

Issue No. 266

Hill & Valley

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF HURSTBOURNE PRIORS, LONGPARISH, ST MARY BOURNE & WOODCOTT

50p

March 2023



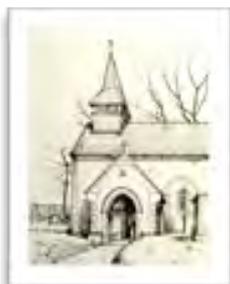
Dear Friends,

My thoughts have turned to thinking about what the word 'Home' means. I suspect that this has been provoked by our forthcoming move to our new home in the middle of Salisbury Plain. There! I've unintentionally used the word home instead of 'house', because surely it is not a home until we have at least settled into it. Yvette & I have mixed feelings about moving away from Litchfield – we came here 8 years ago (the longest we have ever lived in one place) and my intention was to stay here to the end of my life. My connection to the place and the countryside surrounding it deepened during lockdown where my long, solitary walks took me to the most beautiful parts of Northwest Hampshire and introduced me to amazing flora and fauna. We have also met many lovely people who we will miss. The Church at Litchfield will always be special to me.

On the other side is the desire to live in our own house that we can make into a permanent home. We have never lived together in our own place. In the army - a new quarter every couple of years - all with magnolia walls and beige carpets. So, the opportunity has arisen and we are off at the end of April. But what of my original question now we know why I am asking it? What is 'Home'?

I used to think home was a place and it is, but it is more than that. I really do think home is where the heart is. It is where we are comfortable and feel safe. Often, we share our home with those we love most - our families. And, of course, there is a faith dimension to this. The word home (not house) crops up over 200 times in the Bible. Here is one example from St John's gospel '(Jesus says) a time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own **home**. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.' For those of us who have faith we can never be secure and comfortable unless we feel the presence of God with us. It is He that makes our house into a home.

Revd M R Christian
Associate Priest



St. James the Less, Litchfield
in the benefice of Whitchurch with Tufton and Litchfield

Fancy a feast during Lent?

Assuming you are keeping Lent with strict discipline, your merry-making on feast days during March will only begin after sundown - alcohol is permissible then. You will obviously want to mark St David's day, 1st March. Why not join *'His majesty and a many great lords and gentlemen, common people, and even lackeys, coachmen, porters and all kinds of riff-raff and layabouts'*, who, according to a



Dutch visitor to London in 1662, wore a leek in their hats? Perhaps some were even honouring the Welsh saint and people. The same observer noted *'some country folk carry such large leeks in their hats that their heads hung almost sideways because of them.'* That might inspire us all to greater things.

But the great feast and once a significant marker in every year was Lady Day, 25th March. The Feast of the Annunciation of our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary commemorates the visit of the archangel Gabriel to Mary to announce to her that she would be the mother of Jesus, nine months before Christmas Day. It is also near to the spring equinox, which this year falls on 20 March. So, there's a spring feeling of new life, hope and redemption as the days lengthen and nature regains its colour. Indeed, in England up to 1752, it was the beginning of the year. Being one of the 'quarter days' for our ancestors, servants and manual workers were hired, school terms started, debts settled and rents were due. It could therefore be a day of hard financial reality for some.

St Mary is the first among saints for the devout and she has left her gentle touch on this area. The village name 'St Mary Bourne' is repeated so often without the hint of a passing thought for the mother of God. But she is the patron saint and spiritual guardian of the village. Our ancient churches had their side aisle altars dedicated to St Mary, hence Lady Chapels. She is a contributor to the historic holiness and sense of peace which many visitors to the churches report on. Perhaps above all, during the many centuries of patriarchal society, she stood as the example of a strong and spiritually adventurous woman, humble but resilient. The Annunciation falls on a Saturday this year. Perhaps we might pause and find time to thank God for Mary and her light but happy touch even on our times and for the generous gift of spring and hope. (MC)

Hill & Valley parish magazine

After many years of volunteering, our **treasurer** will be retiring at the end of the current financial year on 31st March. We are now looking for a volunteer with basic knowledge of accountancy who would like to join our team and take on this role.

The work is not onerous and you would be required to attend just two management group meetings per year.

For further information please contact Colin Underwood ☎ 01264 738458 or Michael Widén ☎ 01264 738250.

Please support your parish magazine!

March 2023

All Zoom details are available from the Church wardens or Dodie Marsden.

Sunday 5th - Lent 2

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	9.00am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	<i>Morning Prayer</i>
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	9.00am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St James', Woodcott	9.00am	<i>Holy Communion</i>

Church of England Zoom Service Online

Wednesday 8th

St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	9.30am	<i>Midweek Communion</i>
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Sunday 12th - Lent 3

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	10.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i> <i>APCM after Service</i>
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St James', Woodcott		<i>No Service</i>

Home Zoom Service at 10.30am

Sunday 19th - Lent 4 - Mothering Sunday

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	9.00am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St Nicholas', Longparish	9.00am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	<i>Mothering Sunday</i> <i>Service</i>
St James', Woodcott	9.00am	<i>Mattins</i>

Home Zoom Service at 10.30am

Wednesday 22nd

All Hallows', Whitchurch	9.30pm	<i>Midweek Communion</i>
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Sunday 26th - Lent 5

St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors	10.30am	<i>Family Praise</i>
St Nicholas', Longparish	10.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
St Peter's, St Mary Bourne	10.30am	<i>Holy Communion</i>
	6.00pm	<i>Evensong</i>
St James', Woodcott		<i>No service</i>

Home Zoom Service at 10.30am

For all enquiries about Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals in any of the parish churches, please contact the Church Office Administrator: ☎ **01256 893573**
brightwatersbenefice@gmail.com

Rev David Roche: ☎ 01256 892535
revd.davidroche@hotmail.com

Rev Canon Dodie Marsden:
☎ 01264 738211
dodie.marsden@gmail.com

• For details of **Roman Catholic Services** in Whitchurch or Andover: ☎ 01264 352829

• **Methodist Minister** for our parishes:
The Revd Rachel Borgars, 11 Lapwing Rise, Whitchurch, RG28 7SU ☎ 01256 895878 or
rachel.borgars@methodist.org.uk

From the Church Registers

Funerals

"Into God's loving care we commit you ..."

We offer our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of

Margaret Wilkinson - burial of ashes at St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors on 8th February

Les North - funeral at the Salvation Army citadel, followed by a burial at St Peter's on 13th February

Norma Phillips - funeral and burial at St James', Woodcott on 17th February

LET US PRAY - If you would like us to pray for you or someone else, please email stnbrightwaters@icloud.com giving the name (no surname required) and include a reason if you wish, or contact a member of the local ministry team.

Mityana October 2023

Wednesday 22nd March at 7pm

We are having a meeting in St Mary Bourne for anyone who might be interested in coming to Mityana in October. Please email me:

dodie.marsden@gmail.com if you would like to come to this meeting to find out more about dates, costs, plans, etc. Venue to be confirmed in due course. If you cannot make the meeting but would like to chat about this, do ring me on ☎ 01264 738211. *Dodie*



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Editorial Appeal

The Longparish pages of Hill and Valley are slowly becoming a glorified notice board. While it is useful to some, but not everyone, to read all the usual stuff about the Parish Council, the schools, the monthly run L2SOTM and the cricket club it would be good to have some original pieces. Hurstbourne Priors and St Mary Bourne seem to be more creative than us. It would be wonderful if we could have articles which will be novel and interesting to everyone. For example: travel experiences, history, gardening, dogs, your chickens, books, music, local geography and lots more. Let's see if we can make our 6 pages more like a magazine.

