# The Four Parishes News Magazine

# BECKLEY FOREST HILL HORTON-cum-STUDLEY STANTON St JOHN



Stanton St John Church in the snow

March 2021

#### The editor writes:



When the March 2020 edition of this magazine was published, most of us were blissfully unaware that we were on the verge of a global pandemic. One year on, we are not in any position to predict what the situation will be by the time the magazine has been printed: we can only hope that this will be our very last 'lockdown issue'!

In place of all our usual village meetings and events, we have another delicious recipe, another short story and an amusing poem. We are always delighted when people send us contributions for the magazine so please keep them coming, even as life gradually becomes more 'normal'.

This month's "Knowing our Neighbours" feature is particularly appropriate to the current situation, as you will see if you look on page 14: we would very much like to continue with these, so please get in touch with more suggestions.

Meanwhile, keep safe, and let's continue to look out for those in our communities who may be struggling at the moment.

### 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 Zander Cornish-Moore. On 2 Feb 2021 Zander wrote:

"The other day when it snowed I took the opportunity to fly my drone and take some aerial photographs of the area, including the church in Stanton St John."

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

# We welcome contributions or notices for future issues. Please send them to:

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#### The closing date for the Apr 2021 issue is 15 Mar 2021

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 <a href="https://www.fourparishes.org.uk/magazine">www.fourparishes.org.uk/magazine</a>

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**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

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

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| Church Services in the Four Parishes, March 2021 |  |   |   |  |  |  |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|
|  | St Nicolas,<br>Forest Hill<br>with<br>Shotover       | St John<br>the Baptist,<br>Stanton<br>St John | Assumption of<br>the Blessed<br>Virgin Mary,<br>Beckley | St Barnabas,<br>Horton-cum-<br>Studley |  |  |
| 7 Mar  | 11am Benefice Morning Prayer via Zoom                |   |   |  |  |  |
|  | 6pm Taizé via Zoom                                   |   |   |  |  |  |
| <b>14 Mar</b><br>Mothering<br>Sunday             | 11am Benefice Morning Prayer via Zoom                |   |   |  |  |  |
|  | 6pm Evensong from the Book of Common Prayer via Zoom |   |   |  |  |  |
| 21 Mar   | 11am Benefice Morning Prayer via Zoom                |   |   |  |  |  |
|  | 6pm Iona Service via Zoom                            |   |   |  |  |  |
| 23 Mar   | 7.30pm National Day of Reflection Service            |   |   |  |  |  |
| 28 Mar   | 11am Benefice Morning Prayer via Zoom                |   |   |  |  |  |
|  | 5pm Family Church via Zoom                           |   |   |  |  |  |
| 29 Mar   | 7.30pm Benefice Holy Week Service                    |   |   |  |  |  |
| 30 Mar   | 7.30pm Benefice Holy Week Service                    |   |   |  |  |  |
| 31 Mar   | 7.30pm Benefice Holy Week Service                    |   |   |  |  |  |

Currently our churches are closed for services with the exception of funerals due to the country being in Lockdown 3, protecting ourselves and the strain on the NHS.

**All are welcome to join our 'Zoom' online services**. Simply get in touch with Anthea (contact details opposite) to request an invitation.

We went to print with the magazine the day before the Government announcement on measures to bring the Country out of Lockdown. For the purposes of this month's rota, we have assumed everything remains online. However, please do look out for announcements, through emails from Anthea, and by the Four Parishes website, for any changes, depending on what is safe, allowed, and possible.

Following updating of Risk Assessments, all churches in the Benefice are open for private prayer on Sundays and Wednesdays from 10am (9am in Horton-cum-Studley) to 4pm.

#### A letter from Anthea

Hi everyone



I am writing this the day before the much-awaited Government announcement on how Lockdown 3 is planned to be eased. I think we are all waiting with bated breath, wondering what we will be able to do, and when we can see our loved ones again. That should be clearer by the time you read this. I am not going to attempt to second guess what will be said, but we are being warned that the easing will be

gradual, with the key focus of getting children back into school. There is a determination to ensure we do not see-saw, with rates of infection rapidly rising again, as easing of restrictions take effect, nullifying the sacrifices made.

We are in the season of Lent which started in February, and are in our own 'wilderness', perhaps able to relate to Jesus' experience more than ever before - indeed we could say we have been in a Lenten-like season for these past eleven months.

