

WOODSTOCK & BLADON *news*

October 2024

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Editorial

I hope my first issue as Editor has been well received. This was certainly the case with Rod Craig's front cover painting of Brothertons. This month, we have a beautiful photograph of Bladon, taken by our local photographer Pete Seaward. I intend to have a mixture of artworks and photographs of Woodstock, Bladon, and Blenheim over the next year which will showcase the huge range of talent that we have in our midst.

This month, you will also find the next stage of our trip to Woodstocks around the world with an article on the Woodstock Winery in South Australia, and another 'Visitor's View' from an attendee of the recent Salon Prive event. There is also an article about the Dunkley family, and an exciting new regular item - a recipe from a local chef. This month, it features a dish by Saffs, who many of us may also remember from her wonderful narrow boat restaurant 'Rosamund'.

I believe one of the signs of a successful community magazine is a lively Letters page. The letters to the editor in this my second edition make interesting reading, in particular on the subject of the Woodstock Town Council. That there is some controversy may seem regrettable but is perhaps inevitable in any community. As an ex-Councillor and former Mayor, and as the new publisher of WOBL, I will be trying my best to be objective and impartial, fair and balanced.

My overall aim throughout will be to protect free speech and freedom of expression. If any reader thinks I am failing to do that, please write to me. Provided that letter is composed in good faith and is temperate in tone I will answer it, where possible in the same edition.

Nick Manby-Brown, Editor

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Subscriptions

The magazine costs £2 per issue, or £20 per year (for 10 issues).

It can be purchased locally at Mary and Martins Newsagent, The Woodstock Bookshop, Woodstock Town Hall, and the Wootton Stores. It can also be delivered to your door on a monthly basis - please contact Nick (editor@wobl.news) for Woodstock, or Lucy for Bladon. To pay by bank transfer, please pay to Nicholas Manby-Brown 04-29-09 31146627 and use the first line of your address as the reference. (This bank account is temporary until a business account is set-up)

The magazine can also be purchased for online reading. Please send an EMail to editor@wobl.news

Please do Write for Your Local Magazine

Send your contributions to: editor@wobl.news

The next deadline is Friday 18th October for the November 2024 issue (there is some flexibility).

We aim to be balanced and inclusive, and welcome all new contributions that may be of interest to our readers.

Printed by Windrush Press, Witney

Woodstock and Bladon News is printed on 100% sustainable paper which helps promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

Cover photograph - Pete Seaward Photography

Answers to Sept crossword

Across: 1. Obedient, 5. Disarm, 9. Glucose, 10. Caravan, 11. Note, 12. Fly-tip, 15. Boring, 16. Planning, 18. Lyricist, 20. Escape, 23. Square, 24. Scar, 27. Imitate, 28. Banshee, 29. Agenda, 30. Vehicles.
Down: 1. Organ, 2. Equator, 3. Iron, 4. Needle, 6. Alveoli, 7. Monologue, 8. Scuttle, 13. Punish, 14. Snacks, 15. Ballerina, 17. Assured, 19. Require, 21. Alcohol, 22. Treble, 25. Reeds, 26. Anti.



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Finding Common Ground on Climate and Nature Recovery

With our New MP, Calum Miller



Calum Miller, MP

recovery and we hope that Calum and his constituents will work together to help build a better future than the one we currently face. We will hear his opinions and interests ... and hopefully find common ground to help inspire and activate communities. Amazing things are already happening in our constituency and we would like him to champion and support them and make more action possible. It's great start to see that Calum has already signed up to the Climate and Nature Bill www.zerohour.uk.

If you'd like to submit questions to Calum, related only to climate and nature issues, please send by 6th October to the EMail below . Please send with your postcode as you should live in his constituency and it would be interesting to know if you are writing from the point of view of a particular age group.

EMail: sustainablewoodstockuk@gmail.com

Sustainable Woodstock and Oxford Friends of the Earth are organising a meeting together on climate and nature recovery with our new Lib Dem MP Calum Miller, in our new constituency, Woodstock and Bicester. It will be an Eventbrite event held on Saturday 12th October between 11.30am and 12.30pm at Kidlington Baptist Church. Follow Sustainable Woodstock Facebook for updates.

Across the UK thousands will be meeting their MP on October 12th in an event named Common Ground to debate climate and nature and they will be calling to ensure a healthier and greener life for future generations. The October 12th event will introduce Calum to some in his constituency already involved in climate action and nature



Woodstock group with Oxford FoE and others from Oxon meeting up in Hyde Park in June before joining 'Restore Nature Now'

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WOODSTOCK AROUND THE WORLD

Growing Wine in Woodstock?

“Cheers” is the familiar greeting when visiting the home of the Woodstock Wine Estate - in McLaren Vale, South Australia.



McLaren Vale is a small but distinguished wine-growing region of one and a half square miles, nestled in a beautiful area south-east of Adelaide known as the Adelaide Hills. The property of 64 acres was founded and settled (to use the Australian term) by the Townsend family who received a Crown Lease in 1905. It was named after their hometown of Woodstock in Oxfordshire, which - as we all know - is an old Anglo Saxon term meaning “a clearing in the trees”, or in this case “in the bush”.

The family built a homestead and were extremely proud of their brick-built well providing essential water in a region which becomes very hot and dry during the

summer months. The property was subsequently purchased in 1973 by Douglas Collette. At the time this Woodstock in South Australia comprised some run-down buildings, a handful of trees, and some dilapidated vines. Nevertheless, wine has been produced on the property for 120 years.

The late Doug Collette, AM (Order of Australia - awarded for Winemaking), had been a Spitfire and Hurricane pilot during WWII. During his time of active service in both the RAF and RAAF in Italy, he discovered a penchant for drinking wine. It was while drinking copiously there that he vowed if ever he returned to his homeland of Australia he would one day make his own wines to be enjoyed with family and friends.

Doug’s dream was continued over the following fifty years by three generations of his family. Woodstock Wines has become a much prized and recognised grower and producer of predominantly red wines, in particular ‘The Stocks’ Shiraz, grown from 31 rows of the property’s original vines, and the aptly named ‘Pilot’s View’ Shiraz. Doug’s descendants Scott and Peter Collette are the winery’s current winemakers and viticulturists.



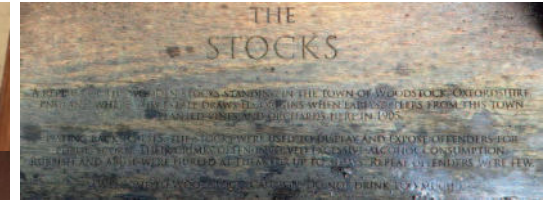
On a visit to McLaren Vale the heavens did not disappoint and - true to its namesake in England - it rained but not enough to dampen the spirits (or, should I say, dilute the wine!). Many features of the original township have been replicated at the property and its environs, with the Stocks at the entrance to the winery taking pride of place.



Wildlife abounds and one can feed the native creatures that have become accustomed to human visitors. This statue of a Hairy Nosed Wombat was proudly unveiled by HRH The Duchess of Kent in 1995.

I look forward to enjoying with friends one day a bottle of the winery’s ‘The Stocks’ Shiraz in the beautiful surrounds of my beloved Woodstock at the gates of Blenheim Palace.

Clare Poole, former resident of Woodstock, Oxon.



The following is engraved on the Stocks, as follows:

A replica of the wooden stocks standing in the town of Woodstock, Oxfordshire, England where this Estate draws its origins when early settlers from this town planted vines and orchards here in 1905.

Dating back to 1415, the stocks were used to display and expose offenders for public scorn. Their crimes often involved excessive alcohol consumption. Rubbish and abuse were hurled at them for up to 3 days. Repeat offenders were few. Welcome to Woodstock (Caution: Do not drink too much!)

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A Visitors' View of Woodstock: a guest from Salon Prive

Last week was our annual pilgrimage to one of the most prestigious car shows at one of the most stunning locations in the UK - Salon Prive at Blenheim Palace.

On our usual walk around the watering holes and restaurants of Woodstock, we happened upon Nick Manby-Brown, an old friend who I learned now has the honour of being the Editor of Woodstock and Bladon News.



Proud owners and prize winners

On chatting over our memories of Salon Prive I was reminded of our first visit to Woodstock to the Concours Elegance at Blenheim Palace when we had the privilege of entering our Jaguar XJ220 into this prestigious event.

For anyone who is aware of the history of the XJ220, they will know that it has a very close relationship with this part of Oxfordshire, being built in the picturesque village of Bloxham, a joint venture between Jaguar and Tom Walkinshaw Racing.

The XJ220 was the typical 'Poster Car' of the late 80's which we only ever dreamed of owning; but we were fortunate enough to be able to buy one of these rare cars in 2014 and not just any old 'common or garden' XJ220 but car number 186 which was ordered and delivered new in February 1994 to one Mr Roderic "Rod" Stewart!

Within days of purchase we embarked upon a 2,000 miles road trip to the 2014 Le Mans Classic where the car performed effortlessly and imagine our surprise when turning on the CD player we were treated to a blast from the past when the dulcet tones of Mr Stewart came blasting out of the speakers with the unforgettable "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy"!

Our first trip to Salon Prive was in 2017 but in 2018 we were invited to enter our car for the Chubb Insurance Concours D'Elegance where we were very fortunate to come away with two trophies for the Most Original Post War entrant and runner up in Class for the Streamlined Closed Sports Cars.

The organisers of Salon Prive recommended staying at The Bear Hotel which we later discovered was an original 13th Century coaching inn which explains the quirky internal layout and wonderful traditional features. Perfectly placed it is just a casual stroll to the Palace, walking past the River Glyme with its amazing view of both Vanbrugh's Grand Bridge and The Column of Victory.

Having sampled the delights of The Bear we literally walked 100 yards over the road to The Punchbowl awash with Salon Prive revellers being welcomed by the locals before being treated to the excellent range of beers in The Woodstock Arms, a stone's throw from The Kings Arms; before we discovered what I believe to be one of Woodstock's best kept secrets, at least from your average tourist and my personal favourite, The Back Lane Tavern; with its eclectic menu and wine list, it is not to be missed!

The last week in August is now a permanent fixture in our diary and we love nothing more than driving through the beautiful Cotswold countryside, staying in stunning centuries old inns and enjoying the generous hospitality of not only the Bagley brothers who mastermind the whole Salon Prive experience but the people of Woodstock and the surrounding area.

Simon Rowell



Champagne stop at Pol Roger on the way to Le Mans

The Oxfordshire Museum

Open Art Exhibition 2024 'Representations of People'



We are delighted to welcome artists from across Oxfordshire who were successful in this year's Open Art Competition to exhibit at the museum. The calibre of the submissions was extremely high this year, and we are really

proud of the result. After exploring the exhibition and these wonderful artworks you will be able to vote for your favourite in our people's choice award. We hope you may even feel inspired to make a submission of your own in 2025!

The exhibition opens on Saturday 21 September and runs until 30 October in the Garden Gallery at the Museum. Admission free.

Workshops and Activities

We have lots of wonderfully creative adult activities and workshops this Autumn. There is something to interest everyone.

As well as adult workshops we have started to plan our half term activities. To see our full schedule of exhibitions, activities and workshops visit our website www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/museums.

