

The Four Parishes News Magazine

BECKLEY
FOREST HILL
HORTON-cum-STUDLEY
STANTON St JOHN



Spring flowers in St Nicolas Churchyard, 2019

March 2022

The editor writes:



This month's magazine is slightly shorter than it has been recently, for reasons that I can't quite put my finger on. Nevertheless, there is still plenty of interesting content and news of local events to look forward to, including the welcome return of 'Daffodil Day' (see back cover) after a hiatus of two years, thanks to the ravages of Covid-19.

Our wonderful advertisers continue to support us, and I am always delighted when I see trade vans around our villages belonging to businesses that I recognise from the pages of this magazine.

The existence of the magazine is entirely dependent on advertising revenue and on the good will of the many volunteers who support it in different ways. If you are curious about what is involved in creating and distributing a publication such as this, and want to learn more, why not get in touch with me? You might find an opportunity to learn a new skill and get some pleasure out of serving our community.

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 Julia Stutfield on a beautiful spring day in March 2019.

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**

Rev'd Anthea Beresford
Vicar

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The closing date for the April 2022 issue is 15 March 2022

The Four Parishes News Magazine is produced under the auspices of our four village churches for the benefit of the whole community. 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. If you are interested in getting involved, please email Julia at 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com.

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

Editor: Julia Stutfield

**Assistant Editors: Jonathan Barker
Anthea Beresford**

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.

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

Church Services in the Four Parishes, March 2022

	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
2 March <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	7.30pm Ash Wednesday Service at Beckley			
6 March <i>1st Sunday of Lent</i>	11am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Morning Prayer
	4pm St Nicolas Children's Service via Zoom			
	6pm Taizé Service via Zoom			
13 March <i>2nd Sunday of Lent</i>		9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Holy Communion
	11am Benefice Zoom Service			
	4.30pm Messy Church at Stanton St John Village Hall			
	6pm BCP Choral Evensong at Forest Hill (St Nicolas Consort)			
20 March <i>3rd Sunday of Lent</i>	11am Morning Prayer (BCP)	9.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am Holy Communion (BCP)	11am Morning Prayer
	6pm Iona Service at Beckley			
27 March <i>Mothering Sunday</i>		9.30am All Age Holy Communion		
	4.30pm Benefice Mothering Sunday Family Church Horton-cum-Studley Millenium Village Hall			
	6pm Church Without Walls Stanton St John Village Hall			

Please check our website <https://www.fourparishes.org.uk/> for any last minutes changes to this list of services.

Additional Notes on Church Services

Please contact Anthea anthea@fourparishes.org.uk if you would like an invitation to any of the Zoom services listed opposite, or to be added to the regular mailing list about church activities in the Four Parishes.

Ash Wednesday: 2 March

This service marks the beginning of Lent. All are welcome to come and share in this special occasion together at **7.30pm in Beckley Church.**

Messy Church: 13 March

We are really excited to be starting Messy Church this month. It will be held at **4.30pm on the second Sunday of every month.** We intend to move it around the village halls, depending on their availability. The first will be held in Stanton Village Hall.

The activity will last around an hour. Parents need to accompany their children. There will be a Bible story and some gentle teaching and conversation about the story, a craft activity, music and food. Teas and coffees will be available for parents. We hope everyone will have fun, build supportive relationships with each other, learn about Jesus, and gently grow in their faith. We look forward to starting this exciting new venture, to add to the other activities we have for children and families in the benefice. Please do get in touch with Anthea to let her know if you plan to be there, so we can ensure we have sufficient resources.

Mothering Sunday: 27 March

Mothering Sunday falls on the fourth Sunday of March, which traditionally is the week we hold the Benefice Service. It is also the week when Family Church meets in the Millennium Village Hall in Horton-cum-Studley. This year, we thought it would be rather wonderful to combine our Benefice Service with the Family Church meeting, so **all are invited to the Millennium Village Hall in Horton-cum-Studley at 4.30pm for the Four Parishes Benefice Mothering Sunday Family Church followed by afternoon tea.**

For anyone unable to come to the afternoon service, there is also an all-age Mothering Sunday Holy Communion Service in Stanton St John Church at 9.30am.

A letter from Anthea

Hi everyone,

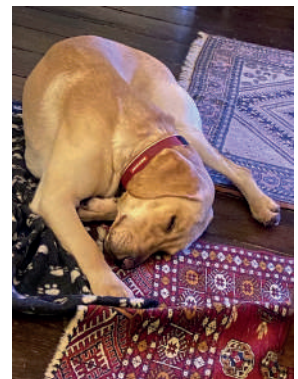


I do not recall weather quite like that which we have encountered this last week or so, despite vivid memories of storms over the years: those of October 1987, when Sevenoaks in Kent lost six of its seven famous oak trees; the flooding of Boscastle, Cornwall in 2004 when I was camping a few miles up the coast; and various other camping trips where we were either nearly washed, or blown, away!