LONGPARISH WILDLIFE - THE GREY SQUIRREL

By Chris Bowman

The UK is home to two squirrel species red and the grey. The species you will see here is the grey. The squirrel is native to North America and was brought here in the 1870s. There are estimated to be 140,000 red and 2.5 million greys. Most of the red squirrels are in Scotland with small pockets in Wales, Lancashire and Brownsea Island – Poole Harbour and on the Isle of Wight. Grey squirrels carry a disease called squirrel pox which the greys are resistant to but will kill the reds.

Squirrels are omnivores. They will eat plants but their diet varies through the year. During early Autumn they will eat a variety of nuts eg: hazel, sweet chestnut, walnut and beech nuts.



During this time of plenty they stash the nuts away for winter, mostly buried in the ground. They can also cause havoc at bird feeders where they are very destructive. Grey squirrels have few predators to stop their expanding population.

A squirrel's nest is called a drey. These are messy balls of sticks, about the size of a football sometimes bigger and are lined with grass, moss, and leaves usually in a tree fork. They start to breed when they are 10-12 months old. They usually have two litters of two - four offspring each year. The first is born in early Spring and the second in early Summer. Baby squirrels known as kits or kittens are born blind and hairless. They start to eat solid food at about eight weeks but rely on their mother for up to ten weeks.

Longparish Church & Village Fete Proceeds 2022

As in recent years the proceeds of the fete in 2022 are to be shared between St Nicholas Church and Longparish village organisations. 50% of fete proceeds helps us maintain the church building. The Parochial church Council (PCC), Longparish Community Association (LCA), Village Hall (VH) and Parish Council (PC), are pleased to announce distribution of the remaining 50% as follows:

- £1500 for the purchase of approximately 20 folding tables for the use of the fete and for the use of villagers free of charge (to be stored at the Village Hall).
- £500 to the Longparish Little School and £500 to Longparish Primary School. Investment in our village schools is always a priority.
- £500 to the Cricket Club. All those involved in the fete are grateful for the use of the facilities the Cricket Club kindly provides. We hope the donation will help the club in its efforts to foster young village cricketers.
- £2000 to the Longparish Community Association. This donation is based on the need for smaller organisations and groups to benefit from fete funding. There will be an application process to enable such groups to seek funding from the LCA, allowing the trustees to make grants in accordance with the LCA's charitable objectives. The LCA will announce details of this process shortly.

Peter Jones & Georgi Leask (PCC)

Stuart Montague (VH)

Peter Hull (PC)

Jo Clare and Andy Jolliffe (LCA)

+++ Volunteers to form the fete committee for 2023 are urgently required +++

+++ Please contact any of the above named if you are interested, thank you +++



BUS BACK BETTER by Christian Dryden — sadly not for rural villages surrounding Andover.

A bit of background to the changes to Longparish bus service from April 2023. Funding has been reduced by 50%. The funding available will target large urban areas particularly where air quality is poor.

The Challenges for bus companies and HCC as explained at a recent Transport Forum Passenger numbers are only 80% of Pre Covid. Costs are rising. The implications for Hampshire Transport mean that contracts will become more expensive which inevitably leads to a reduction in bus services. From the public consultation, people generally opted to pay more rather than have reduced service. Fares will rise. Rural bus services will be hardest impacted as they are the least viable and have higher costs.

What does this mean closer to home? Questions Longparish PC put to the Community Transport Services.

Is it confirmed that the bus routes C3,C4, C5, C6, C8 will be discontinued from April 23? *Yes, the service will be removed in its entirety in April.*

What are the proposals to replace this service for those without private transport to enable them to travel to Andover and back in a timely way? *We are currently tendering a range of options to ensure that passengers are still able to travel, albeit, not in the same way as they do currently. As soon as we have an update for you we will share this. It's vital that we work together to ensure that people understand their options.*

There is a community bus once a week for those who are eligible. Who qualifies to use this service? *Test Valley Call and Go is a service provided by Unity under a contract funded by Hampshire County Council in partnership with Test Valley Borough Council. The eligibility criteria is wide, with anyone who does not have access to a bus service at the time they need to travel being eligible. You need to register to use this shopping bus service with Unity tel 01264 356 808 or register on <https://unityonline.org.uk/call-go>*

If anyone has any ideas or initiatives that could work for Longparish please let the Parish Council know. The PC will keep you updated with any further news about the Call and Go service. Volunteer Drivers are always needed by Unity and Neighbourcare.

Neighbourcare Andover tel 01264 339899 Whitchurch **01256 896645**

The information given here was correct at the time of going to press but not confirmed by Test Valley BC

LCA - L2SOTM - The Longparish Second Sunday of the Month handicap race

Conditions were good for the February race. We welcomed new competitor, Andy Mountain, an experienced runner who recorded the fastest time of the day. Well done!



First home was Caroline Sutton who beat her handicap by a massive 4minutes and 31 seconds to become our Most Improved Woman. Wow! In second place was Fortonian Dave Henery who

was Most Improved Man. This was the 21st time Dave has been MIM in 114 races. Well done both. Special mention goes to Sam Hunt who turned up an hour early. He was finishing as we put out the signs. Paced by his Dad (who needed a bicycle to keep up) he improved on his previous time by around 4 minutes. We look forward to seeing Sam next month when we'll all be starting at 9am.

Thanks very much to Maggie Barber, James Masters, and David Gould for helping and to the Cricket Club for the lovely venue. **The next race is on Sunday 12 March**, starting at 9am. New runners are always welcome. You don't have to be fast. Please do give me a call or drop me an email if you'd like to join us.

Jeremy Barber 01264 720459 mrjeremybarber@gmail.com

LONGPARISH CRICKET CLUB

March brings spring and the promise of long summer days and outdoor cricket matches. Longparish CC's first scheduled home match of the summer season is on 30 April 2023 and League fixtures begin the following Saturday, 6 May 2023. We are delighted to be running the AllStars programme again this summer for children aged 5-8 years starting on 8 May 2023. Registration is on the ECB website <https://www.ecb.co.uk/play/all-stars> Junior outdoor coaching sessions for children from Year 4 - Year 10 will take place on Monday evenings beginning after the school Easter holidays in April. The Club's Junior Coordinator, Justin Jackman, can be contacted at jackmanjustin@aol.com with any queries.

The Club has several social events planned over the summer including a Race Night and the annual match against a Longparish village team.

Finally the club is delighted to announce the appointment of James Hillier as its new Chairman. James and his family are actively involved in LCC, playing in teams and supporting the club via committee activities.

LONGPARISH PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk: Sally Lawman

clerk@longparish.org.uk or telephone 01264 738716

REPORT FROM PC MEETING ON 13 FEBRUARY

PLANNING

The Parish Council had **NO OBJECTION** to:

- Tree work at **The Old Curacy, Longparish**
- Tree work at **Meadow Cottage, Forton**
- Garage conversion and rear extension at **Juniper House, Longparish**

Two other Tree Notifications for **East Aston House** and **The Tile House** will be determined out of Committee pending advice from the parish tree warden.

CEMETERY FEES

The cemetery fees, which had not been reviewed since 2017, have been increased in line with the Church of England's published burial fees. Plots in the cemetery are currently available to both parishioners and non-parishioners. As space becomes more limited, provision of plots to non-parishioners will be reviewed annually. The definition of "parishioner" has been strengthened, and now includes young people up to the age of 25 who may have left the parish, but whose family home remains within the parish. Plots for parishioners are free of charge up to the age of 18. The Parish Council is very grateful to the PCC for their input during this exercise.