The Woodstock Society

'A Life in Music'

The talk will be preceded by AGM with wine at 7.30pm (talk starts at 8pm)

Venue: St Mary Magdalene Church, Woodstock

Date: Monday 21st October

Speaker: Brian Kay, Conductor and Radio Presenter



Brian is a Conductor and Radio Presenter. He is the Principal Conductor of The Really Big Chorus and has presented 'Friday Night is Music Night' on Radio 2. He is a recipient of the Sony Award for Musical Presenter of the Year.

Annual membership (9 talks) £25.00, Visitor fee £8.00

We look forward to welcoming new members and visitors to the second of this season's talks.

For full information visit: www.woodstockociety.org, or email info@woodstockociety.org

Dave Elliott



Dave Elliott, who died aged 92 on August 13th, was a well known figure in the village of Bladon, having lived in The Barn on The Green for over forty years. Many of us would exchange greetings with Dave and his wife Mary - with whom, as his daughter has said, he enjoyed a love affair undiminished by time, - as they walked through Blenheim Estate to Woodstock, later as far as the seat by the beautiful Bladon bridge, later as far as the Blacksmith's gate in the churchyard. Arm in arm and with a walking stick they would support each other into old age. They loved Bladon. Mary died about two years ago.

Dave was a great conversationalist with an original mind. As others have commented, Dave would frequently quote a line from Shakespeare to highlight the nonsense of a situation. He enjoyed music and literature and could quote poetry until he died. His originality and creativity was reflected in his sculptures and photography. His visual perception through art was inspirational. Dave took an interest in current affairs and would use wit when justly challenged on his political remarks.

His father died when he was two years old. He grew up in Northampton, the youngest of six children. He went to university and was a Chemical Engineer, leading international projects in different and often remote parts of the world for lengthy periods of time, separated from his three children. I quote others in saying, 'that now, there will be a gap on the edge of The Green in Bladon, and that he will be missed by his family, friends and neighbours'.

Tim Massey

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

The September edition of your excellent news magazine has much of great interest to everyone in Woodstock. To those of us with a particular concern for the future of our lovely Town, two major long-term issues in particular jump out of your pages.

The first comes from the report of the Probus Club. We learn that "Further capital investment has been going into 'London-Oxford Airport' to support expansion. [There is] a new three hanger facility built for the helicopter part of Airbus at a cost of £50m... Flight control has also benefitted with a new upgrade in the Radar system. This means they are able to land a greater variety of aircraft including small [sic] commercial aircraft, the sort that you see at London City Airport".

"All this has led to the Airspace-Public Consultation which is currently underway. In the next phase of the Consultation, the proposed take-off and landing utilisation of airspace and flightpaths will be put forward. This should include both fixed wing and rotary aircraft and is the phase Woodstock and surrounding villages need to consider very carefully in providing comment".

How many of us were aware we had been 'consulted'? We must wonder how we can ensure we are properly protected for aircraft noise pollution (which is already clearly on the increase) and the dangerous dumping of fuel in our area. We are already suffering from increased helicopter and fixed wing flights over Woodstock, some (allegedly) taking so-called A Listers to Estelle Manor and the Soho Farmhouse.

Secondly, we read, yet again that the Blenheim managers continue to relentlessly press forward not simply with the so-called Solar Farm project but also with changes to the use of the Estate, with ever more weekend events which impact directly on the life of Woodstock. There is also an ongoing traffic issue which must be addressed. On Saturday 31 August, for example, when as far as one could tell there was nothing special going on, the tail-back of traffic on the A44 at 1100 reached as far as Yarnton. Everyone was inconvenienced by this including those on the buses.

London-Oxford Airport (what a silly name, to be honest, 'Kidlington' would be just fine and rather more accurate) and Blenheim should feel that it is being very carefully monitored by the representatives of Woodstock's citizenry and be made to understand that it cannot ride roughshod over us with impunity.

To this end, I have written to the new Mayor of Woodstock and Councillors to ask for that a single Councillor be designated to keep an eagle eye on both these issues, as was the case in the past and

report fully to all of us. This would, in my opinion, be a vital step to ensuring that this generation passes on the unique heritage of Woodstock and to future generations.

Yours, Anthony Glees

Dear Editor

I seem to spend a lot of time thinking about the proposal for the Botley West solar farm and I'd appreciate it if you would allow me to share my thoughts in the Woodstock and Bladon News.

I've been walking, running and enjoying the wildlife on the fields around Woodstock for more than sixty years and if I'm entirely honest I'd really rather they were not covered with solar panels. Trouble is, I also know that the climate is changing and the world is becoming a more difficult place for many people, not to mention other species, to live in. I'm also not proud of the legacy that me and my generation are leaving for those that follow us and, although I hate putting my head up over the parapet on a controversial subject, I'd like to explain why I feel we should engage with and probably support the Botley West project.

1. Solar is clean sustainable energy. It is quiet energy, it does not smell and does not have polluting waste products. Nobody is drilling or digging up anything and it won't run out as long as we need it.
2. It's local energy, made in the UK and not affected by international politics and incidents.
3. It can be a short term solution. If something better comes along in the next few years, the infrastructure is relatively easy to decommission and the land returned to agricultural use.

I'm not pretending to be an expert, but I've read a lot of angry headline grabbing stuff from people against the project and my gut feeling is that they are wrong; that fundamentally large scale solar is a sensible way forward to supply us with the electricity we need and edge us towards a net zero future.

I hate it when people say 'what's the point?'. This project is just a drop in the ocean and won't make a significant difference'. I don't believe in giving up. I'd like to think that I am an optimist about the future and part of the reason is that schemes like this are starting to be built.

My last thought is a question I ask myself. If this project were 20 miles away would I think it was a good idea? And, the truth is, I would. And, for me, that kind of seals it. Even though it actually hurts me to think that the landscape around me, my landscape, would be changed for the rest of my life. I refuse to be a 'not in my backyard' person. We owe it to our children and grandchildren and the generations to follow.

Thank you, with Regards, Bob Pomfret

Dear Editor,

The word 'Democracy', according to my Collins Thesaurus, is taken from the Greek word 'demos', meaning people and 'kratos', meaning strength. In current political terms a democracy is a system of self government by the people; or at least, it should be. Again, according to my thesaurus, a democratic system of government is one which is self governing, egalitarian and representative of the populist view.

So how does this apply to our system of local government and in particular to the recent operations of Woodstock Town Council (WTC), granted that our current Councillors did not even have to submit to an electoral Parish Council vote last May because alas, there were insufficient Town Council candidates prepared to stand?

It seems to me that an invaluable tool available to current Councillors is actually to listen to and to hear what the local electorate might wish to communicate to them; common sense and common courtesy surely? It is for this reason that each WTC agenda provides for a 'public participation' section at the beginning of each meeting. It is a massive aid to communication between the electorate and the Council.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the Council's current Standing Orders provide that matters raised in public participation can only be those relating to items on the Agenda for that specific meeting nevertheless, the Agenda content itself is ultimately controlled by the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor alone (in conjunction with the Town Clerk). Arguably therefore, the Agenda itself might not necessarily reflect all the concerns of the local electorate or indeed sometimes, all the concerns of individual Councillors.

In recognition of this apparent constraint on the principles of democracy, WTC's website provides unambiguously within its rules on Public Participation that: "The Town Council has changed its standing orders on the rights of residents to address the Council. Now, the public can speak on any topic relevant to the affairs of the Council whether or not it is on the agenda. The Council hopes that this will encourage people to air their views on matters of local interest"

This much is clear. So far so good! Participation by the public at Council meetings upon matters of concern to them, is an essential component of democracy and communication between the electors and our Councillors.

What a shocking surprise that it was then, to those of us who attended the WTC meeting on Tuesday 10th September, when the Mayor (who was audibly and insistently prompted by the Deputy Mayor in this respect), announced that only topics related directly to items on the agenda for that meeting, could be raised in public participation by the members of the public. As I was told subsequently, one of the items which would have been raised by one public speaker

was to have been the state and condition of some of the town's bus shelters. The opportunity to raise this directly through public participation was vetoed purely because the topic of bus shelters was not on the agenda for that day. As a result of this unilateral and narrow interpretation of Standing Orders, there was absolutely no public speaking at the WTC meeting on 10th September. Many of those present concluded that this was an appalling turn of events.

How undemocratic was this outcome? Highly, I would suggest. Is the proverbial 'tail' (ie certain Councillors) now trying to 'wag the dog' (ie, the populace)? Is there an intention emerging from within the Council which is to restrict the content of free speech by the electorate? It would seem so. It is a great shame that neither of the (only) three other Councillors present at this meeting raised any objection to the evident erosion of democratic representation in this instance. There was a deafening silence in the Mayor's Parlour at this moment!

This was not a good day for the electorate in Woodstock. It was a dreadful day for democracy within this town, which many will hope will never occur again. Come on Town Council! Kindly correct your interpretation of what should be democracy enabling rules..... "kratos" to the "demos" one could say?! Councillors might begin by sorting out the current Standing Orders which could be aligned say, to those of West Oxfordshire District Council which allow for proper participation in Council meetings. After all, we are meant to be living in a democracy and this is the twenty-first century.

Yours, Jo Lamb

Dear Editor,

I was hoping to inform readers that our council agreed to take action on bus shelters ... a positive story. Not to be, sadly. Despite being contrary to practice, the council announced without warning that the public could not speak, unless it was a subject on their agenda. They read Standing Order 3e but offered no further explanation. However, they did, omit to read the additional text 'to encourage people to air their views on matters of local interest, now the public can speak on any topic relevant to the affairs of the Council whether or not it is on the agenda'. A few made an attempt to question the sudden change of practice but the response was uncompromising, disappointing and frankly unfriendly... their response ... an emphatic "NO". Consequently – no public participated, even though before the meeting, at least 3 residents planned to speak. Although thwarted, I did write to the Town Clerk asking if he would submit the subject of repairing the shelters to the councillors and asked him to confirm the procedure for us to follow. We really would like 'a little help from our friends' ... in the council.

Hilary Brown

Woodstock Live 2024 Review



Woodstock Live made an electrifying return to the Town Square over the August Bank Holiday weekend, bringing together an impressive lineup of artists and an enthusiastic crowd. Despite the heavy downpour of rain on the Saturday morning, festival volunteers soldiered on, setting up the stage, bars and sound equipment in time for devoted music lovers to come out and enjoy the acts under clearing skies from midday onwards.

This year entertainment on both weekend days started an hour earlier at 12 noon with family entertainer, Jordan Bass, creating a fun vibe on the town square leading games and dance routines and bringing a diverse and enthused audience out in time to hear the music. 18 incredible acts graced the stage, ranging from the folky acoustic vibes of Lee & Cheryl Davies, Duotone, Mandolerium, Autumn Leaves, The Machine Breakers and Ponderosa, to youthful upbeat performances from Emma Hunter, Danny Mellin, Spiralites, Killer Kowalski and Brooke Law. The Steff Pirrie Jazz Quartet and Salsazon offered something different with cool jazz and latin vibes to dance to, and The Shakes, Counterfeit Hit, The Oxford Beatles and The Village Idiots bought the nights home playing familiar classics for all to enjoy. Funky Friday got a

second outing as well with Mandolerium at The King's Arms, Tom Rogers at The Crown and the fabulous Marlia Rae wowing crowds at The Back Lane Tavern and if you keep an eye on social media, you can catch edited highlights captured by Woodstock Live's fantastic videographer, Andy Boyd!