First, we had Storm Dudley, then Storm Eunice and just as we were recovering, along came Storm Franklin! As is always the case with these things, some areas were affected more badly than others, and tragically both people and animals lost their lives.

I love watching wild seas - from a safe distance - not like mad people (in my view!) who stand right at the water's edge, putting themselves in danger of being washed into the sea by the huge breaking waves that come along. But I am not keen on strong winds. I do not like hearing or watching strong winds, as they are wild, powerful, and uncontrollable. We are fortunate in this country that hurricanes and tornadoes are phenomena we barely encounter.

Today I went for a walk along the River Severn at the tail end of Storm Franklin as the incoming tide raced up the river. I watched huge pieces of fallen tree being pulled along by the current, and then be caught in an eddy, and begin floating back in the opposite direction - a marvel of nature. The water was muddy brown, and choppy. Later in the evening as I returned to the same spot, whilst the water was still muddy, it was calm and inviting, and had a sense of stillness about it - the contrast from earlier in the day was incredible. A walk up into the woods above the river showed signs of the winds that has passed through - fallen trees and debris from trees all over the path.



It was interesting that these storms happened around the Sunday where we heard Luke 8:22-25 read in our churches which is about Jesus and his disciples being caught in a storm on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus sleeps peacefully as the storm rages around them. Having been woken by his terrified disciples as they feared for their lives, Jesus calms the storm, then rebukes them asking 'where is your faith?' After all, he was with them, so what was the problem?

Our faith is often tested as storms rage around us, whether from the weather as we have just encountered, or storms of ill health, the loss of a loved one, a broken relationship, the loss of a job, financial worries, or anything else that knocks us off an even keel. It can be hard to trust Jesus is with us in the storm; in the boat with us, as we are being battered by the waves around us.

How might we strengthen our faith to help us through these storms? What might help us sense Jesus in the boat with us, calming the storm? By being in close relationship with him: by spending time in prayer and reading the Bible - sources of strength and encouragement.

Lent, which start on 2 March, would be a good time to put time aside to do this. Jesus promises to be with us, and to send us the Holy Spirit. When the storms of life threaten to drown us, we need to seek his presence, by spending time with him.

Please do get in touch if life is tough and you need someone to talk to. Take great care, keep safe and God bless you and your loved ones.

Anthea



CHURCH MATTERS

Church opening, and services

All the churches in the benefice are open daily:

Beckley: 10am-6pm; Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John: 10am-4pm

Covid and our churches

Wearing face coverings is now up to individuals. Where you know there are vulnerable people in the congregation, please be considerate. We continue to use the hand sanitiser on entering Church and during Communion. Before gathering together, please consider taking a lateral flow test, and please do not come to church if you are feeling unwell. Please do wrap up warm as the churches will continue to be well ventilated.

Advent challenge and beyond

I hope you enjoyed reading through Ezekiel last month. This month the challenge is to read three books, but panic not, it involves reading just one chapter a day: Daniel (12 chapters), Lamentations (5 chapters) and Hosea (14 chapters). Happy reading! Please do let me know how you get on.

Ongoing midweek activities on Zoom

We are continuing Morning and Evening Prayer and the Benefice Book Group on Zoom as detailed. Please do get in touch with Anthea for invitations if you wish to be included.

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

Living in Love and Faith

This is a reminder that the five-week course is starting on **Wednesday 9 March, at 7.30pm**, with each session lasting **1½ hours**. We will meet from 7.15pm in **Stanton Village Hall**, and there will be tea, coffee and biscuits to encourage conversation! Please do get in touch with Anthea if you have any questions, or to let her know you would like to take part in the course.

Book Group

The Book Group continues to meet virtually by Zoom on a Thursday evening at 7.30pm. We are reading *Phoebe* by Paula Gooder. If you would like to join the Group, please do get in touch with Anthea. All are welcome.

Daytime Lent Group

There will be a daytime Lent group looking at the Book of Romans. It commences on 9 March and will be held in Horton-cum-Studley on a Wednesday afternoon, beginning at 2.30pm.

If you are interested in being involved, please contact Annie Payne on 01865 351018, leaving a message if there is no reply, or by email at anniefpayne@gmail.com.

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Walking in Oxfordshire

At this time of year we start to think about the mud drying up and getting out to walk in the beautiful English Countryside again, but where to find new and interesting walks?

