

The Four Parishes News Magazine

BECKLEY
FOREST HILL
HORTON-cum-STUDLEY
STANTON St JOHN



'Family Church does Forest Church' at Bernwood Forest

February 2023

The editor writes:



Here we are again at the start of another year, after what feels like quite a short break! Given what happened at the beginning of 2022, I am definitely not going to try to predict what 2023 will be like, but I think we know it is not going to be easy for many people in the world. We are very lucky to be living in such a pleasant rural environment and this month our magazine has some delightful contributions in celebration of the countryside.

If you browse the Village pages, you will find plenty of events to put in your diary, so please make a note of anything that interests you and be sure to take advantage of the activities on offer in our vibrant, caring communities.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone to take note of our advertisers, without whom this magazine would not be financially viable. Just as we rely on them to advertise with us, we need you to make use of their services. It's all too easy to skip through the Classified pages so, if you haven't read them for a while, have another look!

With best wishes for a happy and healthy 2023.

Julia Stutfield

All contributions to this magazine are the sole responsibility of the author and do not imply or represent any official editorial view or endorsement.

Our cover photo ...

was taken by Anthea Beresford on a bright but chilly day in January 2023. 'Forest Church' is one of the regular activities in our villages for families with young children. See page 9 for more information.

If you have taken a photo which you think might be suitable for the cover of the next magazine, please email it to

4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com

**Benefice of Beckley, Forest Hill with Shotover,
Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John**

Vicar: Reverend Anthea Beresford anthea@fourparishes.org.uk

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We welcome contributions for future issues, but please get in touch with the editorial team beforehand at 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com to discuss any piece you'd like to write. Contributors typically live in the Four Parishes, or have a strong personal connection to the area. The editors reserve the right to reject any submitted content at any stage of the editorial process.

Recent issues of the magazine are available to view online at www.fourparishes.org.uk/magazine.

The closing date for the March 2023 issue is 15 February 2023

**To advertise in the magazine please email JULIA
adverts.4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com**

News or notices for the individual 'Village pages' should be sent to:

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Benefice of Beckley, Forest Hill with Shotover, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John

The Reverend Anthea Beresford is Vicar of the Church of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Beckley, St Nicolas Church in Forest Hill, St Barnabas Church in Horton-cum-Studley, and St John the Baptist Church in Stanton St John. Anthea is supported by a team of voluntary clergy, lay ministers and churchwardens, whose details are listed below.

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Stanton St John

Vacant at present

The Four Parishes News Magazine has 10 issues per year and is distributed free of charge to approximately 850 addresses in Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley, Stanton St John and Beckley. It is funded by advertising revenue, which is used to cover the printing costs. We are dependent on volunteers to assemble the content, book and invoice the advertisers, compile and edit the magazine, collect it from the printers and distribute it throughout the four parishes.

Editor: Julia Stutfield

**Assistant Editors: Jonathan Barker
Anthea Beresford**

Church Services in the Four Parishes, February 2023

	St Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover	St John the Baptist, Stanton St John	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley	St Barnabas, Horton-cum- Studley
5 February <i>3rd Sunday before Lent</i>	11am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Morning Prayer
	4pm Benefice Children's Service at St Nicolas			
	6pm Taizé Service on Zoom			
12 February <i>2nd Sunday before Lent</i>		9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Holy Communion
	11am Benefice Zoom Service			
	4pm Messy Church at Stanton St John Village Hall			
	6pm BCP Choral Evensong			
19 February <i>Sunday next before Lent</i>	11am BCP Morning Prayer	9.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am BCP Holy Communion	11am Holy Communion
	6pm Iona Service at Beckley			
22 February <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	7.30pm Ash Wednesday Communion Service at Forest Hill			
26 February <i>1st Sunday of Lent</i>	10am Benefice Holy Communion Service at Forest Hill			
	3pm Family Church does Forest Church at Bernwood Forest, Horton-cum-Studley			
	6pm Church Without Walls at Stanton St John Village Hall			

A letter from Anthea

Hi everyone,



Yippee! We are over the worst of the long dark days of the winter. We still have a way to go before the days are nice and long, and we can enjoy balmy sunny evenings, sitting out in the garden, or having a lovely evening stroll. That said, let's not wish our lives away! But I am always relieved as we turn the corner after the shortest day, and it is lovely to be noticing the gradual, if slow, lengthening of the day. The difference may only be moderate at the moment, but I have the sense of hope.

I love seeing our gardens beginning to come to life as well. I saw my first daffodil in bloom last weekend - that seems very early, but a delight to behold. The bulbs seem well ahead this year. I saw a primrose in full flower in one of our churchyards last weekend too. No doubt there are swathes of snowdrops that I have just not spotted yet. Catkins are evident too. Nature is waking up.



Whilst it was rather hard to keep warm, I loved the recent cold snaps we have had. They are a relief from the constant rain, and in the first, the frost was so hard that it looked as though we had had a light dusting of snow for a while. It was nice getting home from walks with Bertie nice and clean, rather than caked in mud!

I confess I love snow, as the world seems to slow down, and quieten down.



I appreciate it is not great as we try to get around and go about our usual business, and can be dangerous if we must go out. Sitting and admiring it from in front of a fire is rather beautiful though!