As in previous years, festival attendees were encouraged to bring or re-use their own pint cups to reduce plastic waste and Hilary and Graham Brown from sustainable Woodstock did a fantastic job collecting donations and helping to remind punters that Woodstock Live is a volunteer led, non-profit organization that needs to raise

money year on year to cover its costs. An experienced troupe of fantastic and utterly competent bar volunteers helped bring in the bulk of the festival revenue by keeping the drinks flowing and a second bar, designed by new committee member, Harry Moseley, was trialed in a more central position behind the sound tent on the square, making it even more convenient for festival goers to fund the event with their drinks purchases.

Support from local sponsors has once again been invaluable in keeping the festival out of the red too, with Flowers Estate Agents providing significant and reliable funding as headline sponsors. Much appreciated contributions also come from Woodstock Accountancy, Woodstock Wealth, Blenheim, and The Topsy Palace, which had its launch day over the festival weekend, giving away a bottle of posh bubbly to a lucky raffle winner! Thanks also to Lewis Property for providing the festival scaffolding free of charge, and a big hand to Alex Crepes for feeding the festival staff and volunteers with their delicious, locally sourced food!

Finally, thanks to everyone who braved a bit of wind and rain this year to come out to the town square on the August Bank Holiday weekend once again - luckily there was a fair amount of Autumn sunshine as well. The festival wouldn't be able to run without your support and do also keep an eye out for Night Of 1000 Candles in November and of course, Mock Mayor and another Woodstock Live in 2025!

Greg Hooper



AN EVENING CONCERT PERFORMED BY THE

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Saturday 23rd November 2024

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Doors open 7.30pm. Concert starts at 8.00pm.

Tickets at the door: £15 (full time students £5, accompanied children under 16 free)
In advance £15 from the Woodstock Bookshop, 23 Oxford Street Cash & Cheque only

All proceeds for the church roof restoration fund



www.oxfordfiddle.co.uk

Bar Available

Woodstock Town Council Meeting

10th September 2024

5 councillors and 9 members of the public attended. The new Town Clerk was assisted by the previous Town Clerk. There was no audio/visual recording of the meeting.

The first item of business was to co-opt a new councillor onto the Council as there are currently 11 councillors. There were 2 candidates, Maurice Connolly and Sarah Williams. In a closed vote councillors voted by a majority for Sarah Williams. Sarah took her seat at the table.

At the start of the public speaking session the Mayor announced that if the subject was not on the agenda then it could not be addressed by members of the public. This was a change to previous meetings (and the Council website) where the Council had changed the standing orders on public participation so the public could speak on any topic relevant to the affairs of the Council whether or not it was on the agenda. This was to encourage public participation in Council meetings. This change was not explained to the public present and dealt with abruptly. When a member of the public asked for the standing orders to be suspended to allow them to speak the answer was an emphatic no. No members of the public spoke at the meeting, several left.

From the Clerk's report, several health and safety issues were being addressed including organising an asbestos survey (last done in 2010), repair of the Town Hall flagpole, the removal of graffiti and a fallen tree in the Water Meadows.

The Mayor reported the interest shown by McCarthy Stone in the old police station site for a retirement home.

County Councillor Andy Graham said the County were reviewing the situation with respect to coaches parking outside of the Chef Imperial and Bear hotel. In relation to the surgery, relevant parties would be meeting on Friday 13th to discuss local health care provision and Andy was encouraged that Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat) had been appointed chair of the Health and Social Care Committee in Westminster. Andy will also be judging a painting competition in the Oxfordshire Museum.

District Councillor Julian Cooper passed on thanks from Frank Wilson, Interim Managing Director of Publica, to the Town Council for their support during the recent gas outage, especially to the Caretaker. Ubico, West Oxfordshire District Council's waste partner, is trialling zero-emission waste collection

vehicles across the District with plans to gradually replace its ageing waste collection vehicles. The Uplands planning committee of the District Council has approved plans to develop the site of the ruined farmhouse Furze Platt, to the north of Blenheim Park on Akeman Street, with a large house. The public right of way will remain intact. The District Council Planning Officers have given a robust response to the Government consultation with respect to increasing housing development in West Oxfordshire.

The Mayor said that the Working Group system was not working well and wished all Working Groups to appoint chairs to call meetings and drive progress. New signage for the Water Meadows was approved with a budget of £6K as was a ROSPA safety report.

Oxfordshire County Council have contacted Woodstock Town Council for comment regarding a government grant for electric vehicle chargers to improve charging infrastructure and possible locations in Woodstock. The suggested sites are Market Street, Marlborough School and the open air pool site, locations based on residents without private parking and the proximity to existing chargers.

During the property report Councillor Cooper raised the possibility of putting solar panels on the Community Centre, something that has been discussed by Council for many years. It was agreed, after a vote, that quotes would be provided for Council consideration.

Details of another parking survey were discussed. Finally it was agreed that a Drs Surgery working group should be formed to support the doctors in their search for a more suitable premises.

Due to restrictions of space not all Council business has been included. For full details please refer to the Town Council website for agendas and minutes.

Graham Brown

Public Participation at Town Council Meetings

Editor's Statement: For those who are not aware, at the start of Town Council meetings there has been an agenda item called Public Participation, which provides for up to 5 members of the public being allowed to speak for up to 3 minutes each. At the time of going to press, the Town Council website was quoting accordingly: 'The Town Council has changed its standing orders on the rights of residents to address the Council. Now, the public can speak on any topic relevant to the affairs of the Council whether or not it is on the agenda. The Council hopes that this will encourage people to air their views on matters of local interest.'

Historically, therefore, residents have been allowed to

raise any issue not on the agenda. However, at the meeting on 10th September the Council invoked Standing Order 3e – requiring items for discussion to have been accepted on the agenda - and refused to waive it (as they are allowed to do). Various members of the public were thereby not allowed to speak as they had planned.

Woodstock & Bladon News has therefore decided to show what they were going to say.

Annie Cripps was going to say:

Under the heading of Transparency which WTC espouses so regularly, when can voters expect to hear the full cost to the public purse of the case brought by Cllr Parnes vs Woodstock Town Council? Although not able to ask this, Councillors were however provided with a hard copy of **The Nolan Principles of Public Office**.

The Nolan Principles: Suggested by Committee on Standards in UK Public Life in 1995

Selflessness: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity: Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity: Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness: Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty: Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership: Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Source: good-governance.org.uk, (accessed 31.08.24 07.31)

Nick Manby-Brown was going to say:

I can see that you are not using the OWL recording device for this meeting. This unit was purchased by the Council in July 2023 at a cost of £2,162.50, with the purpose of aiding transparency, helping produce

accurate Minutes, and preparing for online meetings. It was used by the Council for the next 16 meetings until May 2024. Notes of how to use it were left for the new Council.

Since the new Council started, there have been 7 meetings, and it has only been used for one partial meeting.

Various reasons have been used as to why it has not been active, but it seems to me now that the current Council is against the OWL system. I am therefore asking the Council to start using it immediately, or have an open vote to decide on its fate.

Hilary Brown was going to say:

Following on from the article 'Sheltering in Woodstock' that was published in September's issue of Woodstock and Bladon News, I planned to speak to the council on the subject of the town's bus shelters. I was going to remind the council that the shelters are used by many residents, school children, visitors and those employed in the town. I wanted to ask the council if they would pick up where they left off with previous discussions and arrange for the repair, refurbishment, and where necessary, replacement of the town's shelters. Also, as residents had followed up by asking me about 2 new shelters a) on the north bound section of the A44 Bladon roundabout and b) A44 northbound in Hill Rise, I was also going to ask the council to confirm what the procedure was for requesting new shelters.

Tony McHugh was going to say: I am sure I was not the only resident who was shocked at the appalling traffic chaos caused by the recent Salon Privé event at Blenheim Palace, at least on the Saturday. For part of that morning one could not drive into or through the town from the Old Woodstock side. And on the approach from the Yarnton side the tail-back extended to beyond the airport - all the way to the main entrance gate to Blenheim! I thought the Town Council, in their regular meetings with Blenheim, had persuaded them to avoid such chaos occurring at future events. How, then, did this recent disaster happen, and what are the Council going to do to ensure it does not happen again?



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BLADON AND WOODSTOCK FLOWER CLUB

Hello everyone. What a wonderful evening we had on 9th September at the workshop with Chris Pearce. Chris demonstrated an autumn table arrangement using dried seed heads, fresh foliage, bark and twigs, cones and a few fresh flowers. All the members then did their own interpretation, and we had a lovely show of them at the end. Workshops are always a great way of socialising with everyone helping each other in so many ways especially the well experienced guiding the less experienced.

Our next meeting is on 14th October when we have Emma from 'Signature Flowers' with her demonstration titled 'Fashion-ed Flowers'.

On 11th November we have another workshop which will be an Imposed arrangement. Each member taking part will be given a container with oasis, a few flowers and foliage plus unusual items such as 6 straws, a paper plate, a scourer, string, and a few wires. These are to be incorporated within the arrangement. All this will be done in a limited amount of time with amazing results.

4th December brings us to our special Christmas event which will be at Exeter Hall with the French

demonstrator Arnaud Metarie at the 'Festive Floral Fantasy'. Tickets will be available online and in person from the beginning of November.

Our meetings are held in the Bowls and Tennis Clubhouse, Cadogan Park, Woodstock on the second Monday of the month starting at 7pm doors open at 6.15pm. If you would like to know more about us, please contact me on 01865 376587.

Margaret Lang

Oxford Centre for the National Trust

22nd October: 'Caring for our National Trust Gardens and Plant Collection' by Pam Smith, Senior National Consultant for Gardens and Parkland at the National Trust. £7 members, £10 non-members includes coffee.

19th November: 'Histories of Childhood: uncovering new heritage narratives' by Dr Gillian Lamb and Dr Sian Pooley.

Both lectures are at 10.30am at the Magdalen Auditorium, Longwall St, Oxford.
£7 members, £10 non-members coffee included.

Updates on 'Botley West'

Who Said This?

Some significant statements about UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE: BLENHEIM PALACE:

"The elements of Blenheim's Outstanding Universal Value and the attributes which convey it - which the setting most directly relates to - are [among others];

- The key visual linkages between Blenheim and its setting - to Bladon church in the south.
- The character of the setting as traditional English countryside, dotted with picturesque villages"

"One of the key characteristics of the surroundings of Blenheim Park is that much of the setting lies within the wider extent of the Blenheim estate - which is effectively managed by a single owner. Thus for almost 300 years management of the wider estate has acted as a means of both supporting the historic core and protecting it. As a traditional landed estate, much of the land is retained in open agricultural and enclosed forestry use - another attribute which contributes to Outstanding Universal Value".

