

The Four Parishes News Magazine

BECKLEY
FOREST HILL
HORTON-cum-STUDLEY
STANTON St JOHN



Newly arrived Ukranian refugees share a meal with their host family in Horton-cum-Studley

May 2022

The editor writes:



People occasionally ask me what I do when I am not organising things in our Four Parishes and the answer is 'quite a lot'! This month, for example, saw the culmination of a project which has taken nearly 3 years to bring to fruition. As a student in the early 1970s I was lucky enough to sing in Schola Cantorum of Oxford, the Oxford University chamber choir which was founded in 1960 by the amazing Hungarian musician László Heltay, who arrived in Britain as a refugee in 1957. In March 2020, I was in the middle of organising a splendid 60th Anniversary Celebration Concert for Schola when Covid put a stop to everything.

Two years later, on 23 April in Oxford Town Hall, Schola has just delivered an outstanding performance of JS Bach's 'Mass in B Minor' with the Instruments of Time & Truth and a wonderful line up of soloists including internationally renowned baritone Roderick Williams, who also sang in the choir as a student. Almost 100 former choir members from all six decades sang alongside the current student singers, and there were a lot of very happy people.

I mention this because, as a result, this magazine may be a bit late getting to the printers. I hope that, just this once, you will forgive me.

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 provided by Tim & Lorraine Dixon from Horton-cum-Studley.

See page 14 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

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Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John**

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The closing date for the June 2022 issue is 15 May 2022

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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

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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.

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Church Services in the Four Parishes, May 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
1 May <i>3rd Sunday of Easter</i>	11am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Morning Prayer
	4pm Children's Service at St Nicolas			
	6pm Taizé Service via Zoom			
8 May <i>4th Sunday of Easter</i>		9.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Holy Communion
	11am Benefice Zoom Service			
	4pm Messy Church at Stanton St John Village Hall			
	6pm BCP Choral Evensong at Forest Hill			
15 May <i>5th Sunday of Easter</i>	11am BCP Morning Prayer	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am BCP Holy Communion	11am Morning Prayer
	6pm Iona Service at Beckley			
22 May <i>6th Sunday of Easter</i>	10am Benefice Holy Communion Service at Stanton St John			
	4.30pm Family Church at Horton-cum-Studley Millennium Hall			
26 May (Thurs) <i>Ascension Day</i>	7am Ascension Day Service in Stanton St John Village Hall			
29 May <i>Sunday after Ascension Day</i>	11am Morning Prayer	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Morning Prayer
	6pm Church without Walls in Stanton St John Village Hall			

A letter from Anthea

Hi everyone,



Alleluia Christ is risen! He is risen indeed, alleluia! Those are the words that rang out during our services on Easter Day, as we celebrated the good news of the empty tomb and the risen Lord. The horror, sadness, and desolation of the crucifixion of our Lord having been remembered once more, was followed by remembrance and celebration of the joyful, unexpected, almost unbelievable news of that first Easter morning. As we did this, it was wonderful to see our churches beautifully decorated, and so many from our communities joining the celebration of this wonderful news.

Easter Day is such a joyful day in the Christian calendar. Now a week on, our churches are still beautifully decorated, and there remains a sense of joy and celebration in the air.

It is as I have reflected on this that I have been jolted by the thought of the Christian Church in Ukraine (the Orthodox Church), trying to celebrate Easter Day, one week after us, as the terrible war continues to rage in the country. I cannot imagine how they were able to gather and to celebrate the wonderful truth of the good news of the empty tomb and the risen Lord, on this special day, Easter Day - the day that gives us hope as we celebrate Jesus' conquering of death. As if the war is not bad enough in itself, for Christians being unable to celebrate Easter, this most holy of festivals, seems to add to the dreadfulness if that were possible.



As the war continues, I find myself having to limit myself over the amount of news from Ukraine I can bear to listen to or read each day - is too unbearable to follow all that we can. That is not to say that I switch my ears and eyes off to it. The plight of our Ukrainian brothers and sisters is very much on the hearts and minds of our communities. It has been

heart-warming to hear of all the activity going on in order to welcome some Ukrainians into our community. I have been hearing about the various support networks being set up, both practical and professional. I have seen first-hand just some of the clothing and bedding collected, and the start of the toy collection. All carefully and tidily sorted and arranged to ease selection and distribution as needed.

If the work done in preparation for the arrival of these poor people, who, escaping the ravages of war through no fault of their own, leaving behind everything: loved ones, possessions, jobs, schools, security of a known life in familiar surroundings - is anything to go by - they should receive a warm, loving, caring and generous welcome here. People have done a fantastic job to date, in a very short space of time, ensuring that there can be a community within our community, where shattered lives can begin to be rebuilt. Hopefully time and a safe space can be provided.

Sadly, I do not write or speak Ukrainian, (but I bet pupils at Beckley School could say 'good morning' in Ukrainian!) but I warmly welcome the families due to come into our community. I hope and pray that we can make them welcome and show the love of Jesus to them. Thank you to all those who have done so much already. May we all do that we can. Just imagine if this had happened to us, to our loved ones. May we love and care for them as we would want to be loved and cared for.