OPEN SPACES – DOG FOULING

The Parish Council has made every effort to install additional dog waste bins around the village, including at the football pitch, so it is disappointing to see that some dog owners are still not clearing up after their dogs in this area. Not only are dog faeces unsightly, they pose a serious health risk, which is particularly concerning in an area regularly used by children to play sport.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/toxocariasis/>

Dog owners: please watch your dogs when out walking, and make sure that you clear away their faeces and dispose of them responsibly.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT – CANCELLATION OF BUS SERVICES

The Parish Council has been notified that bus services between Longparish and Andover will cease to operate in April. Our Highways & Transport representative has been in contact with HCC's Community Transport team to find out about alternative provision. See separate article.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held at **7.30pm on Monday 13 March.**

Parish Council Meetings are public, and parishioners are also welcome to speak on specific agenda items by prior arrangement with the Chairman, or on any matter as part of the Period for Public Speaking. Chairman: Mr Peter Hull - Tel 07747 328760, or email peter.hullpc@longparish.org.uk

Minutes of all previous meetings are available on the current or archived Longparish website

<http://www.longparish.org.uk/parish-council/pc-minutes.html>

Please report any small repairs and maintenance tasks required around the village to the Clerk.



HAVE YOUR SAY: A number of changes on the LCA Committee in recent months have prompted the team to

send out a short survey to Longparish residents. We hope you will respond either online, or on paper and drop it at the shop for us to collect.

CORONATION WEEKEND: Lots of events are running in Longparish over the Coronation Weekend - look out for details on posters around the village, the LCA facebook group and in future issues of Hill & Valley. Those that are planned so far include:

- FoLS fun run - 7th May from 10am
- Street Party - 7th May from 2pm
- LCA fun day - 8th May in the afternoon

SAVE THE DATE: LCA will be running our annual New Villagers Event and AGM on **Wednesday 26th April** in the Village Hall.

The Parochial Church Council, Village Hall and Parish Council have kindly donated a portion of the proceeds from the Village Fete to the LCA to fund community causes. If you would be interested in applying for a grant towards an activity or resource that would be for our community or of interest to our community, please contact us via treasurer.lca@longparish.org.uk

Finally, we are reaching out for volunteers to join our small committee or to start new events with support from LCA - for example, our toddler group runs every Monday morning from 9:15am during term time, it is very popular and would welcome additional helpers to set up, pack away or help with tea and coffee! If you are interested in helping out with any events please do get in touch with us via lca@longparish.org.uk.

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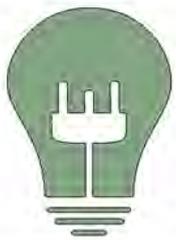
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Longparish CE Primary School

We had a former pupil, Wales and GB Lacrosse player Iona Dryden, return to the school earlier this term.

Iona played for the GB Lacrosse team in the 2022 World Games and so it was a real thrill for the children to meet her. She gave a talk to the whole school about her journey from Longparish to the World Games. Drawing on our



guiding values of 'Excellence' 'Respect' and 'Friendship', she inspired our children to believe that anything is possible; that there may be set backs on the way, that it won't always be easy but that it is important to aim high, live with a spirit of excellence, draw on the

strength of good friendship and maintain a respect for all around.

Following that she ran some introductory training sessions for our Year 5 and 6 children on the playground. Children had the chance to try catching and throwing with lacrosse sticks and played some mini games. Most children had not heard of the game of lacrosse so it was fascinating for them to try out a new sport.

It's always lovely to meet former pupils or to hear of the successes and adventures in life that pupils from Longparish go on to achieve.

Friends of Longparish School

The Longparish Run: Bookings are now open for the Longparish Run! Lace up your trainers and join us at our brand new event on Sunday 7 May. With 10k, 5k and 3k routes around the village, everyone is welcome to take part. Not a runner? You can walk the 5k and 3k routes if you prefer. Register at www.pta-events.co.uk/longparish

We will need volunteers for the event. Please contact us if you could help with registration, water stations or marshalling around the course.

May Fayre: Preparations are underway for our biggest event of the year. **The May Fayre will be on Saturday 20 May, 12-4pm.** All are welcome to attend. And here are some ways to help:

+ Donate items for our bottle tombola and chocolate tombola.

+ Do you work for a company that could donate refreshments? Supermarket vouchers to help us with the BBQ, refreshments and Pimms stall are very much appreciated.

+ We are looking for companies to sponsor a stall. It's a fantastic way to advertise to the local community while supporting a local charity.

Library Books: FoLS have recently purchased £100 of new books for the school library. Thank you for your support, which allows us to make these donations to school.

For more information on both events, please visit our new website at www.pta-events.co.uk/longparish or follow us on Facebook at fb.me/FriendsofLongparishSchool

Jo Allam, Chair (chairfols@gmail.com)



Longparish Little School.

The children at Little School have been busy enjoying our nature area over the last few weeks. They have made the digging pit into a volcano where the dinosaurs live. We have made bird feeders for the birds as the ground was frozen and they couldn't dig for worms. We have started planning what fruit and vegetables we would like to grow in our planters and we have already planted some broad bean seeds. The children get the opportunity to use tools in our Forest School sessions but we are now using our nature area to do more woodwork activities. Recently they have been using a Bow Saw to cut some branches to make wooden stacking blocks for them to build with.

Our spaces for September 2023 are filling fast so if you would like to book a visit to look around please phone 01264 720455 If you would like to see some photos of all the exciting things we do at Little School you can go to our website www.longparishlittleschool.org.uk or our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/longparishplaygroup>

Gardening Club

Tuesday 28th March 7.00pm talk in Village Hall

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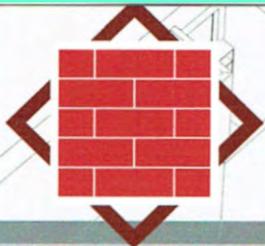
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January at The Plough has been a fantastic month! We've had the busiest week's trading we've ever had! And we've also had the busiest Saturday we've ever had

too. Thank you to all our customers, staff and Steve & Lucy for your support, hard work and loyalty.

The legendary indie rock band, Kula Shaker, came visiting for Sunday Lunch in January – how amazing is that! The band are currently on their sell-out UK tour and were on



their way to a show in Bristol when they decided to stop at the pub. Steve said...
"It was fantastic to have them in the pub for Sunday lunch. It was actually the first time they'd been in the pub. They had lunch, and it was an absolute privilege having them in here with everyone."

Kula Shaker and Steve

Look out for news of our "Theme Nights" due to start from April onwards – always very popular and good fun.

Our new menu is going down a storm and great reviews keep coming in. As Steve & Lucy say, *"If you want great food, awesome ales and dinner by candlelight, there's only one place..."* See social media and our website

www.ploughinn.org for details. We recommend booking to avoid disappointment. Call 01264 720069 or book via our website. We look forward to seeing you at the Plough!

Steve, Lucy and the LCPL Committee.



The Cricketers Inn

Longparish, 01264 720424, thecricketerslongparish@gmail.com

Matt and the team would like to thank you all for your fantastic continued support, providing local jobs for local people, what a great January and February we have had. As we head towards the warmer climes of spring and summer, we are busy making our garden look fabulous for those lazy summer evenings relaxing with a drink and some delicious food – But until then, the fires are always roaring and you can be sure of a warm welcome at the award winning Cricketers Inn.

Our Spring menu is going down well. We usually have a specials board available in addition, and you can't get enough of our proper homemade pies, juicy Dorset beef fillet, ribeye or T-bone, and Scallops St Jaques!

Mothering Sunday 19th March, why not book a table and treat your Mum?

Sunday, 9th April is Easter Sunday, come and join us for a bit of Easter fun and some delicious spring lamb roast.

Opening hours as always:

11.30am – 3pm and 6pm – 11pm Monday – Thursday

11.30am – 11pm Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Food served 12pm – 2.30pm, and 6pm – 8.30pm every day (8pm Sunday)

Don't forget our delicious takeaway food, available every evening 6pm – 8.30pm.(8pm Sunday)



PLEASE JOIN US FOR A TALK BY WESSEX RIVERS TRUST AND AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LONGPARISH TOAD PATROL March 1st, 2023
Longparish Community Hall (School)
 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start Approx. 9pm finish
 Refreshments available on arrival

Spring Village Clean Up – Save the Date
Saturday 22nd of April, 2pm
 Followed by refreshments at **The Plough**

Longparish Players Presents...