"The grazed pastoral landscapes around the river valleys, along with the fields and woodlands are particularly significant as these reflect the land-use and character of the landscape that would have been appreciated during the 18th century. Contrasts between these features is muted and gentle, representing the historic character of the farmed landscape of middle England. In terms of management, therefore, it would be helpful to encourage on-going management of the open elements of the landscape and river meadows through effective agricultural practices and appropriate grazing."

"The conversion of significant areas of agricultural land for other purposes, or the large-scale loss of woodland would detract from the distinctiveness of the setting. Tall developments on the skyline, or large-scale development (particularly those of a non-residential nature which tend to be bulkier and non-vernacular, for example industrial development; wind turbines; solar farms etc.) could detrimentally influence the character of the adjoining rural areas."

"Thus, as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes clear, because the extent of setting is not fixed, it does not have a fixed boundary and cannot be definitively and permanently described for all time as a spatially bounded area or as lying within a set distance of a heritage asset."

You're probably thinking that this was said by Stop Botley West or one of the many other groups trying to

get Blenheim to withdraw its land - at least that nearest to the Palace - from the Botley West Power Station scheme?

You'd be wrong!

These are all direct quotes from Blenheim's own 2017 WORLD HERITAGE SITE REVISED MANAGEMENT PLAN APPENDIX III : SETTING STUDY submitted to UNESCO explaining how they are going to manage and protect Blenheim Palace. This plan has also been endorsed by West Oxfordshire District Council.

Everything they are now doing is in direct contradiction to their own report to UNESCO. So they are clearly pivoting to anything that generates huge profits for those at the top, as well as reneging on their promises to UNESCO.

We need to enlist the help of professional expertise to fight the Botley West application. Please visit our website: <https://stopbotleywest.com/>

Stop Botley West, Hanborough Villages Group

WOODSTOCK Jazz

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Tom Berge - piano
Euan Palmer - drums
Paul Jefferies - bass

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Shopfronts Change but Not Brothertons... Meet the Dunkleys!

In conversation with Leslee Holderness Rumsey



Is there anything that does not 'change'? Woodstock's shops are in flux, housebuilding, the landscape, schools, parking, the Town Council...all in flux and on it goes. Talk to anyone who is over a half century in age and interesting discoveries can be made about years of change as well as what has endured.

One thing that I hope never changes is the sense of community in our town. And many are testimony to its steadfast endurance. One such family is the Dunkleys who for nearly 100 years have touched upon many aspects of Woodstock that some will still remember or even find familiar today.

Recently I met with Pam Dunkley who reminisced about life in our town. Born in 1948 to Eric Leonard Dunkley (he was born at Combe Mill and known as

Bobby) and his wife Gladys Mary (nee Warman and came from Woodstock), Pam has an older sister Sheila Pratley (nee Dunkley), who was born in 1937, to Bobby's first wife. All lived in Woodstock for most of their entire lives. Life was close knit in those days. Pam's mother and grandmother lived on Hensington Road and then moved to 12 Market Street (just behind the town hall) in 1946 when Gladys and Bobby married. After the war Bobby carried on with the family business, Brotherton's; not a restaurant then but a hardware store that was started by his own mother's father, Mr Brotherton. The shop was filled with everything you might need for managing a household, including carpets. Pam recalls how it smelt of ironmongery. A far cry from the specialist aromas that greet us in many shops today.

In those days, Woodstock was pretty much a regular town surrounded by farm lands and a large estate. Cars were smaller and fewer, Banbury's was the town department store, local shops catered to every need, and entertainment was found on the home front, not further afield. Blenheim was a working estate, probably wondering how it would survive the future but with no idea of the entertainment centre it would eventually become.

In 1957 Pam's parents moved to Shipton Road, just across from what is now the Primary School. Even I recall the large plot of land next door with the rickety white house and tumble-down dove-cote but Pam recalls when it was all quite lovely and the owner and Pam's mother would chat through a hole they made in the hedge. There were many glove factories in those days and for years sister Sheila worked at Pullman's on Hensington Road, today the site of hot-desking, pilates lessons, and picture framers. In 1958 Sheila married Derek Pratley from Charlbury and for a number of years they lived 'above the shop' (above what was once La Galleria and is now Brotherton's extension) and later with daughter Elaine they moved to Cockpit Close, which had been built in 1958 on the site of another old glove factory. Sheila worked almost all her life, staying on at Brothertons Hardware until 1980 when it closed, a short while after the death of their father. By this time, Woodstock was on the path to becoming a proper tourist town.



Bobby in Brothertons

If you visit Brotherton's today, you will see many of the architectural features found in the illustration; a 1950s painting of the hardware store.

Sheila went on to John Lorimers grocers and then to Mrs Farren's Cake Shop on the High Street, which later became Harriet's Tea Shop and is now a private residence. Twenty years ago I recall meeting Sheila wearing the tidy white pinafore donned by all the help at Harriets. Derek, who when he retired tended the walled garden at Woodstock House. He had a tumbledown greenhouse and used to give me wonderful tomatoes grown in it. Derek died in 2019 and Sheila now



Brothertons Hardware



Dunkley House in Hensington Road

resides in a Yarmton care home.

Pam and her sister were close and both were great supporters of Oxford United frequently going to matches with their friend Malcolm Holley, himself a lifelong Woodstock resident. Today Pam is the only remaining Dunkley. She says they were a family of shopkeepers; in addition to Brotherton's, her aunt had an electrical shop on Market Place, an uncle worked at the Palace and another uncle worked at Kingerley, the builders. Pam started her working life in the Town Clerk's offices, situated next to the Museum. After a year or so, she went on to Blackwells in Oxford, spending 33 years working there. She remembers fondly Basil Blackwell coming in every morning to say 'hello' to the staff. When she retired from Blackwells she went to the Museum coffee shop serving food and drink to visitors for a ten years. Today she lives on Bear Close with her cat Tinkerbell and regularly visits her sister Sheila and makes plans with friends of old.

She says the town has changed completely from what it was when she was a girl and although she no longer knows everyone like she used to, the sense of a close knit community is with her still.

Woodstock is remarkable in that respect. Long may that be one thing that never changes.



Pam and Sheila



Pam Dunkley

WOODSTOCK SURGERY

Editor's Comment: Following the inclusion in last month's magazine of the letter from the Partners to all interested parties, the editor wrote to all the stakeholders to request some dialogue, and here are the replies that have been received as this issue went to press.

The Partners: As many readers will know, the Partners at Woodstock Surgery have been seeking to move to a larger, more modern, Health Centre for several decades but finding a suitable site and procurement of appropriate funding has not been achievable to date.

At Woodstock Surgery, our team is dedicated to providing the highest standard of care to Woodstock and the 30 other villages we look after. We are aware that our Surgery is outdated and, despite our commitment, we face significant challenges due to our current premises being at capacity.

This limitation severely restricts our ability to expand our team and further enhance the services we offer. In the future we would like to increase the number of Doctors, and to work alongside other Healthcare Professionals with varied roles, providing extra services for our patients in the community. This would facilitate more comprehensive care and reduce waiting times for our patients. Funding is already available for these roles but our limited space does not allow us to progress. The hard work and dedication of our staff are evident as they consistently go above and beyond, even in these restrictive conditions.

Recently we sent a letter to our patients, as well as to key bodies that might support us in our quest, explaining our urgent concerns. With 500 new homes being proposed for this locality, our capacity to cope will be exceeded and we would have to consider the unprecedented step of "closing our list" and not taking any of the new residents onto our books. We are heartened by the supportive response from both our patients and the Town Council, who kindly invited us to present the salient facts at a meeting last month. This underscores the community's recognition of our collective needs.

Many are unaware that NHS England does not generally own GP Surgeries, but rents the buildings from which GPs practice. The rent is based on the footprint of the building. Our current small Surgery is owned by the Woodstock Surgery doctors and is relatively cheap for the NHS. The Woodstock doctors are not in the position to fund the building of a new multi-million-pound Health Centre themselves. Elsewhere, GP Practices have worked with Property Developers so that the Practice is built by the Developer and then NHS England rents it from the Developer, in perpetuity, for the Doctors and Healthcare Team to work in. Of course, this means that the Developer must seek ways to make this financially viable, and NHS England has to agree to rent the new building with its larger footprint. We are currently talking to Blenheim Estates about this model and they are keen to help, as part of a proposed new development on the edge of town.

We are advised that NHS England guidance states that the building of new Practices has to be future-proof, ie the design must factor in room to expand the building over the next 10 years as the population increases and new staff are needed. Our expert advisors (who have been involved in building Long Hanborough and Chipping Norton Health Centres, as well as many others nationally) have looked at the old Police Station site in Woodstock and have repeatedly advised it is too small to meet these criteria. While our Woodstock patients are keen for any new Practice to be located centrally in Woodstock, 60% of our patients actually live in villages outside Woodstock and would find an edge-of-town site with parking, preferable. Staff, ambulance, and patient parking must be considered. Planners would clearly need to meet their own rules and consider access by Public Transport. We are keen to support all Green agendas but it is clear to us that unwell patients invariably come to us by car, and lack of parking has been the most common criticism of our current site.

To continue to meet the growing healthcare demands, securing a new, larger facility remains crucial. We are now at capacity. This expansion is essential not only for accommodating more staff but also for sustaining the level of care and support our patients deserve.

Cllr Andy Graham, Oxford County Council: I met today (14 September) as Chair of the future Oxfordshire partnership planning and advisory committee to discuss ways forward to address the acute primary care infrastructure across Oxfordshire with all the districts, city and county represented alongside the integrated care board and the Bucks, Oxfordshire and Berkshire Primary Care Board.

Resulting out of this was a commitment to collectively work together, understand the existing shortfall in primary care infrastructure and better working relationships. We are all aware of this in Woodstock and I have made every effort to bring the doctors, councils and health authorities together with Blenheim to focus on the Kensington Road site which was considered but found to be not viable.

Work is now starting to look at how councils can ensure health infrastructure is planned for ahead of development, how CIL funding could be allocated to infrastructure alongside Section 106 and co-location opportunities are pre planned to ensure health and wellbeing being is linked with prevention, a key strategy to support a more holistic delivery of services for our residents.

There is much work to do and I as the County Councillor will go the extra mile plus one to ensure the needs of our community both in the town and the important villages that use Woodstock are put where it should be - at the top of the list. I will report on the finding of this work at the end of the year.

Cllr Elizabeth Poskitt, West Oxford District Council: Residents will be as disappointed as I have been that we shall not get a new surgery on the Hensington Road site. The site offers accessibility for green travel on foot or by bus. A surgery there would help retail outlets, especially the pharmacy. When the Police Station came up for sale both circa 2013 and again more recently, Cllr Julian Cooper and I asked WODC to bid for the site. Neither bid was accepted. In 2016, the doctors had an architect's plan for the old Police Station building and Blenheim and the relevant NHS body seemed to be promising support. David Cameron also gave his support but just before the Brexit vote, and if funds were 'promised', they went elsewhere. In 2020, Cllr Cooper and I suggested WODC, OCC, Blenheim and the doctors discuss the whole Hensington Road Car Park area. This happened but eventually it was concluded that the site was too small to meet future expansion for a surgery. The doctors have made it clear that they anticipate a surgery offering more health facilities than at present. Likely sites seem a long walk from town centre, bus stop and shops you might visit whilst in town.

