

Steeple Aston *Life*

March 2023 Issue No. 595



- 50 years of SAL • Prize cryptic crossword • Spring Show details •
- SACS Coronation Concert • Community Orchard • Annual Quiz winners •

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Contributions are welcome. Please email editorsalife@gmail.com

Cover: Photo by Nigel Francis

Steeple Aston *Life*

COPY

All articles and letters to the Editor
editorsalife@gmail.com

COPY DEADLINES

The copy deadline is the 14th of the previous month.

This means the copy deadline for the April 2023 issue is 14th March.

READ STEEPLE ASTON LIFE ONLINE
<https://www.steepleaston.org.uk/sal-magazine>

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Beekeepers (Swarm collection, advice)		Paul Honigmann	340665
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Hand-bell ringers		Sally Cooper	347173
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Methodist Church – Tackley		Rev Paul Carter	01865 243216
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Toddler Group		Hilary Clayton-Lyne, Angela Smith	steepleastontoddlergrp@gmail.com
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WI	President	Cathy Lawday	347209



“...folly is not always folly.”
Jane Austen

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Editorial

“What sort of people live about here?” “In that direction,” the Cat said, waving its right paw round, “lives a Hatter: and in that direction,” waving the other paw, “lives a March Hare. Visit either you like: they’re both mad.”
From ‘Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland’ by Lewis Carroll.

In March, hares are mad. Allegedly. In fact, ‘mad as a March hare’ probably refers to the animal behaving excitedly during its breeding season, which peaks in the month of March. Their strange capers include boxing at other hares, jumping vertically for no apparent reason and generally displaying abnormal behaviour.

Mention ‘March Hare’ and many people will think of Alice and her adventures in Wonderland – specifically the Mad Tea-Party where the hare, hatter and a dormouse exist in a time where it is always six o’clock. Lewis Carroll never refers to the second character as the Mad Hatter – only as the Hatter.

The phrase ‘mad as a hatter’ was around before Charles Dodgson (aka Lewis Carroll) was born in 1832. It means ‘completely insane’. One theory is that mercury, or possibly lead, used in the making of hats caused the disorder, though this has never been successfully proved.

Believe it or not, there is a Mad Hatter Day. This was created in 1986 by a group of American computer technicians inspired by the Hatter and his irrational behaviour. Can you guess why they chose a date of 6th October? Take a close look at the John Tenniel illustration below (one of 42 featured in the 1865 book). The price tag on the hat reads 10/6, or 10 shillings and 6 pence in pre-decimal money. In the USA, dates are written with the month first, followed by the day, so 10/6 becomes October 6th. If a group of Oxford students had come up with the idea, Mad Hatter Day would be the 10th June!

If you want to celebrate Mad Hatter Day, you could wear a hat for the whole day or host an Alice in Wonderland-themed tea party at 6pm. Or, as in the illustration of the March Hare below, you could strew some straw in your hair – a common way to depict madness in Victorian times.

Robert





Sheila Cadd

A big thank you to all our friends in Steeple Aston for the support they have given us after the death of our mother on Boxing Day. We would also like to thank all those who attended her funeral and those who gave donations to 'Dogs for Good'. The total raised so far is over £400 and this will make a huge difference to the charity.

Andy, Jane and family



Memories of May Woods

May Woods, formerly of Middle Aston, died on 4th February, aged 78. There is to be a thanksgiving service for her in Steeple Aston Church on Tuesday 2nd May. Her friend Caroline Parsons has written the following tribute.



May died peacefully at home surrounded by her family. They had lived at Westcott, Middle Aston for 50 years and their cottage at weekends was a joyful place, full of friends and family. It was May and Gil who rescued us after our house had burnt down on our wedding day. They lent us the cottage for two weeks while we searched for somewhere to live. From that day in September 1974 we became firm friends.

May was successful at everything she did. She wrote two books, one on the history of glasshouses and the other on European gardens. She lectured both in the UK and in the USA. She was a brilliant gardener and plantswoman and her plant sales both here and in London were legendary. She raised enormous amounts for the Church and other local charities as well as for Fairbridge, now part of the Prince's Trust. We all remember her plant sales at the Fete.

May and Gil were always in Church on Sundays and before they moved from Westcott, she was an active member of the PCC. They left Middle Aston as May needed to be near the hospital where she had regular blood transfusions.

All of us who knew her will remember her for her enduring kindness, compassion and love. She made us happy.

£2 bus fare cap extended: In the February issue we reported that the Government is subsidising single bus fares so that £2 will be the maximum, irrespective of the usual cost. The cap was due to end on 31 March, but has now been extended until the end of June 2023.

Steeple Aston Noticeboard



The Spring Show 2023 – Sunday 26th March – 2.30pm

As you read this, look outside and you will see that spring is just around the corner. Wait until the end of the month and spring will be here and to celebrate the beginning of a fresh new year, what better way than to come along to your Village Hall on Sunday 26th March and enjoy the sights and perfume of spring. To accompany that wonderful experience, enjoy some homemade cake and a cup of tea at village prices, not those of your local garden centre!

The schedule and entry form are in this edition of SAL so even better, enter something and maybe you will be walking away with a prize. This is what village life is all about. More importantly, getting together with fellow villagers and putting the world to rights – although thinking about it, that might take some time. Take part by making a cake, bringing along a vase of your daffodils or maybe a photograph.

If you want any advice on taking part, give me a call on 340512 or talk to one of the horticultural committee members. Please come along and support our show.

Richard Preston and all the committee members of the Horticultural Society

Christian Aid Lent lunches

Dates for your diary: Saturday 4th March, Friday 24th March.

Christian Aid week is not until May, but we have decided to give up house-to-house collections – although you will be reminded to donate on line if you wish.

I am, however, proposing to host two Lent lunches at Home Farm House to raise funds for Christian Aid. Lent lunch consists of a bowl of home-made soup and bread for which you are invited to give a donation. The dates are as above from 12 noon. All are very welcome, but PLEASE RSVP so that I know how much soup to make.

Caroline Parsons. 07811 820536

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See our website for more information: www.cpreoxon.org.uk

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Roderick Nicholson

12th June 1933 – 16th Jan 2023



Born in West Linton, near Biggar in Scotland, Roderick moved south to Somerset when he was just two years old. Following school, he studied Forestry at Oxford (with plenty of cricket on the side), before doing his National Service.

Roderick first met Hanny when he was 13 as part of a family exchange, but it was not until they went to Edinburgh in their early twenties to see the festival that the magic of Mozart's Magic Flute opera created the spark...

They got engaged in the middle of his two years of National Service, at which point he announced that he was off to Nepal for a year! This seemed to involve a lot of fun with rebuilding a piano in their tent and canoeing down many uncharted rivers in homemade canoes made from old packing cases and canvas!

I think this was his last attempt to enjoy bachelorhood. He had always planned to stay single until into his 40s and then marry a "bright young thing" (his words) to look after him into his dotage.

He started his forestry career in Devon, but soon moved up to Oxfordshire where they bought Kralingen in 1961 – the house that has been their home ever since. The garden was a very derelict orchard and following a complete clear out he planted virtually every tree in the garden.

He took the plunge to start his own business – Nicholsons – in 1979, cultivating container-grown trees to reforest the landscape following Dutch Elm Disease. He was passionate about the business and even in later life was always interested in what was going on. He was so delighted last year to come out to the biggest planting project the company has ever done at Blenheim and join in with the team to plant a tree himself.

He was a real family man and loved his grandchildren, of which there are six. The first thing he would often ask is "how are my grandchildren?". But he also loved music and the silence of the mountains.

Most of you will also know his complete passion for the community. He loved the village and was so supportive of all the various communities within it. He was instrumental in the start of many and involved in so many more, for more years than we can remember: Horticultural Society, Youth Club, Steeple Choir, Cricket Club, Football Club, Village Hall, Bonfire Night, Wassail Night, Entertainments Evening, Boxing Day Hockey and The Yellow Book (Open Gardens, which Hanny and he did for 30 years). How did he do all this?

Marriage is a partnership and Roderick and Hanny had a very strong one. He never bought his own clothes, did the shopping, did the washing, booked the dentist, decided what to wear when going out for dinner, took vital messages, wrote birthday cards, or even knew whose birthday it was. Behind every good man is a very competent woman – Hanny.

He was a true gentleman, who always had time for others and many will recall the characteristic 'twinkle in his eye'. He loved life. And his real passions: trees, ecology, nature, climate change, his garden and the community. And, of course, the family.