This winter has been particularly hard as we have all tried to keep warm while keeping our fuel bills at a manageable level - without necessarily being fully aware of how much the fuel is costing us. I have had many conversations with people about the number

of layers of clothes they have on, and the different ways they are trying to keep warm. Bertie helps me in the evening when he sits on my knee!

It seems a long while ago now, but it was delightful to celebrate Christmas without any Covid restrictions, whilst still being careful, as so many people have been suffering from winter bugs of all sorts.

As Church communities. we have got to the end of the Christmas and Epiphany seasons with the celebration of the Presentation of Christ at the Temple at the end of January, and we now turn our attention away from celebrating the birth of Jesus, and begin to look towards the Cross of Easter. But there is no rush. We have the whole of February before the season of Lent begins, so we have plenty of time for preparation. Maybe we can use February to think about what we might like to do during Lent to mark the season.

Our village communities may wish to join us for our weekly discussions on 'How Village Churches Thrive'. These are being held weekly on each Wednesday in March in Stanton Village Hall, from 7.30-9pm. Our churches have been key parts of the lives of our communities over centuries, and ensuring their survival and flourishing over the coming centuries is important, and something we might all be interested in contributing towards. For more information, please see page 10.

As the cost of living increase continues to bite, and as people face illnesses of themselves and loved ones, please do get in touch if you need someone to talk to.

Take great care and God bless you and your loved ones.

Anthea



The Reverend Anthea Beresford is Vicar of the Church of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Beckley, St Nicolas Church in Forest Hill, St Barnabas Church in Horton-cum-Studley, and St John the Baptist Church in Stanton St John.

CHURCH MATTERS

All the churches in the benefice are open daily. Beckley: 10am-6pm; Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John: 10am-4pm.

In addition to the church services listed on page 5, there are other activities during the week, details of which appear below, which all are welcome to join. **Please email me (Anthea) at anthea@fourparishes.org.uk if you would like to know more.**

Advent challenge and beyond

I wonder how you got on with your Bible reading during December and January. Did you manage to make time for it amongst the festivities? Did you manage to read through the Gospel of Matthew before Christmas? I would love to hear how you got on.

For February I wonder if we can up the tempo a little, and read both 1 and 2 Samuel, which is 55 chapters in all - so just two a day. It would be a great achievement if we can manage that, so let's have a go. Please do let me know how you get on.

Book Group

We are currently reading *God's biker: motorcycles and misfits* by Sean Stillman. We will shortly be choosing a new book to read for Lent, so if you would like to join us for that, please let me know.

Private devotions during Lent

There are a vast array of books available to us to help us engage with the season of Lent. Here are some suggestions from me:

Godforsaken: The Cross - The Greatest Hope of All by Stephen Cottrell

Failure: What Jesus said about sin, mistakes and messing stuff up by Emma Ineson

Let me go there: The spirit of Lent by Paula Gooder

If you decide to read any of these, I would love to hear how you get on. If you read something else that you think others might be interested to hear about for the future, please do let me know.

Ongoing midweek activities on Zoom

We are continuing Morning and Evening Prayer and the Benefice Book Group on Zoom as detailed below.

	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Morning Prayer at 9am		√		√
Evening Prayer at 6pm	√		√	
Benefice Book Group at 7.30pm			√	

Children's craft workshops

The first Children's craft workshop for 2023 is being held in **Beckley Church on Friday 24 February from 3.30-4.30pm**. The workshop will be looking towards Lent, and helping children to understand what Lent is about in a fun and creative way. The workshops are aimed at primary school children and are run by the 'Open the Book' and 'Messy Church' teams - but you don't need to have attended either of those to come and join in the fun. Children must be accompanied by an adult please. There will be light refreshments. The following workshop has a theme of Mothering Sunday, and is being held on Friday 17 March from 3.30-4.30pm. Please do book in by emailing Betty Dye beforehand at betty.dye10@gmail.com.

2023 dates for your diary for children and family church activities

Benefice Children's Service St Nicolas Church Forest Hill 4-4.30pm	Messy Church Stanton St John Village Hall 4-5pm	Family Church Bernwood Forest Horton-cum-Studley 3-4 pm winter; 4-5pm summer	Children's craft workshops Beckley Church 3.30-4.30pm
5 February	12 February	26 February	24 February
5 March	12 March	26 March	17 March
2 April (St Nicolas, 4-4.30pm)		23 April	
7 May	14 May	28 May	
4 June	11 June	25 June	
2 July	9 July	23 July	

Home Group Study on Romans

The study group looking at the Book of Romans is continuing on Monday afternoons at 2pm at Studley Farm House, Horton-cum-Studley. The book of Romans is a hefty tome and is taking some unpacking! If you are interested in being involved, please contact Annie Payne by email at anniefpayne@gmail.com.

Prayers for Peace

As the war continues in Ukraine, and as God's peace is not present throughout the world, we continue to pray for peace. We meet for 15 minutes at 12pm on Wednesdays and Saturdays in February across the benefice as follows:

Beckley	1, 11 February	Horton-cum-Studley	8, 18 February
Forest Hill	4, 22 February	Stanton St John	15, 25 February

An invitation to all to discuss: How Village Churches Thrive

'How Village Churches Thrive' is a new resource book published by Church House Publishing and is being promoted and used by the Diocese of Oxford to give ideas, and to help conversations, in rural church communities. The book has many practical ideas, while recognising that there are limited numbers of people in villages like ours with the time and energy to do a lot, especially post Covid.