Walking in Oxfordshire www.walkinginengland.co.uk/oxfordshire has hundreds 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.

With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy. So home or away, check out the website and get walking!

GENERAL

Situations Vacant

JOB VACANCY FOR A PARISH CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER - 8 HRS PER WEEK

for FOREST HILL WITH SHOTOVER PARISH COUNCIL

To carry out the administrative and clerical functions of the Parish Council and manage the Council's accounts and financial records.

Training is available on specific aspects of the role.

The hours are flexible and mainly working from home with the need to attend an evening meeting approximately every 6 weeks.

Candidates should have good organisational and communication skills (oral and written), be competent in IT including working with documents and spreadsheets and have experience with financial data.

For further details and a job description or to arrange an informal chat please contact the current Clerk.

Email: theclerk@foresthillwithshotover-pc.org.uk or tel: 0844 884 3328

Would you like a job for 1-3 days a week?

Companion/home help for Grandad with early dementia in Beckley

Flexible working (could fit with school day/term time)

Need to be able to drive and have car

Please contact Emma for more information

Mobile: 07967 640446

Email: emmacfergusson@hotmail.com

Dame Elizabeth Holford's Charity

Applications for Bursaries welcomed

Dame Elizabeth Holford's Charity offers benefits to children and young people up to the age of 25 who are or who have parents resident in Stanton St John, Forest Hill with Shotover, Beckley, Horton-cum-Studley and the ecclesiastical Parish of Elsfield.

The bursaries are available now for help in educational needs. In the past monies have been granted for computer software, sporting equipment, residential courses, text books, laptops and other electronic equipment, college courses not funded by Student Finance, tools for an apprentice 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.

Anne Robson Trust

The Anne Robson Trust is a pre-bereavement charity that passionately believes that No one deserves to die alone.

We work alongside NHS hospitals to train Butterfly Volunteers, who sit with end-of-life patients in order to provide company and comfort to people in their last days and hours of life. However, due to COVID restrictions the volunteers were forced to withdraw from the hospitals, and in response to this, we decided to set up a free, National Helpline so that we could continue to offer comfort and support where needed.

The helpline is for anyone who is struggling to cope with a terminal diagnosis or the imminent death of someone they care about. Whether they are family members, friends, neighbours, work colleagues, or even a member of the care staff who may just need someone to talk to. We are fully committed to ensuring that people facing end of life and their families have access to as many layers of support as possible.

Free and confidential helpline: 0808 801 0688. Open Mon-Fri, 12-6pm.

Please visit www.annerobsontrust.org.uk to find out more.



'The tit family'

by Lyn Ebbs

Spring has moved up a gear in the past few weeks; bird song is more evident, especially at the start of the day, as birds are able to take some time from feeding and turn their attention to attracting a mate and nest building. This month's article focuses on some related birds that you might have seen on your feeders and which are now planning to use your nest boxes: the tit family. They are similar in size and shape, and several have similar markings: dark greenish upper sides, pale yellowish undersides, white cheeks and dark caps.

The biggest, and easiest to distinguish by song, is the great tit. Its song is easy to pick out at this time of year - it's written as *teacher-teacher* and is a repetitive, two-note squeaky call. Great tits tend to dominate bird feeders because of their size, and you can spot the dominant males by the broad, black stripe down the middle of their pale lemon fronts - the bigger and bolder the stripe the higher the status of the bird. The white cheek is very obvious, too, at one time giving them the name of ox-eyed tits.



The coal tit is a bit like a diminutive version of the great tit, both smaller in size and more subdued in colouring. Its call is also very similar, but higher pitched and more rapid. The surest way to distinguish them from their larger cousins is by the white stripe at the back of the head. Coal tits rarely stay at the feeders to eat; they fly off with the seeds and return so rapidly it's clear that they have a cache somewhere. It's a good strategy to avoid harassment by the larger tits when moving through gardens in mixed flocks. In fact, coal tits have been shown to remember where they had hidden food items for up to four weeks. In the wider landscape, coal tits prefer conifer rather than the deciduous woodland frequented by their blue and great cousins. You may also see them in churchyard yew trees and *Leylandii* hedges.



Similar in size to the coal tit, but much more colourful, is the blue tit: its back is a dark, blue-green; its front pale yellow and its cap a subtle blue. To each other, the birds appear even more colourful. Like all birds, blue tits can see in four colours to our three, the extra one being ultra-violet (UV). The human-perceived blueness is just the tail of a peak of UVness that the blue tits see and by which they can tell the sexes apart (males are brighter-coloured). It's likely that they use colour intensity as a way of selecting a mate, using it as an indicator of general health and fitness.