Niel Nicholson



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The ARTS Page



There is so much on offer locally that it is often hard to know where to begin. But the blockbuster exhibition 'Labyrinth: Knossos, Myth and Reality' at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, really stands out. On until 30th July 2023, the story of the Minotaur and Theseus is a well-known myth and told here with over 100 artefacts not previously shown. The distinguished legacy of Sir Arthur Evans, given permission to excavate in 1900, alongside these hitherto unshown pieces, makes for a stunning exhibition. At the time of writing, I have not been, but have made two visits to Knossos in Crete and can't wait to go. "The amazing Ashmolean has done it again" – Stephen Fry. Amongst the other offerings, take in the 'Painting Poetry' exhibition by Iraqi artist Dia Al-Azzami. ashmolean.org/exhibitions

The wonderful Creation Theatre is presenting 'The Signalman' – Charles Dickens' semi-autobiographical ghost story – at The Wesley Memorial Church, right in the centre of Oxford, from 11th to 25th March. It looks terrific from the pre-publicity and seems to be selling fast. creationtheatre.co.uk

Amongst the offerings at The North Wall Arts Centre "If you Fall" looks intriguing (April 19th and 20th) – check it out. thenorthwall.com

Worth a look are updated websites for the two local literary festivals, with exciting new additions to the guest lists. This is a chance to see and hear some of the finest writers of our time. oxfordliteraryfestival.org (25th March to 2nd April) and chiplitfest.com (27th to 30th April).

Also worth a look is the newly-developed Museum of Oxford, based at the Town Hall in St. Aldates. There are updates, with two new galleries and fascinating tales from Oxford's past and present – "Something for everyone," and an exciting addition to Oxford's museum offerings. museumofoxford.org

So much music, flagged up in all previous Arts pages! But at the Jacqueline du Pré Music Building, St. Hilda's College, try out the wonderful saxophonist John Harle on 11th March. An extraordinary artist! jdp.st-hildas.ox.ac.uk

Not to mention two phenomenal pianists – Stephen Osborne at SJE Arts, St. John the Evangelist Church, Iffley Road, Oxford, on 30th March (sje-arts.org) and the legendary Martha Argerich at Oxford Town Hall, St Aldate's, on 31st March (oxfordphil.com)

The Oxford Playhouse continues to offer great work. From 7th to 11th March they have the wonderful 'Noughts and Crosses' – winner of excellence in touring, UK Theatre awards 2019. It is the gripping Romeo and Juliet story of love and revolution in a divided world. oxfordplayhouse.com

Elsewhere you will have seen details of the concert in the Church on Friday 10th March at 6.30pm to 7.30pm. We welcome the wonderful actor Robert Powell, a marvellous group of local singers and baritone Charles Cunliffe from the Royal Academy of Music. The Lord's Taverners Charity for disadvantaged and disabled children was formed in 1950 by actors, so it is appropriate that Robert is giving his time to be with us. Lives are transformed by the wonderful work the Taverners do.

As this is the Arts page, it seems relevant to note that enrolment in Arts GCSEs is down by 40% since 2010 and arts teacher numbers by 23%. As I write, there is a letter in my paper saying "the essential contribution that the arts make to health, wealth and wellbeing is clear and well documented.... the arts premium promised in 2020 has not materialised!" Yet the cultural industries have grown at twice the rate of the UK's economy over the last decade. Food for thought – the arts give more than they get.

Nicholas Cleobury
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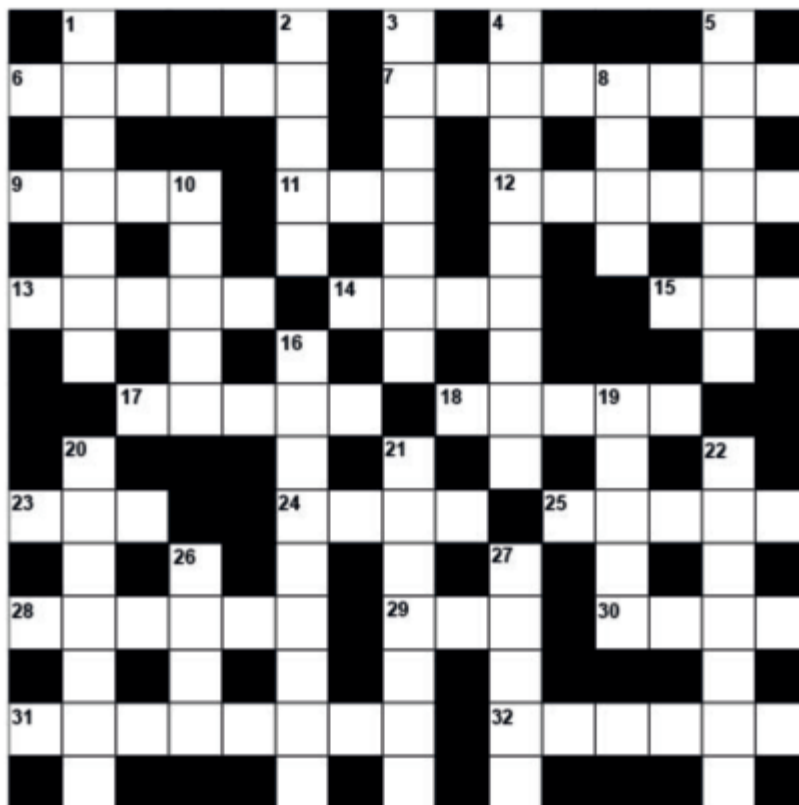
???? Mind Games

Prize cryptic crossword by Yoni Kinory

Please send your entry to: kinory@appleinter.net

If you are not able to scan the completed grid and attach to an email, you could photograph the grid with a smartphone or digital camera and send the resulting image by email.

The closing date for entries is Monday 3rd April 2023. Answers and the name of the winner will be published in the May 2023 issue of Steeple Aston Life. The prize of a book is being donated by Yoni Kinory.



ACROSS

6. Star singer's comeback (6)
7. Failure to carry out love errand (8)
9. Leading character in the Roman arena (4)
11. Won in a fantastic upper league contest (3)
12. But they could be designed for sitting (6)
13. A conventional custom? (5)
14. Travelling light (4)
15. Is it for examining a moggie? (3)
17. Deceive with a swoon, they say (5)
18. Joins up with groups (5)
23. Express enjoyment in a gruff unfriendly tone (3)
24. Satan is, even when losing his head (4)
25. Accumulate, reportedly, a vast tribe (5)
28. Aimless commercial break (6)
29. You could be in its clasp, allegedly for your health (3)
30. A fairly local flower (4)

31. He ran away to the wilderness with little hesitation (8)

32. Cause to be loved needs, confusingly, to be earned (6)

DOWN

1. Joint notebook for the gardener (7)
2. Is it for separating swordsmen? (5)
3. Verse for a romantic pair? (7)
4. Does its nocturnal vision cause frenzy? (9)
5. A hearty drink (7)
8. Spoils the proceeds of a swindler's wager (4)
10. Oily colour? (5)
16. Unwillingly late (9)
19. Mother or I from New Zealand (5)
20. Always expressed as a percentage (7)
21. The angler needs a break, we hear (7)
22. Main ruler (7)
26. It's royal in Scotland (4)
27. A mere constituent (5)

Steeple Aston Spring Show

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AND TEA

COOKING,
FLOWERS AND
VEGETABLES



CHILDREN'S
DIVISIONS

TOMBOLA

Sunday 26th March

2.30-4.30

£1 Entry

Free For Under 16's

THIS IS THE START OF SPRING, SO SEE YOU THERE!

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO.....?

Stratfield Saye House?



The 8th Duke of Wellington (1915-2014) and his dog outside Stratfield Saye House. Photo by Allan Warren.

I've been writing the 'Have you ever been to...?' articles since 2015 and have made it a rule that I have always visited the places I recommend so that I'm telling readers the truth! A number of circumstances during the past few months made it impossible for me to get out and about, so for the first time I'm writing about a place which I haven't actually visited. Stratfield Saye is high on my list of 'to visit' places however, so I thought that if I explained why and told you a little of what I think we might expect you will perhaps add this rather gracious looking house and garden to your planned destinations for the summer months.

My interest was sparked because I listened to a Zoomed lecture about the Duke of Wellington, whom I'd only thought of as the general who led the troops to victory at Waterloo in 1815. I knew of Apsley House, his London residence. I'd seen his extraordinary funeral carriage in the crypt of St Paul's cathedral (once, less than tactfully, taking a French friend to see it!). And knowing of Waterloo Station and Wellington Barracks I'd thought that the Iron Duke was entirely London-centred and a rather one-dimensional figure.

The lecture opened my eyes to a different kind of person. It focused more on his appreciation of art and culture, explaining what a great collector he had been with much of what he had bought or commissioned still displayed at Stratfield Saye, the house in the north-east corner of Hampshire, which he was given by Parliament in 1817.