During the season of Lent, we would love to meet with all those from our villages who would like to explore this important topic, as we aim to ensure our village churches remain a vibrant part of our communities, using the ideas in the book to deepen the conversation in our own context.

We will be meeting in **Stanton Village Hall, 7.30-9pm each Wednesday from 1 to 29 March**, and refreshments will be provided. Please don't worry if you can't come every week, as each evening will be stand alone. We will be discussing chapters with intriguing titles like 'Extending a Warm Welcome', 'Celebrating Our Heritage' and 'Making the Most of Life Events'. Each chapter is quite short, full of practical suggestions for us to consider. If you are interested in joining us, please do get in touch with Anthea or Hugh Lee (see page 4). We aim to ensure you have a copy of the book to read beforehand.

GENERAL

Hello from The Maple Tree in Wheatley!

We have started another exciting year - there is something for every family with young children at The Maple Tree Children's Centre in Littleworth Road, Wheatley, and all our sessions are drop-in.



Each session has at least one Early Years focus. Check out our website www.mapletree.org.uk/growing-and-learning/ for more about what this means in practice. There is a suggested donation of £2.50 per family per session.

Monday: **Messy Mondays** at 10-11.30am

Tuesday: **Story and Rhyme Time** at 10-11.30am

Wednesday: **Baby Cafe** at 10am-12pm

Thursday: **Little Explorers** at 10-11.30am and **Twinnies** at 2-3.30pm

Social Butterflies at 10-11.30am

Family Fun at 10-11.30am, 3rd Saturday in month

Village Outreach

The Maple Tree at Forest Hill Village Hall on Thursdays from 11am-12pm

Run with the help of volunteers from Forest Hill and Stanton St John, this play session is also drop-in but is generally a bit quieter if you have a little one with a gentle soul. Parents, grandparents and carers from local villages are particularly welcome but you don't have to live in the Four Parishes to come, and some of our regulars are from further afield.

Check out our website and our Facebook page for more information about our special events, our programmes, and popular our First Aid classes!

We are here to help young families, if you need advice or support please get in touch on 01865 236700 or 07849 466249.

Laura Spencer
The Maple Tree Centre Manager

Email: info@mapletree.org.uk

Website: www.mapletree.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheMapleTreeWheatley

Instagram: [@themapletreecentre](https://www.instagram.com/themapletreecentre)

Dame Elizabeth Holford's Charity: Applications for Bursaries welcomed

The Charity was set up in 1720 when Dame Elizabeth Holford left £500 to establish a school for the children of Stanton St John and Forest Hill. The Charity came into being in 1988, following the closure of the school at what is now the Holford Centre, in Stanton St John. **The Charity's area of benefit now includes Stanton St John, Forest Hill with Shotover, Beckley, Horton-cum-Studley and the ecclesiastical Parish of Elsfield. Applications for grants are invited from school aged children and young people up to the age of 25 who are or who have parents resident in the area of benefit, for help in their educational needs.**

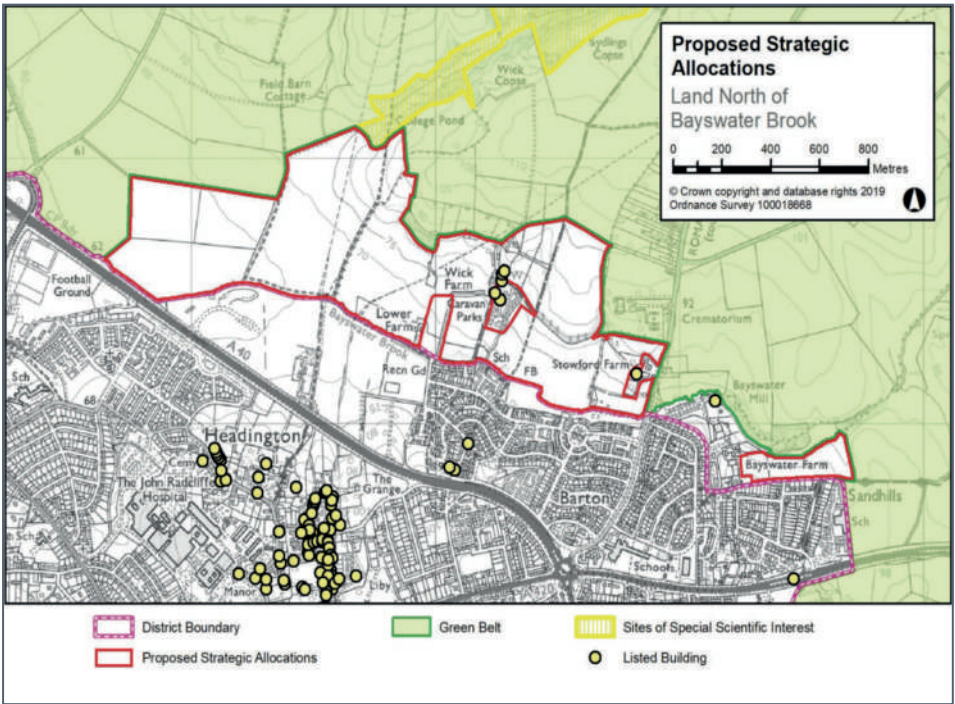
In the past bursaries have been granted for computer software, sporting equipment, residential courses, text books, laptops and other electronic equipment, college courses not funded by Student Finance and music lessons. Applications are not means tested and funding is granted on a case-by-case basis.