So, as we go through Lent, which the Ash Wednesday Service liturgy describes a 'holy Lent' as being a time of self-examination and repentance; of prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and of reading and meditating on God's holy word, let us observe a 'holy Lent'. But may we not concentrate too heavily on 'self-denial' this year, as we have been denied so much of late.

May we be gentle with ourselves as we continue to struggle with our individual situations, whether it be loneliness, illness, financial worries,

concerns about job security or finding a job, concern for loved ones not seen, or known to be struggling, or balancing work, childcare and home schooling; whatever it might be for us individually. May no 'stick' we face, seem too large to carry see the ambition of Bertie on a recent walk!



May we observe, in the beauty of nature, that Spring is definitely 'springing' so to speak! The first flowers are beginning to appear: snowdrops, crocuses, and daffodils and primroses in sheltered places, and buds on trees and shrubs; songbirds are getting into voice: I have heard a skylark,

robins, blackbirds, and bluetits. Nature is waking up from its winter's rest. May our times of self-examination and prayer be as we take in the beauty of our surroundings, as we walk our dogs, as we spend time in our gardens, or sitting in a favourite armchair with a roaring fire or warm radiator nearby.



This Lent, whilst we look towards the Cross, and all that Jesus did for us there, let us keep our eyes looking up, and towards the horizon. Let us not stop at the Cross, but look beyond the Cross. Not, of course, forgetting or dismissing the Cross, and all that Jesus did for us in that unimaginable period, but remembering the continuing story. It is right that we should dwell at the Cross, recognising Jesus' sacrifice for us.

We are in Lent, but the Cross is not the end of the story - let us look to the horizon, to the Cross and beyond, to Easter Day, and the empty tomb - the truth of the resurrection of Jesus, through which we have the gift of eternal life, if we recognise Jesus, and say 'yes' to his invitation.

Without the Cross there is no resurrection. Without the resurrection, death is not defeated. Because of the Cross and because of the resurrection, we are a people of hope.

May you have a holy Lent, whatever that might mean for you. May you look towards the Cross, and then onwards into the distance, to the joy of the resurrection and Easter Day. May we watch the season of Spring continue with nature 'springing' into life. May the lengthening days, the easing of Lockdown and the focus towards Easter, all kindle hope in us.

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

#### Anthea

#### **CHURCH MATTERS**

#### Advent challenge and beyond

Following on from the success of the 'John for January' chat, the chat on people's experiences from reading the Gospel of Matthew in February, is scheduled for **2 March at 7.30pm for an hour via Zoom**. Please do come along and share your thoughts, comments, and questions.

The challenge for March is to read the Gospel of Mark: **Mark for March**. There are only 16 chapters, but I thought you might have plenty of other Lenten activities, so we have a light month on this!

For those doing the **Psalm a Day for 150 Days** challenge, I hope you are doing well. You are probably a third of the way through now!

### Summary of Lockdown 3 activities

In addition to the Sunday Services and Special Services listed on page 5, we continue with the now regular weekly activities on Zoom during March. Look out for emails for updates on activities. Please do get in touch with me for invitations if you do not already get emails from me.

|  | Tues | Wed | Thurs | Fri |
|--|------|-----|-------|-----|
| Morning Prayer at 9am                    | ٧    |     |       | ٧   |
| Evening Prayer at 6pm (not w/c 29 March) |      | ٧   | ٧     |     |
| Midweek Elevenses at 11                  |      | ٧   |       |     |
| End of the Week Drinks at 7pm            |      |     |       | ٧   |
| Lent Book Group 7.30pm                   |      |     | ٧     |     |

#### **Annual Parochial Church Meetings**

Traditionally these have been required to take place by 30 April each year, although the rules changed last year to 31 May. In light of the pandemic, last year, the Bishop of Oxford gave special dispensation so they could be completed later. He has again given a dispensation, and they are to be completed by 31 July this year, in the hope that more may be able to be held in person. We are strongly encouraged to hold them May to July to make this more likely to be possible. Once dates are fixed, we will publicise them, but note that they may be later than you might expect.

#### **Easter Garden Competition**

I thought it would be rather fun to have an Easter Garden Competition. The rules are very loose. The garden can be of any medium. Examples could be a painting, a traditional 'garden' with plants, soil etc, a cake, knitted, crocheted - whatever you would like. Once completed, send me a photo by email with your name. We will not be gathering them all together, due to the difficulties of doing that. We will display the photos on the Four Parishes website for all to see. The closing date for entries is 31 March, and the winner will be announced on Easter Day, 4 April. There will be a small prize for the winner. The idea is that you have great fun producing the garden, and that the photos will bring joy to everyone. All ages are eligible, from the youngest to the oldest in the Benefice. Please do spread the word so we have a good number of entries.