And whilst all this is going on, I know that there is also a lot of suffering in our own community. 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

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

Thank you for Holy Week and Easter

I would like to say a huge thank you to all those who cleaned and decorated all the churches in the benefice so beautifully for Easter. It is so joyful after the appropriate sombreness of Lent, to go into the churches on Easter morning to see them looking so resplendent.

Thank you also to all those who played, sang, led, read, prayed, reflected and preached for all our Holy Week and Easter services and other activities. It was wonderful to walk that journey with you all.

Anthea

Advent challenge and beyond

I hope you enjoyed reading through the seven books of the minor prophets I suggested last month. This month the challenge is to read the last four books of the minor prophets, but it involves reading one chapter a day, so should not be too bad to keep up: Zephaniah (3 chapters), Haggi (2 chapters), Zechariah (14 chapters) and Malachi (4 chapters), and then to make it a chapter a day, round it off with reading the Song of Solomon (8 chapters).

If you are feeling really enthusiastic, or perhaps as an alternative, you might like to read the Acts of the Apostles, to remind yourself of the story of the early Church, which would be very apt in this post Easter period.

Whatever you choose to do, I wish you happy reading! Please do let me know how you get on.

Book Group

The Book Group continues to meet virtually by Zoom on a Thursday evening at 7.30pm. We will shortly be starting a new book. If you would like to join the Group, please do get in touch with Anthea. All are welcome.

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			√	

Dates for diary for children and family church activities

Please refer to the Service Rota on page 5 for times, and look out for email updates, or check out our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

The Children's Service at St Nicolas and Messy Church (currently in Stanton Village Hall) will both be at 4pm in May. Family Church is usually at 4.30pm.

Children's Service at St Nicolas	Messy Church at Stanton Village Hall	Family Church at Horton Millennium Hall
1 May	8 May	22 May
5 June	12 June	26 June
3 July	10 July	24 July
7 August	14 August	
4 September	11 September	25 September
2 October	9 October	23 October
6 November	13 November	27 November 2022
4 December (St Nicolas Day celebration with Christingle)		
11 December Joint Christmas Party (details to be announced nearer the time)		

Easter Garden competition

A huge thank you to Milly, Hazel, Sarah, Gina, Alex, Ellie, Grace and Eva for the contributions to the Easter Garden competition. Some of them were created at our Messy Church event in March, where we had great fun together. Everyone will receive a small prize, as it was too hard to decide an overall winner. Photographs of all the entries can be found at www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Ascension Day Service, Thursday 26 May

This service is the time when we commemorate the story from the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where Jesus had been talking with his friends on the Mount of Olives, when suddenly he was 'lifted up' and a cloud took him out of their sight, and they were left gazing up towards heaven.

Memories fade a little, but we think the first Ascension Day service in recent times was held in the benefice in 2018 at 6.30am, yes 6.30am, in Horton-cum-Studley in the garden of parishioners. It was enjoyed so much, despite the early start, that it was repeated in 2019, but this time in the grounds of Beckley Village Hall. Sadly, it could not happen in 2020, but we did hold one in 2021, when everyone was allowed a bit of a lie in until 7.30am, as people who normally had to rush off to work were all working from home.

As an enticement to the service there is the promise of coffee, and a bacon roll, or croissant . This enticement has worked wonders in the past! All are welcome to the service this year which will be held in **Stanton St John Village Hall at 7am**. All are welcome but it would be helpful to have an idea of numbers so please let Anthea know if you intend to come (see contact details on page 4).

Home Group Study on Romans

We are continuing our study of the Book of Romans, started as a daytime Lent group. We recommence on 18 May in Horton-cum-Studley, beginning at 2.30pm. If you are interested in being involved, and have not already done so, please contact Annie Payne on 01865 351018, leaving a message if there is no reply, or by email at anniefpayne@gmail.com.

Annual Meetings of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meetings

It is that time of year again! The **Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCM)** have to be completed by 31 May this year, and so dates have been set for these. The related **Annual Meeting of Parishioners** is on the same day, immediately before the APCM. Here is advanced notice of the meetings:

Beckley:	25 May at 7.30pm in Beckley Church
Forest Hill:	18 May at 6pm in Forest Hill Village Hall
Horton-cum-Studley:	4 May at 7.30pm in Horton-cum-Studley Church
Stanton St John:	24 May at 7.30pm in Stanton St John Village Hall

Revisions of Electoral Rolls

Electoral rolls need updating in readiness for the Annual Parochial Church Meetings in the Benefice. **If you are on the current roll of your Church, you do NOT need to complete a new form this year.** If your name is not currently on the roll, but you would like to be included on the roll, then you must complete a form. Forms are available in each of the Churches in the Benefice. If you cannot locate them, please do contact the Electoral Roll Officer of the related Church (see details below).