The Trustees welcome applications for bursaries addressed to the Chair of Dame Elizabeth Holford's Charity, Alison Finch. The email address is HolfordtrustChair@gmail.com. You can also apply in writing to Alison Finch, 14 Mickle Way, Forest Hill, Oxford, OX33 1DX.

The next meeting of the Trustees is on Monday 20 February 2023.

Update on 'Land north of Bayswater Brook' (LnBB) Developers submit Planning Application: your opportunity to comment

Christ Church, and Dorchester Residential Management, the developers of the Lower Elsfield and Wick Farm part of the site Land north of Bayswater Brook (LnBB) submitted their planning application for their site just before Christmas. We have been told that SODC Planning Officers have now been through all the documents and validated them. The planning application can be viewed on the SODC website www.southoxon.gov.uk/ using reference P22/S4618/O. This will give all local residents who will be affected by this development the opportunity to have their say.



We have yet to be given details by SODC of how this planning application will be processed, but this is a public consultation, when parish councils and local residents can submit their comments. It is important we convey all our concerns to SODC. We are trying to negotiate a longer deadline as at the moment it is 18 February and there are a huge number of documents.

It is then likely to be considered by SODC councillors at a number of Planning Committee meetings at which people will be able to register to speak and give their views.

The links for the public consultation have been posted on the Beckley and Stowood web site, and on local Facebook pages, and your Parish Council has been sent details by SODC. Please do have your say and give your views to SODC. We will have to live with this development and this is likely to be your last opportunity to help shape changes to it.

We have heard no news about the smaller part of the LnBB site to the east at Bayswater Farm, which is in Forest Hill with Shotover Parish.

Ginette Camps-Walsh
January 2023

'Colourful Corvids'

by Lyn Ebbs

I wrote about two of our black corvids (members of the crow family) last summer, but they do have more colourful cousins. Three of them are locally common.

Let's start with the jackdaw. It could be called 'jack' because it's small, because that's a pet name, like Robin Redbreast, or because its call sounds like 'Jack!', or it could be all three. They are about the size of a pigeon, with black plumage on the body that fades to a soft, silvery grey over the back of the head. Their eyes have pale, almost white irises. Jackdaws are hole nesters and will commonly nest in chimneys, buildings, and tree holes, and are a familiar sight perched on chimney pots in our villages. With its jaunty walk, the jackdaw seems to have avoided the more intense persecution campaigns waged against other corvids, although, along with the magpie, it has a reputation for being attracted to bright, shiny objects.

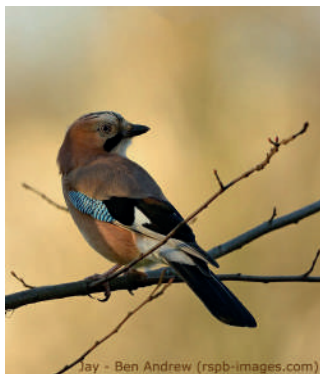


Magpies are jacks of all trades - scavengers, predators and pest-destroyers, and their challenging, almost arrogant attitude has won them few friends. They are highly intelligent and very adaptable; they are omnivorous, eating mainly insects, but will also take carrion and store surplus food. They used to be heavily persecuted by gamekeepers, but their numbers recovered greatly in the late 20th century. This coincided with a decline in numbers of many songbirds, such as the song thrush, and despite long-term studies proving them not guilty, magpies continue to be blamed for their loss. It's true that they will take nestlings and young fledglings but the dramatic fall in insect numbers is a far more important cause of songbird decline.



With its noisy chattering, black-and-white plumage and long tail, the magpie is hard to ignore and an easy target for people who like their birds a bit less self-confident. They have given their name to sports teams whose colours are black and white, but close-up the magpie's black plumage takes on an altogether more colourful hue with a purplish-blue iridescent sheen to the wing feathers and a green gloss to the tail. They are also associated with many versions of the folk rhyme that starts: "One for sorrow, two for joy" and some people still treat the sight of one magpie as unlucky, unless you address it by wishing it "Good day".

The shyest but also the most colourful member of the crow family is the jay and at one time "Jay" was used as a dismissive term for a flashy dresser. It has a body colour of warm greyish pink, a speckled crest and a white rump. Most eye-catching of all are the blue striped wing coverts which were once used to make anglers' flies. In spite of their flashy plumage, jays are actually quite difficult to see. They are very much woodland inhabitants, rarely moving far from cover. Its screaming call will let you know a jay is nearby and it's when a bird is on the move that you catch sight of that distinctive flash of white on the rump. They have attracted some of the hostility levelled at magpies for their nest-raiding, suffering persecution as a result, but are primarily vegetarian.



Jays are famous for their acorn feeding habits and, in the autumn, you may see them burying acorns to retrieve later. An individual jay can store around 8,000 acorns each year. In winter the birds visit their scattered larders to feed, exhibiting remarkable powers of memory in retrieving their stores. Some 'lost' acorns can then germinate and develop as new oak trees.

These three species are smart birds in both senses of the word - stylish and intelligent. And it may be their intelligence that makes them unpopular, we feel slightly threatened by birds that can outsmart us.