Though colour-wise a little bit subdued, one of my favourite garden visitors during the cooler months is the marsh tit. It is light brown above and off-white below with a glossy black cap and a neat little black bib. It has a distinctive call, often described as a 'sneezing' *pitchou*. They also have a rattling, scolding call to warn of danger and are just smart little birds to have around. They favour natural nest holes over nest boxes, so we assume they head back to the nearby woods in the spring.



Last, smallest, but definitely not least is the long-tailed tit. It belongs in a separate family to other tits but is closely related to them. It also ignores our nest boxes and builds exquisite little nests made of moss and lichens held together by cobwebs and lined with other birds' feathers. During the winter long-tails move around in family groups, separating into pairs in the spring. Their urgent high-pitched *tsee-tsee-tsee* calls help to keep them all in contact as they flit through the hedgerows looking like a party of flying lollipops. Superficially they are black and white, but with a flush of brownish pink on the shoulders and flanks.



These closely-related small birds provide us with a lot of entertainment in return for a supply of food and some nesting opportunities. Then we have the fledglings to look forward to!

Church Paintings by Toddy Hoare

Having officiated in 40 churches around our local area over the years, Rev'd Toddy Hoare set out to paint them and offer prints to each as a contribution to church funds. Below are Toddy's paintings of our four parish churches.

Prints are limited numbered signed editions on good art paper with colourfast inks unframed, size 12 ins x 16 ins. The cost is £30 each of which £15 will be donated to the funds of the relevant church.

The original paintings are for sale at a cost of £120, unframed, of which £50 is donated to the church.

'Wandering Life Together' - a new anthology

Some of us in the Four Parishes have been recipients of Toddy's weekly Lockdown email 'Out & About', with poem collections to amuse and distract during the 2020 - 2021 Lockdown.

Toddy has now produced an anthology from those and other sources called 'Wandering Life Together'. It contains thoughts, experiences and reflections, both spiritual and historical, as an ongoing journey which was shared with others when Covid had rendered the going as a rather muddy patch to cross!

The aim is to print a limited run of this collection and anyone interested is invited to subscribe beforehand to enable the cost to be calculated. Starting prices are £10 - £12 per copy + P&P. However if there is a preference for a more collectable hardback, it would be marginally more.

The book will include 140 poems and 20 illustrations over 200 pages.

If you are interested in either of the above, please contact Toddy via this magazine at 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com.



BECKLEY

Beckley Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 4 - 9**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

A date for your diary - Open Day Sunday 19 June

You may have heard already that the PCC is planning another Open Day this year, the first since 2018. As always, we hope that it will be a happy event for the whole village, with open gardens, an art show, teas, and various stalls and other attractions yet to be decided. All profits will go towards the upkeep of our beautiful church.

If you would like to have your garden open, or have any questions or ideas, please contact Gina Robson (tel: 01865 351637) or Susy Jepson (tel: 01865 351609)

Also, if you have any spare plants left over after planting in the Spring, it would be very much appreciated if you were able to save them for the plant stall!

Lighting up the Church



Beckley Church was lit up from 6pm to 10pm on 12 February in memory of Geoff and Christine Tagg's son Robert, who died tragically on 12 February 1999 aged 19.

If you would like the church to be lit similarly in memory of someone, please contact Gina Robson:

Email: gina.robson@virgin.net

Telephone: 01865 351637

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

We suggest that for the foreseeable future people attending events in The Abingdon Arms consider taking a lateral flow test before they come, particularly if they have any relevant symptoms.

Pub quiz

7.30 pm on the first Wednesday of the month in the bar at The Abingdon Arms. No need to book - just turn up.

Community Walks

These gentle, approximately two hour, walks usually start place at 2pm on the third Sunday of the month. Dogs on leads are welcome. Details of individual walks will be emailed around the community and available at <https://bacbs.org/events> a few days before each one.

Talks

The Abingdon Arms is generously providing some food for those attending talks in the pub.

Sunday 27 March, 6.30pm D.A. Holdsworth: *Writing political satire*

D.A. Holdsworth (a Beckley resident) will talk about his two debut novels, both published during the pandemic and both political satires. The first of them, *How to Buy a Planet*, was the culmination of a twenty-year journey. Dom will pull highlights from this journey, including the strange coincidence of completing a novel in 2019 about a global pandemic and a global debt crisis. He will also talk about his experience of self-publishing these books on Amazon.

Sunday 24 April, 6.30pm Anthony Harnden: *Reflecting back on Britain's vaccination strategy*

Anthony Harnden, Stanton St John resident, is Professor of Primary Care, General Practitioner and Fellow of St Hugh's College. He has research interests in infections and paediatrics in primary care, specifically common childhood infections, vaccine preventable infections and the early diagnosis of rare but important childhood diseases. He has been the GP member of the Joint Committee of Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) since 2006 and Deputy Chairman since 2015. JCVI advises the UK government on vaccine policy, including the current Covid-19 vaccination programme.

