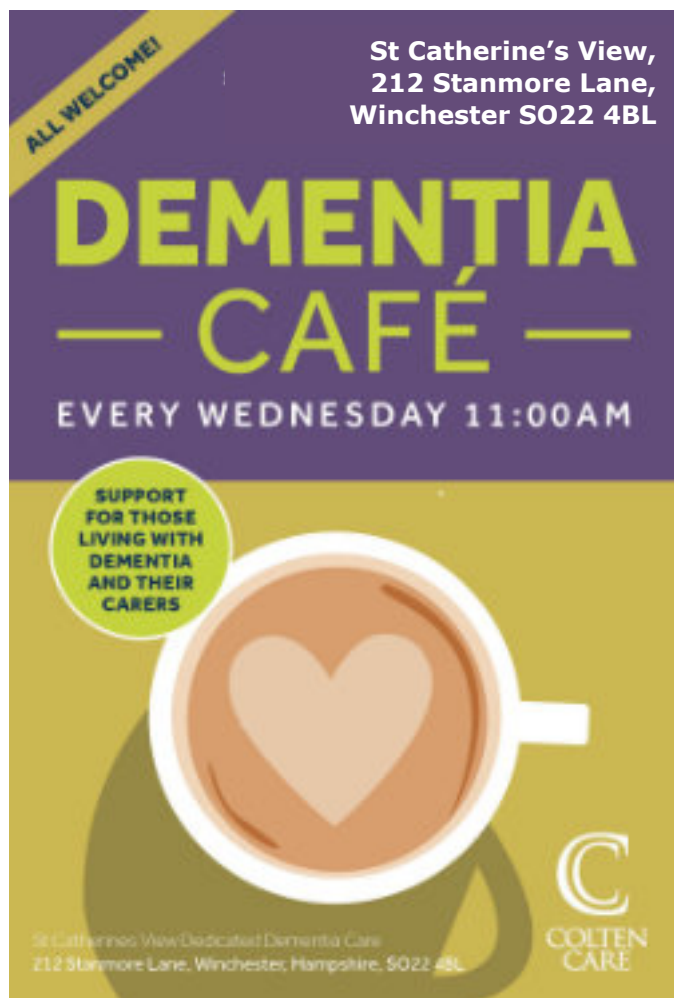
Refuse unexpected offers to have waste taken away

Ask what will happen to your waste

Paperwork should be obtained – get a full receipt

Machinery Theft

There are many thefts of plant machinery in Test Valley and, nationally, rural theft is on the rise as plant and agricultural machinery are attractive to thieves. Proactive measures such as installing a doorbell camera or CCTV can sometimes be enough to deter criminals. Installing a tracker on your machinery can also make a huge difference in enabling police to locate and recover your property if it is stolen. (Source: Hampshire & IOW Constabulary Rural Times Newsletter)



The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, founded by Princess Anne in Glasgow in 1991, has been chosen to provide the new Countywide Carers Support Service for Hampshire County Council from September this year.

The Trust is a specialist organisation which has been providing support for carers in Hampshire for 30 years. The Winchester and Andover Carer Centre was set up in 1994 by the then Mayor of Winchester, Susan Glasspool, using the proceeds of her Mayor's Charity Appeal. Based in Andover, it is part of a network of 130 Carer Centres in the UK coordinated by The Carers Trust.

The new service is set to offer help to Hampshire carers over the age of 18 looking after an adult with a long-term health condition, including dementia, and those looking after a person with a physical or learning disability.

It will provide a wide range of assistance comprising information and advice, direct one-to-one support where carers' needs are more complex, and contingency and emergency planning, helping carers to prepare plans in the event of an emergency when unable to look after their loved one.

The Trust prides itself in its dedication to ensuring all carers are properly supported, their rights are recognised and they have a choice as to the extent of their caring role. It aims to make sure all carers in Hampshire have access to high quality information and advice.

The Trust's work is varied and tailored to the needs of each individual carer, focusing on giving carers accurate and up-to-date information on anything from disability aids to benefits claims as well as emotional support. It also runs special support groups, acts as carers' advocates, liaises with Social Services, GPs, hospitals and the Benefits Agency, amongst others, and offers free counselling to carers by way of qualified voluntary counsellors.

If you would like to know more about the Trust, do ring 01264 311680 and/or go to info@carercentre.com

(The Trust, a Registered Charity, is planning to give a talk on its work to be held at Stockbridge Town Hall in January. We hope to be able to provide details in next month's magazine. Editors.)

Andover Concert Series

Cello and Piano

Thursday 21st November 2024 - 7:30pm



Featuring Faure, Schubert, Bach & Gershwin

Garwyn Linnell & Beatrice Nicholas

Tickets: £18 from *The Lights* or on the door

Performed at:





www.andoverconcertseries.uk

Presented by:



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The Brontës Revealed

There's a curious mythology that has grown around the Brontë sisters, one that places them in a world of isolation and innocence. The question is often asked; How could three Victorian spinsters, living in the wilds of the Yorkshire moors, possibly have written some of the greatest literature of the English language? Novels written about passion, betrayal, drug addiction, alcohol abuse, social upheaval, madness and domestic violence.

Polly Teale's play, *Brontë*, currently being rehearsed by Stockbridge Amateur Dramatics Society, addresses and dispels these myths.

Charlotte, Emily, Anne and their brother Branwell were all writers, poets, musicians and artists and they lived in a world beset by great social change. From protests and riots against local mill owners to the poverty, deprivation and disease of their close neighbours and then the personal tragedy of the loss of their mother Maria Branwell, aged 38, and their two older sisters, Maria and Elizabeth aged eleven and ten respectively, they were neither isolated nor innocent of the world.