#### Corporate Worship at Beckley School

It has been great being involved in Corporate Worship via GoogleMeet with the School. It has been amazing seeing the sea of faces on screen. Thank you to the School for making this possible. Children, teachers, parents, classroom assistants, and everyone else that is helping to 'make school happen' at the moment, deserve huge praise. Times have been exceedingly difficult, but it has been wonderful seeing how engaged people are. At the time of writing this, I hope they are all enjoying a well-earned rest.

#### Songs of Praise

We had the most amazing informal 'Songs of Praise' on 14 February via Zoom. All the hymns were chosen by people in the Benefice. A total of 18 hymns were sung, with 16 having been recorded locally by people in the Benefice and their friends. Two were recordings from St Martin-in-the-Fields, London. The recording of the 'Songs of Praise' can be found at: <a href="https://www.fourparishes.org.uk/songs-of-praise">https://www.fourparishes.org.uk/songs-of-praise</a>. You might like to have a listen and sing along, to raise your spirits. Do share with others if you would like to.

### **Recordings of Services**

Some of you may have access to a computer, but not like using Zoom. You can watch Benefice services by following this link: https://www.fourparishes.org.uk/online-services.

#### **GENERAL**

#### Helping our ICU staff

Andrew and Mandy Myatt from Stowford Farm are involved in an initiative to support ICU staff at the John Radcliffe hospital.

Staff in ICU (Intensive Care Units), are under incredible pressure at the moment. For weeks they have been at full stretch, caring for patients who may have been in ICU for as long as six months. Instead of seeing most patients get better, they are seeing many more die than usual. The emotional load and the physical stress will inevitably take its toll. One of the ways to support them and brighten their day is by giving them a good quality meal every day.

Since the beginning of 2021, the two Vineyard Churches in Oxford, in partnership with Oxford Hospitals Charity, have been providing 100 meals

every day, free of charge, to staff in three ICU units at the JR hospital. Over 2000 meals have already been provided, which have been received with huge thanks. The meals are being cooked by two restaurants who would otherwise have to lay staff off.



Funding for this project comes entirely from private individuals. Andrew and Mandy are directly involved in giving out the food and are also helping to raise funds through as many channels as possible.

To make a donation to this worthwhile project, please visit the Just Giving page – <a href="https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/givingbackoxford">https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/givingbackoxford</a>. Donations of any size are gratefully received, and every penny goes towards the food.

### Proposed Regional Nature Park

As reported on BBC South and in the Oxford Mail, Bioabundance (a Community Interest Company) is promoting the idea of our local landscape becoming a Regional or National Park. It would include the Four Parishes area; designation would recognise its high landscape and wildlife value. The proposal covers the land between the M40, Oxford-Bicester Railway, Northern Bypass and the A40 to Wheatley.

Bioabundance sees the Park as a positive initiative to ring-fence our deep

(with its rural-ness low population) as an asset to all urban nearby areas. Designation as a Park would bring newly available funding for landscape and nature restoration including tree planting, as well as sustainable transport and outdoor leisure



activities. Details of the funding are set out in Boris Johnson's *Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution* in November 2020.

Designation as a Park would also provide protection against major development, most likely to be driven by new roads - not only the Ox-Cam Expressway, but also the regional transport plan.

An 'Area Action Plan' by the Local Authorities would bring tighter planning policies that go beyond the Green Belt protections. For example stopping giant solar farms and ruling out developments that block wildlife movement between habitats and degrade key views. Applications for sustainable transport and sustainable leisure projects would be supported.

In the County Transport Plans the Park would gain new and upgraded cycle and foot paths, and bus access to the Park from adjacent urban areas, all linking to the railway stations at Islip and Oxford Parkway. Other transport initiatives would include improvements to road crossings, lower speed limits, and 'Quiet Lanes' where foot and cycle traffic are prioritised.

We are now asking for ideas and comments on the Park idea from Oxfordshire residents, landowners, farmers, Central and local government, parish councils and wildlife groups.

Get involved by commenting on the Bioabundance Facebook and Twitter account, emailing us on <a href="mailto:bioabundance@gmail.com">bioabundance@gmail.com</a>, joining Bioabundance to support us and be kept informed of progress, and offer relevant experience and expertise to develop the proposal further.