Lyn Ebbs has lived in Stanton St John for 34 years and has been volunteering at the RSPB Otmoor Reserve at Otmoor Lane, Beckley, since 2009.

How are the mighty fallen!

Planting Trees for The Queen's Green Canopy

In February 2022, the high winds of Storm Eunice felled a handsome,



dead-yet-still-standing oak in Mill Field near Stanton Great Wood. Stand-alone field trees, once emblematic of the English landscape, have been lost at an estimated rate of up to 84% in recent times (Woodland Trust, 2021).

Meanwhile awareness has grown of their further key role as habitat, vital stepping stones for wildlife between patches of woodland and as shelter/shade for livestock.

Amongst local field trees already lost were those in Stanton St John below Millennium Field and Hillcraft, where older residents may recall a large mid-field stump and where other remains are still extant (clue: thorny surrounds). I had dreamt of restoring one for the Millennium but rather missed the deadline. The Queen's Green Canopy initiative (see below), together with the special chance of being given a Windsor oak for the purpose, revitalised the idea, and the Parish Council welcomed it.

Last winter, two young English oaks were generously lifted from Windsor Great Park for Stanton, one as a spare; we chose to plant both. Construction of essential livestock protection, planting and watering were all kindly undertaken by Julian Money. One didn't stay the course, the other was knocked back during this summer's drought but seems well on its way as a new resident beside the lower footpath to Mill Field.

The old oak, Stanton's last freestanding outrider of the Great Wood, had been brought down just days before planting took place. It was a pleasure and a comfort to give a kindred successor a start straightaway. We hope that it will thrive and that future creatures of all sorts might enjoy and be sustained by its presence.

Note: there's still time for individuals, schools, villages, businesses, and community groups to plant trees for The Queen's Green Canopy initiative. 'Everyone across the UK is invited...' and the invitation has happily been extended to the end of March to include the full planting season. <https://queensgreencanopy.org/get-involved/>.

Single trees can be purchased through the Woodland Trust website as well as local and other nurseries. <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/schools-and-communities/queens-green-canopy/>.

Also, those without garden space or access to planting sites who wish to support the treeing of Britain can make a donation 'directly towards planting trees in schools and urban areas ... to the benefit of future generations across the United Kingdom.' <https://shop.queensgreencanopy.org>.

*Emily Van Evera
Stanton St John*

Walking England: time to get walking again!

With Spring on its way, we start to think about getting out to walk in the beautiful English Countryside again, but where to find new and interesting walks? There is a huge amount of walking information on the web, but it is difficult to find what you want.

Walking in Oxfordshire (part of the Walking in England website) has brought everything together in one place, so whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you. With walks from half a mile to over twelve miles long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy. So home or away, check out the websites and get walking!

Walking in Oxfordshire <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/oxfordshire> has loads of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

*John Harris
john@walkinginengland.co.uk*

BECKLEY

Beckley Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 5 - 10**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Christmas in Beckley Church

Very many thanks to everyone who helped with our Christmas celebrations, including the ever popular 'Carols and Claret' on 18 December and a 'Messy Crib Service' on Christmas Eve, which was much enjoyed by adults and children alike. The collection from 'Carols and Claret' was given to the St Martin-in-the Fields Charity.

Repairs to the Beckley Church Organ

Some parishioners will know that the organ, which was already making extraneous noises because of problems with its 'pneumatics', was further damaged during storms last year, when rain leaked through defective flashing on the vestry roof. The repairs relating to the storm damage will be covered by insurance, and the other necessary work (patching of the leathers, and overhaul of the front pipe action, as well as cleaning and partial overhaul of the remaining parts of the organ) will be carried out at the same time. The additional work not covered by the insurance is costing in the region of £22,000. We have received two anonymous donations of £5,000 each towards this, for which we are exceedingly grateful but there is still a further £12,000 to find. Whilst we do have the finances for this work, it does mean that this money is not available for other valuable activity of the PCC, so if you would like to donate towards the repair of the organ, please do get in touch with Susy Jepson susy.jepson@gmail.com. The work is due to start in the next 2 weeks, and will be completed well before Easter, as long as all goes to plan. Once completed, we very much look forward to welcoming you to the Church to hear the fully refurbished organ in its full glory.

The organ is thought to have been built by Charles Martin for an Oxford College around 1880, apparently as a single manual instrument. Martin

was very active as an organ builder in the Oxford area from the late 19th century and he also built the single manual church organs in Forest Hill and Stanton St John around the same time. The firm became Martin and Coate in the 1890s, based in Pembroke Street, and was still operating in the 1930s. According to the National Pipe Organ Register, the organ was rebuilt in 1934, when it is thought to have been moved to Beckley Church and converted to a two manual instrument.

Beckley and Area Community Benefit Society Ltd

More than a Pub program. <https://bacbs.org/events>

The Beckley & Area Community Benefit Society (BACBS) has a great line up of events at The Abingdon Arms, Beckley to which all are welcome.

Coffee mornings

1st Wednesday of the month, 11am. Meet for coffee and cake in the pub.

Pub quiz

1st Wednesday of the month, 7.30pm. Thanks to The Abingdon Arms, there's a free round of drinks for the winning team.

Community walks

3rd Sunday of the month, 2pm start. Dogs on leads are welcome on these gentle, approximately two-hour, walks.

More than a Pub talks

Talks are usually from local experts and cover a wide range of topics.