To qualify for inclusion on the electoral roll of a Parish Church, you must be living in the Parish, or be a regular worshipper in that Parish. If you have any questions about this, please do contact the Electoral Roll Officer of the related Church (see details below). After the revision of each of the electoral rolls, an updated copy will be exhibited for inspection at each Church. Here is the timetable for these reviews:

Beckley:	27 April - 10 May
Forest Hill:	20 April - 3 May
Horton-cum-Studley:	revision already completed
Stanton St John:	26 April - 9 May

For further information, please contact your **Electoral Roll Officer:**

Beckley:	Gina Robson (01865 351637)
Forest Hill:	Pat Fraser (01865 875679)
Horton-cum-Studley:	David Slingo (stbarnabaspcchcs@gmail.com or 07850 004700)
Stanton St John:	Sue Baker (01865 351449)

GENERAL

Four Parishes Ukrainian Refugee update

The response of villagers in Horton-cum-Studley and Beckley to the Ukrainian crisis has been overwhelming. To date 7 households are waiting for the arrival of 9 families in Horton cum Studley, 6 households are waiting for the arrival of 6 families in Beckley with 4 sponsors from both villages still waiting for confirmation or allocation of a family. At least 2 households in Stanton St John and Forest Hill have also volunteered to become host families.

A great deal of thought and discussion has resulted in teams of volunteers who are now working hard in various areas to provide everything the refugee families will need, both immediately and longer term during their stay in the UK.

Some of the areas being covered:

Food Bank

St Barnabas Church in Horton-cum-Studley has set aside an area with fridge/freezer and storage for donations. For further information please contact Carol Welch carol_welch20@hotmail.com, or Lis Pugh emjpugh@btinternet.com.

Clothing & Textiles Bank

To donate clothing in good, clean condition and items of bedding (especially single duvet covers and single sheets) and towels in good, clean condition please contact Pauline Cox pauline@plcfitness.co.uk, or Julia Slingo jhslingo@gmail.com

IT Equipment: Computers/Laptops and Mobile Phones

To donate items for re-use or for help with obtaining items/setting up items for your guests, or for further information please contact Stuart Horribin hortonhelpsout@gmail.com.

Toys and Games, Footballs, Tennis Rackets, Art & Craft Materials

To donate or for further information please contact Lyn Whitaker lyndawhitaker@btinternet.com.

Ukrainian Fund

Cash donations are a straightforward and immediate way to support the refugees. We have a dedicated Ukrainian fund to provide cash for food, toiletries, gift or pre-paid cards, bus passes, essential items and so on. For further information please contact Lisa Mynheer lisamynheer@gmail.com or Kate Salter katesalter@icloud.com.

Transport

Could you be a volunteer driver for one-off or weekly trips to the supermarket, doctor's surgery in Islip or a place of work? Or, do you have a bicycle you no longer use and need or would you be willing to help with bicycle maintenance? For further information please contact David Slingo pdslingo@gmail.com.

Employment Opportunities

Could you offer a job locally or within Oxford? If so, or if you would like more information please contact Lisa Mynheer lisamynheer@gmail.com or Kate Salter katesalter@icloud.com.

We also have various offers of help in areas such as English language teaching, translation, mentoring, pastoral care, gardening, various therapies, friendship. Could you offer your help and support in these areas or in anything else?

If you have any other creative ideas of what could further help the refugees we welcome your suggestions. Please contact Lisa Mynheer lisamynheer@gmail.com or Kate Salter katesalter@icloud.com.

A new page has been added to the Horton cum Studley village website http://www.horton-cum-studley.org.uk/ukrainian_hub

This is a resource for sponsors, refugees and the teams helping and supporting them. It will have news, information and contact details of how you can get in touch. It will be updated and added to regularly.

Please contact Lisa Mynheer lisamynheer@gmail.com or Kate Salter katesalter@icloud.com if you would like more information, advice, if you have any suggestions or would like to get involved. We would love to hear from you.

Cover Story: a note from Lorraine Dixon



Alona and Yelysei arrived [in Horton-cum-Studley] on Easter Monday, from Warsaw. They are from Dnipro in Ukraine. It has been a pleasure to have them with us. Over the Easter holidays we have enjoyed our time together. This photo was taken on Sunday after Ukrainian Easter celebrations, over a traditional English Sunday Roast. We have also enjoyed delicious Ukrainian Borscht a delightful cultural sharing of food.

Refugee Fundraising Event, Beckley 7 May

Proceeds to Refugee causes especially for the Ukrainian children at Beckley Village School

Refreshments Available

Access via the concrete track at the corner of the High Street and Otmoor Lane. Keep going up the hill and across the field, it is the last house.

Entry £3 (Children Free)

Open Garden & Plant Sale
Upper Park Farm
Beckley
7th May 2022
10.00am-1.00pm

Thame & Wheatley Ramblers

Join us for a walk! The Thame & Wheatley group has planned introductory walks for anyone interested in trying out the Ramblers. There will be a leisurely 4 mile walk on Sunday 8 May at 10am, starting in the Upper High Street car park, Thame. This will be followed by complimentary coffee and cake in Christchurch Hall (opposite the car park) where there will be information about activities of the Ramblers and walking locally. If you want to try a longer walk, we are also offering a 6 mile walk from Crowell on Saturday 21 May and a 10 mile walk from Watlington (Recreation Ground car park) on Saturday 14 May, both starting at 10am. Just turn up on the day, or if you would like more details please phone 01844 213608 or visit the website www.ramblers-oxon.org.uk/thame-wheatley.html.



The Arc descending?

Earlier this year newspaper articles appeared claiming that Michael Gove, in his new role as Secretary of State for Levelling Up Houses and Communities, has 'shelved' the Ox-Cam Arc scheme. This followed on from rumours late in 2021 that the dedicated Ox-Cam Arc team within that Ministry had been allocated to other tasks.