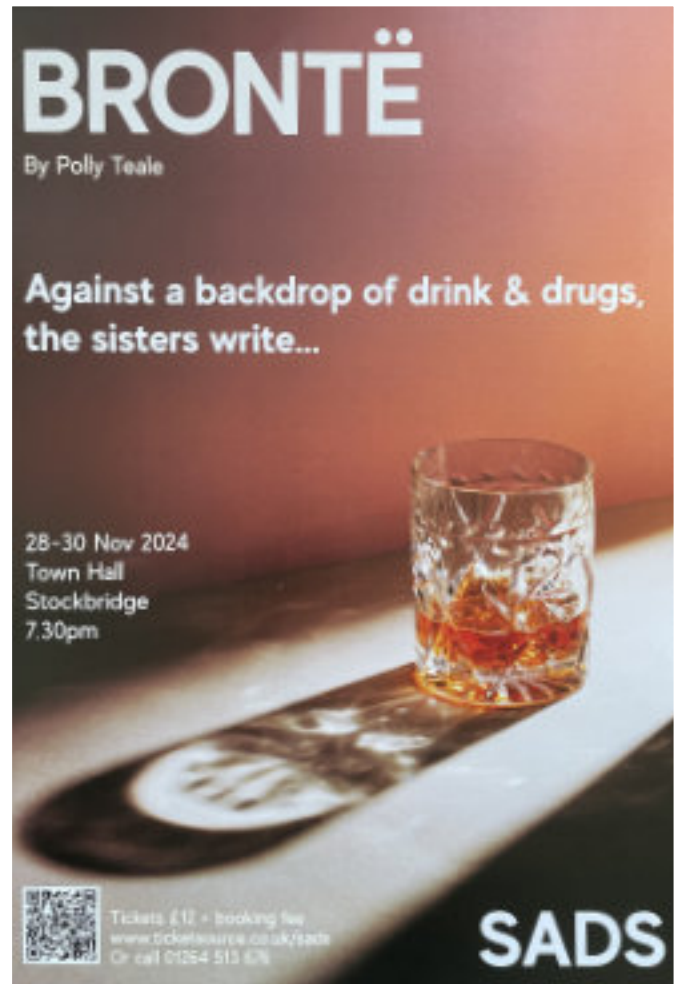
Their father Patrick, a vicar, campaigner, abolitionist and educator, encouraged his children to read everything they could lay their hands on. They read great literary works, newspapers of different political hues and the gossip and intrigue of local magazines.

His children took inspiration from the exploits of explorers in far-flung lands and the battles of Wellington to create incredibly detailed imaginary worlds written in tiny handmade books.



*Anne, Emily, Charlotte c.1834 (restored)
by Patrick Branwell. In National Portrait Gallery.*

The social dictates of the day meant that Branwell, the only son, was given all the opportunities to become a great poet or artist. Upon his shoulders were placed all the hopes and expectations of his family. Whether he didn't quite have the talent or perhaps the temperament to succeed in his endeavours, he certainly crumbled under their weight. His disastrous sojourn as the tutor of the



family of Thorp Green Hall, near York, was the catalyst for a descent into drug and alcohol abuse. The affair he had been conducting for over a year had been discovered - an affair with the mother of the family; the now infamous older woman, Mrs Robinson (yes, that one).

The play *Brontë* revolves around this period of time in 1845 when Anne, having been governess for the Robinsons for five years, promptly resigns and returns to Haworth; shortly to be followed by her brother. The timeline jumps forward and back to explore the influences, experiences, temperaments and compulsions that enabled these three sisters, constrained by the need to earn a living and look after their ageing father, to still find time to write.

We can only imagine what the sisters might have achieved had they been afforded the same advantages of their brother. Charlotte whose talent, ambition and determination to be 'forever known' was almost all-consuming, Emily whose intensity and passion was inspired by nature and the wild world of the moors and Anne, feminist and social firebrand who saw injustice around her and wanted to make the world a better place.

Sarah Litton

***Brontë* by Polly Teale**

is being performed at **Stockbridge Town Hall**
on 28th, 29th and 30th November.

To buy tickets go to: www.ticketsource.co.uk/sads



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Stockbridge Primary and Pre-School News

'Autumn Days ...

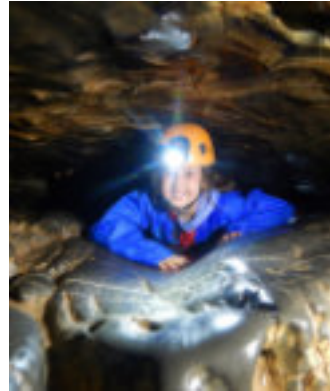
... when the grass is jewelled ...' I hope you can continue the lyrics from this popular school song – we certainly can! Autumn is well underway and our annual conker competition is in full swing! Literally. This traditional game is referenced in our old school log books which date right back to when the school was first built and we couldn't let it slip as a rural school! Children were set the task of scavenging for conkers in early October weekends and have come all prepped and ready. The playlist is up on the doors in our corridor and each breaktime, our bronze ambassadors referee conker matches. With over 100 children taking part, it's no mean feat!

In these days of health and safety gone mad, it would be easy to skip this annual festival but it's important to us to keep traditions upheld and we've found a way of doing it safely; a dedicated match space, hoops to stand in to ensure we separate children well enough, straight arms out being monitored by the refs and teachers on duty and we seem to be able to do it well! Of course, for some there is the inevitable exhilaration of a win and for others, the crushing defeat of a loss. These are important life lessons that we try to teach our children through curriculum areas but there is no substitute for real, healthy competitive events. Of course, our THRIVE trained staff are on hand to support children and explain that these feelings are completely normal and part of growing up.

Our Year R children are settling in brilliantly! Just before I settled down to write this article, I'd been to see them in their learning and they were in the middle of building conker runs; problem-solving to find ways around and through obstacles that they'd created and get their conker down the guttering the quickest! Some were inside doing 'drawing club' – an initiative to get them writing at this early age but still through play and exploration. Seeing them with their older buddies in school is a really positive feature of the way we all support and look after one another here at Stockbridge – long may it continue!

Year 6 have completed their last residential during their time with us. Another trip up to the Brecon Beacons has proved fruitful and they have returned

with a grown up attitude, a developing sense of independence and some real successes under their belt – learning how to paddle and steer a canoe, conquering the 'letterbox' in the caves at Porth yr Ogof and climb a mountain to name but a few, not to mention trying new and different foods and cooking for their friends and teachers each evening.



Amelia in the caves

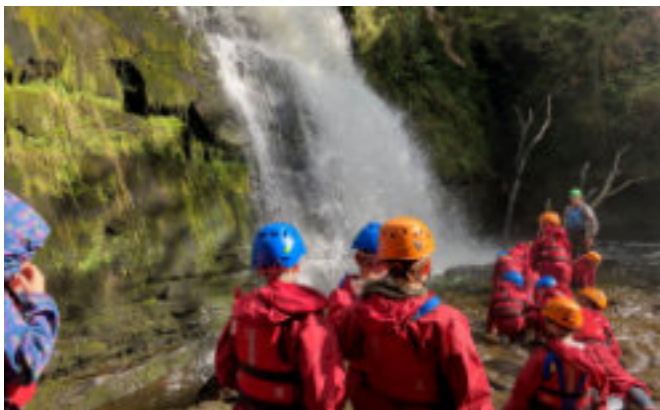


Alex sitting

Our annual trip to Hampshire's Mountain Centre in Libanus is always a highlight of our year and talked about even now with children who have long since left our school.