Sunday 26 February, 6.30pm: *Walking on Water*

In the UK, millions of people have arthritis that affect the joints. Michael Beverly, a retired orthopaedic surgeon from Islip, will look at how your joints work and why they get arthritis.

Sunday 26 March, 6.30pm: *Placebos in Medicine*

Professor Andrew Carr, Nuffield Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Oxford, will talk about placebos in medicine (full details tbc.)

If you missed any of the talks and want to listen to the recordings or would like more information, go to bacbs.org/events.

BACBS Good Neighbour Scheme

Started three years ago, the Good Neighbour Scheme is still operating, albeit at a low level, to give lifts to those with no other transport - for example, to the doctors and village shop in Stanton as well as lifts to the Barton/Green Road roundabout, where there are regular buses into Headington and central Oxford. The scheme serves Beckley, Elsfield, Stanton, Forest Hill, Woodeaton. (Noke, Islip and Horton-cum-Studley have their own schemes).

To request a lift, ring either 07514 791910 (if no answer, leave a message) or email BACBSgoodneighbour@gmail.com. If you know of anyone who might need help, and perhaps does not know this service exists, please do let them know. If you would like to volunteer, please email the above address.

Beckley & Stowood Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 2 February at 7pm at Beckley Village Hall**. Any changes to the published meeting dates will be on the website www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk.

The Clerk's email address is clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk and Parish Council information can be found on the website.

For information on Beckley Village Hall, please see www.beckleyvillagehall.org and to enquire about a booking please contact the Booking Secretary at booking@beckleyvillagehall.org.

Beckley and Stowood Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

The consultation runs from 19 January until 2 March 2023.

Read the documents online and find out more at southoxon.gov.uk/BeckleyAndStowood-NP. The printed documents can be viewed at The Abingdon Arms (during opening hours) or Beckley Village Hall (during events).

Please help spread the word to others who may wish to take part. For any queries, please call 01235 422600 or email planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk.

FOREST HILL

News from St Nicolas Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 5 - 10**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Thank you to everyone who helped with our Christmas festivities: decorating the Church, playing the organ and singing, providing refreshments and attending or officiating at our many and varied services.

Jane Walker

Ride and Stride

A very big thank you to all the kind people who sponsored me for last years Ride and Stride. I made £172, which will be shared between St Nicolas and the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust.

Pat Fraser

Music at St Nicolas

A huge thank you to all the members of the St Nicolas Choir who turned out on cold winter evenings in November, December and January to rehearse in church as well as learning music on their own at home. Having not had a choir at Christmas since 2019, it was truly wonderful to have such a feast of music at our Christmas services.

Peter and Julia Stutfield



‘Daffodil Day’ at Shotover House, Sunday 26 March, 2-4.30pm

Anyone who came to Daffodil Day in March 2022 will remember the afternoon of absolutely stunning weather, as we emerged from yet another Covid-19 ‘lockdown’. An astonishing number of people from all over Oxfordshire were attracted by the thought of spending a quiet afternoon in the private gardens of Shotover House and the result, although exceeding expectations from the fundraising point of view, was somewhat overwhelming for all concerned!

This year St Nicolas Church, with the support of the Shotover Trust who own and manage the house and grounds at Shotover, has once again joined with The Maple Tree Children’s Centre in Wheatley (see page 11) to organise another ‘Daffodil Day’. **Advance tickets will be available to purchase online from Monday 20 February, so put the date in your diary and watch out for details or visit <https://www.stnicolasforesthill.org/>.**

We are making a number of changes to the way we organise the event this year, to prepare for the possibility of a large number of visitors (although realistically the situation this year will be quite different from 2022). Meanwhile we are looking for volunteers to help with a range of tasks, both beforehand and on the day. If you would like to help out in any way please contact Julia Stutfield (07766 103427 or julia.stutfield@gmail.com).

Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be in March at 7pm in Forest Hill Village Hall. The date to be confirmed and will be advertised on the village website. Current Agendas and Minutes are posted on the notice board outside the Village Hall. Archived Agendas and Minutes can be found on the website www.parish-council.com/foresthillwithshotover/index.asp.

You can contact the Clerk by email at theclerk@foresthillwithshotover-pc.org or telephone 0844 884 3328, between 9am and 5pm.

Forest Hill Village Hall

To hire the village hall, please contact Dawn Dunbar either by email at dunbardawn@ymail.com or on 07527 732050.

HORTON-cum-STUDLEY

News from St Barnabas

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 5 - 10**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Coffee and Chat

Coffee and chat will be in St Barnabas church on Saturday 11 February 10am-12pm. Everyone is welcome to pop down to share an hour or so with neighbours.

The Reverend Anthony de Vere died peacefully at his home in Old Headington on 2 January. Anthony was the vicar of Horton-cum-Studley, Elsfield and Beckley 1971-1994. He served the villages with devotion and dedication. Latterly he joined the Roman Catholic Church where he continued his ministry.

Nick Mynheer

Millenium Village Hall news

Our November Wine Tasting Event was enjoyed by all, and stocks of the Italian wines were ordered in for the festive season (or any season). Those attending contributed to a surplus of roughly £170, added to the playground fund.

Thanks again to Nick and Lisa for organising the Christmas event on 21 December, decorating the hall, and the smooth running of various activities: for some it was their first experience of the Mummers play tradition. Thanks also to Ben and Tori Short for running a bar and ladling out copious cups of mulled wine.