In February of this year property developers Bidwells, whose commercial footprint just happens to coincide with the Arc, released a report titled 'Radical Capital', with articles by a whole range of parties interested in Arc development and with a Foreword by Oxford's Regius Professor of Medicine, Sir John Bell FRS. The Report claimed that the Arc's economy could reach £235 billion by 2030, £50 billion of which would be lost if the Arc did not go ahead. If the Government did not support the Arc, its supporters said, they would 'internationalise' it, with Beijing as the first stop in such global attempts to raise funds. How happy should Oxford scientists be, that their future research facilities might be funded by regimes with appalling human rights records and recognised by the UK Security Services as a threat to our national security? Should we have a blue plaque on each new building, pointing this out? Or perhaps blood-red would be a better colour?

Bidwells' £235 billion figure for the Arc's economy by 2030 (from today's £115 billion) involves growth at an annual rate of 9.34%, more than three times the rate predicted by the National Infrastructure Commission under its most extreme 'transformational' (i.e. highest) growth scenario (2.90% p.a.) - a scenario involving more than 700,000 additional workers by 2050 and an increase in the housing stock of all five Arc counties of 66% by 2050. According to the Radical Capital report, Bidwells' very much higher growth rates come from 'Bidwells Research'; research which has not yet been put in the public domain. There's football and fantasy football. Bidwells appear to have invented the economic equivalent; 'fantasy economics'.

David Rogers
Secretary, Stop the Arc
david.rogers@zoo.ox.ac.uk

'Knowing our Neighbours': profile of a local musician

Singer-songwriter Jules Blyth (aka Julie Osborne) has lived in Forest Hill since 2009. She released her first album 'Place your Bets' over Easter Weekend 2022.

Q. When did you become interested in writing lyrics?



I always liked poems as a child, and used poetry in my work as a primary school teacher and even as a birth doula and midwife. Now I see the power of words in a therapeutic setting working as a college nurse in Oxford.

Q. How do you bring this into your songwriting?

My lyrics usually come first - if I'm in the mood, they just come tumbling out. I find it stress relieving - my songs usually reflect things that are on my mind or going on in the world.

Q. Tell us some of the topics you write about

The first single, 'Plans' is all about the pandemic, how it restricted social engagement, and made everything go virtual. Working as a midwife during this time made me aware how difficult it was for families to manage without access to visitors & family. Another song called 'You don't need to step in line' I wrote when I was a midwife, about twins born either side of midnight giving them different birthdays. I thought about their life ahead, how people might expect them to be the same, but they're individuals with their own choices: 'Each of us a woodchip off the block, carving our creation as we go...!'

Q. What are your musical influences?

I was brought up on jazz, and also love many styles like Stevie Wonder, Donald Fagen, Simply Red, Joan Armatrading and have played from Carole King's 'Tapestry' songbook for years. I've played piano since I was a child, but only recently taught myself to play by ear and to handle the more complex chords and progressions of jazz. This helped me to transition from playing other people's music to writing my own. It's satisfying coming up with new and unique music, knowing you created it and it didn't exist before.

Q. Where do the tunes come from?

I literally couldn't tell you! I just sit down at the piano with the lyrics and melodies come to me quite quickly. The key is to capture snippets of phrases and ideas as they arise and before you forget them. I love creating harmonies and doing my own backing vocals - that's one of the highlights of the recording process for me.



Q. When did you start on the album?

It's taken 3 years to write and record all the songs. When I got to song number 10, I thought we had enough material for an album. There are 14 tracks in all now.

Q. What was it like getting it finished?

It was really exciting doing the recordings. We'd booked a studio in the middle of nowhere in Scotland. It was a bit nerve-wracking to start with, but we soon felt in safe hands with Danny our sound engineer. It's intense, you have to concentrate really hard. Then there's lots of work to do with editing and production, which took about 3-4 months. Julia Stutfield was



incredibly helpful in getting the album cover finished in time for my dad, whose photos feature on the cover, to see before he sadly passed away just before Easter. He was a great fan of mine! It's so rewarding to have it completed, a legacy to be remembered by. I

hope people enjoy listening to it.

Q. How can people access your music?

You can order the full album on CD at www.julesblyth.com for £10, or buy it directly from the White Horse pub in Forest Hill. Singles are being released from the album on a monthly basis on all major music platforms - search 'Jules Blyth'.

Editor's note: we are delighted that some of the songs destined for the 'Place your Bets' album were performed live at St Nicolas last year. Watch out for more 'Music at St Nicolas' dates listed elsewhere in this magazine.

‘Unique traditions to welcome the fasting month of Ramadan in Indonesia’ by Dr. Shinta Holdsworth

Indonesia is a vast country with thousands of islands, diverse ethnic groups, a wide variety of cultures, religions and beliefs, with Islam being the religion the majority of the people profess.

In observing the holy month of *Ramadan*, all Muslims are traditionally expected to fast from dawn to dusk for one whole Islamic month. Fasting precludes both food and water and, of course, the length of the fast varies with where you are in the world. Ramadan can be quite testing for an Indonesian living in England, particularly when it falls during the summer! (This year it runs from 2nd April to 1st May.)