There's one thing for sure, school life never stands still! Enjoy the beauty that autumn brings, we'll be out in it no matter what the weather!

*Emma Jefferies
Headteacher*





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Stockbridge Parish Council News

Rights of Way Path Warden Volunteers

Do you enjoy walking along the local Rights of Way paths? Do you notice when the brambles get too much and the nettles become obstructive. The PC is looking for Path Warden volunteers who are happy to walk along the footpaths cutting back overgrowth where it is needed. Unfortunately, HCC is having to reduce the amount of time (and money) it is able to spend maintaining the county's footpaths and Rights of Ways. HCC is therefore looking to the Parishes and to volunteers to undertake the necessary maintenance work.

HCC is proposing that there should be one or two volunteers per Parish, as Path Wardens, to keep regular checks on the paths and to do some cutting back as and when it is necessary. These Path Wardens will also co-ordinate teams of volunteers to tackle more demanding problem areas. It is hoped that the team of volunteers would also be happy to work with other Parishes as well. HCC will provide some training (half a day) and a backpack of equipment so that the volunteer can take a hike along the paths, improving it as they go. If you are interested in becoming a Path Warden for Stockbridge Parish please let the Clerk know - Clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk

Old London Way One-way Street Consultation

At the September meeting, Stockbridge Parish Council agreed to start the first stage of a possible installation of a one-way street in Old London Road. The Council unanimously agreed to ask for the entrance and exits of the A3057 roundabout at the White Hart to be narrowed which it was hoped would slow the traffic and stop cars trying overtake other cars which slowed to let a child cross. Other changes to Old London Rd were not unanimously agreed but were resolved. HCC will now consult with residents so it is hoped that HCC will listen to any dissenting views.

Consultation on HCC Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LWCIP)

HCC is consulting on the proposed enhancements to walking and cycling routes in the Test Valley area. One of the proposed walking routes uses Stockbridge High Street so it is important that as many residents as possible respond to the consultation because HCC will be able (at this stage) to take into account resident's comments. It is very likely that Stockbridge residents understand more about the route than the HCC officers do and they are open to making changes.

Links to the consultation and how you respond are on Stockbridge PC website under the News tab - *Consultation on Northern TV Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plan - Stockbridge Parish Council, Stockbridge.* **Response deadline 17 November.**

High Street WhatsApp Group

The Parish Council is starting up a High Street WhatsApp group to be able to pass on announcements and other information. Using technology in this way is a cost-effective means for the Council to communicate with residents. It has already proved useful in October when it was used to let residents know that HCC was going to undertake gully cleaning so residents' cars needed to be taken off the highway. If you would like to be part of this group, please let the Clerk know with your mobile number and she will ensure you are put on the group.

HCC Decisions on Future Services

HCC will be making key decisions about future services this Autumn. Consideration will be given to the services provided by HCC to residents including in areas such as household waste recycling centres and streetlights to library stocks and road maintenance. Over 14,400 people responded to HCC's consultation which asked for the public's views on 13 options to change and reduce some local services to help make savings towards an annual £132 million budget shortfall. HCC has been aware it would be facing this deficit and needs to focus on core service delivery so it can live within its means and prioritise providing the essentials.

Before making any decisions, the HCC Cabinet will carefully consider the officers' recommendations in the context of the consultation responses, the feedback from the Select Committees and any deputations made. While officers make the recommendations in the reports the Cabinet is open to considering other options that may evolve through this process. The Cabinet can also choose different solutions and timescales at the point of its decision-making. For more information go to <https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/20240902SP25>

Falls Prevention Week

In September, HCC held a 'Falls Prevention Week' to promote strength-building activity every day – even just a little – for a fitter later life and to help maintain balance and prevent falls. However, all the information and the links to the exercises is still available on HCC's website.

Each year in Hampshire, it is estimated that more than 86,000 people aged 65+ have a fall, which can significantly impact their long-term wellbeing. However, simple, strength-building and balancing exercises incorporated into daily lives can make a difference in preventing falls.

Go to the web address below and follow the link to the 'Live Longer Better' website:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/News/240920fallspreventionweek>

Stockbridge Parish Council will next meet on 21st November at the Town Hall at 7:15pm.

Belinda Baker, Clerk to Stockbridge Parish Council
clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk

Hampshire Medical Fund
Christmas Fair
 2024

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Friday 15th Nov 9.30 - 16.00

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Come and enjoy two days of festive shopping at the Hampshire Medical Fund Christmas Fair on 14th - 15th November at Black Chalk Winery!

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There is also a delicious on-site cafe, so you can shop and eat with friends! The event opens on the evening of 14th November with the option of drinks, supper, and shopping. Or join us on Friday for a full day of shopping from 9.30am to 4pm. 10% of all sales benefit the charity!

Tickets cost from £6 for the 15th (when purchased in advance). For 14th evening, tickets cost £12 for drinks and shopping and £20 for drinks, supper and shopping.

Visit <https://www.hampshiremedicalfund.org/> for tickets and further information.

www.hampshiremedicalfund.org


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'Christmas is Coming – oh yes it is!'

The Stockbridge Christmas event and switch on of lights will take place on Friday 6 December beginning with the arrival of Santa with his Tractor Parade at 3.45pm and culminating in the switching on of the lights at 6pm by our new Rector, the Rev'd Joe Sweetnam, following which everyone is invited to mix and mingle over refreshments in St Peter's Church.

The theme of this year's event is 'Panto' so feel free to show up as your favourite pantomime character. Local schoolchildren have been invited to follow a treasure trail of Cinderella's glass slippers along the High Street, Santa and his elves will be welcoming visitors in the Town Hall, music will be provided by Michelmersh Silver Band, Test Valley Brass and Stockbridge's own 'Sing for Fun' and, throughout the village, there will be opportunities for food, fun and games.

Get your diaries out and save the date -

Friday 6th December

We look forward to seeing you there.

Alyson Lownie


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... Reading, Writing and Travelling by Elaine Sperber

At the end of May this year, I closed 'The Bookmark'* and promised myself some much-delayed time off. I teasingly told people I wanted to do nothing – but it turns out that wasn't quite true!

It appears I can think and write about books now without actually having to be in the same place to do so, and over the summer and early autumn I visited family in Northern Ireland, friends in Paris, and in New York.

In each place, I couldn't help thinking about the language and literature that made them special. I was reminded of the many wonderful books I'd read about all of them, and the ones I was looking forward to exploring when I got home.

These reflections start with Ireland.