"Just Desserts"

A scrumptious murder mystery in aid of the Longparish Cricket Club Thatch fund.

When: **Saturday 4th March**

Where: **Longparish Village Hall**

Doors Open 7pm Showtime 7.30pm

Tickets: £15ea includes supper and dessert and, of course, the show!

Phone James Hillier for tickets
 07831 329772 or 01264 720016 or email:
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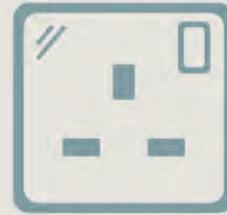
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Following a very Successful Burns Celebration by the Friday Lunch Club with our piper and the Address to the Haggis performed by John Young, please join us for the next Lunch Club

31st March 12-2pm,

£3 for hot soup and freshly baked cake.

A chance for warmth, conversation and meet up with Longparish folk. Open to anyone of any age but please book for catering purposes.

Future dates 28th April

To book lunch and or transport for any date ring Andrea 720 457 or Christian 720 398



March Coffee Morning will be on Friday 10th March

10 am – 12 Noon at The Plough
All welcome – Coffee and Biscuits for £1

Saturday 1st April 2023

10am until 12 noon

Please join us for a Spring Clean of our beautiful village church

Help would be very much appreciated. With jobs to suit all ages and abilities. We would also be grateful for the loan of tools. If you can let us know in advance (stnbrightwaters@icloud.com) that would be lovely but if this is not possible please do just come along on the day if you are able to.

LITTER FREE LONGPARISH for 2023!!

Next Litter pick is on Friday 17th March 2023. I am afraid it doesn't coincide with the coffee morning this time. Meet behind the Village Hall at 9.15 am, the Parish Council will provide litter picking sticks, hoops and bags. For more information Tel Christian Dryden 720 398

Poor Aleppo – by Tom and Alix Bremridge

We went to Aleppo as tourists in October 2010. Syria at that time was an efficient thriving state with excellent schools, universities, hospitals and transport. Two months later the uprising started. The president, Bashir al Assad, (a former practising UK eye doctor) started bombing his political opponents mercilessly. Aleppo, a World Heritage Site, was a particular target. The beautiful mosque was ruined. The ancient square tower in the corner of the courtyard built in 1090 AD collapsed. Now the earthquake has demolished most useful buildings and inflicted further extreme suffering on the people. These photos give a flavour of the ruin of a beautiful city, once by wilful destruction and secondly by natural disaster.



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WEATHER - JANUARY 2023

Total rainfall for month	134mm	5.27in
Rainfall same month last year	29mm	1.14in
Total for 2023	134mm	5.27in
Total for 2022	29mm	1.14in
Max temp (on 2 nd)	13C	56F
Max night temp (on 2 nd)	10C	15F
Min temp (16 th)	-8C	18F

Last January, it was very dry for the whole month. This year we had all the rain, in the first half - and a lot of it!

The second half was very cold, with 10 consecutive frosts down to -8C.

John Smail

LADIES COFFEE MORNING

This month's Coffee Morning will be held by Fiona Obert on Thursday, 9th March at Bourne Cottage, no.55/56 from 10.15 am. All ages welcome!

For more information or offers to hold a coffee morning, please contact Susie Sorby (tel 892665 or sbsorby@hotmail.com).



WORD OF THE MONTH



This month I have selected PALINDROME for any HANNAH in the village, meaning it can be turned back to front along with repaper, rotator, deified, noon and kayak - WOW !!

Barbara Carrodus

MOTHERING SUNDAY - 19th MARCH



You are invited to join us for a Family Communion service for Mothering Sunday on 19th March at 9am in St Andrews Church with Revd Dodie. There will be an activity for children during the service and there will be refreshments afterwards too!

THE MAY FAIR - 1st MAY 2023



We are looking forward to our annual May Fair which will be on Monday 1st May from 12 noon to 4pm. A small team of village volunteers is already at work preparing for the big day but, as we all know, the real May Fair Team is the entire village, who every year do their bit to make the day a great success.

For those who are new to the village or have never attended the Fair, here is a flavour of what happens in the run up to the Fair and on the big day itself.

We hold our traditional rural village fair on the lovely recreation ground, with villagers running a pub from the cricket pavilion and a tea room in the village hall. We have live music, children's entertainment and games, tombolas for young and old, barbeque, hog roast, ice cream and candy floss. We'll have stalls selling homemade cakes and preserves, home grown plants, pre-loved toys, books, clothes and bric a brac, alongside a small selection of local artisan traders selling their wares.

Attractions already booked include a circus workshop, stilt walker, juggling show, May pole, a model railway, beekeepers and a fire engine, but we hope more will be added soon! The fair usually punches well above its weight in terms of visitor numbers from surrounding towns and villages, rain or shine, thanks to our prominent location and great reputation as a good family dog-friendly day out. See our Facebook page for photos from previous events. Fair proceeds go to benefit our village amenities: Village Hall, Church and Recreation Ground.

Even if you missed the Big Breakfast and Pancake Race, please do get in touch if you'd like to help with the Fair in some way. And watch the Hill & Valley over the next couple of months for more news and reminders.

Here are just a few ways you can help (there are plenty more and feel free to do as many as you are able!):

- Help with set up and dismantling of marquees on the days before and after the fair
- Help run a stall (if you have a bright idea for a new stall or attraction then please talk to us!)
- Join the car park marshalling rota
- Shadow our treasurer with a view to taking over the role next year
- Publicise the fair by delivering flyers, social media and word of mouth
- Donate! Do you work for a company who can donate an attractive tombola prize? Are you a home baker who can make cakes and biscuits for the fair? Perhaps you're decluttering your home - please donate your good quality unwanted toys, books, games, clothes, gifts and bric a brac. And the bottle



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tombola will gratefully receive donations of bottles of wine etc.

If you'd like to know more about on how to get involved please contact anyone from the organising team or email: hurstbournepriorsmayfair@gmail.com We really cannot run a fair without you!

The May Fair organising team: Jim Vyse (Chairman), Kim French, Kate Gardner, John Perry, Clare Read, Susie Urquhart, Fenella Williams
hurstbournepriorsmayfair@gmail.com

HURSTBOURNE PRIORS PCC

On Sunday 12th March we have two meetings in St Andrews' Church immediately following a short 10.30am service of Holy Communion.

The Annual Vestry Meeting: this is a short meeting for the election of the two Churchwardens for the coming year. All parishioners may attend and vote at this meeting

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) will take place immediately after the Vestry Meeting. This is to present the annual report of Hurstbourne Priors PCC and for the election of members of the PCC. All members of St Andrews' Church Electoral Roll may attend and vote.

Fenella Williams
Churchwarden

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Hurstbourne Priors Parish Council meets every other month on the final Wednesday at 6.30pm the Village Hall and the next meeting is on 29th March 2022.

All Parishioners are welcome to attend. You do not need to give any notice, but if there is a particular item which you would like to discuss, and which you feel it would be beneficial for Councillors to look into prior to the meeting, please contact:

Richard Waterman, Parish Clerk
Richard.waterman150@btinternet.com (01264 772460) or
Clare Read, Chairman
clareread@aol.com

ANDOVER FOODBANK



The Andover foodbank would like to thank everyone who has generously donated over the past few weeks. We are incredibly grateful.

This week, we are in need of the following food items:

Longlife Fruit Juice	Tinned Fish
Tinned Fruit	Tinned Potatoes
Milk	

Thank you.