BACBS Open Share Offer - Update

<https://bacbs.org/openshareoffer>

Beckley and Area Community Benefit Society has now launched the new open share offer to help fund new projects and to rebuild our reserves. As detailed last month, our funds have been, and continue to be, depleted by reason of the pandemic and are needed to fund ongoing maintenance and improvement works on the pub building, as well as to enable existing shareholders to redeem some of their shares if they wish (as permitted within our Rules should funds allow).

We have got off to a good start and are looking forward to more members of the community, new and old, joining the society and contributing to the preservation of this vital resource within the heart of Beckley.

Good Neighbour Scheme

Serving Beckley, Elsfeld, Stanton, Forest Hill, Woodeaton. (Noke, Islip and Horton have their own schemes).

This scheme is still operating, albeit at a low level, to give lifts to those with no other transport: taking people for their vaccinations, collecting items from surgeries, and Stanton village shop etc., as well as lifts to the Barton/Green Road roundabout where buses into Headington and central Oxford are frequent.

To request a lift, ring either 07514 791919 (answerphone if no answer) or email BACBSgoodneighbour@gmail.com. Given COVID issues, both driver and client need to be satisfied with both parties wearing masks and having open car windows. If you know of anyone who might need help, and perhaps does not know this service exists, please do let them know.

Beckley Art Club

<https://beckleyart.com>

Beckley Art Club is holding another exhibition in the Stanton St John village shop window, courtesy of Rowan, during the months of March and April, rotating every two weeks. Work from among its 20 members will be on show.

Beckley & Stowood Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 3 March at 8pm in Beckley Village Hall** (tbc).

The Clerk's email address is clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk if you wish to contact the Parish Council to raise a question for the next meeting.

Parish Council information, including agendas and minutes, is available on the website www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk, together with much useful information about local events and services.

The Annual Open Parish Meeting will be held on **Thursday 19 May 2022 at 7pm at Beckley Village Hall** (tbc).

Temporary Road Closure at Beckley, High Street, OX3 9UU

A request has been received from 1st Choice Traffic Management for a temporary road closure to apply to a section of High Street (OX3 9UU) whilst cabling and jointing works are carried out. A temporary Notice is being made to implement the temporary closures and will operate from the 21/03/2022 to and including the 25/03/2022 (full closure 24hrs each day). Access will be maintained for emergency service vehicles and for those frontages within the closure area, subject to the progress of the works and liaison with the works supervisor.

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FOREST HILL

News from St Nicolas Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 4 - 9**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Candlemas, 30 January

The St Nicolas Candlemas Service marks the end of Christmas by celebrating the Presentation of Christ in the Temple at Jerusalem. It is normally a feast of music for choir and congregation alike but due to the continuing Covid situation, we decided on a candlelit service of Holy Communion with congregational hymns instead - a wonderful peaceful way to end the Christmas celebrations.

Ash Wednesday, 2 March

Please note, this year the Benefice Ash Wednesday Service is in Beckley Church at 7.30pm on Wednesday 2 March.

St Nicolas Children's Service, Sunday 6 March at 4pm

YouTube links to edited recordings of our online Children's Services in January and February can be found on the Four Parishes website www.fourparishes.org.uk/children-s-videos. Each video includes a Bible Story reading, specially recorded songs and a scripted, illustrated, version of the story for younger children. The individual stories can also be watched as separate videos from the website.

The Children's Services are organised and run by St Nicolas Church, but everyone in the Four Parishes and beyond is welcome to join. The next Children's Service will be on **Zoom at 4pm on Sunday 6 March**, but we aim to be in church in April.

Concert at St Nicolas Church, Saturday 19 March at 3pm

The first of our two concerts during Lent will be on **Saturday 19 March at 3pm (please note the day and time)**. Will Blyth and Julie Osborne (cello and piano) make a welcome return to St Nicolas to share a programme with Peter Stutfield (organ). The concert will last no more than an hour and will be followed by tea and cake in the garden, weather permitting!

‘Daffodil Day’ at Shotover House, Sunday 20 March, 2pm - 4.30pm

Long-time residents of Forest Hill will be familiar with the annual ‘Daffodil Day’ event in the private gardens of Shotover House but it is now three years since the last one, with the 2020 event sadly cancelled due to the pandemic. This year, for the first time, St Nicolas has joined with The Maple Tree Children’s Centre in Wheatley to raise much-needed funds for both organisations.