Irish authors are currently experiencing a huge wave of popularity in both fiction and non-fiction. But when it comes to writing from Northern Ireland, it is very difficult to find books which don't turn on 'the Troubles' in one way or another. I was hoping to discover the literary equivalent of 'Derry Girls' in print – but so far, no luck.

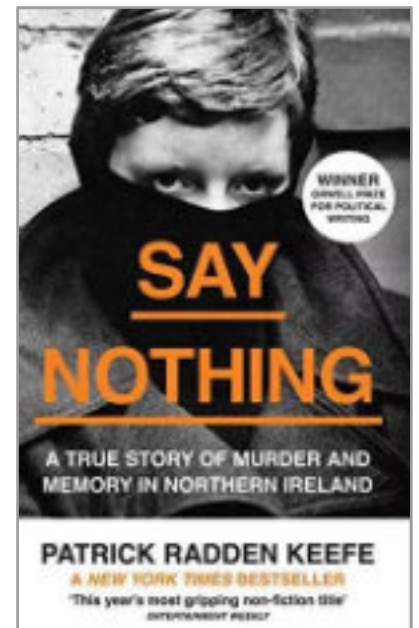
It's understandable that most authors writing now will have lived through some part of Northern Ireland's troubling 30 years of recent history – a history which never quite seems to disappear entirely from the current scene, in spite of how different things are today.

For me, by far the best non-fiction book which deals with this is **SAY NOTHING** by Patrick Radden Keefe. Though published in 2018, Keefe started writing it in 2013 when he read about the murder of Jean McConville. It's not an easy read, but it manages to humanise characters on all sides of the conflict, exploring their conscious and unconscious behaviours throughout this awful time.

When you visit Northern Ireland now, it's hard to imagine that so much fear and death could have lived for so long among the truly beautiful land and seascapes of this little island. My mother was born there and she started to take me back to see her family from the time I was four years old. As an adult, I kept going to see them, even through the worst part of the 1970's and 80's. As late as 1995, I was the first to take my cousin's teenage boys to see a film in a real cinema in Belfast. It was considered far too dangerous before that. The contrast with the present is remarkable.

A lot has been written about all this, so it's hard to be insightful and original, but Patrick Keefe managed it brilliantly. His book won virtually every writing award the year it came out, and now it has been adapted for television and will be streaming on Disney+ in November.

I can't wait.



When it comes to fiction, though there are some notable recent novels from Northern Irish writers (Louise Kennedy's *TRESPASSES*, Anna Burns' *MILKMAN*), their stories seem to be unavoidably and understandably influenced by the Troubles. Though this isn't necessarily a bad thing, it would be nice to read some with different contemporary settings, and perhaps more humour?

A lot of the heat around current Irish fiction at the moment comes from 'down south' as the locals would say. The Republic of Ireland has given us fantastic writers like Colm Toibin (*THE MAGICIAN*, *LONG ISLAND*), Sally Rooney (*NORMAL PEOPLE* and her latest, *INTERMEZZO*), Claire Keegan (*SMALL THINGS LIKE THESE*), not to mention Tana French, Sebastian Barry and Roddy Doyle.



Obviously, the history of great writing from Ireland comes from a long tradition of story-telling and generations of literary giants. The authors mentioned above are some of the most recent examples, but they are certainly continuing that glorious history in style.

Happy Reading . . .

**Elaine owned and ran 'The Bookmark', an independent bookshop on Stockbridge High Street, from April 2018 to May 2024*



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The Rights of the Child for World Children's Day



World Children's Day takes place each year on 20th November. The idea of a Children's Day began in 1857 when a certain Reverend Dr. Charles Leonard, pastor of the Universalist Church of the Redeemer in Chelsea, Massachusetts, held a special service dedicated to, and for, children. Leonard named the day 'Rose Day'; it was later renamed. Over the years, many countries followed suit culminating in today's World Children's Day which marks the United Nations General Assembly's adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959 as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989.

The General Assembly's new proposals on human rights were designed specifically to improve child welfare and encourage all countries to work together to build a better world for children. This set of principles, comprising 54 articles, makes up the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and sets out basic rights whatever a child's ethnicity, gender, religion, language, wealth and physical or mental ability. It is the most complete statement of children's rights ever produced and the most widely-ratified international human rights treaty in history. It specifies every child's right to:

- Life, survival and development
- Medical care and nutritious food
- Get information that is beneficial - from newspapers, social media, the radio or TV etc.
- Receive help from their government
- Rest and play
- Not have to do work that is dangerous
- Be raised by, or have a relationship with, their parents if it is safe to do so
- Think for themselves
- Protection from violence, abuse or neglect
- Express their opinions, be listened to and taken seriously.
- An education

All countries that sign up to the Convention are bound by international law to work together to make these fundamental rights available to all children until they are 18 years old. Compliance is monitored by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

On World Children's Day each year, UNICEF, partners, governments, businesses, parents, teachers and children around the world shine a light on children's rights and call on world leaders to accelerate the actions needed to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of every child, everywhere, without discrimination. Although child rights are human rights and should be non-negotiable, sadly, in too many places today, both near and afar, children's rights are being misunderstood and disregarded or even denied and attacked.

The theme for 2024 is 'Inclusion, for every child' and the occasion encourages adults to ask children about their experiences of today and their vision for tomorrow. By engaging in conversation, children can reflect on their future and exercise their right to expression, while adults can gain insights into children's perspectives to inform the decisions and actions they take today.

To that end, World Children's Day is marked by a variety of events and activities focused on elevating children's voices and priorities. Children 'take over' high-visibility rôles in media, politics, entertainment, business and sport to highlight issues that matter to them and to have their own voices heard. Providing public platforms for children to express themselves in their own words can inspire support and action from the wider community. 'Even the smallest voice can create the loudest echo of change.'

In 2023, nearly 200 countries around the world recognised World Children's Day. To indicate support for child rights, schools and iconic landmarks are often lit up or painted blue, including the Eiffel Tower, the Acropolis, the Empire State Building and even Brighton's Palace Pier.



So let us cherish and support every precious child in our world, both on November 20th and every day.

Editors

S.L.G.M

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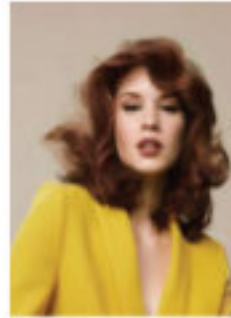
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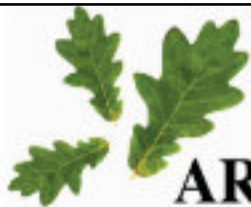
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Potting Shed Cuttings for November

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Unforgettable Gardens: 500 Years of Historic Gardens & Landscapes - The Gardens Trust;
The Cut Flower Sourcebook - Rachel Siegfried;
To Stand & Stare: How to Garden while Doing Next to Nothing - Andrew Timothy O'Brien.