Jenny Lelean, Andover Foodbank
www.andover.foodbank.org.uk

ST ANDREWS REELS - 16th SEPTEMBER



CHURCH AND VILLAGE CLEAN UP

The Hurstbourne Priors Annual Village Clean Up will be held on Saturday, 18th March. Please meet at the Church or Cricket Pavilion from 10am where we will be serving tea, coffee, hot chocolate and homemade brownies to help you keep your strength up.



There is a range of tasks from polishing and cleaning in the church, clearing in the graveyard, recreation ground and play area with a bonfire to get rid of all the winter debris and general litter picking along the lanes.

Please wear suitable clothing and gloves are recommended for outside tasks. We will have pick claws and rubbish bags available in the Pavilion. Cleaning products will be available in the church for those wishing to take part in 'inside' activities.



Everyone is welcome; no one is too small or too old for a useful task!

Many thanks,
Your Parish and Parochial Church Councils



DIARY OF A WIMPY CYCLIST

Hike the new Bright Waters Benefice

On Sunday 4th December, I swapped my lycra togs for a walker's cagoule and backpack in a mad rush of blood to the head. These are strange times for the world of churching as we seek to recover attendance numbers from the pandemic days of services served up in the kitchen over a visi-plate of Zoom.

After many rounds of discussion at the Winchester level, the benefice (groups of local churches) has, over the past year, been expanded to merge our Hill & Valley community with the larger church at Whitchurch (All Hallows). There is probably already some historical precedent for this, but the net outcome is that we are now a group of nine – so I thought, as vice-chair of your PCC, it would be quite fun to draw attention to this and raise a little money for own church building (St Andrew's) at the same time.



Having plotted the route on Strava – the go-to tool for most if not all cyclists – 20 miles seemed far too short for a cycle ride, so I opted for bipedal perambulation without the aid of machine: a walk. In a single day. On one of the shortest days of the year. Julia dropped me off at St Michael's in Bullington at 06:30, and we lit a candle and set it on the concrete step outside. I figured it would be unreasonable to knock on William Murray's door for the church key(!). I then set off at 06:55 for a power-walk in the dark over to Barton Stacey. It was cold and drizzly – a good metric for the day ahead. All Saints was also quiet, the village of Barton Stacey carpeted in the ghostly green-gray of the pre-dawn. Another power-walk over to Longparish, where I shivered with a cup of tea from my flask gratefully in the glass-doored porch of St. Nicholas. Peter opened up the church a few minutes later, gave some stick to David Blake and Revd Dawson ('who comes from Leicester, don't you know') and wished me good fortune on my travels. I would see them at the evensong after the day – and before the predicted thrashing of Senegal in the World Cup.

From Longparish the day was further brightened by Matt my neighbour and his dog, Loki. We passed the tempting warm glow of The Plough and quickly despatched the spine of Longparish to meet Clare Read and Basil the dog who came with me and the dance went on. A

promised knock on the door at Lavender cottage yielded a Rapunzel-like cheer from the Lavers above, and we passed the young footballers gathering on Hurstbourne Priors recreation ground. A gratefully received hot-crossed bun and biscuits awaited in St. Andrew's as I lit another candle and signed the guest book. Four down, five to go.



A pleasant side-effect of actually walking around is the discovery of new paths and dog walking routes. Julia and Lola the dog joined Matt, Loki and me for the jaunt to St Mary's Tufton – avoiding the bridge.



There is something very grounding looking up at faded 400 year old paint in an ancient and incredibly peaceful space – I could see why some people get into Champing. We trotted into Whitchurch, and a deserved shortbread in Kudos café.



All Hallows were hugely welcoming, and it was great to address everyone with what I was up to – more tea and another altar-candle lit. We set off toward the viaduct in search of lunch at St Mary Bourne.

However hugely tempting it was to grab a pint in The George, following my brief candle stop in St Peter's, Julia met me for a lunch stop at the new coffee shop at St Mary Bourne. We sat outside and shivered over a chicken mayo sandwich and packet of quavers. I knew the afternoon with its longer walking stints by myself and dwindling daylight would be tough. A quick bang on the pub window to wave at Mark Briant-Evans as a thank you for his sponsorship too and I set off alone on another power-walk to Egbury, 14 miles done, 7 miles to go... As I stomped and whistled inanelly to myself up Egbury hill, getting pebble-dashed by the unswerving Range Rovers, I was suddenly joined by a friendly MAMIL on a fine-looking bike! Crispin Orr had been sent on a mission to deliver me some mince-pies and we swapped stories as we headed up the hill.

St James in upper Woodcott sits on the top of the hill on the corner of a farm and conjures images of Irving's legend of Sleepy Hollow owing to its aspect, but again was a peaceful respite from the aches, pains and encroaching dusk. By now it was gone 3pm and time to get jogging down the hill to Dunley. This was the 'wall' moment I had been expecting, when the resilience kicks in and had to be at Litchfield before total darkness – I scrambled over the fields and arrived at St James the Less. My Garmin booked me at 37.31 km for the day, or 23 miles.



Often it is the unknown that truly underlines a journey. As we met up at the final Church in Litchfield a figure emerged from the darkened graveyard near the doorway: Mrs Walker. She was no doubt baffled by our fussing over the dog and fumbling our way into the church, but it became clear that she was in need of a hug – her husband's headstone had that day been installed.

A huge thank you to all of you who sponsored me – we raised just shy of £600 for the Church that short winter's day.

Simon Mattison



THE JOY OF SNOWDROPS



I have always loved snowdrops, plucky tiny green shoots pushing their way through the mud long before any other plants. To me it means there is never a dead of winter; just as the last

leaves fall from the trees at the end of December I start my hunt.

I don't have to travel far, some of the earliest can be found in St Andrew's Churchyard. Now it is covered with carpets of snowdrops but just after Christmas I look very carefully in the right of the path heading the extension to the grave yard and here I will find the first blooms. Then within a week the glorious drift just by the entrance to the playing field starts to pop up. Slowly the numbers build but I have to wait until February for the full display.



I have taken photos of the first snowdrops for many years now, usually finding that first bloom on Boxing Day but with the very cold snap in December, this year it was not until 1st January.

Sarah Milne





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£20 - J. Croser **£10** - T. Riley

The next 100 Club Draw: Saturday 11th March



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£2.50 for coffee and biscuits - For more information contact
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The Lunch

Our next village lunch will be
held on **Wednesday 15th**
March at St Mary Bourne

Village Centre, as usual starting to serve at 12.30pm.
Suggested donation is still only £3. If a lift is needed,
please phone Chris on ☎ 01264 738110 by Noon on the
Tuesday. CS



EASTER LILIES

The Easter Sunday flower
arrangements each year
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Resurrection. It is a gift
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with sight and scent. We also make a display of the
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If you would like to make a donation in memory of a
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or to her personally by **Palm Sunday 2nd April at the
very latest.**

We ask for **£1** for each person remembered, in an
envelope marked **Easter Lilies**, with the name(s)
printed on the outside of the envelope or on a card
inside. NOTE: only list the usual Christian name and
surname rather than full names - eg: Bill Jones rather
than William Edward Jones. EL-S

St Peter's Churchyard

Each March we tidy up the churchyard and remove
all the Christmas wreaths & dead and old flowers.
At the same time we have all the spring flowers
brightening up our days. If you have never seen the
churchyard in the Spring, come this year. It is so
beautiful. DM

Calling ex-SMB Class of 1973-75 pupils

We hope to reach any ex-SMB Primary School pupils
who left in 1973, '74 or '75 and invite them to meet us
on 25th March at 2pm at the Boundary Cafe. We plan to
walk around the village together and end the afternoon
in the pub with a pint and a meal. Nothing formal is in
the pipeline; just a chance to reminisce and enjoy each
other's company again.