The Woodstock Town Clerk wrote: I can confirm that in the monthly meeting of the Council held on 10th of September the following was discussed and the Council agreed the following four points:

1. The council fully supports the Woodstock Doctors need for a new surgery to accommodate the rising population of the Town and surrounding villages.
2. Agree to carry out a survey to collate residents views and support including input from surrounding villages, both by electronic means and via letter box drop
3. Assist with any facility they have available e.g. printing, advertising via the council's website and newsletter together with the offer of free of charge venue for meetings that may be necessary to achieve delivery of this most important facility for Woodstock to date.
4. Consider forming a Working Group for continuity of progress and continued pressure with monthly reports to full Council.

Editor's Comment: During the preparation of this item, it was announced that the old Police Station site in Hensington Road had been sold by Blenheim to McCarthy Stone, and therefore the contributors may not have been able to consider this news in their responses. We'll have more on this important story in future issues.

Woodstock In Bloom

The Rose bed under the chestnut trees on Oxford Street had decayed past hope. They were planted by Bob Pittick, Mayor and Senior postman in the 1980s. If new roses were to be planted on the same site they would quickly inherit the virus diseases remaining in the soil so the policy is to grass over the area after we have picked up the hundreds of conkers.

With this in mind, eight members of Woodstock in Bloom assembled on 31st August with pick axes and other weapons of mass destruction. We heaved and tugged for nearly three hours and cleared the site. Andy Mills, the Blenheim Palace Head Gardener, very kindly arranged the removal of the great piles of roots and prickly bits by his team.

It will soon be time to plant tulips and forget-me-nots in Woodstock's plant holders. Unfortunately, the time for the germination of the forget-me-nots coincided with the only dry patch in this Summer. Very few have

come up in my garden. I must therefore appeal to readers of this publication. Can anybody please spare some forget-me-nots for the plant holders? Tel 01993 811616 or wrobertedwards3@gmail.com.



Removing the rose bed in Oxford Street

Nature Review

Bladon's nature-rich farmland landscape is beyond price. Or is it?

Read Professor Dame Kathy Willis's new book, cleverly titled *Good Nature*, to find out.

Professor Willis, Professor of Biodiversity at the University of Oxford, is one of our most eminent climate scientists; she has risen to sit as a cross-bencher in the House of Lords through her work in biodiversity and ecosystem science. In *Good Nature*, Kathy has reviewed a colossal swathe of new scientific literature at the crossover between ecosystem science, and neuroscience and human health. From this she has distilled a simple, powerful conclusion: contact with nature can save the NHS money. In other words, nature's contribution to people's physical and mental health can now be assigned a monetary value. This means that nature-richness can be listed as an asset in the calculations of Natural Capital that shape land use policy.

Good Nature: The New Science of How Nature Improves Our Health is unputdownable, an amazing and timely book that shows how nature is not just 'nice to have' but vital to people's health and wellbeing.

The list of chapter headings shows how relevant the content is to preserving Bladon's fields and footpaths and ancient wildwood hedgerows: 'Green Horizons: Why the View Matters; Why Green is Good for Us, and Not Just in What We Eat; Flower Power; The Sweet Smell of Success: Protective Plant Perfumes; Sound Surgery: From Birdsong to Rustling Leaves; The Proven Benefits of Tree-Hugging; Hidden Senses; Indoor Sensecapes: 'A Garden Within Doors'; Outdoor Sensecapes: The Power of a Short Walk'.

We who live in Bladon can walk straight into a small Eden of rolling farmland criss-crossed by ancient hedgerows; free from wheels, fumes, artificial light and hidden surveillance. This parish's network of historic paths - inalienable legal rights of way which cannot be closed and which must be signposted - is almost like a village green for Bladon. It provides solace for the lonely, freedom, safe space and contact with nearby nature for children; beauty and joy for all and anyone, any time. It offers peace, away from the mad traffic of our main street and noisy events in Blenheim Park. Here we can enjoy ancient farmland with its woods and ancient hedgerows full of resident birds, and flocks of winter visitors on lightly-tilled fields after harvest. You can view far horizons at sunrise and sunset, stars and the moon in dark skies. It is like an irreplaceable inheritance that we lucky residents currently enjoy, and surely should protect for future generations. It need not - and must not - be lost under a new national Solar Power Station.

Thanks for reading this - now I am off for a refreshing stroll along the Campsfield footpath (Bladon public footpath 132/2/10 on the definitive map), to enjoy the autumnal hedgerows of the former Blenheim Estate Home Farm fields that once bore the local name of 'Paradise'.

Good Nature, published last month by Bloomsbury, is in the Woodstock Bookshop now.

Sarah Watkinson, Bladon, 14th September 2024

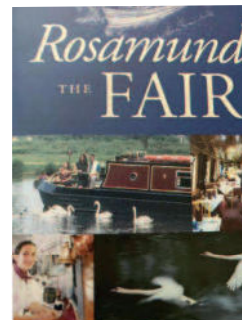


'Being outdoors in nature, for at least twenty minutes three times a week, provides a whole host of health benefits'

Wild Apples

Rose Hips

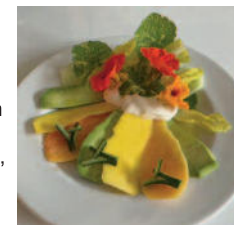
Recipe of the Month - Saffs Summer or Winter Salad



I had the pleasure of running the famous restaurant boat *Rosamund The Fair* for 18 years with Tim Matthews, my husband. We would both take turns either cooking in our 6ft x 9ft galley kitchen or being the Front of House host. It was a fine-tuned operation offering two menus that you could chop and change between on the evening - all cooked freshly on board, even the bread.

It was a truly wonderful experience cruising the river Thames, along Port Meadow and down to Christchurch Meadow.

One of my favourite dishes is the recipe shown here and one that was reviewed by Max Davidson of the Telegraph saying "this salad was such a splendid combination that it had me humming as I ate." Enjoy!



Method

Wash your hands. Wash and gently dry the fruit. Top and tail the mango and papaya and then peel the skin off these fruits. This can either be done by holding the fruit and using a peeler to remove the skin, or using a knife with the fruit standing up on a chopping board and working your way around with a knife top to bottom. Peel the avocado and prepare as the other fruits. A little lime juice squeezed onto the avocado will help keep its beautifully vibrant green colour.

At this point you can place the fruits on a plate in the fridge for when you're ready to serve. When ready to serve, place your plates on your kitchen worktop along with a chopping board and medium sized sharp knife. Arrange a little salad in one corner of the plate along with any other decorations. NB (please make sure if you use flowers, they are edible ones. Some look pretty but are not safe to eat).

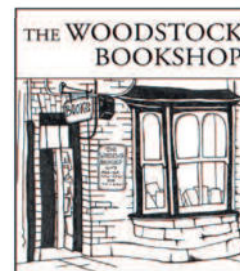
Next start cutting the fruits, and I suggest cutting the mango first. They have a wide, flat stone inside but lots of beautiful yellow flesh that you can cut from top to bottom into strips about 10cm long x 4cm wide and a depth of about 1cm. In this instance size is not hugely important as it will still taste wonderful, but it does look very pretty if you can arrange the fruit in stripes and fan shaped - "presentation is everything!" Pink, yellow and green.

Once the fruit has been arranged, you can squeeze a little lime juice over the avocado and smooth it over the whole slice to prevent it from turning brown, very gently with the tip of your clean finger. Then mix the yogurt in a bowl with some lime juice. So here you can use your own judgement, if you love Greek yogurt use more and if you like a citrus taste use ½ lime juiced to mix into the bowl of yogurt. I normally use 2tbs of Greek yogurt and ½ a lime juiced. Spoon this over the fruit where they meet at the top. And then you can choose if you'd like to spoon some vinaigrette over the salad. And you can play about with how you present it.

It seems a very summery dish and yes, it is beautiful in the summer as a light lunch, but also fantastic as a starter before a hearty winter dish or roast.

Ingredients - for 2, or 4 smaller portions

1 ripe avocado, 1 ripe papaya, 1 ripe mango
(ALL ripe but not over ripe)
Some salad leaves/edible flowers
4cm chunk of cucumber
2 tbs Greek yogurt
1 lime



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Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum

Monthly talks in the Museum in Woodstock at 7.30pm

Wednesday 2nd October 'Lawyer, Town Clerk and Ruthless Land Speculator? The life of Henry John North of Woodstock'. By Gareth Winrow, local author, researcher and academic.

Henry John North was born in Woodstock in 1756 and became a prosperous and highly-regarded member of the community. You can see a stained glass window in the church, installed as a tribute to him after he died. But it seems he had a ruthless streak and our speaker has researched details of questionable practice! A few years ago, our Museum was able to buy a large oil painting of Henry John North by the eminent artist Sir William Beechey. The painting is kept in storage, but as a special concession it will be on display for the talk this evening. Our speaker has written a fascinating book 'The Butcher, the Tailor, the Picture Frame Maker....' about personalities of Victorian Oxford - many names you will recognize. It includes a section on HJ North and Woodstock. It will be on sale (cash only) for the reduced price of £7.

Wednesday 6th November 'The Lost Villages of Oxfordshire' By Deborah Hayter, Oxford University Dept of Continuing Education

Talks are free to Friends, who are also sent a Zoom link. Visitors are welcome in person or by Zoom for a fee of £5. For further details Email: contactfriendsoftom@gmail.com or website: www.friendsoftom.org.uk

The Woodstock Bookshop

We had a highly entertaining and informative author talk at the Town Hall on Saturday afternoon, the 14th September. Professor Tim Coulson was talking, and taking questions, about his new book *The Universal History of Us*. It was a sell-out event and we are delighted to say that we have many more such things to come.

Next up we have Robin Laurance at the bookshop at 7pm on Weds 2nd October. He will be talking about his new book, *The Busy Narrow Sea*, about the history of the English Channel from Napoleon through the Second World War and into modern day. This is free entry, and you get a complimentary glass of wine. Limited seating so please book soon!

Our website is being redesigned and updated at present, so look out for something far more engaging and informative in about a month or so.

We are always happy to receive suggestions from our customers, so don't hesitate to contact us with anything you think might be useful.

Thank you to all our lovely customers who support us and keep us going.

Panniers

Everyday cycling in Woodstock and Bladon

We are now starting to see real progress on the Woodstock LCWIP - the **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan** that will encompass the town and surrounding area.

By the time you read this, officers from the county council will have carried out **Walking Audits** for Woodstock, from which network maps and a prioritised list of infrastructure improvements will be developed.

Work is also progressing regarding cycling. Initial identification and audits of cycling routes were carried out last year by the Village Travel Network (VTN) and council officers. That information is now being reviewed and mapped to understand how we might better get around our communities by bike for day-to-day essentials such as schools, shops and healthcare.

The point of all this is to make walking and cycling more attractive and to reap the many benefits of that - a fitter population, calmer streets that attract more people to shops and restaurants, less pressure on car parking, cleaner air and reduced carbon emissions, to name but a few.