The house was apparently described by Queen Victoria, who came with Prince Albert to stay in 1846, as 'low and not very large, but warm and comfortable' and it certainly looks delightful. I understand that it's still furnished much as it was by the first Duke with his collections of pictures and a splendid library. He was clearly a cultured man, having added pieces of sculpture and unusual items collected during his travels in Europe to enhance the beauty of the architecture (the house was originally built in the 1630s). Apparently a strong family man, the duke enjoyed living in this place with family around him.

Stratfield Saye belongs to the Historic Houses organisation, but it is still in the hands of the family, lived in by the present Duke of Wellington, who is the 9th Duke. Open to the public on limited days, one has to book online and join a tour (wellington.co.uk/stratfield-saye-house). There are no independent visits, I guess because there are such treasures on display. It is cheaper to visit on weekdays. I shall certainly try to make an expedition there before long. Perhaps I'll see you there?

Eileen Baglin-Jones

Parish Council Meeting *Notes*



This month I am writing about two meetings – one to decide on the village’s approach to Cherwell probably seeking 47 extra houses here by 2040, the other is the monthly Parish Council meeting.

Extra Houses

I am not quite sure why I am writing about this, because sixty-eight people came to the public meeting on 16th February. The meeting started with Martin Lipson explaining that Cherwell had withdrawn the initial proposals including the 47 houses. The proposals are likely to be resurrected after the local elections in May and any new plans are likely to be similar, even if not exactly the same, so the Parish Council had chosen to continue with the meeting.

Cherwell had apparently decided that 500 houses are needed in ‘larger villages’ in their rural areas by 2040. Two villages in the area of the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan (MCNP), Steeple Aston and Kirtlington, have been designated as ‘larger villages’ because they have all, or some, community facilities such as a bus, school, shop, village hall, church and pub. We have been allocated 47 houses and Kirtlington 46, while Heyford Park gets 1,235 extra houses. The other parishes in the MCNP area get none.

Martin explained that we had two initial choices. First, whether or not to object to the concept of ‘larger villages’ taking more houses. Second, whether to leave it up to Cherwell to decide where and what houses should be built, or ask the MCNP to co-ordinate managing the planning of the developments in Steeple Aston.

Martin was clearly well aware that local decisions of this sort could be highly contentious and he suggested we should follow the technique used successfully elsewhere of developing strict criteria which would be applied equally to all potential sites. The sites, the criteria and the assessments would be published for total transparency. Also, he suggested that in addition

there should be a group from Steeple and Kirtlington and perhaps other MCNP parishes to look objectively at each potential site. Again, comments would be published for transparency reasons. The proposal was for a long list of sites to be identified. Each would be tested against the criteria and when there was a short list of potentially acceptable sites the owners of the land would be approached.

The audience was invited to comment and a lot of individual points were made such as whether Rousham Bridge could cope with the extra traffic, whether additional children could go to Dr. Radcliffe’s School (yes) and the lack of a doctors’ surgery specifically for Heyford Park. Others mentioned the strong demand for one-storey houses for the elderly, the desirable ratio of different sized houses and the need for affordable homes rather than mansions.

Parish Council

The PC meeting began with a discussion of the new planning application for Hatch End. This assumes the existing buildings would not be replaced, but that three additional buildings should be added making the proposed total space have a larger footprint than the initial, now refused, application. The Parish Council will use the same objections as last time, mainly that the travel implications are awful for the village and it will be unsafe, especially for the school children. Someone said that Unit 1 is being converted for self-storage. Comments on the application have to be in to Cherwell by 2nd March and letters sent in about the initial application will not be transferred to this application automatically. New letters are needed if you object to the current re-application.

We were told about the plans for the Coronation Parade and Party by Helen Wright. They sound terrific. The idea is to close the roads and have a procession round the village followed by a party at Robinsons Close. At the moment the organisers have raised £500 as a grant, the Parish Council has promised them £500 and other applications

Parish Council Meeting Notes



for grants are pending. The initial idea was to have a marquee on Robinsons Close, but this would cost about £4,000 so it is likely the party will be in the Village Hall and Sports and Recreation Centre instead.

Our County Councillor, Arash Fatemian, said he was fighting for the reinstatement of the school bus service. At present, local children not eligible for free transport to school can pay to get to Warriner on a school bus. Arash said the number of free places on the bus had been declining over the years and the cost for the next school year was forecast to be three times the current cost. He said Oxfordshire County Council had assumed, without asking parents, that parents would not be prepared to pay this and would look for cheaper alternatives. He said the idea would be to provide free transport for the relevant children in the smallest vehicle feasible, leaving no spaces for other paying child passengers.

The Parish Council discussed the prospect of 47 new houses and agreed with the public meeting that the Mid Cherwell Neighbourhood Plan team should be asked to take the discussion forward on the basis agreed. They discussed whether new houses had to be on an existing road or whether they could be set back behind it. They also queried whether any new development could be self-build, like Graven Hill, and were told this was a possibility.

The next discussion was about the dog poos that have been sprayed yellow. Someone had complained that fox poo had been sprayed and the Councillor doing the spraying said he could not identify the types of poo so he sprayed them all “so as not to take any chances”. They discussed whether the purpose of the spraying was to be effective in influencing dog owners, or was it just to appear to be doing something in order to reduce the complaints.

The Council then went through a series of issues quickly. Oxfordshire County Council is going to plant a tree at the top of Nizewell Head. Old noticeboards should be kept as they might have to

be repaired and reused at a later date. Ash trees on Heyford Road were dangerous and are being cut because of ash dieback. The broken hinges on the play area gate will be mended and blocks attached so that the gate cannot be swung in the wrong direction in future. The plaque to commemorate the donation of the Village Orchard was discussed at length – whether it should be on the gate, inside the orchard or on a tree, what it should be made of and what form it should take.

The village is getting about £15,000 to spend on transport improvements and the money cannot be used for anything else. It was agreed this money would probably be used to buy two solar-powered speed warning signs and white gates beside the road at the entrances to the village. We were told that white gates, combined with white lines beside the road and new 20mph speed limit signs were effective when located together. However, when it was decided the speed limit should be changed to 20mph in Witney, the old 30mph signs were removed and replaced with 60mph signs instead.

It is not relevant to the village directly, but I was interested in what is happening to the traffic in Oxford and the traffic consultation in Banbury. Oxford is being divided into four areas, North, South, East, West, and there will be traffic filters. When the filters become fully operative cars without a permit will be able to drive unrestricted in each sector, but direct movement between sectors won't be possible without using the ring road. Banbury is considering something a bit similar, but without having a ring road. The Banbury scheme is currently out for consultation and if you wish to see the details go to the village website at www.steepleaston.org.uk

The next meeting is on 20th March. Do come.

Steeplejack

This report is the personal view of the SAL reporter and is not intended to be a complete record of the Council meeting. The official record – once approved – will be available at www.steepleaston.org.uk

THE ASTONS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY – SPRING FLOWER SHOW 2023 – ENTRY FORM

The Spring Flower Show will be held in the Village Hall on **Sunday 26th March** from 2.30 to 4.30pm. Entries are open to everyone and new exhibitors are welcome. The entry fee includes the Society’s membership fee. Rules for exhibitors are as laid down by the secretary in the Annual Show Schedule except: a) entries must be in by **7pm on Thursday 23rd March. Late entries will be charged double and no entry will be accepted after Friday 24th March;** b) exhibits must be staged between 9am and 10.45am on the morning of the show **after which the Hall will be closed.** Multiple entries in the same class will not be allowed in Divisions 1, 2 and 3. Cups will be awarded to the winner of most points in each open Division and the Mead Vase will be awarded to the person having entered in at least three of the five divisions and gaining the most points in the show. Easter eggs will be awarded to the winner of the most points in each of the children's age groups and the Bedding Cup for the best exhibit.