Oliver de Soissons: Member of Bioabundance

# Local Plan Update and Land North of Bayswater Brook Masterplan Consultation

#### Legal Challenge to Local Plan

Funding for the legal challenge by Bioabundance against the Local Plan has reached its initial target of £10,000 and is now aiming for £25,000 to fight the case. It will be several months before we know if the case will be heard. If you would like to support the legal case here is the link - <a href="https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/southoxonlocalplan/">https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/southoxonlocalplan/</a> and if you would like to join Bioabundance their website is here - <a href="https://www.bioabundance.org.uk/">https://www.bioabundance.org.uk/</a>. A number of local Parish Councils have joined Bioabundance, as well as many individuals.

#### Masterplan Consultation Land North of Bayswater Brook (LnBB)

Representatives from local Parish Councils and communities were invited to join a series of intensive workshops on the masterplan for LnBB by a communication company, Camargue, working on behalf of the site promoters - Christ Church, Pegasus Group and Dorchester Residential Management for the Lower Elsfield and Wick Farm parts of the site (the Bayswater Farm site is separately owned). Those invited were mainly focused on Oxford, while LnBB is in South Oxfordshire District. Most of the Oxford City Councillors were invited, while only a handful of SODC councillors were. Oxford City Football Club was invited but no clubs or organisation in SODC and some Oxford schools, but none in SODC.

These 'Enquiry by Design' workshops showed an outline masterplan which did not include any transport infrastructure alleviation as the detailed traffic modelling for Inspector Bore's 'low car policy' has yet to be carried out under the supervision of Oxford County Council Highways. A spokesman for the site promoters stated that a 'no car policy' for the site would not be possible, so as all the neighbouring communities own at least one car per household it is expected that there will be at least 1,100 additional cars on local roads including the Elsfield and Bayswater Roads, which are already over capacity at peak times. It is very likely that traffic alleviation will be required which will probably affect the road layout on the site. It was agreed that no further workshops would be held until the modelling had been completed and alleviation agreed with County Highways. This will probably be in April or May.

Other significant issues that arose from the series of workshops are -

- The Lower Elsfield and Wick Farm parts of the LnBB development is for 950 dwellings, with the other 150 for the Bayswater Farm part of the site. Yet 1,600 homes were being proposed for Christ Church's part alone.
- The site plan shows houses outside the 'concept plan' very close to the SSSI.
- It was admitted that the 200m buffer zone around the SSSI was only to protect from traffic fumes and adequate mitigation would need to be agreed with Natural England, which some attendees stated should be a protection zone of 1.5km.
- No mitigation for the loss of the Green Belt was mentioned although this is a requirement.
- Flooding of the Bayswater Brook is caused by water run-off which will be exacerbated by development. A model was proposed to reduce flooding (see hydrology presentation).
- The site roadway is to the north of the site high above the development and Barton, and will cause traffic noise pollution to residents of Barton and to the crematorium.

All the workshop presentations are listed separately on the Beckley and Stowood website with the most recent first. These contain links to each presentation and more detailed notes on each - <a href="https://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk/?q=community/parish">https://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk/?q=community/parish</a> council.

There will be another workshop followed by a formal consultation on the revised masterplan when the traffic modelling has been completed.

This development will affect all local residents and we value your feedback. Please have a look at the development proposals in the presentations and feedback your views to your Parish Councils and you can also contact Camargue direct - <a href="mailto:BayswaterOxford@camargue.uk">BayswaterOxford@camargue.uk</a>.

Ginette Camps-Walsh 15.2.21

### "Knowing our neighbours": Anthony Harnden

Anthony Harnden is a GP, lecturer and fellow of St Hugh's College, member of the General Medical Council and the Deputy Chair of the UK JCVI (Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation). The Committee is responsible for advising government on policy decisions relating to the vaccine rollout, such as prioritisation groups and the delayed second dose. Over the last couple of months, Anthony has been on the news regularly as the "media front" for the ICVI.

Anthony came to live in Stanton St John thanks to his wife, Karin, who was

working as a research dietician for Oxford University at the time. He secured a job as a GP at Morland House Surgery in Wheatley, a position he has held for over 30 years. "It was a very small practice in Church Road in Wheatley, with no car parking and about 7,800 patients, and I spent the first 10 years of my



career working full time to develop the practice, during which time we moved the premises to Morland House", he says.