Finally, with winter approaching, stay warm, dry and visible. Make sure your bike is well lubricated, check tyres for wear and have wet weather gear and lights to hand. Happy utility cycling!

David Walker is a member of Sustainable Woodstock, the Village Travel Network and is a qualified Bikeability instructor



Towns with high rates of cycling are safer for all road users

Woodstock Literature Society

A Talk for our Times? A Review



Dr Elizabeth Lowry



The audience at Woodstock Town Hall

Dr Elizabeth Lowry's talk on her latest novel on Joan of Arc took place on Thursday 19th September.

Cruel wars, gender identity, religious faith and fanaticism: Elizabeth Lowry's talk on her latest novel evoked all these dark contemporary issues drawn, paradoxically, from contemporaneous court documents relating to the trial of the fifteenth century illiterate French peasant girl, Joan of Arc. Inspirational in her religious passion and patriotism, she led French forces to some battlefield successes against the English in the 1430's, always dressed in male clothing. Eventually she was captured, imprisoned at Rouen, and tried by the French Catholic church for heresy and blasphemy with the co-operation of the English. She was executed by burning and her body then displayed to demonstrate to the crowd that she had been a woman (and hence deserved a cruel punishment for dressing as a man) At this point historical reality gave way to fiction. Elizabeth Lowry was fascinating on the subject of Joan's afterlife through the following centuries. She was soon seen by the French as a national icon; Shakespeare refers extensively to her as a witch in his *Henry VI*; Schiller, Mark Twain, G.B.Shaw, Brecht, Jean Anouilh, and several other contemporary dramatists all followed, intrigued by her complex story. Eventually, the Catholic church revised the verdict of its fifteenth century

predecessors, and first beatified Joan and then canonised her in 1920, at which point she became St Joan. An amazing and dramatic story, and it is no surprise that Elizabeth Lowry wished to base her novel on Joan: will she get closer to Joan than Shakespeare, Shaw or Mark Twain? It will have a different point of view, one which explores misogyny and religious hysteria. Her novel *The Tower* will appear later in the year.

It was highly rewarding to hear a creative artist discuss the sources and processes of her work and the audience was delighted to be drawn so close to 'work in progress' while at the same time learning so much about a multi-faceted historical character, St Joan.

Linda Glees

Woodstock Literature Society's further events this autumn

Wednesday 23rd October at 11.30am in the Town Hall. The informal Open Book Group will discuss '*Cloud Street*' by Australian novelist Tim Winton. All welcome.

Saturday 26th October at 3pm at the St Hugh's Centre. Professor Seamus Perry will discuss the Romantic poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (along with Coleridge's Woodstock link!)

The poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge may be best remembered for his poem 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner'. Residents of Woodstock may also like to savour an unusual link with the poet to be found on the stone wall plaque outside Nos 6-8 High Street. This plaque, with its beautifully carved albatross, commemorates the young Simon Hatley who ran away to sea to escape from his over-bearing father, also called Simon Hatley, one-time Mayor of Woodstock. The story goes that Simon was the original Ancient Mariner who told his chilling story to a sea captain, who in turn wrote a memoir read and remembered by Coleridge. Whatever the truth of this story, it is nevertheless a pleasing thought to think about this local link to the Romantic poets.

For more information about the Woodstock Literature Society visit the web-site: www.woodstockliteraturesociety.co.uk



Woodstock and Bladon Churches Together

A Message from Rev Fr (Dr) Prem J Fernando, Parish Priest of St Thomas More, Kidlington and St Hugh of Lincoln, Woodstock

As was announced recently, Pope Francis appointed two new Auxiliary Bishops for our Archdiocese. We prayed for them at our Holy Masses and are delighted about it. Once again, we would echo our thanks to Bishop William Kenney who for many years served the archdiocese with responsibility over us in our region. We are doubly thankful to him, whilst choosing to live within our parish, for his support and readiness with a favourable help to our parish. More importantly my special thanks to him for the trust and confidence placed on his priests, personally to me whilst looking after both the parish and the chaplaincy. His support, relying on my ability and competence with a sense of admiration and appreciation did go a long way, and must be admired and told, taking the given confidence to do so.

I write this message, not with ease, but with a sense of Joy for the church, particularly for the Catholic church, here in this Land and for our peoples. With the appointment of these new Auxiliary Bishops to the Archdiocese it is significant that we have the first ever British Asian or Black clergy raised to the episcopate.

It is not a secret that a diversity of people lived in this land for centuries, even before the catholic emancipation. With the colonisation, the commonwealth, they have become a part and parcel of this country long before. And so, like it is of the forgotten lot of the D-Day celebrations, they too would be forgotten of their sacrifices amidst famines, wars, persecutions, and hardships; nurturing, nourishing and sustaining this land, her culture and values, making them their own not simply the faith. Possibly, they still continue to do so in their own way. Despite all the odds in history, those peoples survived, achieved and now in many walks of life, recognised and rewarded. The country must be proud to see them even in the helms of governing this country. It has taken a considerable amount of time and untold unsung sacrifices too, but has and is changing for the better, we hope. The credit is not purely on their survival instinct, but also the native people who live honourably in this land, standing by recognising them and fighting their cause, empowering them with confidence, I believe makes the change for the better. This then the richness the country strives to achieve, the greatness of this nation and the resilience of its peoples. The nation's pride.

It is significant then therefore to note that this is far behind in the Churches, seemingly not at all in the Catholic church. In recent times it is the diversity of peoples that shape the churches and keep them open. There are number of priests, not deacons?, who are of Black and Asian backgrounds serving as clergy for a long time in this land. But isn't it shocking that there is none in the episcopate within the Catholic church here in this country. Not many in the seminaries either. The religious orders too, survive because of them, but they are never raised to a position beyond a community service. And so, it is obvious that I share this joy with you, and hope you feel the same, especially if you are not of an Asian or Black origin.

It is not good enough rejoicing over it. We must also ask the difficult questions as to why it has taken all this while. Is it likely the profiling of Black and Asian clergy most falsely as; 'not us and like us, don't understand our culture', 'they do not know, not competent', 'we could not understand them nor they could understand us', 'they help their families their people', 'they help foreign students and people', 'they always ask for more money' 'Their names are in every type of a log entry and every type of fraud and offence', 'Russian agents'....Oh! They are bound to carry a reputation— spoken, written, repeated, recorded, communicated and published. That's who they are! Thieves, brigands? Wow not an unfair, unfamiliar, comment, isn't it not! Am I far right?, or right to say! I suppose we know it best where we stand. Country would know it all by now. But hush! That's not how 'we' do things! You do not know an outsider!

Shanties and stories by lamplight

Tales of Jesus' s first disciples will be told in shanties, stories and spoken words in 'Salt and Light', a LAMPS performance at St Mary Magdalene Church on Saturday, October 5th at 7.00pm.

LAMPS Collective is a group of professional writers, actors, and musicians whose Christian faith underpins their lives and work.

This will be LAMPS' third visit to Woodstock and their packed audiences will testify that their performances are truly remarkable. LAMPS stands for Love, Action, Music, Poetry and Stories - all things close to our hearts! Their productions seek to inspire, challenge, and entertain young and old alike and to reach out beyond the Church's walls.

Tickets £12 (£6 for under 18s) from Woodstock Bookshop or Church Representatives or on the door. Refreshments will be on sale.

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

What's On at SOFO

'Journeys Through War' Young people's art competition and exhibition

Open to entries until 29 September. Exhibition opens 19 October 2024

We're running our first open art competition for 7 - 18 year olds this Summer, with submissions going on display at the museum this October. There's still time to submit entries up to the end of September 2024. Painting, drawing, collage, even digital art can be accepted, and entries need to tie into the theme of 'Journeys Through War'.

Find out more and enter at: bit.ly/summerartcomp

Posting Letters to the Moon: The Wartime Letters of Celia Johnson and Peter Fleming

Join us at Blenheim on Wednesday 2 October 2024 for a three course dinner in The Orangery and an outstanding show in The Marlborough Room, as actress Lucy Fleming, with her husband Simon Williams, read these funny, poignant letters sent between her mother Celia Johnson (Brief Encounter) and the famous writer and explorer Peter Fleming.

Find out more and book your tickets at: www.sof.org.uk/whats-on

10th Anniversary offer for WOBL readers

Show us your copy of Woodstock and Bladon News or quote this offer to receive a FREE bottle of Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum's Anniversary Ale when you sign up for a museum membership!

Museum memberships start at £10 per year and all include an annual pass to the county's military museum and all its exhibitions. Many membership levels also include free tickets to talks, exclusive event invitations and many other offers.

Brewed by Hook Norton Brewery, Horsa Hop is an amber English IPA perfect for Summer. The limited-edition beer was released to celebrate 10 years since the museum was first opened by HRH Princess Anne on 24 September 2014, but also commemorates the 80th anniversary of D-Day and the contribution made by Oxfordshire people in the historic campaign of 1944.

Find out more about the museum and membership options when you visit, or online at: www.sof.org.uk

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum is an independent museum and registered charity (No. 1145408) dedicated to preserving and showcasing the county's wartime stories.

u3a

The u3a is a national, or even inter-national, organisation and Woodstock & District is our local branch. Members are offered a monthly speaker meeting which can be on a variety of topics - aimed at the layman.

Members then have access to various and many interest groups which operate locally, usually daytime rather than evening; it is therefore aimed at retirees or anyone available in the daytime. Our speaker in September talked us through the work of a magistrate - it was interesting to learn about the processes of the law and see if the audience came to the same conclusion as the magistrates in a few autonomous cases. Our next speaker meeting is on Thursday 3rd October at St Hugh's Centre, Hensington Road, Woodstock - the speaker is Frederick Dove and the topic is 'A Thalidomide Survivor'. New members always welcome commencing 2pm (doors open 1.45pm) visitors charged at £2.

Please do check our website for further information: www.woodstocku3a.uk.

Sue Blackshaw - Chair, Woodstock & District u3a:
Email: chair@woodstocku3a.uk



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References supplied on request.

Please contact:
michelleturkie@gmail.com

GCSE and A Level results success at The Marlborough School

We are absolutely delighted to share the outstanding achievements of our Year 11 and Sixth Form students once again this year at Marlborough.

In terms of GCSE results; as a school, we were significantly above national benchmarks on every measure, and we have achieved higher grades overall this year than last year's record-breaking performance - a remarkable achievement. Our students have been able to secure their next stages of their educational journey, be it a high quality apprenticeship or College course. Of course, we were delighted to see so many pupils return to us at the start of this term, to be part of our thriving and highly successful Sixth Form.

The A Level results received represented the best ever performance by a group of young people in our school - and our results have always historically been incredibly high. We are delighted that 43% of all our grades are A*/A - a remarkable figure - with 67% of all grades at A* - B. The vast majority of pupils have also achieved their first or insurance choice of destination, be it a high quality apprenticeship or their chosen course at University. Apprenticeships include placements at The JR Hospital and with the RAF, whilst our students have been able to access a huge range of subjects and courses, from Computer Science to English Literature, Marine Biology to French and Spanish. This year, our students are off to study at Universities all over the country, including Oxford, Cambridge, Exeter, Durham, Bath, Warwick, Edinburgh and Liverpool.