Pruning

In the fruit garden, blackcurrant, redcurrant and gooseberry bushes can be pruned this month. Take out old shoots which have flowered and leave young shoots which are healthy.

Hydrangea petiolaris will be looking a little untidy by this month so it can be gently pruned now. It will flower next year on this year's wood so simply aim to keep it to the shape you would like. Other plants to tidy are hellebores and berberis which can be kept in shape when the birds have eaten the berries. Buddleja can be cut back by about half, the remainder of the pruning should be completed early in the following year.

Sowing

Broad beans, such as Aquadulce Claudia can be sown now for slightly earlier crops next year, along with first early peas such as Meteor. Spinach and mizuna can be sown under glass or on a sunny windowsill as can chilli peppers. There is still time to sow winter varieties of spring onions in a greenhouse or under a cloche and sweet peas can still be sown; check seed packets of perennials, many of which can be sown in November to germinate in the spring.

Planting/Potting Up

For the fruit garden, apple, pear, plum and cherry trees, either bare-rooted or in containers, can be planted, as well as gooseberry, raspberry and blackcurrant bushes. This is a particularly suitable time of year to plant bare-rooted trees, hedges and bushes as they are generally much cheaper than container-grown varieties.

Garlics, onions and shallots can still be planted this month for a spring crop. Bare-rooted roses are also available this month; the soil should be warm enough to allow them to establish themselves for growth next spring.

Continue planting up containers for winter and spring; to allow good drainage, in case this winter is as wet as this autumn has been, pieces of tile or container feet will raise the plants off the ground.

November is the ideal month to plant tulip bulbs; according to the RHS this helps reduce the risk of various viruses, especially 'Tulip Fire', which can decimate tulip bulbs and spreads from plant to plant. Bulbs should be planted at least twice as deep as their height.

Miscellaneous Jobs

Tidy up perennial borders but remember to leave plants whose seed heads may be attractive to birds over the winter. The sight of birds feeding on these seeds far outweighs the lack of 'tidiness' in your borders.

Rose leaves, particularly those with black spot or other diseases, should be collected and binned or burned. Annual climbers, which have given so much pleasure over the summer and autumn should be cleared away with the approach of frosts; for the same reason, you need also to decide whether to lift dahlia tubers or to cut them back hard and leave them to over-winter in the ground. If they are lifted, clean and dry them and store in dry compost in a frost-free spot.

Alpine containers should be moved under glass to protect them from winter rain and frost. In the greenhouse, complete clearing and cleaning and fix bubble wrap to the roof and walls for 'warm' areas.

Fruit and Vegetables

The sections on pruning, sowing and planting have dealt with much of your work in the fruit and vegetable plot.

Other jobs include ensuring brassicas are protected from pigeons with netting, Brussels sprouts or other tall brassicas are secured against winter winds and Jerusalem artichokes are harvested and stored. Any greenhouse grown summer crops such as tomatoes and cucumbers should have been cleared away by now and outdoor courgette plants dug up and added to the compost bin.

Micki Nadal



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(Abigail Van Buren)

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A taste of Autumn

Sloe gin, homemade or bought, is a warming drink but also a lovely flavour and I have found the most amazing recipe where it is used to full advantage. It's very quick to make as a lovely supper or lunchtime family dish.

Chicken with Sloe Gin and Juniper

Serves 8

Ingredients

2 tbsp butter
30ml/2 tbsp sunflower oil
8 chicken breasts, skinned
350g/12oz cooked carrots
1 clove garlic, peeled and crushed
1 tbsp finely chopped parsley
60ml/2flop chicken stock
60ml/2flop red wine
60ml/2flop sloe gin
1 tsp crushed juniper berries
Salt and pepper
A bunch of basil leaves to finish

Method

Melt the butter with the oil in a pan and sauté the chicken fillets until they are brown on all sides. Place on a plate.

In a food processor, combine all the remaining ingredients apart from the basil, blending until a smooth puree. If the mixture seems too thick, add a little more red wine or water until a slightly thinner consistency is reached.

Put the chicken back in a large pan and pour the sauce over the top of the chicken and cook on a low to medium heat until the chicken is cooked through. This should take between 15 and 20 minutes but it depends upon the size of your chicken. I wouldn't have temperature too high as you want the chicken to remain tender.

Check seasoning, adding salt and pepper if required. Add the chopped fresh basil leaves and serve.

Tips

This is a very flexible recipe and will fit in with your activities. You can make the sauce in advance and keep in the fridge. I have also successfully substituted skinned and boned chicken thighs instead and this is just as tasty. You could replace the oven top cooking (if your oven is on) by placing the chicken and mixture in a shallow covered casserole in the oven on 180°C for approx. 20 minutes at the cooking stage.

Lovely served with sauté potatoes and some fresh sourdough bread.

Linda Hotchen

Eco Tips from Lisa Traylor

I might be wrong but I don't remember too many Bible stories set in wintery weather or with snow and ice on the ground. But things are definitely getting colder round here and so A Rocha's eco tips for November might well come in handy!

To save on carbon-emitting fossil fuels (and on your gas/oil/electricity bills too!) can you identify any gaps and drafts around your home – and fix them? The obvious places to check are keyholes, letterboxes, cracks around the edges or bottoms of windows and doors, loft hatches and floor boards. And if you're not sure how to solve the problem, there's a video for everything these days on YouTube. Or you could try putting foil or radiator panels behind radiators to reflect heat back into the room.

We set our thermostat at 17.5°C - and with extra jumpers and slippers, staying in one room in the evening, we keep our energy use down. Visitors do need to acclimatise though and we do turn the temperature up when the grandchildren come to stay

Keep cosy and obviously, if you've got health problems that are exacerbated by cold, then looking after yourself is your top priority. And let's keep all those who are homeless or in sub-standard housing in our prayers this winter.

And to reassure you, St Mary's Church will have the heating on for all services over the winter. We have efficient radiant heaters that are timed to come on for services. Hope to see you at our special Creation Care service on November 3rd when we're welcoming the Diocesan Environment Officer, Sam Scott to help lead the service.

Winter Fuel Support in Test Valley

Test Valley Council aims to help some of the most vulnerable pensioners who are set to lose their Winter Fuel Allowance following the government's decision to limit payments only to those receiving means-tested benefits.

The Council will allocate up to £40,000 to the Test Valley Winter Fuel Payment Scheme to continue support for those of pensionable age in the borough who need assistance to pay fuel bills. This scheme could help over 400 households.