Rob Davies, Mark Hirst & Patricia Barton

Contact: robcdavies@gmail.com

NEW TO THE PARISH?

**WELCOME DRINKS
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on Friday 17th March 2023 - 6.30pm
St Mary Bourne Village Centre

**All new residents are warmly invited to a drinks
reception to welcome them 'officially' to the
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For acceptances / more information, see
www.stmarybourne.org/new-residents .

* Anyone in Binley, Dunley, Egbury, St Mary Bourne, Stoke,
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**FLOWER
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AGM
Friday 24th March 2023
7pm
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'The Film' at St Mary Bourne Village Centre



P-G 13 • 1 h 44 m

David and Georgia, two divorced parents who can't stand each other, head to Bali after their daughter, Lily, announces her plans to marry a local islander she just met while on holiday. They decide to put aside their differences and work together to stop the wedding, believing that doing so will keep Lily from making a dreadful mistake similar to their own.

Tuesday 21st March - 7.15pm

Hall and Licensed Bar open from 6.45pm

Tickets **£5** in advance or **£6** at the door

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www.stmarybourne.co.uk

Next Film: 18th April

Surprise visit to The Boundary

Shoppers and coffee drinkers at the Boundary were happily surprised to recognise an old friend of the village on Friday 17th February.

Clare Willis broke her journey from Wales to Dorset to look in with her family. She and her late husband Bob lived from 1971 to 1983 at Willow Cottage in the High Street. From there they ran the SMB Post Office & General Stores and were great supporters and contributors to the community.



Clare keeps in touch with village events through Hill & Valley on-line and she was thrilled to visit The Boundary as she is still passionately interested in community shops and is a shareholder in the project.

Clare met many old friends and was delighted to meet Lara Madge to congratulate her in person.

RW



March, in my mind, is the start of Spring... it's the time of year where we can shake off the winter blues and really look forward to the warmer months stretching ahead of us... PHEW!! We made it!

Decking to the back of the Café is in the process of being built and, dare I say, might even have been finished by the time this magazine is published. Outside furniture will be going on top shortly and Café customers will be able to bask in the sunshine, whilst enjoying their favourite drink and snack.

We have also tweaked our menu slightly, making it more unctuous; and also streamlined the kitchen to make our service to you quicker.

The kitchen is now open six days a week, Tuesday – Sunday, 9am – 2pm, and the Café is open slightly longer as well, Monday – Friday 8am – 5pm; Saturday 9am – 3pm and Sunday 9am – 2pm.

We continue to get our lovely fresh flowers every week, along with fresh meat from Greenfields and Bere Mill. Fruit and veg arrive every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from Kenyons and we continue to stock our shelves with everyday items from Londis with emphasis on our value range of Jacks products.

All in all, life is good. The days are getting longer. Summer is on its way. Don't forget Mothers' Day on 19th March... we have everything you need to let her know how much you care!

We look forward to seeing soon.

Lara and the team xx



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News and Views

Parish Council Activities

That time of year – again

The recent rapid rise in water levels up and down the valley are being watched and communicated through relevant parties. We all know this is a troublesome issue and not something that can be fixed quickly or without a lot of money.

A longer-term plan does need to be created and this is currently being discussed and added to the list. Thanks to Sarah Cooney, Clem Jones and your PC members Dave, Ed and Phil. More information will be posted on the facebook page as and when available.

Highways communications

The road closures over the last few weeks have caused disruption and most people will have been affected. Unfortunately this wasn't planned and no notification was given to the PC, so in turn we could neither raise awareness nor suggest any alternative plan/route. There are more closures planned, including Gangbridge Lane, and this also doesn't exclude more foul water tankers. As soon as we have details, we will update you on our facebook page.

Last, but certainly not least:

It is with sadness we announce that Kevin Noble has resigned from the council. Kevin has been on the council for a number of years and of course has been a resident of the parish for many more. We collectively thank him for all his contributions.

This does of course leave a space on the council and we are in the process of reviewing the procedure for the next steps. If anyone would like to get more involved with the PC, then please get in touch and we will keep you posted, as we uncover more.

Next parish council meeting:
14th March - 19.30 Village Centre Club Room
Public more than welcome.
www.stmarybourne-pc.gov.uk

Copies of meeting minutes are available on the parish council website - and please email any questions or points to Maxine on clerk@stmarybourne-pc.gov.uk. Facebook: Search for www.facebook.com/SMB.PCpage - and like and follow to get updates, or pop along to the parish council office in the SMB Village Centre Club Room for a chat.

Details of all Planning Applications for the Parish can be accessed on the B&DBC website: www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning, and if you have any further questions or concerns, please raise them with your parish council or contact Borough Councillor **Sam Carr** on ☎ 07474 273573 or write to him: crr.samuel.carr@basingstoke.gov.uk.



"Thank you, Mr B, let's keep fighting for our NHS"

In a recent consultation Mr B was empowered to praise us at the practice and the hospital for the care he had just received following a diagnosis of cancer. His prostate cancer was picked up very early following a targeted screening PSA blood test. "Keep fighting on here Dr L" he exclaimed. He wondered why there was so much negativity about the health service when everything had worked out so efficiently for him. He felt passionate to spread the message of success and positivity about his experience, now he has completed his treatment.

We discussed our vision locally, because this is something we felt we had some control over. We talked about how fortunate we are to have enough doctors and nurses and administrators working in our practice. We talked about how we work in mini teams (pods) to retain continuity of care which the clinicians and patients value so highly. We also discussed how and why we have recruited physiotherapists and pharmacists and mental health coaches to improve the care for our patients. Mr B discussed how he had met Rebecca our cancer care coordinator following his diagnosis and found this extremely helpful and supportive.

We went on to reflect on the pressures that our hospitals and our teams remain under. The news always seems to mention a crisis, the covid pandemic, winter twindemics, long waiting lists, strike action, it is hard to ignore the negativity. Mr B wonders why the government isn't fighting hard enough to protect our NHS.

Mr B reminded me how amazing our local health service is and how lucky we are to have such an incredible and innovative team here and at the hospital that cares for everyone no matter what their background or situation. I will continue to support and treasure our NHS and do everything I can to ensure its safe future. I won't take it for granted but will keep fighting for it with you. Thank you, Mr B.



St Mary Bourne United Charities with St Peter's Community Fund may be able to help if you live in the parish and know someone struggling with financial worries.

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- 1 • Take a keep cup everywhere you go and use a metal bottle for drinking water.
- 2 • Buy some of the small mesh bags they sell in supermarkets for holding loose fruit and vegetables and avoid buying plastic wrapped vegetables.
- 3 • Use the Village Shop container-free facility and ask for help if necessary.
- 4 • Remember the writing materials recycling box at the back of the church or take them to the village school.



Light Touch Down the Drain

With overflowing sewage pipes at the forefront of our minds at the moment, it seemed a good time to consider what we all put down our drains.

Hopefully, no one puts nappies or sanitary products down the loo anymore. But it is really important not to believe product information that declares it is 'flushable'. A pair of pants, pet turtle or goldfish is physically 'flushable', but certainly not recommended. Many makes of wipes will not disintegrate and will cause a blockage, or could even resurface further down the road at the moment. It's not a bad idea to be ever mindful of the amount of loo paper sent down the pan as well.



At all times of year, it is really important that we look carefully at the cleaning products we use which all end up going down the drain. Everything from face wash and shampoo to all those magical products that remove our household dirt with one wipe, kill 99 per cent of all known germs, or make our clothes whiter than white. Effective 'effort free' cleaning comes with a price. Instead use ecological cleaning products and some old-fashioned tricks like vinegar or lemon juice which may need a tiny bit more effort. The medicines we take will add chemicals and hormones to this mix which we cannot do much about, but never get rid of any unneeded medication down the toilet.