It was fantastic to see the school values of ambition, matched with perseverance, being lived out in these young people. Each person has a great story and there are so many individual tales of courage and determination, we are so very proud of our students, they are a credit to our school.



A Level Students on results day

From L-R Mrs Jones (Sixth Form Head), Mr Gavin (Sixth Form Deputy Head) and Mrs Strivens (Examination Manager)

Woodstock CE Primary School

Welcome to our New Headteacher

We would like to welcome our new Headteacher Mrs Hipwell, who is very well known to the school community after being the Assistant Headteacher for the past 14 years. We wish her the very best in her exciting new role as Headteacher of Woodstock CE Primary School.

The expansion work that has been going on for the past 18 months was finally completed at the end of the summer holidays. Children and parents will notice lots of changes around the school, including our new Reception classrooms, which we welcomed 60 children into at the start of term. We are working with our very supportive PTA to further develop our outside spaces for the children to enjoy.

As always, the start of term is always a busy one and much has been going on already including curriculum launch days for Years 5&6 for their Meet the Greeks theme, and Key Stage 1 All Around Me. Years 3&4 visited Perdiswell Farm, Woodstock where the children explored links between food and farming and gained a greater understanding of where our food comes from. Children enjoyed a 'hands on' morning digging in the field, watching a sheepdog in action and grinding flour. Thank you to Farmer Price and his team for being so welcoming and producing a day to remember!

See picture opposite from the Woodstock CE Primary School



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Legal 500, 2024



WOOTTON VILLAGE HALL TALKS

The event with Professor Angela Gallop, leading forensic scientist, on Friday October 11th is now sold out, although we sometimes get returns closer to the date of an event - and so please write, via our website, if you would like to go on the waiting list.

Our speaker at 7.30pm on Friday November 8th is CHARLIE IRELAND, who plays a key part in the Amazon global hit, *Clarkson's Farm* - a series about Jeremy Clarkson and his 1,000-acre Diddly Squat Farm near Chipping Norton. Charlie, who lives in Wootton, is a professional agronomist and land agent who advises Jeremy on farm management - and offers tips on agricultural aspects of crops, the complex details of government regulation and the financial consequences of the enterprise.

Entry is £10 in cash - and includes free food. Wine and soft drinks are available for a modest donation. Children over 16 are welcome. Cards can be used to buy speaker's books. To reserve seats, please contact us through our website www.woottontalks.co.uk

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Combe Community Cinema

Screenings take place at the Community Cinema in the Combe Community Hub - the former Methodist Church - in Park Street, Combe.

On **Friday, October 18**, we will be showing 'Hit the Road', a funny family drama with delightful performances from its actors, particularly six-year-old Rayan Sarlak.

On **Friday, November 22**, the film will be 'The Holdovers'. Set in late 1970 and early 1971, the award-winning film stars Paul Giamatti as a strict classics teacher at a New England boarding school who is forced to chaperone a handful of students with nowhere to go over the Christmas break.

Doors (and bar!) open at 7.30pm, with the screening starting at 8.00pm. All are timed to end by approximately 10.00pm, and all feature subtitles. Tickets £5 on the door.

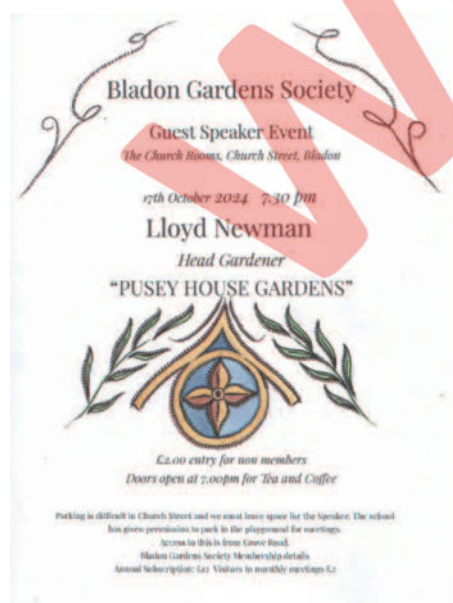
Woodstock 50+ Cinema Club

This Club shows films on the fourth Friday of every month at the Woodstock Methodist Church in Woodstock.

The next film is on Friday 24th October at 10am. The cost is £3.50 per person.

Please come and spend a relaxing morning for a get-together, watch a film, and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, and biscuits.

Jessica, 07384 511698



The Arts Society Cotswolds

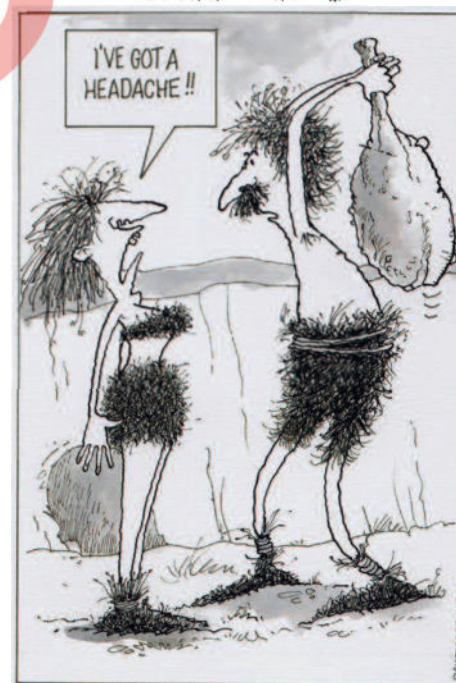
Lecture on Wednesday 9th October 2024
The Irritating and Influential Mr. Whistler

An American artist in London, James Abbott McNeill Whistler was a leading proponent of the idea of 'art for art's sake'. He settled in London in 1859 having created a distinctive Post-Impressionist style at a time when many of his British contemporaries had yet to come to terms with Impressionism. Whistler's art moved painting towards abstraction, sparked a renaissance in printmaking and gave us the Peacock Room, a masterpiece of interior design. Inspired, influential, and infuriating, his art was full of subtle delicacy.

About our speaker: Julia Musgrave has a Graduate Diploma in the History of Art from the Courtauld Institute of Art and an MLitt from the University of Glasgow. She gained her PhD at the University of York for her research into the involvement of Roger Fry and the Bloomsbury Group and the development of the Contemporary Art Society from 1910 to 1939. She teaches Art History at the City Literary Institute (City Lit) and is Co-Director of The London Art Salon.

This hybrid lecture will be held at the Warwick Hall, Church Green, Burford, OX18 4RZ at 11am and via Zoom. Booking is recommended to reserve a place via our website. Non-members are welcome (space permitting) at a charge of £10.

Karoon Korner



Special Interest Day on Wednesday 23rd October 2024

The Seine: River of Light and Artists' Delight - Home to Impressionism

This wonderful river in France often referred to as the River of Light was a great influence on the 19th century artists and the development of Impressionism. It was the estuary which first attracted them, then the area west of Paris which became known as the Cradle of Impressionism and artists came in their droves to seek inspiration. This series of three lectures follows the course of the river and the artists' exploits along it and will aim to uncover new revelations!

Lecture 1: The Seine Estuary - Beginnings

Lecture 2: The Ups and downs of the Impressionists in their early careers along what is termed the Cradle of the Seine

Lecture 3 The Path to Success

About Our Speaker

Carole Petipher acted as a guide for twenty years in France leading tours specialising in art and history. Through that work she lived and worked on the Seine and Paris Basin and confesses that the Seine is very much flowing through her veins. She has literally walked in the footsteps of those much-loved Impressionists and built up an in depth knowledge and great admiration for them.

The Special Interest Day consists of three sessions, two in the morning, followed by lunch and then another session in the afternoon. It is a smaller event and an opportunity to get to know other attendees over lunch. The day will be held at the Warwick Hall, Church Green, Burford, OX18 4RZ at 10.45am, finishing at 3.00pm. Doors open at 10.15am, with coffee being served. Numbers are restricted so booking is essential to reserve a place via the website or contact programme@theartsocietycotswolds.org.uk or call Alison Morgans on 07771 817050 for a booking form. Charge £42 for members. Non-members are welcome (space permitting) at a charge of £44.

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Park View Childcare Official Opening

His worship the Mayor of Woodstock John Banbury officially opened Park View Childcare on the new Pye Development on Monday 16th September.

In his official opening ceremony John Banbury stated that Park View is a very much needed educational provision for the community, and what a pleasure it was to see the children and team today.

Park View Childcare joint Directors Lorraine Wheatley and Sonja Fenton-Pryor stated how overwhelmed they have been with the interest and thanked those present who have played a part in the journey from the "initial email and conversation this time last year" as stated in her opening speech by Lorraine Wheatley to now the official opening and families already attending.

Jane Maharry from Oxfordshire County Council Education stated how the "the main space had a real wow factor, and it was evident how much care and attention both Lorraine and Sonja have into all the detail and thanked them for their commitment to the endeavour at Park View".

Sian Low Director Founder of RME along with her Divisional Manager Amy Solis stated how honoured and pleased they were to be invited and recognised the little touches for the those attending, in supporting every child's needs.

For further information in registering your child either call 01865 699300 or email: admin@parkviewwoodstock.co.uk



Photography by Beauty & Bicester, Bicester's favourite community and event cameraman

Woodstock Probus Club

Our Monthly Meeting was held on 5th September when our Speakers came from the North Oxfordshire Community Foodbank, Melvina Fawcett and Carol Carter. This is an entirely voluntary effort and they have no government funding. Some 50 volunteers are involved to collect food donations in various drop boxes, sort and distribute on Fridays from Kidlington which is the main activity centre, Chipping Norton and Woodstock. They distribute over 3,000 boxes to those in need during a year. As well as food donations they need cash donations to make up any shortage from the drop boxes. Clients come with a voucher and there is also a CAB advisor on hand to give any advice needed to help them overcome their situation as the Food Bank is only seen as a temporary solution. A number of our members already support the operation and this was a good opportunity for others to get involved.

Also before lunch there was a presentation by the President of the Justin Johnson Trophy which had recently been played for at Tadmorton Heath Golf Club over 18 holes. This was won by Roger Henman who also won it at the inaugural competition in 2011. Well done Roger

Later in the month we are looking forward to visiting New College to look at the medieval records of Swalcliffe Barn with the archivist as well as a tour of the College. This follows an earlier visit to Swalcliffe. Plenty to look forward to including the Opera in October.

Michael Bowles, Past President



Roger Henman

News from Bladon Parish Council

BPC's Response to the Botley West Targeted Consultation

Bladon Parish Council has responded to a Targeted Consultation around the Botley West Solar Farm proposal, regarding a proposed change to the cable route. The change has been proposed due to a Veteran Tree, which should be protected, being affected by the original route. Among other objections, BPC has noted that the proposed revised route does not do enough to avoid or minimise the environmental effects of the cabling on the veteran tree and would cause unacceptable harm to this tree and other mature/veteran trees in the immediate vicinity.

The full response to this Targeted Consultation is available to view on the Bladon Parish Council website at bladon-pc.gov.uk.