Zumba classes have started. Book with Fredrika on 07856 285273.

A reminder of contact details: for hall bookings bookingshcsmvh@gmail.com and for treasurer treasurerhcsmvh@gmail.com.

Nick Meyjes 1930 - 2022

Nick was born in 1930 in Gerrards Cross, a good vintage year he always said! He was 8 years old when war broke out. His father, an engineer, was asked to be an Armaments Inspector, so the family moved to Birmingham, not a good place for an 8-year-old boy. An evacuated prep school was found in Puddleston in Herefordshire. His parents took him to see the school. The Headmaster explained the school was really full but added "does the boy sing?" Nick's mother, having no idea if he could sing at all, said with great enthusiasm, "Oh yes," the Headmaster replied, "If he will join the choir, I will take him." Fortunately, Nick found he could sing, and became a chorister, singing solos in the village church. He also sang in the Three Choirs Festival. It was a happy time.



At the end of the war, the family returned to Gerrards Cross and Nick went to school in London. At school Nick had been persuaded to take part in a play. He found he really enjoyed acting and this continued all his life.

Nick studied photography at the London School of Printing. He then joined *The Field*, a country sports magazine as a staff photographer. He had 12 wonderful years, photographing landscapes, agricultural shows and country pursuits and meeting many interesting people from all walks of life.

Nick joined a choir in London, and one evening after rehearsals, on the way to the pub, crossing the Marylebone Road, he was introduced to a new choir member, Jill, and the rest is history! They were married in 1962 and bought a house in Surrey which needed a lot of work. Nick enjoyed DIY and was good at it, so with Jill as mate, they set about the house. In 1964 their first daughter Rebecca was born.

After 12 years at *The Field*, Nick was ready for a change, so they decided to leave London and Nick joined a firm in Headington to work as an official

photographer for the University of Oxford. In 1966 they bought a house in Horton-cum-Studley. One week later, Joanna was born rather earlier than planned and three weeks later, Nick decided that unfortunately the job was not going to work out. So there they were, new baby, new house, no money, no telephone and no job! After much thought, Nick decided he would become a freelance photographer. He had continued to freelance for The Field. Jobs would come in by telegram - it was all very different from today! In a couple of years, he had built up a good client list, mainly by word of mouth.

Nick and Jill joined the Studley Singers which brought many years of fun, enjoyment and companionship. Nick also joined the Horton Players, the Islip Players and latterly the Limewalk Players. Many happy hours and some excellent productions followed, not forgetting Gilbert and Sullivan. In one of Shakespeare's plays, Nick, as the Duke had to open the play. As the curtain rose on the assembled Court, a messenger arrives who hands a scroll to the Duke. He opens it, to read "Your flies are undone" - Nick's thought was 'I'll kill him!

The Otmoor Challenge was always a great day. From the early days Nick did the commentary. On one occasion, a visitor was heard to say, "I only come to listen to that chap" so he was dubbed the voice of the Otmoor Challenge.

He had two stints as Chairman of the Gardening club which he much enjoyed. On retirement he became a National Trust tour guide at Boarstall Tower taking parties round the tower and telling them about its history which he loved doing. Every year Rob Dixon, who was the tenant and his wife Pam, gave a wonderful lunch party on the terrace for the volunteers and partners. Lunching in the sun with a lovely group of people eating and drinking was wonderful.

Nick loved meeting people and having friends and family come to the house. Nick and Jill felt they were so lucky to have come to such a lovely village with a strong community, where lifelong friendships were forged.

Nick has left us all with so many happy memories and we were very blessed to have lived the remainder of our marriage here.

*Jill Meyjes
Horton-cum-Studley*

The H-c-S playground committee warmly invite you to a

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On Saturday 4th March

At the Millennium Hall, H-c-S

At 7pm for 7.30pm (first dance)

In aid of the new playground

For more info, to purchase tickets or to donate a raffle prize, please email Nat or Vicky on

playgroundsubcommittee@gmail.com

Tickets must be purchased in advance.

And will be limited so please book early!

Adults: £10

Children: £5 (Under 3s: Free)

Bar, nibbles and raffle will be available on the night. (Cash & card payments accepted)

Village Night at Studley Wood

The next Village Nights at the Golf Club are Friday 24 February and Friday 24 March.

If you would like more details about these supper evenings contact Ruth on ruth.david@live.com

Menu choices need to be given on the Monday before each of the Social Nights.

Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council news

The Parish Council continues to meet remotely at 7.30pm on the 2nd Thursday of each month and face to face on a quarterly basis in the Village Hall. The next face to face meeting is on Thursday 9 March.

The recent cold snap and heavy rain has caused a deterioration of local roads with many new pot holes appearing over recent weeks. If you spot a pothole, please log the location and details of the size, depth etc. on Fixmystreet fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/. Attach photographs, if you can find a safe place to stop.

Our email address is hortoncumstudleyparishcouncil@gmail.com.

Launton & Otmoor District Update January 2023

It is a short update from us this month, as December was largely a clean-up and prepare for 2023 at the District Council. We are available as always on 01869 717712 or via email at gemma.coton@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or angus.patrick@cherwell-dc.gov.uk.