In return for a small entrance fee, the public is offered a rare opportunity to wander around the Shotover gardens and to enjoy the extensive displays of daffodils and other spring bulbs. Tea, coffee and home made cake (including gluten free and vegan options) will be on sale throughout the afternoon in the arcade at the rear of Shotover House. There will also be a plant and home-made produce stall. Payments will be accepted by credit/debit card as well as in cash.

The gardens at Shotover House were laid out in the early eighteenth century and include, among other things, a large obelisk, two ornamental temples or ‘follies’ and a lake. The house and grounds are currently owned and managed by the Shotover Trust.

There will be posters around the villages or you can gain more information by contacting Julia Stutfield (julia.stutfield@gmail.com or 07766 103427). See also the back cover of this magazine.

Mothering Sunday, 27 March

Please note, this year there will be **no service at St Nicolas on Mothering Sunday**, but everyone is invited to the Millennium Village Hall in Horton-cum-Studley at 4.30pm for the Four Parishes Benefice Mothering Sunday Family Church followed by afternoon tea. You may also find small bunches of flowers in St Nicolas porch and outside Lyttleton in Main Street for you to collect as a small gift for your mother or other loved one.

Save the Date, Sunday 10 April at 6pm

Naomi Hinks and Julia Stutfield, accompanied by Joe Burgess, will perform **Pergolesi’s ‘Stabat Mater’ in St Nicolas on Sunday 10 April at 6pm**, followed by drinks in the garden. Pergolesi’s beautiful setting of the great 13th century hymn describing Mary’s grief and despair at the foot of the cross reaches across the centuries to comfort and inspire us all.

Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council

The date of the next meeting is **Thursday 3 March at 7pm in Forest Hill Village Hall**. Until further notice social distancing rules remain in place for all meetings.

The Annual Parish meeting will be held on Thursday 7 April at 7pm in Forest Hill Village Hall.

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 Helen Cross, the Parish Council Clerk, tel: 0844 884 3328, during the hours 9am to 5pm, or email: theclerk@foresthillwithshotover-pc.org.uk.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, 2 - 5 June

James Skinner and Julia Stutfield will be in **Forest Hill Village Hall between 10.30am and 12.30pm on Saturday 12 March** to host an open discussion about how we might celebrate the Jubilee in Forest Hill.

We hope to involve the whole village in this special celebration, so please drop in with suggestions and offers of help, in whatever capacity. If you can't make the meeting but have some questions or ideas, please don't hesitate to contact us by emailing 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com.

The Maple Tree at Forest Hill

The Maple Tree Baby and Toddler group at Forest Hill continues to take place in the Village Hall, **every Thursday from 11am to 12pm** including half-term and school holidays. We keep the hall well ventilated with windows and doors open as much as possible, so please make sure that you and your child are wearing warm clothing if you are thinking of coming along.

Grandparents, great-grandparents, carers and parents (even fathers!) have featured among our regular attendees, and there is friendship and expert advice for the adults, as well as fun and socialising for the children. There is no need to book, but if you have any questions, please contact Laura Spencer (laura@mapletree.org.uk) or Julia Stutfield (07766 103427).

HORTON-cum-STUDLEY

News from St Barnabas

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 4 - 9**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Animal Friendly Church

We continue to make little changes as we strive to achieve an 'Animal Friendly Church' Certificate from the Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals.

We are looking for bird feeder 'sponsors'. The RSPB ask that if we feed birds, we must also be responsible for keeping the feeders clean so we do not cause unnecessary harm from Avian Flu and other diseases. Therefore, to be a 'sponsor' we ask you to provide a feeder of any kind and keep it topped up and clean. Thank you if this is something you would like to support. The feeders will be placed towards the front of the churchyard so anyone passing by may be able to sit on the bench for a while and enjoy the birds.



We have also kindly been given some new bird boxes to put up. If anyone has knowledge of bird box placement etc. I would love to hear from you so these can be positioned correctly.

We have also been given a plastic box to try to make a tiny wildlife pond. Again, all help and ideas welcome. Thank you.

If you would like to be involved in any of these projects, please email carol_welch20@hotmail.com.



Social Night at Studley Wood Golf Club

The next social night at Studley Wood Golf Club for villagers and friends will be on **Friday 25 March** (7pm for 7.30pm). Attendees can opt for either a 2 course meal for £16.95 or 3 courses for £19.95.

If you would like to join us for this event or future events and would like further details, please contact Ruth David ruth.david@live.com or 07815 799364.