Anyone who needs help is urged to contact Citizens Advice as soon as possible (Tel - 0808 178 6882 or website www.testvalleycab.org.uk) who will then assess whether the person qualifies for financial assistance and offer wider support and advice. (They will also check eligibility for Pension Credit; there may be hundreds of people in Test Valley that could claim but do not.)

Those the CA identifies for financial help with fuel costs will then be referred to 'Unity', a Test Valley-based charity that will hold the funding pot and make the payments direct to residents.

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Remember, remember, the Fifth of November ...



For over 400 years, on November 5th, we have burned bonfires and lit fireworks in recognition of the familiar events of the failed Gunpowder Plot.

In 1605, a group of thirteen Catholic conspirators, including Guy Fawkes, plotted to blow up the Houses of Parliament, an act aimed at assassinating the Protestant King James I and many members of Parliament. And so the genesis of Bonfire Night ...

Born in 1570 in York, Fawkes had loyal Church of England parentage until his father died when he was eight and his mother remarried a recusant Catholic. By 21, Fawkes had converted to Catholicism, sold his inherited estate and set sail for Europe to join the Catholic Spanish army to help wrench the Netherlands back from the Protestant Dutch forces in the Eighty Years War. He was promoted through the ranks of the Spanish military to captain, along the way becoming proficient in the use of gunpowder - which would come in handy later. He also adopted the name, 'Guido'.

The original assassination plan was to dig a tunnel under the Houses of Parliament and use it to transport the gunpowder under Parliament's walls. Fawkes took the false identity of John Johnson and pretended to be a servant. However, the conspirators managed to rent an undercroft in the House of Lords so the tunnel plan was abandoned. 36 barrels of gunpowder were moved in and concealed within a pile of firewood. On 5th November, prompted by an anonymous letter, the authorities searched the undercroft and found Fawkes/Johnson guarding the area. He begged his innocence by saying he was storing firewood, a claim that was initially believed. However, suspicions were raised again and another search revealed the hidden gunpowder. The game was up. Fawkes was arrested and condemned as a traitor.

Fawkes was never burnt on a bonfire as is often thought but sentenced to be hung, drawn and quartered. On 31 January 1606, weakened from torture, he had to be carried to the gallows to endure the first part of his sentence. However, when the noose was secured, he fell - some say jumped - and broke his neck, dying instantly and so avoiding the rest of the brutal punishment. His corpse was cut into quarters and distributed for public display across the country.

Until 1959, it was illegal *not* to celebrate Bonfire Night in Britain except in one case. Out of respect for its alumnus Guy Fawkes, St Peter's School in York was excused from burning a photo or effigy of its former pupil. Of course, during the two World War blackouts, lighting fireworks or bonfires was banned so Bonfire Night revelries were kept indoors.

The story of the gunpowder plot continues to fascinate (and haunt) us. The Yeomen of the Guard still search the Houses of Parliament cellars before the State Opening of Parliament in case anybody tries to take a leaf out of Guy Fawkes' book. Indeed, research suggests the blast from those 36 barrels of gunpowder would have destroyed Westminster Hall and the Abbey. Ironically, in 1834, the cellar where the gunpowder was stored was destroyed in an accidental fire. And, in Oxford's Ashmolean Museum, you can see the lantern Fawkes was carrying at his arrest.

Finally, there is an intriguing fact that an uninhabited island in the Galapagos is called Guy Fawkes Island. No-one knows why it has that name - perhaps it was part of Fawkes' escape plan ...?

So, as we mark this historic event with pyrotechnic ritual, may we all have fun and stay safe.

Editors

(Illustration - Gunpowder Plot Conspirators - 17th Century engraving via Wikimedia Commons)

... will be a friend better than any possession. (Sophocles)

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Remembrance Commemorations in Stockbridge

Remembrance Sunday, 10th November

The traditional service of remembrance will be held in St Peter's starting at 9.45am. and led this year by the Right Reverend Philip Mounstephen, Bishop of Winchester. At the end of the service, the congregation will proceed down the High Street to the war memorial, led by a contingent of 35 Army Air Corps soldiers from Middle Wallop and followed by the Royal British Legion Standard and the Scouts, Cubs, Brownies and Beavers.

A short service, concluding with a second act of remembrance, will take place at the war memorial. The Police will control the traffic during the procession and service at the war memorial.



Wreaths will be laid at the war memorial after the act of remembrance. Weather permitting, there will be a fly-past by three Apache helicopters from the Army Air Corps Centre at Middle Wallop.



Procession to the War Memorial last year

Armistice Day, Monday 11th November

A short service of commemoration, led by the Reverend Joe Sweetnam, will take place at the war memorial starting at 10.55am. and concluding with the act of remembrance. Stockbridge Primary School will lay a wreath.

David Williams

Stir up, we beseech thee ...

The tradition of 'Stir-up Sunday', which this year falls on November 24th, dates back to Victorian times where families would come together to 'stir up', steam and store their fruit puddings ahead of Christmas. Each member of the family would take a turn to give all the ingredients a good mix with their eyes closed and make a wish.

Rather than a cooking term, 'Stir-up Sunday' takes its name from the Collect of the Day for the last Sunday before Advent in the Book of Common Prayer which begins with the words:

'Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.' However, the term has become associated with the custom of making the Christmas puddings on that day as it served as a timely reminder to make the traditional Christmas food.



The Christmas pudding as we now know it is said to have been introduced to Britain by Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, although a version of the pudding was introduced from Germany by George I (often known as the 'pudding king') back in 1714.

In the past, Christmas puddings would contain only 13 ingredients to represent Jesus and his disciples but, over the years, have been enhanced with all sorts of extras. The mixture should be stirred from East to West to commemorate the journey of the Wise Men and the customary garnish of holly represents the crown of thorns albeit that holly berries are highly toxic!

Traditionally, lucky charms are added to the pudding to bring good fortune if you found them in your portion of pudding on Christmas Day - a silver coin for wealth, a wishbone for luck, a thimble for thrift, a ring for marriage, and an anchor for safe harbour; less lucky eaters might 'win' a trip to the dentist!

Many of us will remember, as children, the fun of stirring a sixpence into the pudding mix and making a fervent wish. The rich fruity smell of the steaming and the family ritual added to the thrilling anticipation of Christmas.