DIVISION 1

HORTICULTURE – FOR DUNCAN CUP

1. Tulips growing in a container
2. Daffodils (longer trumpets than petals) in container
3. Daffodils (shorter trumpets than petals) in container
4. Daffodils (multi-headed) in container
5. Miniature Daffodils in container
6. Hyacinths in a container
7. Any other container grown bulb
8. Any other container grown spring flower(s) of one or more variety, excluding bulbs
9. Cactus or succulent) *must be in your possession for*
10. Pot Plant Flowering) *8 weeks*
11. Pot plant foliage) *8 weeks*
12. Vase of Cut Garden Blooms
13. Container of Garden shrubs/Hedgerow/Trees Buds or Blossom, judged on variety and quality
14. 5 cut stems of Daffodils (long trumpets) any varieties
15. 5 cut stems of Daffodils (short trumpets) any varieties
16. 5 cut stems of miniature Daffodils
17. 5 cut stems of multi-headed Daffodils
18. 3 Stems of Rhubarb (tops on)
19. Container of Cut Scented Spring Flowers
20. A single cut daffodil with solitary bloom

DIVISION 2

COOKERY – FOR WI CUP

21. A savoury flan (state flavour)
22. Brioche loaf
23. 2 Vegetable pasties
24. Treacle tart
25. 3 egg Victoria Sandwich
26. 3 Pieces of flapjack
27. Marble cake
28. 5 Chocolate truffles
29. Seville Marmalade
30. Fruit curd (Lemon, orange, lime, etc.)
31. 3 home produced eggs from domestic fowl (with saucer)
32. Homemade lemonade in a clear bottle with a glass
33. Homemade alcoholic drink in a clear glass bottle with a glass. (Shop purchased gins / vodkas to flavour are allowed)

DIVISION 3 – FLORAL ART FOR THE FLOWER CLUB

SILVER TROPHY (All 4 classes count for the cup). Exhibits marked * to be staged in a niche 18” wide, 18” deep and 25” high

34. Arrangement in a gravy/ sauce boat - no other accessories
35. *Title - ‘Coronation’ – accessories allowed
36. *Foliage Arrangement – no accessories allowed
37. *Title - ‘A Musical’ – accessories allowed

DIVISION 4 -FOR HANDICRAFT CUP

38. A Knitted animal
 39. ‘Ink’ on fabric (e.g. ink printing, tie dye on fabric of your choice)
 40. A limerick - 'There once was a naughty M.P.' (With 8 syllables in 1st, 2nd and 5th lines and 5 syllables in 3rd and 4th lines)
 41. A painting or drawing
 42. Any other handicraft
 43. A ‘New Home’ card
 44. Photo – ‘Aston animals’ Winner to supply a Jpeg to be used on Steeple Aston Village social media.
 45. Photo – ‘Wet’
 46. Photo – ‘Yellow’
 47. Photo ‘Wheel(s)’ Must be black and white photo
- Photos - may be in colour or black and white for classes 44 to 45 and all photos are not to exceed 7" by 5". No mounts allowed**

DIVISION 5 – NOTE NEW AGE GROUPS, age must be written on entry form.

Under 5

48. Hand/finger printing, A4 max. size
49. Painting or drawing of a crown, A4 max. size
50. Decorated biscuit (biscuit can be shop purchased)

Aged 5 to 7 inclusive

51. Handmade decorated crown
52. 3 homemade biscuits – to be judged on taste
53. Painting or drawing of a house, not larger than A4

Aged 8 to 11 inclusive

54. Junk vehicle that has functioning wheels
55. Painting or drawing of a crown, not larger than A4
56. 3 Brownies to be judged on taste. Displayed on a plate

Aged 12 – 15 inclusive

57. Pizza to be judged on taste and appearance.
58. A decorated T shirt
59. Photo – ‘Action photo’ no larger than 7”x 5”

Please circle the classes you wish to enter and return the entry form to Richard Preston, Primrose Gardens (behind Primrose Cottage), North Side (01869 340512) or Victoria Clifton, Bluebell Cottage, Middle Aston (07817025948) with full entry fee by 7 pm on Thursday 23rd March 2023. Extra forms are available from Richard or village website.

Classes 1-47 entry fee 25p. Classes 48-59 entry fee 10p. Prizes first £2, second £1, third 50p.

For our privacy policy see: <https://www.steepleaston.org.uk/clubs-societies/gardening/#horticultural>

ENTRY FORM

	Classes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19				
Name.....		20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37					
Address.....																								
Tel No		38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55					
If entering Division 5 - Age on day of Show	Parent’s consent to entry:																				56	57	58	59



The Gardening Spot

Spring is here and it is time to get out in the garden

During the month of March we usually have some nice warm weather along with the occasional cold snap, accompanied by rain, sleet and wind, so pick your days carefully as you venture into the garden. On saying that, you will notice bulbs are popping up all over the place and signs of growth can be seen on shrubs and in the borders. I always think that the garden ‘wakes up’ this month and so it is time for us to do the same.

Sow seeds such as sweet peas, hardy annuals such as cornflower and marigold and early vegetable crops such as lettuce, carrots, beetroot and radish. Then, towards the end of the month, plant your early potatoes. A little trick with potatoes is to dig out a trench about a spade’s depth, place some fertilizer in the bottom, such as fish, blood and bone meal, and add a sprinkling of slug pellets before placing the potatoes about a foot apart and covering the trench to ground level. I know many of you do not like using slug pellets, but as they are buried along with the potatoes, no pet or bird is going to eat them. As the potatoes emerge from the ground, keep an eye on the weather forecast and protect from a late frost. This can be done by ‘earthing up’ or simply covering with fleece or upside-down pots.

As plants begin to emerge from the winter, just like us when we wake-up, they need breakfast, or to put it more correctly, a feed. I am a great believer in fish, blood and bone as it is a slow-release fertilizer and as organic as it can possibly be. Once the soil begins to warm up, place some fertilizer around the base of shrubs, roses and perennials, giving them the feed they will need to produce superb flowers or growth as the season progresses. Watch out for weeds that pop up from nowhere, removing them and preventing them from taking over the flower beds or vegetable plot.

On a cooler or less friendly day to be outside, check that all your plants in the greenhouse are OK, giving them a feed if you have not already done so. If you grow tomatoes from seed, then they need to be sown now in readiness for placing them in their final position come mid-April if to be grown indoors. If you purchase tomato or cucumber plants from garden centres or online, don’t be in too much of a hurry as they will need heat until early April at best and maybe beyond. Garden centres, or those purporting to be such, will have tender plants on sale now in the hope that you will be tempted to purchase them early and sadly find they die or are put back so badly that you feel you have to buy some more to replace those poor plants.

During this month it will be time to mow your lawn. The secret here is to not to cut it too short. If you do, you will encourage moss and place the turf under undue stress. Saying that, I actually cut my grass for the first time this year in early February and it looks fine, but at that time there were no frosts and I left it reasonably long.

To make an instant show in your pots or small garden areas, how about planting a few primroses or pansies that can be purchased at present. There is nothing that gives greater pleasure than to look out onto an array of colour in your garden.

Hydrangeas need cutting back now by reducing the stems down to a strong shoot near to ground level unless they are the mophead variety which simply need deadheading.

Finally, my neighbour asked me, “How do you find the time?” I said, “Easy, it’s right here next to the sage.” Happy gardening.

Richard Preston

50 Years of Steeple Aston Life

March 2023 marks the fiftieth anniversary of Steeple Aston Life. Probably. The problem is that we do not have a copy of the first issue and do not know when it was published. The second issue came out in May 1973, with issue three in October 1973 and issue four in December 1973. So March 1973 has been chosen as the starting date, though this might not be the date of the first issue.

George Ennis, headmaster of Dr. Radcliffe’s School, and Paul O’Sullivan, Chairman of the Parish Council, took on the task of producing the newsletter. The first issue was a single A4 page of news.

The May 1973 issue is headed ‘Steeple Aston Parish Council Newsletter No. 2’. The publication was created to inform parishioners of decisions and events in the village when few people attended council meetings and there was no social media to keep everyone up-to-date.

From January 1974, the newsletter became a monthly publication and has remained so ever since, with the 500th issue appearing in April 2015.

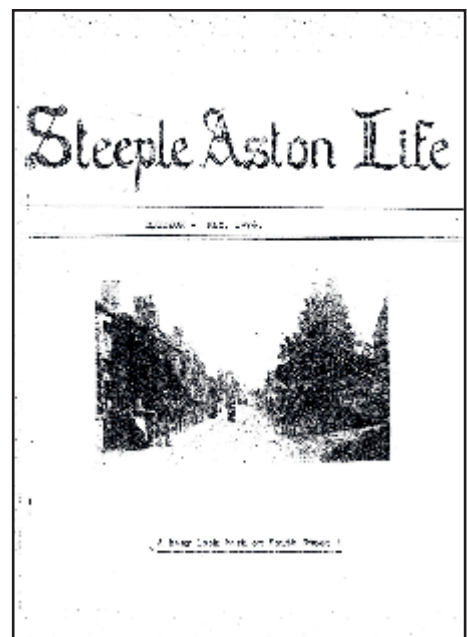
The name changed to ‘Steeple Aston Newsletter’ with the March 1974 issue and then to ‘Steeple Aston Life’ with the May 1974 issue. Mrs. Burgis, Old Malt House, was thanked for submitting the winning name. Her prize was a string of pork sausages from ‘Waltons’, the butchers.