Do your sheds and garage shelves hide old paint cans, banned weed killer or pesticides? Please take them all to the tip for disposal. Just think where all these products (if sent down our drains) would end up.

Our antiquated sewage plants can only remove certain basic pollutants when working well. But they can easily become overloaded if there is heavy rain, especially when new housing developments have been added to an old system. The overflow drains then pour untreated sewage into our rivers or the sea. This amount of pollution is disastrous for wildlife as it directly kills, at worst, or upsets delicate ecosystems, challenging plant growth and causing the slow death of river and ocean environments, whilst making swimmers ill.



Look for the 'surfers against sewage' real time map online to find safe beaches. Thames Water have a 'nearly real time' map of discharges into their rivers, some of which are not that far away from us. And all water companies are meant to be cleaning up their act as our government discusses changes to the law enforcement of better water quality. CH

Biosecurity for Our Chalk Streams

With their serene beauty and intriguing wildlife, it's no surprise that our chalk streams draw people to them. But when visitors leave, they may not be alone: diseases and invasive species could be hitching a ride to their next destination. For streams that are under pressure, or home to vulnerable species, this stealthy spread can spell disaster.

Take the white-clawed crayfish, for example. This amazing animal thrives in chalk streams, where it uses the mineral-rich water to strengthen its shell. Yet it is now endangered, due largely to a water mould called 'crayfish plague'. The mould's carrier - the invasive signal crayfish - is mostly immune to its effects. For native crayfish, infection is usually fatal.

Unfortunately, crustaceans aren't the only ones in trouble. Many chalk stream fish are susceptible to parasites like the fish louse, water moulds like Saprolegnia, and diseases like koi herpes virus or carp edema virus. Infection can lead to serious illness, and even death, in iconic species like the common carp, the brown trout, and the Atlantic salmon.

On the floral front, invasive non-native plants like monkeyflower, parrot's feather, and floating pennywort can flourish from just a sliver of root or stem. These fast-growing species can quickly dominate a chalk stream, depriving its wildlife of sunlight and oxygen. Once established, they are very difficult to permanently remove.

Luckily, there are easy ways to enjoy our precious streams while doing your bit for biosecurity. Whether you're a paddler, an angler, or a river keeper, you have a crucial role to play in their protection. Spores, eggs, and plant fragments can survive for weeks in damp conditions, so we recommend the 'Check, Clean, Dry' method:

- CHECK your clothing and equipment after leaving the water. Remove any mud, aquatic animals, and plant material while on site.
- CLEAN your clothing and equipment as soon as you can, ideally with hot water. Make sure you get into all the nooks and crannies.
- DRY your clothing and equipment for as long as possible before using it again, especially if you will be visiting a different location.

Want to learn more about biosecurity? Join us at **7pm on 28th March for a free online talk**; book your ticket at www.hiwwt.org.uk/events. You can also get involved in tackling invasive species through the Watercress and Winterbournes scheme: www.hiwwt.org.uk/winterbournes. Our work is supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Go Exploring This Spring

Discover a world of wildlife, with our free Open Chalk Streams events this April! Visit hidden places and see familiar ones in a different way. Learn more at www.hiwwt.org.uk/winterbournes/open.



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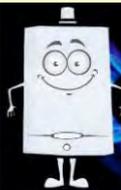
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Postcard from Binley

As I write I am propped up by pillows in the 'spare' room. Don't ask! It is a typical Hampshire cottage bedroom. The ceiling, held together with horsehair, plaster, hazel twigs and a blinding belief it won't collapse sags above me as do the misshapen walls, broken here and there by oak beams of indeterminate centuries that twist and turn and somehow keep the old place standing. God alone knows how. These buildings stand on no footings and this one originally had a floor of beaten mud that someone kindly covered with bricks back in the 1800's. Watercolours hang in profusion, mainly of British birds but an occasional one by my old friend Leslie Illsley who founded the Cornish Pottery company, Troika. A lovely man with a drink in his hand but less so sober. As is often the case. Talking of which, my creative juices are oiled this evening by a glass of Balvenie Double Wood. It helps. I think. But it is a mild night in February and the window is flung open and a large, hairy black dog is asleep at my feet. The silence in Binley at this hour is deafening. It actually makes your ears sing. But come daybreak the rooks will be up with the lark and off in huge numbers like the murmurings of starlings. Why they do it at this time of year I'm not sure, but they take to the wing in their hundreds from the park to settle on a couple of sycamores up by the Harrisons before moving again to the Oaks above the Strong's. Come nest building this all stops and then they will be seen on the down's pecking around for material, stripping the moss from the barn roof and generally mooching about, and nobody mooches better than a rook.

I rather like nature's timetable. It gives you things to look forward to. We have snowdrops now, and then daffodils, Hares will soon start to spar and chase around like dervishes, the Fallow will arrive as they always have, pheasant and partridge will pair up, early asparagus will break the soil's surface and leaves will unfurl, the most vibrant, iridescent, verdant green that ever was. And as I get older, with each year I appreciate this beauty more. Yesterday, and it is mild, at dusk a blackbird started singing his spring song from the kitchen roof and my heart skipped a beat! The first hint that we are coming out of winter! Wonder of wonders! And what a joyous song it was. If that doesn't warm your cockles, then nothing will.

But my cockles have in truth been somewhat cooled by the sad death of a dear friend, countryman and one of the most colourful characters to have inhabited these parts, Colin Ponting from Hurstbourne Tarrant. An all-round sportsman, a brilliant cricketer as he himself would tell you, and an aficionado of the Turf. He also played football for The George and Dragon Reserves but rarely mentioned it. I first met Colin nearly forty years ago when he would hold court in the Hurdlers Arms here in Binley with Wyndham Culley, Joe Hirst, Peter Corbett and others where the laughter flowed even more than the beer. Colin was a wonderful raconteur and a day in his company at the races was always one to treasure and you'd come home with aching sides and an empty wallet.

Nobody told a story like Colin and in his memory, I'll leave you one here...

When Colin and his wife Pauline married, they made their home at Brookside in HBT next to the pub. There was a yard at the back for his cattle lorries and his office sat on the end of the house.

And Colin said to Pauline in that wonderful Hampshire accent he had *"Now I don't mind you coming in my office and flicking a duster about but on no account must you touch anything, move anything and you must promise me faithfully you will never look in the safe?"*

And Pauline promised. And for forty years she never did.

But one day Colin arrived home from Salisbury market and Pauline was waiting for him in the hallway.

"Colin" she said *"I'm very sorry but today I looked in the safe."*

"I told you not to look in that safe!" shouted Colin.

"Well, yes but I have, and I want to know why there's three eggs in there and thirty thousand pounds in cash?"

"Well," said Colin *"I suppose I should tell you. You see over the last forty years every time I have made love to another man's wife, I've put an egg in the safe."*

"Well, I suppose that's not too bad over a forty-year marriage" replied Pauline. "Just three eggs?"

"Ah yes," said Colin *"But when I get a dozen, I sell them and that's where the money comes from!"*

God bless, CP. Rest in peace.

NA

Go Star Gazing in March

7 March - Full Moon

Moon will be located on opposite side of the Earth as the Sun & its face will be fully illuminate. Known as Worm Moon by early Native American tribes, as this is the time of year that earth worms reappear.



20 March - March Equinox

This occurs at 21.17 UTC. The Sun will shine directly on the equator & there will be equal amounts of day & night throughout the world. This is also the first day of Spring (vernal equinox) in the Northern Hemisphere & the first day of fall (autumnal equinox) in Southern Hemisphere.

21 March - New Moon

Moon will be located on same side of the Earth as the Sun & will not be visible in the night sky. Best time of the month to observe galaxies & star clusters as there is no moonlight to interfere.