To welcome the holy month of Ramadan, muslims from all corners of Indonesia are known to practice certain rituals inspired by their faith, with traditions passed down from generation to generation. My family is from Central Java, but I spent most of my childhood in Aceh, a province located at the northern tip of the island of Sumatra. There is a unique tradition carried out in Aceh to welcome Ramadan, called *Meugang*. Meugang is a tradition of cooking and enjoying meat dishes with the whole family to welcome the holy month. It usually runs for two days before the first day of Ramadan. In this sense it has a very basic similarity to Shrove Tuesday. The Meugang tradition is believed to have flourished since the era of Aceh Sultanate, under the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda. The Aceh Darussalam Sultanate in the 16th and 17th centuries was the biggest Islamic kingdom in Southeast Asia and, thus, the Meugang tradition is closely connected to the teaching of Islam.

Another Ramadan tradition from Indonesia, which also played a role in my childhood, is that of *ngabuburit* - a term taken from the Sundanese language, a local dialect in West Java. According to this tradition, each day during Ramadan, you get together with friends or family and engage in outdoor activities to pass the last few hours before the breaking of the fast.

When it's time to break your fast, there are common traditions in Indonesia of holding breaking-of-the-fast events with large numbers of family and friends, regardless of religion. The events are better known as *buka bersama* - or *bukber* for short - which means breaking the fast together. (Think of

the English 'break-fast', but at the end of the day, not the beginning.)

A wide variety of signature and special delicacies for *takjil* (light snacks to break the fast) is among the many things that people look forward to during Ramadan, such as *lemang* - glutinous rice cooked in a hollowed bamboo stick and *kolak pisang* - steamed banana

cooked in coconut milk and brown sugar. When I was a university student in Bogor, a small town located 37 miles south of the capital Jakarta, my friends and I often checked out the treats offered by dozens of street vendors across the city. The vendors spread their snacks and food on tables for buyers to peruse.



To mark the end of Ramadan, Muslims celebrate the *Idul Fitri* holidays, sometimes spelled *Eid al-Fitr*. Indonesians typically celebrate Idul Fitri in their hometowns and take the seasonal homebound journey, popularly known as *mudik*. Often my family celebrated Idul Fitri holidays with my maternal grandparents who lived in a small village in the highlands of Central Java. The villagers still celebrate the end of Ramadan with a torch parade around the village.

The next day, on the first day of Idul Fitri (which lasts two days), Muslims in Indonesia perform the Idul Fitri (Eid) prayer at the nearest mosque or field



before gathering at family homes to ask for forgiveness. They also share in the holiday feast, which typically include *ketupat* - rice cake packed inside a diamond-shaped of woven palm leaf pouch and *opor ayam* - chicken white curry. The second day is usually reserved for visiting friends and neighbours.

When I observe Ramadan, along with the small group of other Indonesians in Oxfordshire, I find it can be challenging at times - but also a wonderful reminder of home and a way to remain bonded with my family back in Indonesia, who are fasting at the same time.

Shinta works for an environmental consultancy based in Oxford. She lives in Beckley with her husband Dom and daughter Alex.

'The Dawn Chorus'

by Lyn Ebbs

Back in my youth I would invite friends to stay at my home in Oxford, get up ridiculously early on 1 May so that we could get to Magdalen Bridge by 6am and celebrate May Morning. Mostly they thought it was an elaborate practical joke on my part. So, when I suggest that you get up even earlier on 1 May this year to celebrate International Dawn Chorus Day, please be assured it is an actual event.



It started in the 1980s and is held on the first Sunday in May and is best celebrated during the dawn chorus peak: half-an-hour before to half-an-hour after sunrise (5.35am this year). The variety of song can be confusing but the first birds begin to sing about an hour before sunrise and if you are a regular early riser, you may realise that some species habitually start before others. Among the earliest to sing are song thrushes, robins and blackbirds; wrens and warblers typically join in later.

But why do birds sing and why start so early in the morning? As some of our small birds are pretty hard to spot among the emerging foliage of spring - even to other birds - song is the best way for a male bird to announce his presence at the start of the mating season. Having a loud, recognisable song lets passing females know that he's there. And the converse message goes out to other males that this patch is taken so they had better keep away.

And the early start? Early morning, while light levels are still low, isn't a good time to go foraging for food such as insects and small seeds, so this could be a better time to try and attract a mate. Also, as a small bird, you might be on the menu for predators, so singing before the morning gets too light is a good strategy to avoid their notice. The air is often still around dawn, with less background noise, and song can



carry up to 20 times further than at other times of the day. As the light strengthens, food becomes easier to find, hungry birds begin to move off and the chorus gradually diminishes.



The quality of the song, both in terms of its strength and complexity, helps females decide who is likely to make the best mate. Singing is hard work, and uses hard won food reserves, so it is the fittest, best-fed males who produce the strongest, most impressive song. Females therefore choose the best singer, because he is more likely to be good at raising chicks, to have a good territory, or to pass successful genes to their young. In many species, once the female has been attracted, the male will sing less often. A bird that sings on and on, late into the season, is probably a lonely bachelor who has failed to attract a mate.

I've been writing these articles for a year now - the first being a tribute to Charles Merry. I already had in mind to write about the dawn chorus, but the anniversary triggered another memory of Charles: he told us that a previous owner of our cottage lived in Headington but stayed in Stanton at weekends particularly so that he could listen to the dawn chorus. And this week we found out from Mary Anthony's tribute to Betty Carter that the dawn chorus was one of Betty's fondest recollections of living in Cox Lane in the 1970s.