Editors

Music in St Peter's

Mark Jennings, celebrated for his classical guitar recitals and collaborations with other musicians, as well as his accomplished academic pursuits, (he holds an MPhil and Doctorate in Philosophy from UCL), came to St Peter's on Friday evening, 11th October. He delighted his audience with guitar music spanning centuries of compositions. For those of us who love baroque music there were plenty of wonderful pieces transcribed from Bach's compositions for harpsichord and lute; others who came for the spirit of Spain were thrilled to hear the Brazilian composer Villa-Lobos, described as 'the single most significant creative figure in 20th-century Brazilian music', and Agustin Barrios, the prolific Paraguayan composer and guitarist. More music from other Spanish composers included Joaquin Rodrigo and the haunting piece by the Spanish composer Francisco Tárrega *Memories of the Alhambra*.



On that Friday night, Mark brought the spirit of the guitar to his recital with his versatile mastery of the instrument and his eclectic choice of music. Feedback from this lovely concert was unequivocally enthusiastic.

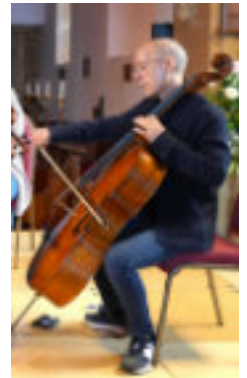
Stockbridge Music has been providing high quality classical music for residents of the Test Valley and far beyond for many years. At the end of September, we were pleased to welcome **The Tippett Quartet**, playing Mozart, Schubert and Beethoven. The four talented and experienced musicians in the Tippett Quartet have performed together in the Wigmore Hall among other venues, on BBC Radio 3 and they have toured many countries.



The lead violinist, John Mills, is well known as a chamber musician and for 20 years has led the Tippett Quartet.



Playing with him were Jeremy Isaac, violinist; Lydia Lowndes-Northcott, viola, and Bozidar Vukotic playing the cello.



They played Mozart's *String Quartet in C Major*, written when the young Wolfgang Amadeus was only sixteen; then Franz Schubert's *String Quartet Rosamunde*, composed in 1824 with the lyrical slow movement familiar to most of us. After the interval, we heard Beethoven's *String Quartet in F Major* which was exhilarating with its overtones of Russian folksongs. There was a very large, appreciative audience. The inspiring musical performance of the *Quartet* that filled our lofty Victorian church was faultless. We look forward to the next concert in November featuring the Soprano Nadine Benjamin MBE with the pianist Andrea Kmecova.

Helping Hands Around the World is a charity that raises money to provide education, healthy drinking water and meals for people that live in poverty in the Biara region of Nigeria. St Peter's was the venue for a fund-raising programme of music, a mix of ancient, modern, folk and pop by the **Hampshire Combined Choir** made up of the Barton Stacey Chamber Choir and Singing for Fun, Whitchurch. Their choral pieces included *Locus Iste* by Anton Bruckner and the *Gloria* from William Byrd's *Mass for Four Voices*, followed by more contemporary pieces. After the interval, they repeated that pattern with more of Byrd's *Mass* and songs including *Sweet Caroline*. The singers were charming, professional, and a great joy to listen to and it was a pleasure to help them raise money for this charity.

For those of you who enjoy **Ben Maton's** weekly wanderings around our rural churches, you will be aware that he goes further afield now that he has acquired his collapsible caravan. On a Sunday in early October, Ben was in Dorset visiting the beautifully-kept Thomas Hardy church, St Michael's, in Stinsford where he gives us the fascinating history of Hardy's connection, recites some of Hardy's inspiring poetry and plays some glorious baroque music on the organ.

Janet Williams

(Photo credits - Nigel Rugman and Janet Williams)

Church News

St Peter's and Old St Peter's Stockbridge



During October, the Reverend Joe Sweetnam and his family moved into the Rectory in Trafalgar Way. I am sure I am joined by everyone in welcoming them and wishing them a happy and fulfilling incumbency in the Mid-Test Benefice. We just have a short wait until Joe's eagerly-awaited Institution service led by Philip, Bishop of Winchester on the 6th November, bringing an end to ten challenging months of interregnum.

We've had three joyful weddings in St Peter's since mid September.

One of them was for Geoff and Liz Cox's granddaughter, Ciara, who was marrying Dr Fahad Jarjees, originally from Iraq. John Rennie led the service but a special Orthodox blessing was given by His Eminence, Archbishop Athanasius of the Syriac Orthodox Church in the UK who was in attendance with two of his staff (see below).



It was heart-warming to have this blend of different branches of the Christian Church here in St Peter's. Our warmest wishes to all three couples for their future.

The Benefice Service on 29th September was held in St Mary's Church, Broughton led by the Right Reverend Geoff Annas who has been Acting Bishop of Southampton for the last year. It was well attended, especially by Stockbridge parishioners.

The first Sunday in October saw St Peter's beautifully decorated, displays all over the church with the fruits of the harvest for Harvest Festival. The congregation brought bags of food, which the

Reverend Matthew Grayshon cheerfully blessed with the help of little children attending the service.

All the goods were then taken to the Andover Food Bank by David and Jill Barnes on Monday. The choir sang a Harvest Anthem by Maurice Green which opened with a solo sung by one of our tenors, David Barnes. We said prayers for our farmers and their families and those who look after our chalk streams, and expressed thanks to them for the food they bring to our tables. We are truly blessed in the Test Valley.



Returning to the Old St Peter's visiting book which I browsed through last month, I find a page with visitors from several areas of the UK but also from USA, Canada, Australia, Tasmania and the Netherlands! Many of their views are encapsulated in one comment: 'Peaceful, historic, fascinating. An absolute treasure of a church'. Thanks again to the team who look after it.

Looking ahead :

Saturday, November 2nd at 12 noon: All Souls Day Service in St Peter's. Remembering the faithful departed is an opportunity to give thanks to God for those we have loved. Names will be read out and candles lit.

Sunday November 3rd at 3pm: Teas at 2, Nelson Close for those who live alone

Wednesday, November 6th at 7.30pm: Institution Service for the Rev'd Joe Sweetnam as Rector of the Mid-Test Benefice. Due to space limitations at this service, attendance is by invitation only.

Friday, November 8th at 7.30pm: Stockbridge Music Concert, Nadine Benjamin MBE, soprano and Andrea Kmecova, piano

Sunday, November 10th at 9.45am: Remembrance Sunday Service in St Peter's followed by a second Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial.

Monday, November 11th at 10.50am: Armistice Day - Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial

Saturday, November 16th at 6pm: a concert 'Songs of Solace' by the Amici Singers. Free entrance with optional donations to the Marie Curie Charity after the performance.

Janet Williams

Church News

St Mary's Longstock



The **Harvest Festival** service on 6 October went really well. Around 50 adults and children attended the service taken by Rev'd Matthew Grayshon.