His upbringing took place between the US and Sussex, studying at Collyer's Grammar School in Horsham, before going to the University of Birmingham Medical School. He went on to train as a paediatrician in London teaching hospitals, and during this process spent a year in New Zealand, a country he describes as being "very dear to me". However, when he came back, he decided that he would rather be a GP than a paediatrician.

"I was interested in the combination of a science-based subject together with something which involved communication and helping people", Anthony says. He credits his parent's careers in guiding him towards the path of medicine, his father being a chemist and his mother a nurse. "I think I got my science brain from my father and my compassion and communication skills from my mother", he explains.

In 1999, he decided to pursue an interest in research and took a sabbatical to study for a degree in epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. During his studies Anthony secured a Medical Research Council programme grant to examine common respiratory infections,

which led to his appointment within the department as a lecturer upon the completion of his degree. Now he is a professor in primary care health sciences at the university and Director of Graduate studies. "Basically, I'm in charge of the admissions, mentoring and processing of all thirty plus PhD students", he says.

As his career progressed, he explored his specialist interest in the effect of diseases on children, including common infections such as whooping cough and influenza, as well as rarer ones such as meningococcal disease. In 2008 he was the primary care lead for the Confidential Enquiry into Child Deaths, researching how to avoid child deaths in the developing world, and making recommendations for improvements in clinical and primary care.

Nowadays Anthony's work is more focused on policy, especially in relation to the UK's ongoing vaccination programme. Looking forward, he says, "I'm sure we're going to be in a position where we're going to have an annual coronavirus vaccine, similar to the flu vaccines, which are tailored to the variant strain in circulation at the time".

Anthony is a huge lover of cycling, both on the road and off it. "My interest really dated from when I was 17, I cycled from John O Groats to Land's End", he says. He has followed this up with a number of extensive cycling

trips over the years, which have taken him all over the UK. However, since contracting Covid-19 in March last year and suffering inflammation in his heart and lungs, Anthony has only been able to cycle until recently with an ebike. "I've suffered with a form of long covid for quite a number of months afterwards" he says.



While he is less involved with general practice nowadays, Anthony maintains it is the area he has valued most during his career. "I still feel the most important thing I've done in my career is to look after the patients at Wheatley and the surrounding villages", he says. Though he is keen to emphasise the most special thing in his life is by far Karin and their three children, Kate, Charlie and Elizabeth.

Robert Macfarlane, Horton-cum-Studley

### Correspondence with our MP, February 2021

Editors' Note: John Howell, our MP, emails a regular newsletter to parish magazines in his constituency, which we sometimes publish. As regular readers will know, we also invite contributions from our various local government representatives and members of the communithy, which we hope will contribute to informed and lively debate about issues of concern to local residents. This month we were copied in on a letter to John Howell from a resident of Forest Hill, together with John's reply. We didn't feel that the question had been answered fully so we asked John for further comment, which he duly supplied. The three letters are reproduced below.

#### Dear John,

You have previously expressed, in our parish newsletter, a commitment to action on climate change. I would therefore request that you lobby your party to take a strong stand on the issue of the proposal to excavate a new deep coal mine in the same year that this country is hosting global climate change talks. There remains a very large questionmark over the ability of the Conservative Party to demonstrate joined up thinking and principled leadership on this issue and I would love to read in our next parish newsletter that you have felt able to take a clear stand.

Regards, David Radford, Forest Sun. Forest Hill

Dear David,

Thank you for your email.

I am afraid that these decisions are beyond my control. Planning permission for these sites is either granted or rejected by the planning department at the local county council. They are encouraged to weigh up a whole range of factors, before coming to their decision, including environmental concerns, as well as the thoughts of the wider population. In the case to which you refer, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has opted not to overrule the decision. In this way, I am afraid there is little more I can suggest. It looks like the Government are aware of the opposition to this proposal, but have taken a stance which supports the decision of the local planning authorities. John

Dear Editor,

Thank you for sight of the email exchange between David Radford and me, and for the opportunity to comment.

The issues that David raised was about a local planning decision made by Cumbria County Council in relation to a minerals planning application. Hence my reply was wholly accurate as I have little doubt that David would have known. The decision was entirely within the remit and gift of the local council. Thus I am curious as to why David seeks to lay blame for the approval on the Conservative Government. Looking at the political make up of Cumbria County Council it is led by a Labour/Liberal Democrat Coalition. It was they who made this decision. Interestingly just this week Tim Farron, the Liberal Democrat MP, has sought Government intervention on this. Surprising when in relation to other planning issues the Liberal Democrats have vigorously complained about Government intervention.