Please do remember to email **Annual Star Count to the CPRE**. These are crucial to understanding the impact of light pollution. With this in mind, please try to minimise outdoor lighting. This benefits insects, birds, mankind and our environment.

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Remembering...

Phyllis Rich 14th June 1925 - 23rd December 2022

Compiled from the tribute given at the funeral service in St Peter's Church on 26th January.

Phyllis was born in the summer of 1925 to William and Annie Golding of Picket Twenty. She enjoyed a humble but happy country childhood, taking pleasure in the glories of nature and her loving family.

One of the highlights of her early life was attending Andover Down Sunday School which had connections to St Mary's Church in Andover. Phyllis would often happily reminisce, not just about the lessons she learnt, but of the wonderful Christmas parties, Easter egg hunts, and seaside outings. She went on to attend East Street School, then later, Andover Girls School. On leaving at the age of fourteen, Phyllis took a position as a clerk in the town. It was during this time that she also offered her services as a fire watch warden, helping to keep Andover safe during World War II.

Phyllis had a lifelong love of dancing, and at a Guildhall dance in 1946, she met Frank Rich, a local dairy farmer from St Mary Bourne. She might have had an inkling about her future life as a farmer's wife when Frank used to collect her on his motorbike with a numberplate starting "COW".



Phyllis and Frank were married at St Mary's Andover in the summer of 1951, between haymaking and harvest. But not, of course, until after Frank had milked the cows in the morning. They honeymooned in Lake Como, Italy, which sparked a love of travel within her. Over the years, Phyllis and Frank enjoyed the wonders of Europe, Egypt and the Holy Land and also spent three months visiting Australia, New Zealand, Canada and America.

In 1954, Frank and Phyllis's first child Robin was born, followed by Heather in 1956 and Catherine in 1964. With Frank, three children and a busy farm to support, life was never dull.

Phyllis was an excellent cook. There was always a hearty lunch on the table, using produce from Frank's vegetable garden. Delicious cakes were often to be found baking in the oven too. Phyllis won many prizes for her culinary skills at the St Mary Bourne Flower Show - an event she attended every year with interest.

Despite the busyness of her life, Phyllis always had time to bathe a grazed knee, soothe away tears or plan a jolly picnic. She also enjoyed learning new skills and attended many classes. She studied English language, oil and water colour painting, Spanish, dressmaking, catering, lampshade making, cake decorating, swimming and horse riding, to name but a few. Also, continuing her love of dance, she and Frank won a bronze medal for ballroom dancing at a Club competition they entered in Salisbury.

Throughout her glorious ninety-seven years, Phyllis had a great sense of humour; smiling and laughing her way through life. Her gentle and kind manner never waned, nor the love and support she had for her family.

At the service held in St Peter's Church, they gathered to celebrate the life of a much-loved lady. Phyllis Rich - mother of three, grandmother of five, and great-grandmother of seven, all of whom she delighted in.

"Say not in grief she is no more, but in thankfulness that she was."

The family are very grateful for all the support and kind messages they have received since the sad loss of Phyllis.

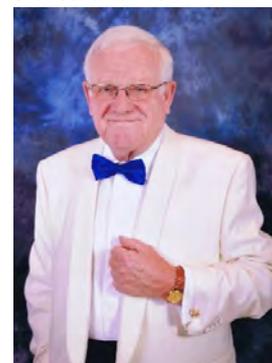
Richard Walker

28th July 1939 - 14th December 2023

Richard was born on 28th July 1939 at Heston, Middlesex, to Bill and Phyllis Walker. After schooling in Middlesex, he attended the Berkshire College of Agriculture where his interest in livestock management, breeding and showing cattle was first developed.

Richard worked his way up the farming ladder. Starting as a relief herdsman in Essex and Derbyshire, and then moving south to Wiltshire as a herdsman on a family dairy farm. Richard met Elizabeth - his wife to be - through the local Young Farmers Club and they married in Shaftesbury on 17th March 1965. They then moved to the Bisterne Estate near Ringwood where their eldest daughter Ann was born. Three years later, Richard secured a job as Livestock Manager on an estate on the Dorset/Wiltshire border where their second daughter Sue was born. Richard's farming career progressed; and in 1975 he became Farm Manager for the Nicholsons on the Woodcott Estate where he remained until 1991. His final job was as Area Manager for Jeary's Agricentre, covering Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex and Berkshire as part of the animal health industry. Richard thoroughly enjoyed visiting farms in the area and he eventually retired in 2009.

Richard was a member of Whitchurch Growmore Club and he enjoyed participating in the county competitions. A love of cows took him to the Southern Friesian Breeders' Club and then to Holstein South & Wilts where he represented the club at Holstein UK meetings. For a number of years Richard and Elizabeth organised the Calf Show for Holstein South & Wilts held in conjunction with The Royal County of Berkshire Show at Newbury. After retiring his main love was travelling and he was lucky enough to visit USA, Canada, Iceland, Russia and much of Europe.



As a family man, Richard was always very supportive to Elizabeth when she was singing with Andover Choral Society and St Peter's church choir. He was immensely proud of his daughters in their chosen careers and granddaughter Immy on her education at South Wilts Grammar School and Cambridge University. He enjoyed talking to his grandson Julian about farming and would take him on visits to friends' farms. He always loved being in his garden and would go outside most days before his heart operation at the Brompton Hospital in London during Covid.

Richard made a slow recovery from that but he still managed to enjoy three holidays at West Bay in Dorset and he had a lovely time on the Isle of Wight only the week before he passed away.

It was a great shock that Richard passed away so suddenly but peacefully at his home. He would have been very humbled to know that he was held in love and respect by so many.

Elizabeth and the family thank everyone for their kind support and messages in memory of Richard.

Longparish

- 1 7.15pm - Wessex Rivers and Toad Patrol Talk - Community Hall (School)
 4 7 for 7.30pm - Murder Mystery 'Just Desserts' - Longparish Players, and supper - Village Hall
 10 10am to 12 Noon - LCA Coffee Morning - The Plough
 12 9am - L2SOTM - Cricket Ground
 13 7.30pm - Parish Council Meeting - Village Hall
 17 9.15am - Litter Pick - Village Hall
 28 7pm - Gardening Club Talk 'Astromerias and the British Cut Flower Industry' - Village Hall
 31 12 Noon to 2pm - Friday Lunch Club - Village Hall
 1 Apr 10am to 12 Noon - Church Clean Up - St Nicholas Church

Hurstbourne Priors

- 12 10.30am - Annual Parochial Church Council meeting - St Andrews Church
 18 from 10am - Church and Village clean up - Cricket Pavilion
 19 9am - Family Communion for Mothering Sunday - St Andrews Church
 29 6.30pm - Parish Council meeting - Village Hall

Front cover photo: Michael Widén

St Mary Bourne

- 1 7.30pm - **Village Centre AGM** - Village Centre
 4 10am to 12 Noon - 'The Repair Café' -
 The George Inn
 14 10.30am - Coffee at The George Inn
 14 7.30pm - Parish Council meeting -
 Village Centre Club Room
 15 12.30pm - **'The Lunch'** - Village Centre
 17 6.30pm - Welcome Drinks for New Villagers -
 Village Centre
 21 7.30pm - **'The Film'** - 'Ticket to Paradise' -
 Village Centre
 24 7pm - **Flower Show & Fête AGM** - Village Centre
 26 9am to 12 Noon - **THE BIG BREAKFAST** -
 Village Centre

Saturday mornings - 10.30am to 12.30pm -
The Community Library - Village Centre



Photo: Jeanette Davies

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Your contributions - letters, pictures, comments or articles are always welcome. Contact your parish editor by the copy date.

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