Everyone was really generous and brought plenty of food and things like toothpaste to be taken to the Andover Food Bank.

After the service everyone who was coming to the **Harvest Supper** met in the Village Hall. Richard Woods was there with the Hog Roast. 50 adults and 6 children came to the supper. The Hog Roast was accompanied by jacket potatoes, salad and couscous. The vegetarian option was a vegetable pie with aubergines and red peppers, encased with filo pastry. As ever, the puddings were supplied by many volunteers from the village – meringue fruit pie, apple and fig lattice pie, fruit crumbles, cheesecake and fruit salad. All delicious. Many hands made light work of the clearing up – with the last jobs being done by Selina – thank you.



Two kind villagers paid for the Hog Roast, so this means we were able to generate £700 for our fundraising column in the accounts. A really fun event with a good atmosphere. I am particularly thankful to my son-in-law, Michael, who helped during the whole afternoon and evening.

At the **PCC meeting** on 15 October, we agreed to spend £2000 on necessary **organ repairs** – something we hope will stop some keys 'sticking' at all the wrong moments. We also spent much time on **safeguarding**, coming to terms with more responsibilities being put upon PCC members.

In November, we have an exciting new initiative – we have someone from the Diocese, Rev'd Sam Scott, coming to help with a service based on '**Caring for the Environment**'. This will be on Sunday 3 November and will be our All Age Service.

A great opportunity to give thanks for the environment and to think about what we can do as good stewards of creation. Usual time, 9.30am, followed by refreshments.

10 November is **Remembrance Sunday**. At 9.30am we have a Family Remembrance Service – thinking about the sadness and futility of war. The collection will go to the Royal British Legion. At 10.50am we have an Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial, honouring the dead from Longstock. The Peat Spade, as ever, is kindly providing coffee.

An exciting and momentous day for St Mary, Longstock is 17 November when our **new Rector will take the Parish Communion Service** at 9.30am, the first service at Longstock taken by him after his induction. I do hope you are able to join us sharing Holy Communion with Rev'd Joe.

For November services at St Mary, Longstock please see p31.

If you have any queries please contact Maddie Hedley Churchwarden, 810284; email mjh723@btinternet, or the Benefice Administrator, Lois Opperman at midtestbenefice@gmail.com

Maddie Hedley

Progress Report on the Vacancy

At the time of writing this in October, we are 'all systems go' to welcome our new Rector. The service for the Institution and Induction of Rev'd Joe Sweetnam as Rector of the Mid-Test Benefice will take place at 7.30pm on Wednesday 6 November at St Peter's Church, Stockbridge, an invitation-only event, due to the limit on numbers.

Rev'd Joe and his family will have moved into the Rectory during the last 2 weeks of October and he already has a very full and busy November and December. His first service in the Benefice will be the Remembrance Service at All Saints, Houghton on 10 November at 10.00am.

We are all looking forward to Rev'd Joe working with us and with the Ministry Team, maintaining and growing our congregations, bringing life and hope through our Lord, Jesus Christ.



Hampshire Downs RC Parish St Thomas More

Services are held on Sundays at 9.00am

Church News

From the Rural Dean

Churches were beautifully decorated for Harvest Celebrations – I hope you managed to see them! Lots of food was taken to Foodbanks – thank you.

'Remember you are mortal.' It is said that, when a successful Roman general was welcomed back to Rome in a triumphal victory parade, he would always have a slave sitting just behind him and whispering those words in his ear – to make sure he didn't get too carried away by the adulation of the crowds. But it is not just Roman generals who seem to have difficulty remembering their mortality – we all do, most of the time. There is a lot of remembering going on. In November we have All Souls Services (when we particularly remember those who have died recently) and Remembrance Sunday.

After disasters and wars there tends to be a surge in religious activity and expression. People become aware, in a new way, of just how fragile life is, and how easily (and without warning) it can be snuffed out. And they want to be ready – in case such a thing should happen to them.

In Advent, I hope that you will find, and make, time, to look forward, prepare and wait. Our magazines and newsletters are full of details of Advent and Christmas events and services.

Your Rural Dean, James

Rev'd James Pitkin - romseyareadean@gmail.com

The Column For October

Baptisms none

Weddings

5 October 2024. Fiona Bell and Robert Green were married at 12noon at St Nicholas', Leckford.

10 October 2024. Lydia Korol and Ross Taylor were married at 1pm at St Peter's, Stockbridge.

Funerals

29 October 2024. The funeral for Roy WaL took place at 11am at St Nicholas Church, Leckford.

Roy Watt

Roy Watt was a long-time resident of Leckford. He moved a year ago after the death of his wife, Ann, to a Care Home in Emsworth. His daughter lived close by. He was, for many years, Churchwarden at St Nicholas, Leckford and remained active with the church until poor health prevented him continuing.

He loved his garden and many friends and family have benefited from his generosity with plants, vegetables and fruit, especially apples. Like his neighbour and friend, Dawn, they are much missed.

Maddie Hedley

November Services for

Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford

2nd November (All Souls Day)

12.00 **Stockbridge** All Souls Day Service

3rd November (Fourth before Advent)

08.00 **Leckford** Holy Communion BCP

09.30 **Longstock** All Age Environment Service,

11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist

10th November (Remembrance Sunday)

08.00 **Old St Peter** Holy Communion

09.30 **Longstock** Remembrance Service

09.45 **Stockbridge** Remembrance Service

10.50 **Longstock** Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial

10.50 **Stockbridge** Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial

11th November (Armistice Day)

10.50 **Stockbridge** Service of Commemoration & Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial.

17th November (Second before Advent)

09.30 **Longstock** Parish Communion

11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist

18.00 **Leckford** Evensong

24th November (Christ the King)

11.00 **Stockbridge** Morning Worship

Prayer for November

Lord, the seasons change and we move to Autumn. Shorter days. Fires are lit, the heating comes on.

We thank you for the time of Remembrance.

To reflect on the bravery and sacrifice of thousands. Men who volunteered to fight, in awful circumstances. You, Lord, lived with them in the trenches and on the battlefields.

Lord we pray for wisdom and justice in the world. We are sorrowful that the sacrifice of so many to ensure no further wars has not happened. Leaders still engage in war, fighting and killing for reasons of revenge, defence or greed.

We pray you can hear our voices raised in prayer for wars to cease, for swords to be changed to ploughshares.

We pray for peace, security and justice.

Lord God, our heavenly Father, we pray you can lead the path to peace.

The world you made at the beginning was a beautiful place and it was good.


Guide us to the restoration of your creation.

Amen



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 We'd love to show you around and talk to you about your child.

01264 810550
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