Horton-cum-Studley Gardening Club

Spring is traditionally a time of hope but sadly for us we also have to bid farewell to our longstanding Chairman, Sue Burge, who retired last month after many years of knowledgeable stewardship. She remains a member of the Club, and we are sure that members will regularly visit her wonderful garden and benefit from her expert advice and extensive knowledge. We cannot possibly attempt to follow in her footsteps, but what we will try to do is offer enthusiasm, ideas and a ready smile. We all join in offering Sue our heartfelt thanks for all she has done over the years.

The programme for 2022 has been agreed. It includes some real treats: two visits, one to **Bridewell Gardens in North Leigh** and another to **The Filberts at North Moreton**. Other months offer talks by experts, including one from **Benedict Vanheems from Wild at Heart** and another by **Rosemary Wise** who will speak about her work as a botanical illustrator.

The annual fee is £10, and monthly meetings are held at the Millennium Hall, usually on a Tuesday. You can try it out as a guest, for £3. We are hoping to attract new members and we already have members from Summertown, Beckley, Stanton St John and Forest Hill, if you would like a car share. Everyone is most welcome. For our website see www.horton-cum-studley.org.uk/community/clubs/.

Future newsletters will be more focused on our gardens, and what's happening in the world of horticulture. However, we hope that those of you who are even vaguely interested in gardening, flowers, art or wildlife will consider joining us and sharing ideas. No previous experience needed!

*Melanie Jones and Victoria Hunt - Joint Chairmen
Contact for further info: victoria.hunt@me.com*

Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council

The Parish Council continues to meet remotely on the **2nd Thursday of each month. at 7.30pm**. If you wish to contribute please contact Alexia using the email address hortoncumstudleyparishcouncil@gmail.com.

The Parish Council is looking for the input from Villagers regarding Celebrations for the Queens' Jubilee. Current plans include the lighting of a beacon on the Village Playing fields followed by an evening celebration in the Millenium Village Hall on Thursday 2 June. The Parish Council will provide drinks (including soft drinks), but due to the unknown situation regarding Covid, villagers would be required to bring their own food.

Otmoor Challenge Run, 11 June 2022

As announced in last month's newsletter, we can confirm that after a two year COVID delay, **The Otmoor Challenge will go ahead on 11 June 2022**, as both a running and walking event.

The run will start at the earlier time of 10am and for the first year there will be chip timing for each runner. On-line registration will be offered at a slightly reduced rate to the on-day cost (£21.05 vs £25). Registration is due to go live very soon so please keep an eye on the HcS Facebook page and the website www.otmoorchallenge.co.uk for updates.

Walkers, on either the short or the long route, will set-off between 8.30am and 10.30am. Walkers register on the day only. Cost will be £7 adults, £3 under 16's, (£2 FOBS children), under 5's free.

As some of you will already know, the committee have decided against holding an accompanying fête and evening 'bash' this year. We would welcome volunteers to help organise this for 2023 and so if you are interested in offering your assistance please reach out (runners@otmoorchallenge.co.uk). However, with the help of our amazing volunteers from the surrounding villages and members of the WI, there will be a variety of cakes on sale as well as tea and coffee. There will also be an ice cream van and selection of alcoholic beverages available for purchase on the day.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Nick Tribble (Chairman, OCA)

Millenium Village Hall

There is little to report and few bookings. The main gate has a lock on it as a result of joyriders on the field. The lock, kindly organised by Barry White, is digital and anyone who needs vehicular access can request the code from the committee. Our cleaner gave notice but a new couple start on 6 February.

The AGM is on 16 June at 8pm and posts of Chairman and Bookings Secretary will need reappointing. Please submit nominations together with a proposer and seconder to me. Our treasurer, Rachael Ayres, stood down at the beginning of the year and we are grateful for her work over the last three years. I am pleased to announce that Daisy East will be taking over and her appointment will be ratified at the AGM. Last year's accounts were generously examined by Tom, Liz Buttery's brother, and were submitted to HMRC.

The hall is in good order with electrics, shutters and general upkeep up to scratch. There are some bookings beginning to be made which will give our new treasurer some peace of mind.

Derek Jewell

Horton-cum-Studley Playground

As many of you know, our much-loved village playground is in need of repair. The HCS Village Playground Committee is now developing a plan for necessary repairs and, if possible, adding to the range of play equipment. We were very grateful to all those who responded to our survey. It was clear that families value and appreciate the playground as it is but would appreciate additional spaces and equipment for older children. We are taking this as our brief going forwards.

We have sought advice from the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association who suggest we may be able to repair key elements of the existing playground without wholesale replacement. We hope to organise a consultation event for children and young people, to hear first-hand what play equipment they would like, to narrow down the options.

Whatever we do, we will need some money to do it. There are grants available that we will be pursuing further, but many grant-givers expect communities to do their own fundraising too.