Why not take some time in the next few weeks to go out early or just open a bedroom window wide and let the dawn chorus work its magic on you?

In memory of Betty Carter, 8 August 1927 - 25 March 2022

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.

All photographs Ben Andrew ([rspb-images.com](https://www.rspb-images.com))

Dame Elizabeth Holford's Charity Applications for Bursaries welcomed

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

The bursaries provide help with educational needs, both academic, vocational and physical. In the past monies have been granted for music lessons, sporting equipment, residential courses, laptop computers and software, digital cameras, tools required by apprentices and help towards masters degrees. The Charity does not fund undergraduate courses or private school fees. Applications are NOT means tested and funding is granted on a case by case basis, decided by the Board of Trustees.

Applications can be made to the Chair of Dame Elizabeth Holford's Charity, Alison Finch. The email address is HolfordtrustChair@gmail.com. Applications can also be made in writing to Alison Finch, 14 Mickle Way, Forest Hill, Oxford, OX33 1DX.

Situations Vacant

Beckley Village Hall Manager

Are you - local, good with people, interested in the community?

Then this part-time paid position as Beckley Village Hall Facilities Manager, with flexible hours depending on activity at BVH, might be for you.

The candidate will be required to monitor use of the hall, often especially at weekends. Also to check the cleanliness and any damage to the fabric or equipment within and immediately surrounding the building. Lastly to liaise closely with the BVH Committee, cleaner and booking clerk.

Enquiries and CV in writing by 10 May to the BVH booking clerk
booking@beckleyvillagehall.org.

Interviews will be held Monday 16 May or Tuesday 17 May and we hope the successful applicant will be able to start on 1 June.

BECKLEY

Beckley Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 4 - 11**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Beckley & Stowood Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 5 May at 8pm in Beckley Village Hall**.

The Annual Open Parish Meeting will be held on **Thursday 19 May at 7pm in Beckley Village Hall** followed by the **Village Hall AGM at 8pm**.

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.

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

**Beckley Open Day and Iona Service of Thanksgiving
Sunday 19 June**

2pm - 6pm

Open Gardens, Teas and Cakes, Plant Stall, Art Show, Raffle

6pm

**Iona Service of Thanksgiving in Beckley Church
to round off the day**

All are welcome. Please do come and join us!

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

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.

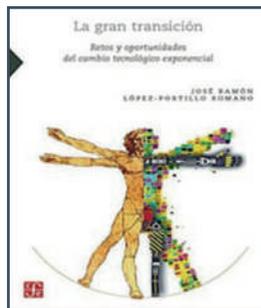
Community Walks

These gentle, approximately two hour, walks usually start at 2pm on the third Sunday of the month (not 19 June, as this is Beckley Open Day). Dogs on leads are welcome. Details of individual walks will be emailed around the community and are available at <https://bacbs.org/events> a few days before each one.

Forthcoming Talks

Sunday 29 May, 6.30pm José Ramón Lopez-Portillo: *Can mankind survive the current exponential growth in technology?*

Dr Lopez-Portillo, a resident of Beckley, is a specialist in the subject of accelerating technological change and its socio-economic impact. He continues to be an adviser to the Mexican Government regarding science diplomacy and the UN Resolution on "Impact of rapid technological change on the achievement of the SDGs". His recent work on this topic is reflected in his book entitled: "The Great Transition" (2018).



Sunday 26 June, 6.30pm Andrew Wilson, journalist and former Sky news presenter who lives in Elsfield, will be interviewed by Chris White.

Platinum Jubilee Celebrations, 2 - 5 June

Events at the Abingdon Arms:

Thursday 2 June - Afternoon tea (clotted cream, jam etc) and a variety of gins in our garden gin bar, a small a la carte menu and pizzas

Friday 3 June - The very best of British food - Fish and chips, pie and mash, Cornish pasties etc

Saturday 4 June - Ticket event (200 maximum) Live music, hog roast, local beers, face painting and more

Please do share any further ideas you might have about the Jubilee to an email account that has been set up at beckleyjubilee@gmail.com.

FOREST HILL

News from St Nicolas Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 4 - 11**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

A big thank you to Rosemary Waknell and Linda Hurren who faithfully clean the inside of St Nicolas Church on a monthly basis, and who helped to decorate for Easter, along with Pat Fraser and Susan Strange.

Recycle your inkjet cartridges and help to save the environment

This is a reminder that you can **recycle your empty inkjet cartridges at St Nicolas** and prevent them from going to landfill. A collection box is kept in the church porch, available even when the church is closed. Unfortunately, laser cartridges cannot be recycled here.

For more information, see <https://www.recycle4charity.co.uk> or ask Peter Stutfield, tel: 01865 876848.

Cream Teas and Music at St Nicolas: save the dates

3-5pm Cream Teas with live music in the garden

5.15pm Informal concert in the church followed by drinks in the garden



These popular monthly summer events will re-start in June on the **4th Saturday of the month (note the change of day), i.e. 25 June, 23 July, 27 August, and 24 September**.