Paul O’Sullivan continued as editor after George Ennis moved away from the village. In 1983 the Steeple Aston Life committee was formed and Barbara Johnston took over as editor. Edwina Kinch was on the committee, looking after production and collation before taking over as editor in 1988. She continued in this role for 25 years, editing more than 300 issues. After stepping down in 2013, Edwina became Chair of the SAL Committee, finally retiring from SAL in 2022.

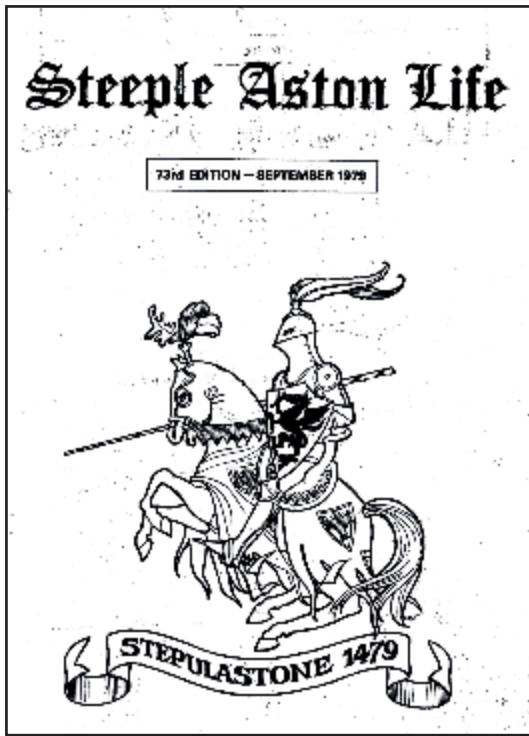
Cathy Lawday became editor in 2013, succeeded by Heather Sherkunov in June 2019. In April 2020, Steeple Aston Life acquired two new editors – Becca Coker and Angela Smith – who planned to edit alternate months. Becca stepped down at the end of 2020, with Angela heading off on maternity leave in February 2021. Since then, SAL has been edited by Robert Scott.



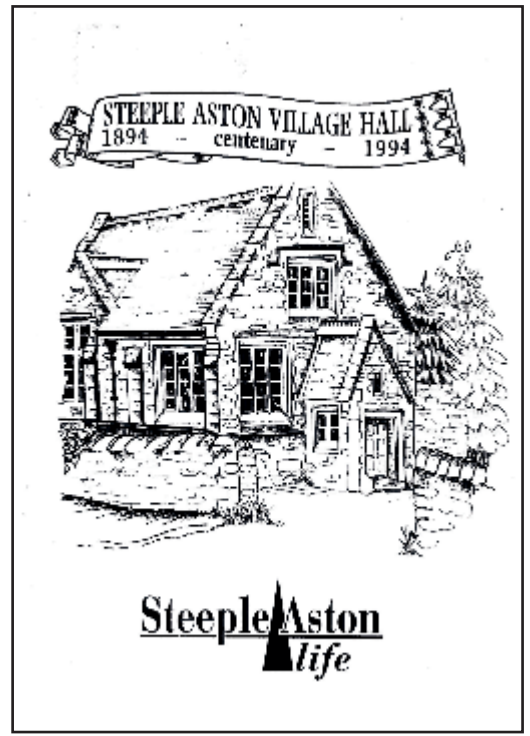
May 1973 (left). We are not sure how copies of the early newsletters were produced, but a popular process at the time was to use a ribbonless typewriter to create a stencil. This was then transferred to a duplicator where ink was passed through the stencil on to paper. This issue had three pages.



May 1974 (right). This is the first issue of the newsletter with a front cover and the title ‘Steeple Aston Life’. The illustration is from a photograph. ‘South Street’ has since been renamed ‘South Side’.

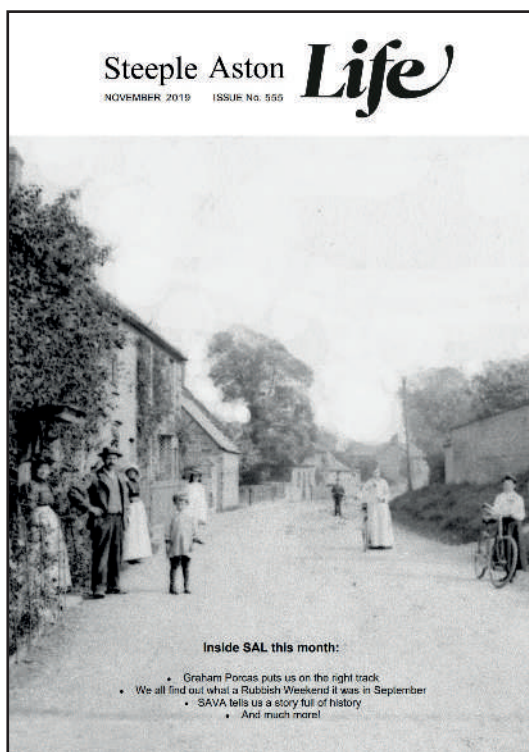


September 1979 (above). There have been over 25 different spellings for Steeple Aston over the years, from Stapelestone in 1219 and Stupelaston in 1300, to Stepylaston in 1522. 'Stepulastone 1479' on this cover refers to a mediaeval fair organised for 30th September 1479 – the first Michaelmas fair in the village since the Middle Ages. "The fair will commence at 1100 hrs (eleven of ye clock) with a special Harvest Festival Eucharist in the church, after which the Rector and The Lord of the Manor and his retinue, will process to Church Corner to bless the fair and open the day's events. From then until 1745 hrs the village will be treated to many usual (and unusual) Mediaeval sights and sounds, Finally, for the unfortunately limited number of diners who are able to purchase tickets, a splendid feast will round off the festivities." This issue, of 18 pages, saw a redesigned title.



July 1994 (above). Another redesign for the title. Line drawings were frequently used on the cover during this period – they had more impact than photographs. The number of pages continued to increase – this issue had 38.

September 2013 (below). Cathy Lawday (left) takes over from Edwina Kinch. "My first issue as editor was September 2013," says Cathy. "My last issue was May 2019. High points for the team during this time were a complete re-design and revamp in January 2014, the introduction of an occasional colour cover, the start of the popular Steeple People feature, and winning two National Parish Magazine Awards (and as a result, an interview on BBC Radio Oxford.)



November 2019 (left). This issue shows an old photo of Steeple Aston – South Side around 1905 – but the current cover style. The photo is one of many from the SAVA book 'Steeple Aston Through the lens: 150 years of Photography of Village Life' (available from www.steepleastonarchive.org.uk/store/c1/Featured_Products.html for £12.95).

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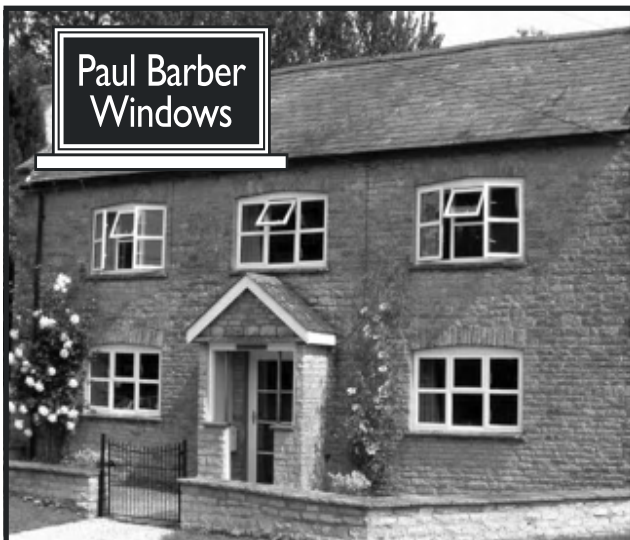
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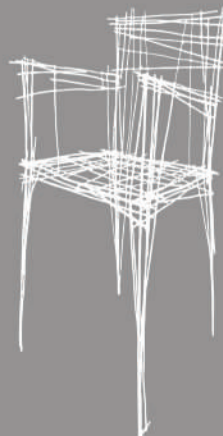


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wistful thinking – a lament

try to think
of what you'd say
imagine what's the cost
if when your jaw
begins to move you find
your voice is lost

despite the rolling
of your tongue
the movement
of your lips
your utterances disappear
your deepest thoughts and quips

and not because
you couldn't say
or eloquence was missin'
but more because
at t'other end
There's no-one there to listen

it's happened to me
more and more
the older that I've got
my voice
no longer carries weight
my thoughts have gone to pot

it's not my age
as such I'm sure
or what I have to say
it's more that those
who'd hear my words
don't want to sit and play

and that's the thing
when talking loud
there's no point holding sway
if when you talk
and words spill out
the listener's gone away

I like to say things
face to face
it's happened so so fast
replaced by social media
I'm stuck here.....
in the past

Peter Wild

You have been warned!