To support our fundraising efforts, we have registered the Horton-cum-Studley Millennium Village Hall charity as a charitable organisation on **AmazonSmile**. This means that Amazon donates 0.5% of the net purchase price (excluding VAT, returns and shipping fees) of eligible purchases to the **Horton-cum-Studley Millennium Village Hall Trust** charity when purchases are made through smile.amazon.co.uk. This money will go into the playground renovation fund. To be eligible for the donation, purchases must be made through smile.amazon.co.uk. You can login with an existing Amazon account. AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support the playground project, at no cost to you.

Of course, this is just the start. If anybody has other good fundraising ideas, then please just let us know.

Finally, if anyone would be interested in contributing to the playground committee, in any way at all, we would love to hear from you. Just drop us a line at playgroundsubcommittee@gmail.com.

Horton-cum-Studley Tennis Club

We are a family friendly club that encourages players of all abilities. Everyone is invited to join the club and enjoy the lovely courts!



The courts have been cleaned ready for the 2022 season and the new membership year starts 1 April. Annual memberships remain the same as previous years - adults (£47), juniors (£20) and families (£80).

Come and join other members for a relaxed and fun Sunday morning session at 11am every Sunday!

Group coaching for adults and children (membership not required) and private lessons for club members are available.

To book coaching or membership applications please use web: <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/HortonCumStudleyTennisClubOxford> or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/hscctennisclub>



STANTON ST JOHN

Stanton Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 4 - 9**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.



Stanton Church, January 2022
Photo by Julian Money

Stanton St John WI

Stanton St John WI's meeting in March will be held on **Tuesday 15 March at 7.30pm in the village hall**. It is our Annual meeting when we choose the Committee and President for the coming year.

After all the business is sorted we usually have a short interactive event and also this year we ask you to contribute to our **Bring and Buy sale in aid of Associated Country Women of the World**. Bring some cash and a gift for sale, please! Books, jam, (of course!), marmalade and any duplicate gifts from Christmas will all be readily snapped up for a good cause.

Coffee Mornings in Stanton Village Hall

It was lovely to see so many people again at February's coffee morning. The next coffee morning will be on **Monday 7 March, 10.30am - 12.00pm**, followed by **Wednesday 13 April**.

Everyone is welcome. For further details, please contact Sue Baker 01865 351449 or Sarah Coyne 01865 358876.

Médecins Sans Frontières

Rowan and I, aided and abetted by John Hazel, managed to raise **£750.00 for MSF**.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this by donating things and to everyone who supported it by purchasing things. It wouldn't have happened without the support of the local community and without Rowan kindly offering up the shop window for the month of January. Thank you all once again.

Pat Moss (and Rowan Reavley)

Stanton St John Parish Council

Traffic measures in the village

You may well have seen the traffic survey cables at various locations around the village in February. The data gathered will be used to help draw up proposals for traffic measures. Plans will be presented to the village in due course.

Vehicles blocking road access

Please ensure that vehicles belonging to anyone visiting your home - including building and trade professionals - do not block the road or footpath. If space is limited, please direct them to the Village Hall car park. It is vital for road access to be kept clear at all times for emergency and service vehicles.

Local transport and connectivity

There is still time (until 16 March) to submit comments on Oxfordshire County Council's Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (to 2040). Relevant documents and the online survey are available at <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk>, or you can ask for them to be sent in printed form by calling 01865 792422.

SSJ Covid Support Network

Many thanks once again to all those who have kindly volunteered their help as part of this village contact network. It is greatly appreciated. As the threat from Covid-19 is currently diminishing, distribution of the updated list has been postponed, but anyone in need of support should contact the Chair of the Parish Council.

Film Night, Saturday 19 March 7.30pm Stanton St John Village Hall



Time for some action with the last Bond thriller with Daniel Craig:

James Bond has left active service. His peace is short-lived when Felix Leiter, an old friend from the CIA, turns up asking for help, leading Bond onto the trail of a mysterious villain armed with dangerous new technology.

Doors will be open at 7pm, with a film start at 7.30pm. It is a long film (2hrs 43min!), so best to bring some cushions for extra comfort. Before and after the film, delicious cakes and drinks will be available whilst the bar will serve wines and Bond's classic Martinis.

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

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

* * * * *

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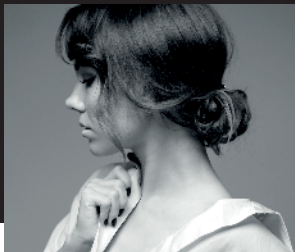
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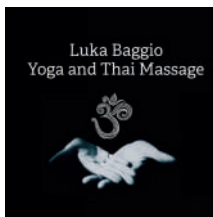
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