We particularly welcome local performers, so please get in touch to book your slot.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, 2 - 5 June

Our main Jubilee celebration is planned for **Saturday 4 June** with co-ordinated activities all around the village from 2-5pm and a 'bring and share' get-together in the Village Hall from 6pm.

We hope to involve the whole village in this special celebration, so please get in touch with Julia or James if you want to be involved in helping or organising: julia.stutfield@gmail.com or jde_skinner@hotmail.com.

Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on **Thursday 12 May at 7pm in Forest Hill Village Hall**. The date of the June meeting is Thursday 30 June.

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, email address: theclerk@foresthillwithshotover-pc.org or tel: 0844 884 3328, during the hours 9am to 5pm.

The Great British Spring Clean 2022

If anyone would like to form a group to organise a litter pick, the Parish Council have equipment to borrow. Please contact the Clerk.

Parking on Mickle Way/Stanton Rd junction

Vehicles are parking too close to the junction causing a serious driving hazard. Please be aware of the view of Stanton Road for drivers who are exiting Mickle Way.

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 have welcomed well over 40 different families from the Four Parishes and beyond since we re-started in June last year and everyone who comes is assured of a relaxed and friendly welcome.

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. Attendees can also join our WhatsApp Group, which enables members to ask advice and keep in touch with each other.

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 - 11**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Support for Ukranian Refugees

Many people in the Four Parishes, especially in Beckley and Horton-cum-Studley, are working hard in a number of different ways to welcome and support Ukranian refugees. Please see pages 12 - 14 for further details. The welcome message on the back cover of this magazine has kindly been translated into Ukranian for us by Tetyana Bogden. The English text is reproduced below:

"The parishes of Beckley, Horton,-cum-Studley, Stanton St John and Forest Hill welcome you to our villages. We hope to offer you a place, in this peaceful part of the Oxfordshire countryside, where you can feel safe, cared for and find friendship with our many villagers and your fellow Ukrainians. This magazine is published monthly and will provide you with information about community activities."

WhatsApp Group

If you are a WhatsApp user and you would like to be added to the Four Parishes **Ukrainian Refugee Support WhatsApp Group**, so you can keep up with updates and information online, please email your mobile number to lisamynheer@gmail.com.

2022 Giant Pumpkin and Sunflower Growing Competition

We are back this year with a fresh new crop of seeds. Plants will be available from late May or early June. You can pick up a plant from 3 Mill Lane or ring Cathy on 07941 245726.

Any donations to Parkinson's UK will be gratefully received either when you get your plant or at the weigh and measure-in which will be sometime in October.

Good luck everyone. Hope it is a great year!

Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council news

Platinum Jubilee - Beacon, Prosecco & Pudding

2 June 6-8pm

Celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee at the Millennium Hall with a village get-together post-lockdown! Bring your own picnic if you want to for the first hour. At 7pm we'll light a beacon, then return inside the hall to drink a toast to the Queen and serve Platinum Pudding. Entertainment will include a chance to enjoy community singing led by our very own Jacki Maynard.

To help ensure we cater for all those who would like to be there, we'll use the new email distribution list to communicate and get confirmed numbers attending.

If you haven't already signed up, go to the village website at <http://horton-cum-studley.org.uk/news> and complete the form.

Annual Parish Meeting - 12 May 8-9pm

All parishioners are invited to the APM at the Millennium Hall where we report on the work of the Parish Council over the last year and have an opportunity to discuss matters of importance in the village.

Otmoor Challenge

On-line registration is now open and is offered at a slightly reduced rate to the on-day cost (£21.05 vs. £25). To sign up please visit <https://race-nation.co.uk/register/otmoor-challenge/2022>.

We're looking for volunteers on the day to help with the water stations and field marshalling. If this is something you could commit to, please reach out to us at ukotmoorchallenge@gmail.com.



Millenium Village Hall

There has been an increase in bookings which has provided some income and we have been very pleased with the new cleaners who keep the premises sparkling.

The hall has been opened to collect clothes, bedding and towels for Ukrainian refugees and we are planning to allow them to use the hall twice weekly as a meeting forum, providing no other users have hired the hall. There will be a few logistical problems but none that cannot be overcome. An increase in hirers should allow costs (ie electricity) to be covered.

Dates for your diary:-

14 May - Pub night, organised by Ben Short. Details will be posted on the village Facebook page in due course.

11 June - Wine tasting, organised by Jeremy Parke from 5.30pm. Please register attendance either tel: 01865 351315, or email derek.jewell@ndm.ox.ac.uk. Cost: £15.00 for a couple or £10.00 for a single person. Advanced payment would be appreciated. The last occasion made a loss because payment was made 'on the door' and many who had said they would come failed to do so. Apologies for increasing costs especially at this difficult time.

16 June - the Annual General Meeting will be held in the Millenium Village Hall at 8pm. Chairman, Bookings Secretary and two committee members will be standing down. Please send nominations for these posts together with names of proposers and seconder. The village hall is a great amenity for all of us and everyone should feel a degree of responsibility for its continued management. Please show your support by attending this meeting with nominations and ideas for future events

Derek Jewell



STANTON ST JOHN

Stanton Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 4 - 11**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Sunday 5 June 12.30pm

A reminder to those who have yet to contact us

We are looking forward to celebrating as a village with a bring and share lunch on the Millennium Green.