I'm getting rather tired
Of being treated like a shmuck
With cautions, warnings and
advice
Everywhere I look.

It's assumed I have no judgment
That I have no nous.
And I will surely kill myself
In various ways about the
house.

There's a warning on the bottle
That I must not drink the bleach
Should they also warn me
Not to eat the stone in a peach?

If I buy a box of eggs,
Should it say "Don't eat the
shell"?
Should it say "Don't eat the wax"
On a mini Baby Bel?

A new kettle informs me
That it will "generate some heat"
Should they also say the toaster
Is not to be used for cooking
meat?

The label on my paint stripper
Says "Do not use as a hair
dryer"
Perhaps I also should be told
Not to wash my feet in the deep-
fat fryer?

The label on a recent purchase
Really made me see red.
I had bought a mirror
"Contains glass" the label said.

I have discovered for myself
that knives may lead to cuts
And I can work out on my own
That almond butter contains
nuts.

I know the picture on the packet
Is only a 'serving suggestion'
And that if I eat the packaging
I'll get indigestion.

I'm aware things coming from
the oven
Will probably be hot
And that things taken from the
freezer
Will probably be not.

Do I need someone to tell me
That this is the case?
If we can't deduce this for
ourselves
There's no hope for the human
race!

I know not to snack on poison
ivy,
Not to attempt electrical repairs
Not to take a stroll in quicksand
Or wear roller blades on the
stairs

Do they think that we are stupid
With not an ounce of common
sense?
Because if we are as daft as
that,
Safety labels are no defence.

The irresponsible among us,
The hasty, rash and mindless
When faced with warning labels
Have a sort of blindness.

When we see warning labels
We don't bother to read them
And even if we do
We probably won't heed 'em!

So, enough of all these cautions
And these dire words of warning
If we were careful all the time
Life would be s-o-o boring!

Cathy Lawday

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THE VALENTINE CLUB

Our February meeting brought in lots of members who were able to learn all about the exploits of Kevin Allen, who has been a firefighter in some of the most dangerous situations around Europe. It was also really nice to be able to sit on some very comfortable new chairs provided by the Village Hall Management Committee – thank you!

For our March meeting on Tuesday 21st, we will have a chance to educate ourselves in how to protect our financial position other than spending it all before the kids get their hands on it, or indeed the HMRC! Should be interesting, although I think many of our members have decided that holidays are perhaps the best way of investing in the future.

Our first coach trip of the year is not until April, but already some of the expeditions we have planned are almost full. Maybe it is time to invest in a double decker?

To find out more about The Valentine Club, simply visit our own website at www.valentineclub.wixsite.com/aston (easiest way to log-on is go to the village website; go to ‘Clubs and Societies’, find The Valentine Club and click on the link) or keep up-to-date by looking on the village website www.steepleaston.org.uk or simply call me on 01869 340512.

If you feel you could help support the club then please go to: CherwellLottery.co.uk/support/the-valentine-club where you can participate in the Cherwell Lottery and hopefully, like many of our supporters, become a winner.

Richard Preston – Group organiser
Richard.preston5@btopenworld.com

1st Deddington Guides Report

We had great fun the evening lots of little robots came to visit! There were lots of little ball-shaped robots that the Guides quickly learnt how to programme. They soon had them playing skittles, flashing with colourful lights, going through slalom courses and generally racing round the room. Thanks to Mary Brodey for giving up her time to bring them along.

It has been a pleasure to welcome some more Guides and be able to form a fourth Patrol. We now have Bumble Bees to add to Bluebells, Foxes and Hedgehogs. The patrols, as ever, have been busy planning their own activities and working on some badges.

Amongst many various games and challenges, we've started to learn knots. The Guides also made some super shadow puppets. We had all sorts of animals, magical creatures, ghostly beings and wonders from under the sea on the screen.

Lastly, the girls prepared and presented some simple snacks for their ‘cafe’ and came up with some imaginative ideas and tasty treats.

After half-term we will be celebrating all things international and beginning to put together our entertainment to raise money for charity.

Maggie Rampley 07957 600755
Marian Trinder 07786 001641

Steeple Aston Community Orchard



Photo by Nigel Francis

Steeple Aston Community Orchard is now recruiting volunteers to help look after this beautiful space on Water Lane, generously donated to the village by Sarah Lucas, who used to live close by.

Volunteering sessions will be on the first Sunday of every month, in the afternoon. The orchard itself will open officially on Sunday 12th March with a tea party. All are welcome. Umbrellas if wet! The gate into the orchard is down Water Lane from the Red Lion pub, on the right-hand side. Volunteers will be there from 2pm and tea will be served at 4pm!

The community orchard will mean different things to different people. For some it will be an exciting project to get involved in, for others the beautiful garden they never had. You may see it as a place to let the kids play, to meet friends, to contemplate the beauty of the trees, or to practise Tai Chi. It may become a picnic place, a source of free fruit, or more of a nature reserve.

This raises a few questions. Are these different uses compatible with each other and with the needs of residents for safety, privacy, peace and quiet? And are they compatible with the needs of a healthy, biologically diverse green space?

For example, if the orchard is intended to benefit young children and wildlife, the decision whether or not to admit dogs is a difficult one, so we are going to try a compromise. For the time being, dogs on leads will be allowed – but if some owners do not pick up after their dogs, then all dogs will be banned.

Each setting for a community orchard will have its own particular challenges and its own solutions. The new public space on Water Lane will only reach its potential as a resource because of the resourcefulness of the people who use it. We want to hear your ideas, your needs and your priorities.

Email sacommunityorchard@gmail.com

Join the first volunteering session in the orchard on Sunday 5th March from 2pm.

Come to the Open Day on Sunday 12th March. Volunteers will be on site from 2pm and tea will be served at 4pm.

The Cricket Report



LORD'S TAVERNERS

Empowering young people through cricket

ROBERT POWELL (famous actor – Jesus of Nazareth, The 39 Steps, Holby City) will host an hour of cricket-related 'Music and Readings' in Steeple Aston Church at 6.30pm on Friday 10th March 2023.

Tickets are only £5 (under 18s free) and will include drinks after the event. All proceeds go to the charity, whose mission remains to empower young people with disabilities and those from disadvantaged communities to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence by playing sport.

Tickets can be bought from the Village Shop or by emailing peter.higgins@ctshirts.co.uk or calling 01869 347792.

Peter Higgins
Chairman SACC



AD&D Photographic Society



In February, we enjoyed a fun, relaxed, informative workshop evening creating light distortion photos over various activity tables brought in by members of the committee. It is amazing how light, mirrors and glass can create such exciting photos. It got the rest of the members talking about photographic techniques and pushing some out of their comfort zone!

We also utilised the darkness outside and created light trails and light painting, which were new techniques to quite a few members – something we will be re-visiting next month to further our knowledge and experience.

The aim was to experiment with lights that anyone has access to, such as candles, torches, phone torches and so on to show the variety of photos available to everyone, no matter what level of photographer you are.

The 'Topic of Simplicity' was a challenge for some, but others found this something they really enjoyed and excelled in. The recent frosty weather we have been experiencing recently definitely helped with the creative juices for foggy and misty field and lake photos. All can be seen on the website.

The next meeting is on the 1st March at 7:30pm at the Adderbury Institute. All welcome.

Courtney Killpack
www.addphoto.co.uk



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Annual Quiz Night 2023

Once again, the Village Hall Committee organised a thoroughly enjoyable Quiz evening on Saturday 21st January. A dozen teams took part in the fun with names ranging from 'Merrily on High' to 'Babies from the 40s'. Perhaps next year there should be a prize for the most creative team name?

As usual, the teams went to town providing a wide and interesting variety of food and nibbles to keep them going during the evening. A bar was also available to serve liquid refreshments to all.

This year the quiz was devised and led by Carl Tomlinson, with Kate in charge of the scoreboard. They had devised a very clever tabletop opener involving answers which had links with Steeple Aston road names – easy, you might think, but the winners not only needed to be correct but also hand their answers in as quickly as possible!

Other questions and conundrums challenging the teams included:

- Which countries contested the first international cricket match? (Answer: USA and Canada)
- What do we call the country which is known to its indigenous people as Aotearoa? (Answer: New Zealand)

As usual the evening was rounded off with the presentation of the trophy and wine to the winning team – 'Win or booze' – with a score of 128.

The Village Hall committee was grateful to receive donations of some generous raffle prizes donated by The Yurt (Nicholson's), Holt Hotel, Photo by Nigel Francis, Holt Garage, Arty Crafty (Middle Aston) and Wine & Candles (anonymous)

Keep a watch out for the details of the 2024 quiz in later editions of SAL, but be quick as tables swiftly get booked up for this challenging but fun annual event!