The Local Plan

The delayed Local Plan, with additional detail on housing needs across the region, was released at the end of 2022 for consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny committee in early January. It is very detailed, running to many pages, and once that committee reports back, the CDC Executive will work further on it. The draft has been forwarded to the Parish Councils locally, and more information on the Local Plan for Cherwell is available at www.cherwell.gov.uk/homepage/27/local-plans.

Full Council meeting - December 2022

A full council meeting was held on 19 December with a number of motions and questions being raised. The proposed Botley West Solar Farm was raised by me in a question to the Leader of CDC, Cllr Barry Wood. I asked for an official CDC position to be published so we can respond to you better, and for a mechanism to capture public comments before it is available on the planning portal. You can find more information on the meeting, and see the exchange above at 18 minutes in to the webcast, on the CDC portal at cherwell.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/731072.



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STANTON ST JOHN

Stanton Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 5 - 10**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Christmas Lights in Stanton St John

A huge thank you to all those who helped at and attended our Christmas lights evening on 9 December. It was a lovely get together once again, hopefully enjoyed by all, and although not a 'money making' event, we managed to raise £659! We will purchase a timer for the tree lights, new lights for next year (as some bulbs only just made it to twelfth night) and the remainder has been donated to the Church repair/upkeep fund.

Sue Baker and Elaine Warner

Ninebarrow, Stanton Church, Saturday 25 March at 7.30pm

The Dorset folk duo return to Stanton St John to perform songs inspired by the landscape and history of the British Isles.

Tickets (£16) now on sale at www.ninebarrow.co.uk/gigs. Tickets will also be available from Stanton Village Shop nearer the time or by contacting Julian Money on 01865 351829 or julianmoney@hotmail.co.uk.

Stanton St John WI

In February we are focusing on Friendship and recharging our batteries with a relaxed and informal selection of activities. If you enjoy crafts, feel free to bring along your current project, be it knitting, sewing, crochet or something completely different. There's no compulsion to demonstrate, but sharing our enthusiasms such as cookery tips, especially energy saving, would be welcome. For those who are "not into crafts" perhaps you could recommend books you've enjoyed, show off your quiz or dingbats expertise or provide us with a few gardening or wildlife tips? Alternatively, you can just sip tea or prosecco and relish cake whilst browsing through some of our archives. Yes, we really did all those things and didn't we look young?!!

The village hall will be open at 7.30pm on Tuesday 21 February. We look forward to seeing you then.

Monthly Coffee Mornings in Stanton Village Hall, 10.30am-12pm

Come for tea, coffee and cake on 8 February and 8 March. Everyone is welcome! For further details, please contact Sue Baker 351449 / Sarah Coyne 358876.

Film Night at Stanton St John Village Hall

Saturday 25 February, 7.45 pm

The Stanton St. John Film Club presents the 2022 comedy-drama:

MRS HARRIS GOES TO PARIS



"Mrs. Harris goes to Paris" tells the story of a widowed cleaning lady in 1950s London who falls madly in love with a couture Dior dress and decides that she must have one of her own.

The film will start at 7.45pm but doors will be open at 7pm. Before and after the film, delicious cakes and drinks are available whilst the bar will serve wines and "Blue Negligee" cocktails

Since only 60 seats are available in the Village Hall, please reserve your seats as soon as possible for the screening by emailing Sue Baker (susanjbaker24@gmail.com) or in the Village Shop.

Tickets are £5 (cash only) will be sold at the door. Any profits raised will be used to enhance the Village Hall for future screenings.

Stanton St John Parish Council

Traffic measures in the village

This project is moving forward (at a very modest speed!) and a formal consultation process on changes to the speed limits and their boundaries should be underway soon.

External lighting and electrics at the Village Hall and Millennium Green

Many thanks to all those involved in the work completed shortly before Christmas. The new low-level lights in the Village Hall car park are a great improvement, with reduced light spill and environmental impact, and the new external power supply to the Millennium Green simplifies the arrangements for the village Christmas tree and outdoor events.

Parish Council meetings in 2023

Meeting dates for the rest of this year are: 20 February, 20 March, 24 April, 22 May, 19 June, 17 July, 25 September, 23 October, 20 November and 18 December, at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

Meeting agendas are published on the notice board outside the shop, and via our email distribution list. Please contact our Parish Clerk, Anita James, at stantonstjohnpc@gmail.com if you would like to be added to the email list. Members of the public are always welcome; there is a 10 minute public forum at the beginning of each meeting.

* * * * *

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen

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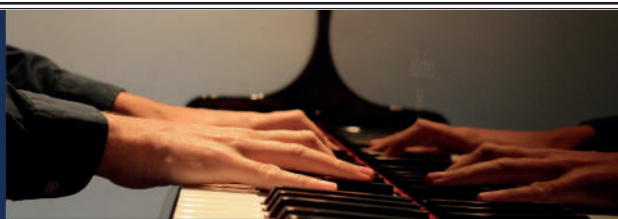
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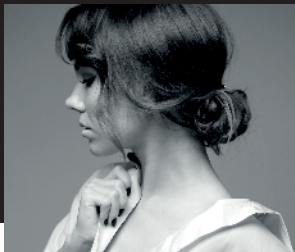
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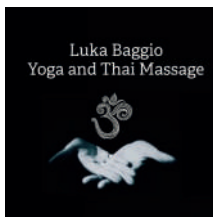
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