Information on Blenheim Events that may impact Bladon

We have added a page to our website where we publish any notices we have received regarding large events held at Blenheim Palace. This page, bladon-pc.gov.uk/blenheim-events/, is regularly updated and includes information regarding traffic management, fireworks and other noise, dates of events including any setup and breakdown, as well as notes on who to contact with any concerns regarding those events. We will also endeavour to post any information we receive onto the Bladon Community Facebook page and send alerts out to users who subscribe to the e-mail update service available through our website.

Speedwatch in Bladon

You may have seen Bladon's crack Speedwatch team in their hi-vis vests, keeping a close eye on the speeds of motorists through the village. Speedwatch is a national scheme where communities, with the support of local police, record details of speeding vehicles using a speed gun, and it has been successfully discouraging speeding in neighbouring communities. Registered vehicle owners found exceeding the speed limit are automatically contacted by the police. If you are interested in joining the team, please contact the Clerk at clerk@bladon-pc.gov.uk.

Remembrance Day

An early reminder that Remembrance Day this year will be held on Sunday, 10th November, at the War Memorial. The meadow bank around the War Memorial is looking exceptionally beautiful this year, for which we would like to thank the volunteers that put in so much time and effort to keep it looking so lovely at all times of the year.

Bladon Snippets from the Past

A landmark no more. About half way along the right of way to Begbroke was Gabe's Barn, a sizable Blenheim building built with huge Cotswold stone blocks. It stood roofless in the seventies, then the valuable stone was reclaimed.

Why Gabe? It seemed he lived there joining the Nuns at Begbroke for breakfast; later in the day he came to Smith's Grocery Shop (now the Pottery) where he took further nourishment. Gabe was a drop-out having turned away from life as we know it. I suspect he came back from World War One so damaged, that all changed.

Mary F. Sitch

Note: Mary is referring to the footpath below the trees that goes through the fields from the top of Heath Lane to the church in Begbroke.

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Friends of St Martin's Bladon



The Bladon Church Room has acquired a new kitchen. Gleaming white cupboards and sparkling new sinks have taken the place of the rather tatty cupboards and sinks that pulled away from the wall. This has been noticed and some users of the room have even enquired about how this was paid for. The answer is that it was paid for by the Friends of St Martin's Bladon. It made me realise that, although the Friends was founded over twenty years ago, there are many who are unaware of its existence. Does this matter? Well yes it does because not only was it founded in 2001 but the Committee that we had then is basically the same one that we have today and, as you can imagine, it would be good to have some new people and ideas taking our place.

The Friends was founded because the Church at that time was very short of money. We were paying over £3,000 per year to have the grass cut in the Churchyard and, although we owned two houses, one was occupied by the curate and one by the verger which cost money rather than contributing to income. Things are different today, the Churchyard has been closed for burials, except for reserved plots and a large part of responsibility for keeping it in order has been taken over by the West Oxfordshire District Council. Both properties generate rent.

Fewer people come to Church regularly but it is the belief of the Friends committee that Bladon appreciates its Church. Christmas, Easter, and Harvest are times when the village comes together. It is difficult to imagine not having a Church for family events, weddings, funerals, and christenings. The Churchyard is always busy with visitors to the Churchill grave and it must be one of the liveliest places in Bladon with people passing through and the joyful sound of the children in the school playground next door.

The Friends was founded with the idea that we would reach out to people who supported the Church but did not want a regular commitment. There have been many fund raising events organised by the Friends from an auction of promises, which was the best fund raising event we ever had, to Easter egg hunts for the children which was a fun rather than fund raiser. We have had regular St Martin's feasts in November when we celebrated our patron saint. We have supporters who pay a regular monthly amount to us and some who donate a single amount.

From this income we have contributed to the Church, the Church Room, and the Churchyard. The first large donation that we made to the Church was to finance the sideboards, cupboards and notice boards that are at the back of the Church and through the years we have helped with donations towards the renovation of the organ £5,000, repair of the tower clock, £6,050 and improving the central heating in the Church, £10,320 as well as financing a new floor in the Church Room, buying a new fridge/freezer and new tables. Grants of over £500 have been made to treat the Churchyard benches, and looking at the state of the benches now it is likely that we shall have to spend more on them. The monthly Lunch Club which meets on the first Tuesday of every month and charges £5 for a main course, a piece of home made cake and coffee is sponsored by the Friends as is the Toddlers group which meets every Wednesday morning 9.35 to 11.30 during term time.

We not only feel that it would be nice to have new people helping to run this Bladon charity but we see it is necessary for new people to become involved. It would be sad if we lost this society through lack of people willing to help run it.

If you feel you may be able to help, please contact me, Mollie Hance, Secretary to the Friends of St Martin's on mollie.hance@tiscali.co.uk. You could come along to a few Committee meetings to see if it is for you before committing yourself.

Mollie Hance

Oxford Bus and Morris Motors Museum

Half Term & Hallowe'en Scary openings

Owls – real ones - pumpkins, spooky buses and all things scary will be found at the bus museum this Hallowe'en – a date that coincides with half term. So scoop up the children and bring them along.

We shall decorate one of the buses, which will be used for the free heritage rides on Sunday 27 October at 12.15pm, 1pm and 2.15pm and on Wednesday 30 October at 12.15pm and 2.15pm.



But beware – last year our bus inspector even frightened one of our conductors!

This year we are determined to make the events even scarier. We thought about having live bats flying around, but concluded that, rather than attracting additional visitors, it might deter them. So we decided to bring in that spookiest of birds, the one most associated with Hallowe'en – an owl, or in our case, several.

So we are delighted that Alan Charlett, who runs Al's Owls, has kindly agreed to bring a selection from his owl collection on both days. Perhaps not as scary as bats, but more interesting, as for a small extra fee, visitors will be allowed to hold the magnificent birds.

Come and enjoy the fun!



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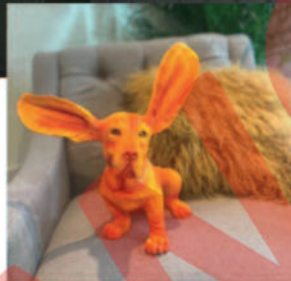
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Keep It Local

Welcome to what we hope will be the first of a regular slot to promote localism, whether it be shopping, events, sports, etc.

I was brought up in the 50s and 60s in rural Wiltshire, where the whole community knew each other. The doctor (my father), the dentist, the banker, the postman, the shopkeeper, the farmer, the builder, the milkman, were all local people who supported each other. It was just the way it was in those days. We were lucky in that we had Jenny, our Jersey cow, who we milked by hand. We shared half our milk with a neighbour who did occasional gardening in return for us. We also made our own butter from the very rich cream in our trusty milk churner and our wooden butter paddles. There was no need for plastic wrapping and transportation from miles away back in those halcyon days.

Then later on I remember our local pub when I first moved to Oxford, which had a blackboard behind the bar. The idea was that you could buy a couple of drinks for a friend or neighbour in return for them doing you a favour - it was always exciting to go in and see if someone had bought you a drink. True British goodwill at it's best.

As the world "improved" over the next 40 years, our lives changed and we were told that it was more efficient to buy from supermarkets, and now they, and delivery companies are making us all more introspective and out of touch with our neighbours. So much is being lost as a result of all this. A simple conversation about a bag of freshly dug potatoes from George the grocer's vegetable garden can present a perfect opportunity to enquire after their sick daughter's wellbeing in a non-invasive way, or to learn of the Vicar's new car.

Let's try to bring back the essence of a close-knit community. Let's try to be more local. We are particularly lucky being in Woodstock - we have so many lovely local shops, to say nothing of the wonderful pubs and restaurants. As for sport, we don't have to necessarily travel to see our favourite Premier team - we can walk to Woodstock Football Field and watch our local team instead; we don't have to go to Wimbledon - we can go to the Woodstock Tennis Club, or North Oxford, and watch County matches. And as for music, well, we can support local jazz, folk rock or choral work rather than spending thousands of pounds on Taylor Swift or Oasis concerts!!!!

If anyone would like to write the next article about localism, we would be delighted to hear from them. Please send your ideas to editor@wobl.news

Nick Manby-Brown, Editor

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STOP PRESS

Doctors Surgery: McCarthy Stone has bought the Police Station site from Blenheim for retirement flats, putting an end to the hope that the surgery could be located there. Please see pages 20 and 21.

McCarthy Stone: On Friday 13th September, WOBL received an EMail to let us know that there was a consultation on Tuesday 17th, and that the consultation would finish on Monday 30th. Assuming the magazine comes out on Friday 28th as planned, our readers have the weekend to consider the proposal!!!

Woodstock Social Club: There will be an AGM held at 7pm on Saturday 12th October in the Club and all members are invited and requested to attend. Tea, coffee, biscuits and soft refreshments will be supplied free of charge. For any enquiries, please contact secretary.woodstocksc@gmail.com

Next Bereavement Cafe: Losing someone you love can turn your world upside down. A Bereavement Cafe at St Mary Magdalene Church on 18th October will provide a space to talk about the pain of loss and to find mutual support and encouragement. All are welcome from 3-5pm. For more information contact Gemma Ferrier 07971 529242.

Peter Jay: As we went to press, we heard the sad news that Peter Jay had died today, Sunday 22 September. More about his life and career next month.


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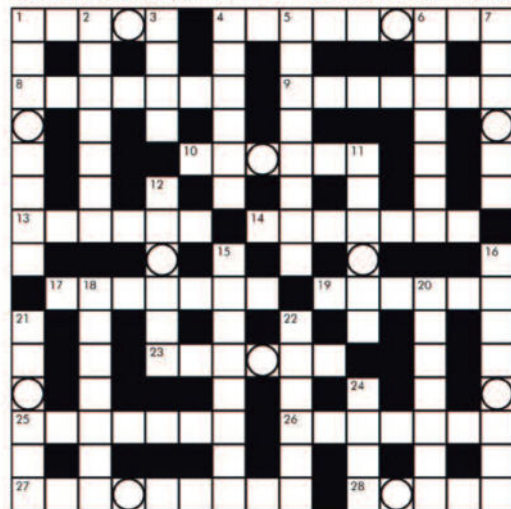
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Solve the clues to this straight crossword. Read through the letters in the marked squares to reveal a character from the television sitcom *Blackadder*.



- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Across</p> <p>1. Elated</p> <p>4. Pecking order</p> <p>8. Rich German fruit loaf</p> <p>9. Sneak peek</p> <p>10. Desert plant</p> <p>13. Scuffle</p> <p>14. Female big cat</p> <p>17. Promised solemnly</p> <p>19. Kitchen item</p> <p>23. Lengthen</p> <p>25. Disposition to move</p> <p>26. Trade stoppage</p> <p>27. Spiced biscuit (6,3)</p> <p>28. Squads</p> | <p>Down</p> <p>1. Pause</p> <p>2. Irrational fears</p> <p>3. Christmas period</p> <p>4. Aircraft building</p> <p>5. Compassionate</p> <p>6. Health facilities</p> <p>7. Gaped with tiredness</p> <p>11. Artiste</p> <p>12. Grow feathers</p> <p>15. Hold back</p> <p>16. Magnanimous</p> <p>18. Encased lamp</p> <p>20. Greek restaurant</p> <p>21. Romancing</p> <p>22. Arthropod</p> <p>24. Adjoin, border</p> |
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