Barbara Brewer



*A view of the Village Hall on the Annual Quiz night, plus the successful 'Win or booze' team.
Photos by Nigel Francis.*



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Steeple Aston Church Allotment Association

invite you to join in with our

Grand Seed Swap

at the

Horticultural Society's Spring Show

Sunday 26th March (2:30 – 4:30pm)

We will have a wide range of seeds to give away/swap, both flower and produce – including unopened packets, part packets and saved seed. Please bring along any unwanted seeds you may have on the day (in date or just out of date only, please) or drop them into the box outside the side door of Windyridge, Paines Hill ahead of time.

Let's get growing!

Village Hall News



Forthcoming Events

Sunday 30th April: Walking Trail. Starting at 2pm

For those of you thinking of strolling along on the Trail, here are some things to bear in mind:

- The Hall will be open from 2pm onwards.
- It is not competitive, so no prize for the quickest jog round, but the hall will close at 5pm.
- Wear sturdy shoes as some of the trail will take you off-road.
- Bring something to write with and something to rest the trail sheet on.
- Prebooked entry fee, £5 per person and £10 for a family. On the day £6 and £11.
- Any profit made will go to help Village Hall costs;
- At the end, when you return your forms, there is tea and cake included in the price.

There will be a lucky draw when all forms have been checked and a bottle of champagne awarded to the lucky person and a bag of sweets if the form is for a family. The event will go ahead, no matter what the weather, wet or Mediterranean sunshine.

Sunday 4th June 2 to 6 pm: NGS Village Open Gardens.

Saturday 1st July: Barn Dance – details to follow later.

Please note our letting agent is Mrs. Angela Smith 07734 112967. Please do not call this number between 6pm and 8pm unless urgent.

Email steeple-aston-village-hall@hotmail.com

Collect keys from 'Mijas' South Side, Steeple Aston. OX25 4RU.

Barbara Brewer – chair

Steeple Aston Garden Club



Our February meeting had a last-minute change of speaker. We were fortunate to have Jonathon Heath talking about his gardening career, starting with Pershore College, Hidcote, various gardens in between and currently Head Gardener at a large organic estate near Stow. A very interesting and colourful evening. Jonathon is also a judge at the Steeple Spring and Horticultural shows, so very good to meet him and get some tips!

Tuesday 7th March is our next meeting in the Village Hall, 7pm for 7.30pm. Our speaker is Stuart Lowen from Ball Colgrave and his subject is 'What's new in seasonal colour'. Something we will all look forward to as the planting season will soon be upon us.

New members are always welcome, just come along.

Chris Clarke
S.A.G.C. Secretary



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Our meeting on 14th February was addressed by Jennifer Cowling who gave an illustrated talk about the importance of exercise in fighting the problems associated with ageing. We were then treated to a short taster of an exercise programme, consisting of a warm-up, followed by easy but effective movements and stretches, to up-beat, well-known music. We all agreed it was a fun way of exercising. To mark the date we also had heart-shaped cake and biscuits with our coffee, and a quiz about Valentine's Day.

Several members took a walk round Blenheim on 21st February. These outings only attract a few hardy members at this time of year, but we plan to have more walks once the weather is milder.

In the last week of January about a dozen members met for a drink at the Deddington Arms and decided to stay on for supper. It was an enjoyable get-together and we plan to repeat this with a pub lunch at the Red Lion in Adderbury on Friday March 17th. If you would like to come, meet there at 12.15pm.

You could also join Walking Netball every Wednesday. It starts at 10.30am, lasts for an hour, and costs just £3. It is open to both WI members and non-members. Give Merrill a ring first (347802), or just turn up.

Our next event is on March 14th, when speaker Melanie King returns, this time to talk about spying in World War II.

Cathy Lawday – President
01869 347209



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Coronation Parade

Here is an update on preparations for the Steeple & Middle Aston Coronation Parade and Party. The plan is for people to watch the coronation in the comfort of their own homes and then come out for the village parade and party.

As we don't yet know the exact time the Coronation itself is taking place, our timings for Saturday 6th May are still to be confirmed. However, the fabulous Catie Simpson (who has performed in, choreographed and directed amazing shows around the world – including 'Chitty Chitty Bang Bang' at the London Palladium and 'Smut's Saga' at Duns Tew Village Hall) has agreed to look after our Coronation Parade as our Creative Director.

We know some groups have already started constructing their entries and we have our very own King Charles and Queen Consort who will judge them on the day. This parade is free to enter and open to everyone. We think it will be a fantastic way to both celebrate your group/club and raise awareness of it (you might even recruit some new members on the day!).

We also want to welcome individuals coming together (for example a school class of friends or a family or a street/close) or a more informal group with shared interests (for example a Book Club). Or if you're affiliated to another group further afield that wants to join, for example Steeple Aston Brownies might want to invite Deddington/Adderbury Guides along, or you might find that many of your team mates at Deddington Football Club or Banbury Rugby Club actually live in Steeple Aston and want to come together.

However, we must remind everyone that every individual and every organisation/group that takes part in the event does so entirely at their own risk! Please read the Event Safety Notice at www.steepleaston.org.uk/home/steeple_aston_news/#KING

If you'd like to take part, please contact Catie (catie.entwistle@hotmail.co.uk) to register your interest. Catie will be putting together a route and timetable for the floats and suggesting suitably regal themes for participants to follow. She will need to know how you plan on parading (whether that's a float or a wheelbarrow, a bicycle or on foot) and the size of your group.

We want this to be a fun event which is open to everyone. Put your heads together with friends and neighbours and please get back to Catie by Wednesday 15th March.

Following on from the parade there will be a party at Robinson's Close. Depending on how our fundraising goes this will either be in a marquee or in the Village Hall. There will be food and entertainment for all ages – we're hoping to make this a day to remember for the whole community!

Speaking of fundraising – if you or your business or the organisation you work for would like to make a donation towards putting on this fabulous event, we have sponsorship packages from £50. Please don't hesitate to contact us to discuss options.

Helen & Josie
www.facebook.com/groups/3399525043665358



Churchwardens' Chat



Everyone in the village should have received a leaflet explaining why the church is in urgent need of financial help. Please read it carefully and if you can make any contribution it will be very gratefully received and help to keep the church open and the resource it should be for all.

We are not insensitive to the fact that many are financially stretched at this time. Only send what you can afford – but we know that the church is much-valued having been here – and still is – for everyone since about 1180 as perhaps the focal point of the village.

We have had permission from the Archdeacon to plant the Hornbeam tree in the churchyard as a memorial of the Platinum Jubilee. Watch for details of the tree planting ceremony to which everyone will be welcome.

There was a very cheerful atmosphere in the church on Snowdrop Sunday at the beginning of February when a good number of people enjoyed tea, children's activities and a lot of cake! It was lovely to have busy children and families enjoying the afternoon. We are also delighted that the response to Graham's appeal for more people to come to join the bell ringing team has brought several volunteers. The bells will ring out in a special peal for the King's coronation! We are fortunate to have such a skilled and dedicated team of bell ringers who continue the ancient tradition of ringing so regularly.

By the time this is published, we shall know whether we have applicants for the post of Rector. This means that before the end of the month we might be able to announce who will be coming to live in the Rectory and take up his or her ministry to the parishes in Steeple and North Aston and Tackley. We hope and pray that the end of this slow, slow process is in sight! Meanwhile services continue as normal, generally taken by a variety of clergy whom we thank for their support, including as you will see from the Rota, a visit from Bishop Gavin, Bishop of Dorchester, to take the next United Benefice service at the end of this month.

Alongside the regular services, the life of the church keeps going. A home group is discussing the Beatitudes and the advice they give about how to live a fully human life (using materials from Bishop Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford). Also, plans are in hand for the fete and for Easter celebrations. Of course, everyone as always is welcome!

Eileen Baglin-Jones, Graham Clifton – Churchwardens

The ides of March

'Beware the ides of March,' says a soothsayer to Julius Caesar in Shakespeare's tragedy of the same name. Caesar ignores the warning. "He is a dreamer, let us leave him, pass." But on 15th March, 44 BC, a group of senators murdered Caesar at a senate meeting.

The ides are not exclusive to March. It was a day in the old Roman calendar falling around the middle of each month, either on the 15th (March, May, July, October) or the 13th (other months). The word ides is from Latin and means 'to divide'. Initially, the ides marked the full moons, but calendar and lunar months are of different lengths, so they soon fell out of step.

The Romans also had a name for the first day of the month – Kalends – from which we derive the word 'calendar'.