We ask that you bring a favourite dish to share (sweet or savoury), on a serving dish with a utensil to serve. Food will be served to you. Please could you also bring your own plates, cutlery and drinking vessel with your own drinks.

Please reply by 7 May, letting us know numbers and whether you will be providing a sweet or savoury dish.

RSVP to Maddy Shaw madelonshaw@gmail.com or Caroline Clark caroline.clark@hotmail.co.uk.

Memorial Service for Frank Robson

Frank's family are arranging a memorial service for him on **Monday 6 June 2022 at 1.30pm** in the church at Stanton, with refreshments afterwards in the Village Hall. We hope that those who knew Frank will be able to join us to celebrate his life and share memories. In order to gauge numbers for the catering please could people email Lorna at lornarobson59@gmail.com or phone her on 07791 854821 if you are planning to attend.

Save the date Friday 1 July

On Friday 1 July Oxybaroxy (Oxfordshire Youth Baroque Strings) will be playing in Stanton Church at 7.30pm. Admission will be free.

Betty Patricia Carter (née Reed) 8 August 1927 - 25 March 2022



It is a great sadness to announce the death of Betty Carter, a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother.

Betty was born in Essex but spent much of her teenage years and early adult life in and around Aylesbury and Marlow. Betty met her husband, Frank, in 1943, marrying in 1949. A life together of very nearly 80 years.

Betty and Frank moved to Stanton St John in 1972, only leaving some 47 years later in 2019. Betty was the most delightful, helpful and kind neighbour and friend to so many. She was always ready and willing to "do her bit" for the village. She will be much missed.

Our thoughts are with Frank, Linda, Simon and their families as they treasure memories of a lovely lady.

Stanton St John WI

We look forward to being entertained by Analiza Jones giving us a Culturally Quirky humorous talk on the everyday lives of ordinary Filipino people. Our meeting takes place on Tuesday 27 May at 7.30pm in the village hall.

We always welcome any interested ladies from the villages of the Four Parishes to find out more about our activities and talks. Come along to a meeting or contact us at stantonstjohnwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk.

Coffee Mornings in Stanton Village Hall 2nd Wednesday of the month

Wednesday 11 May, 10.30am - 12pm

Wednesday 8 June, 10.30am - 12pm

Come for tea, coffee and cake! Everyone is welcome.

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

Film Night, Saturday 4 June 7.45pm Stanton St John Village Hall

As part of the Platinum Jubilee, the Stanton St John Film Club presents:

THE QUEEN



After the death of Princess Diana, in a particular difficult period in her life, Queen Elizabeth II struggles with her reaction to a sequence of events nobody could have predicted.

Stellar performances of Oscar-winning Helen Mirren and Michael Sheen in the 2006 movie "***The Queen***" (1h 43m, rating 12A), directed by Stephen Frears.

Doors will be open at 7pm, with a film start at 7.45pm. Before and after the film, delicious cakes and drinks will be available whilst the bar will serve wines and Gin & Tonics.

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) and 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

Parish Council email distribution list

If you would like to be included on the Parish Council's email distribution list, please send a brief message to the Parish Clerk at stantonstjohnpc@gmail.com. The clerk circulates relevant local information, agendas and minutes of Parish Council meetings, and selected notices from the district and county councils.

Meeting agendas and minutes are also posted on the notice board outside the Village Shop, and on the Parish Council website at <http://www.parish-council.com/stantonstjohn/>.

Dog walkers

Please remember to pick up after your dog - always - and dispose of dog waste carefully and appropriately, by bagging it and placing either in a designated dog waste bin, or your ordinary grey household wheelie bin. This applies even if you are walking your dog on paths in open countryside or agricultural fields, since dog poo can contain parasites which can kill other animals, including cattle and sheep.

"Fix My Street"

Problems areas on roads (including fly-tipping, potholes, overhanging branches) can be reported directly to Oxfordshire County Council (who are responsible for our roads) at <https://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>, giving details of the location, and if possible, a photo of the problem.

Similarly, any problems on public bridleways and footpaths (such as obstacles, excess vegetation, unfit bridges/crossings) can be reported directly at <https://publicrightsofway.oxfordshire.gov.uk/standardmap.aspx>.

Fundraising for Ukraine

I am selling bouquets and jam jar posies in Stanton St John to raise money for DEC Ukraine. These are speciality, sustainably grown flowers, conditioned fully to maximise vase life.

To place an order, please email smallspaceflowers@gmail.com at least 12 hours before you would like them.

Many thanks, Catherine Rye



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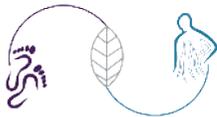
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Ми сподіваємось, що тут, в цих тихих селищах в серці Оксфордширу, Ви почуватиметеся в безпеці в приязному оточенні мешканців сел та місцевої української громади.

Цей журнал виходить щомісяця, в ньому публікується інформація щодо заходів, які відбуватимуться в нашій громаді.



The parishes of Beckley, Horton-cum-Studley, Stanton St John and Forest Hill welcome you to our villages.

We hope to offer you a place, in this peaceful part of the Oxfordshire countryside, where you can feel safe, cared for and find friendship with our many villagers and your fellow Ukrainians.

This magazine is published monthly and will provide you with information about community activities.