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Church Services



	North Aston	Steeple Aston	Tackley
Sunday 5th March	9.30am BCP Communion Rev. John Underwood	11.00am BCP Communion Rev. John Underwood	5.30pm Evensong Richard Bailey
Sunday 12th March	9.30am Morning Prayer Stephanie Lacey	11.00am Morning Prayer Stephanie Lacey	5.30pm Holy Communion Rev. Sue Spankie
Sunday 19th March Mothering Sunday	9.30am Holy Communion Rev. Sue Spankie	11.00am Holy Communion Rev. Sue Spankie	9.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 26th March	10.30am United Benefice Holy Communion Bishop Gavin Bishop of Dorchester		
Details of the people leading some of the services have not been confirmed as we go to press www.sntchurch.com			



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Secretary	Margaret Bulleyment (01869-347346)

Represented Clubs must nominate a trustee to attend Village Hall committee meetings.
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0702 0800 0844 1003 1603 1702 1802 1902 2010 2125 2255

Saturdays

0704 0804 0919 then hourly to 1819 1932 2047 2217
0746 0846 1002 1902 2010 2125 2255

Sundays and most public holidays

0903 1033 1203 1333 1503 1633 1803
0944 1114 1244 1414 1544 1714 1844

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0835 0935 1035 1535 1638 1738 1838 1929 2024 2135 2250 0020

Saturdays

0759 0857 0957 then hourly to 1557 1657 1757 1855 1955 2107 2222 2352
0835 0935 1035 1635 1731 1831 1924 2024 2135 2250 0020

Sundays and most public holidays

0917 1037 1207 1337 1507 1637 1807 1937
0953 1113 1243 1413 1543 1713 1843 2005

Times subject to change. Before starting your journey please check the timetables at www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables E&OE

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Rubbish bin collection day is Thursday

March 2023

2nd Green
9th Blue and brown
16th Green
23rd Blue and brown
30th Green



April 2023

6th Blue and brown
13th Green
20th Blue and brown
27th Green

Food caddy is collected weekly

Steeple Aston Calendar

Check the village website at www.steepleaston.org.uk (Home > Calendar) for any changes.

March			
Wednesday 1st	'AD&D Photographic Society. Scarlet Page, accomplished portrait photographer.	Adderbury Institute	7.30 - 10.00pm
Sunday 5th	Volunteering in the Community Orchard.	Water Lane	2.00 to 5.00pm
Tuesday 7th	WI. Walking netball – all welcome (every Tuesday).	Village Hall	10.30 to 11.30am
Tuesday 7th	Garden Club. Speaker: Stuart Lowen. What's New in seasonal colour	Village Hall	7pm for 7.30pm
Friday 10th	'Music and Readings' with Robert Powell	SA Church	6.30pm
Sunday 12th	Community Orchard Open Day.	Water Lane	Tea at 4pm
Tuesday 14th	WI. Birthday Night. Speaker: Melanie King: 'Spying in WWII'.	Village Hall	7pm for 7.30pm
Tuesday 14th	SAL April 2023 copy and advert deadlines		
Friday 17th	WI. Pub lunch	Red Lion, Adderbury	12.15pm
Monday 20th	Parish Council meeting	S & R Building	7.30pm
Tuesday 21st	Valentine Club. 'How to protect your future.'	Village Hall	2.30pm
Saturday 25th	WI. Workshop to make an Easter door wreath.	Village Hall	10am to 12 noon
Saturday 25th	Deddington Farmers' Market	Deddington	9am to 12.30pm
Saturday 25th	Sustainable Steeple	Deddington Church	9am to 12.30pm
Sunday 26 th	Spring Show	Village Hall	2.30 to 4.30pm
April			
Sunday 2nd	Volunteering in the Community Orchard.	Water Lane	2 to 5pm
Wednesday 5th	'AD&D Photographic Society. The Society AGM and 'What is it?'.	Adderbury Institute	7.30 to 10.00pm
Tuesday 7th	WI. Walking netball – all welcome (every Tuesday).	Village Hall	10.30 to 11.30am
Tuesday 11th	Valentine Club. Trading Standards and AGE UK: Doorstep crime and scam prevention'.	Village Hall	2.30pm
Tuesday 11th	WI. AGM Wine & canapés. Speaker: Alan Jones: 'Body Language'.	Village Hall	7pm for 7.30pm
Friday 14th	SAL May 2023 copy and advert deadlines		
Monday 17th	Parish Council meeting	S & R Building	7.30pm

Choral Society Rehearsals. Village Hall - 7.45pm - Mondays
Badminton. Village Hall - 10am -12.30pm - Tuesdays
Bell Ringing practice. Church Tower - 7.30pm - Tuesdays
Scouts. Sport & Rec Centre - 7.30pm - Tuesdays
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Badminton. Village Hall - 8pm - Thursdays
Village History Centre (SAVA). 10am - 12pm - Saturdays

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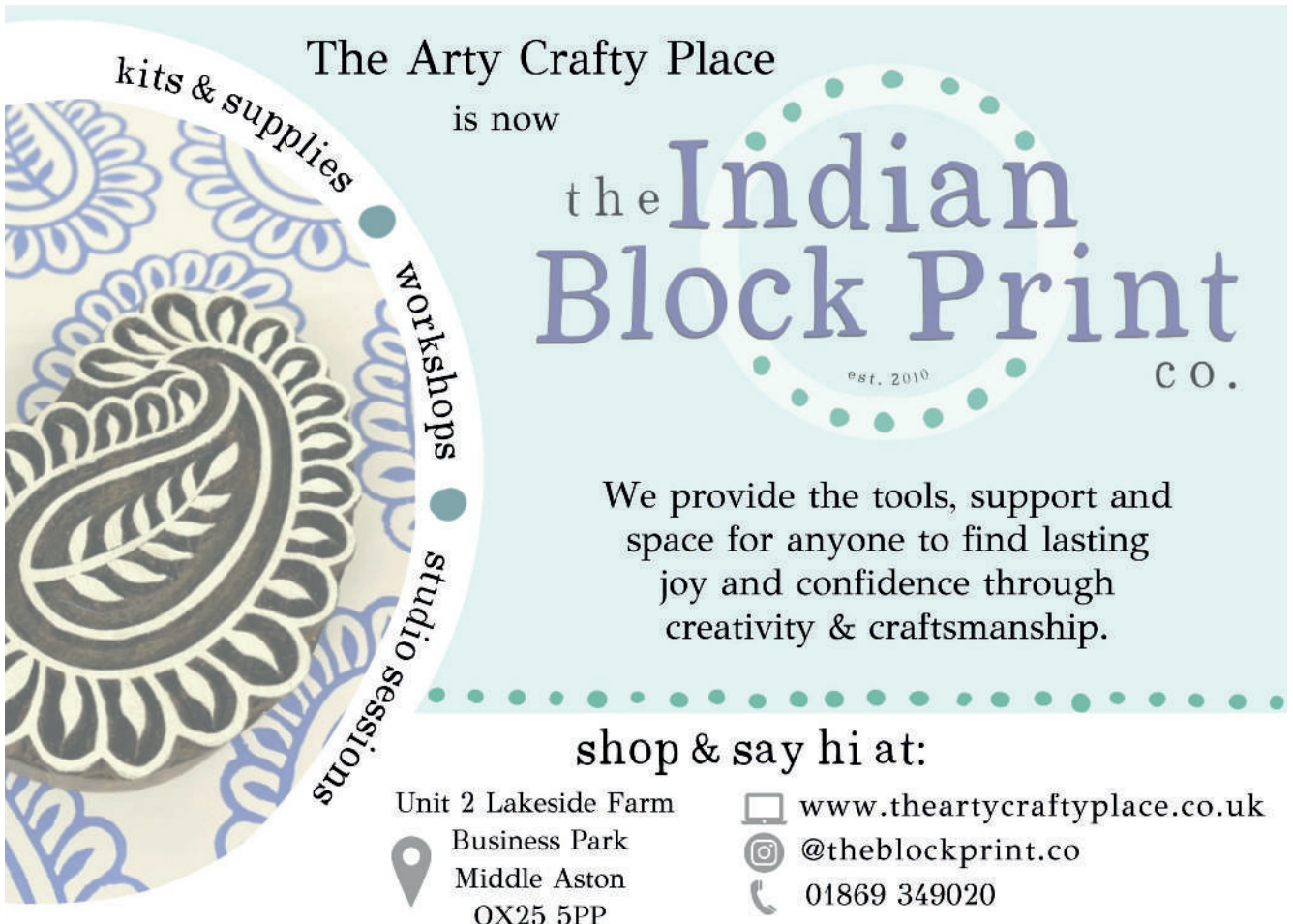
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