However, given the interest I have looked at the report to the Committee on the application. The key point is that the extraction is for coking coal which is needed for our steel industry. The steel industry is moving to decarbonisation and the Government is working on its hydrogen strategy, but until we have that the steel industry needs coking coal from somewhere. Alternative sources from overseas have their own climate related issues associated with transportation. There are also human rights issues from some key global players in this industry.

The Councils Executive Director for Economy and Infrastructure's expressed strong support for the application saying: "I am convinced that there are considerable benefits resulting from the development, not least the potential number of highly skilled jobs on offer and benefit to the UK economy. The project also contributes to the supply of coking coal for the UK steel industry, which is a critical raw material. Overall, the development and its wider impacts when considered as a whole would currently reduce global emissions as a result of savings made from reduced transportation distances of coal to the steelworks and other emissions being neutral. This would be expected to remain the case until more environmentally friendly methods of steel manufacture and transportation are developed to be commercially viable."

I am led to believe that the Council is considering for itself whether to have the planning decision reconsidered by its own Development Control and Regulation Committee.

John

# Oxford-Cambridge Expressway Update

NO EXPRESSWAY no expressway.org

# Waiting for the Transport Strategy, and the elusive Arc Spatial Plan

At time of writing, we are still waiting to see the final version of England's Economic Heartland's (EEH's) Transport Strategy, due sometime later in February. We understand that it will set a net-zero-carbon-by-2040 target - a 10-year improvement on the 2050 target in the July 2020 draft version of the strategy. We have yet to see whether this involves fewer cars or a more rapid implementation of the switch to electric and hydrogen powered vehicles that were always part of the plan. An EEH Transport Strategy Forum in February this year came up with the curious statement that: "Further information (will be) included in the transport strategy to demonstrate how improving local connectivity to assets (such as the natural environment) not only improves health and wellbeing but also reduces the need to travel. This approach brings nature to people rather than people having to travel to nature." Whenever transport specialists talk about 'improving connectivity' it usually means building more roads and, certainly, EEH's alternative to the Ox-Cam Expressway isn't just one road but a collection of 13 of them, serving a very much wider area than ever the expressway might have done. EEH's road improvements are specifically targeted to unlock yet more green-field land for development. How this improves health and wellbeing or brings nature to the people rather than the other way round remains a bit of a mystery.

The spatial plan for the Arc, again mentioned in the previous Newsletter, is proving as elusive as the Cheshire cat's grin. Our 'usually reliable sources' turned out to be as confused as are we. Either a framework or the full spatial plan may appear shortly.

The Bioabundance CIC was set up to bring a Judicial Review challenging the Secretary of State's handling of the South Oxford District Council's Local Plan, and stated that the plan itself did not adequately address the climate change crisis (<a href="https://www.bioabundance.org.uk/">https://www.bioabundance.org.uk/</a>). The group Planning Oxfordshire's Environment and Transport Sustainably (POETS) highlighted the growing democratic deficit in all local planning matters, reminding everyone that the May elections are an opportunity to hold our representatives to account (<a href="https://poetsplanningoxon.uk/poets-democratic-deficit-2021Update-paper-080221.pdf">https://poetsplanningoxon.uk/poets-democratic-deficit-2021Update-paper-080221.pdf</a>). Signs of Spring, both.

### Greetings from The Maple Tree Centre!

I am Laura Spencer, the new manager for The Maple Tree. During the first lockdown, we were recognised for our online programme and service to the community by Thame Town Council. We are spending more time at home once again and we know that parents will be looking for inspiration to keep their children challenged, entertained and learning, especially on these chilly wintery days. We also value the importance of looking after our mental health. So, we have moved online once again. Here is a list of some of our activities. For more information, email info@mapletree.org.uk.

**Messy Mondays: Play and Learn** Sensory/Creative activities for Facebook and/or The Maple Tree website

**Tuesday: Play and Learn**: Once Upon a Rhyme-Time with Sasha for Facebook and/or The Maple Tree website

**Wednesday: Well-Baby Clinic** (with Health Visitors) to be booked through the NHS **Thursday: Play and Learn**: Little Scientist activities for the under 5s for Facebook

and/or The Maple Tree Website

Friday: Play and Learn: Physical Fridays

The Maple Tree is offering 1:1 sessions to parents needing a listening ear during these trying times; this can be by phone, online, in the centre or on a walk as per government regulations.

# Appeal for new Trustees, Advisors and Volunteers

These are difficult times for charities and we are looking for more members from our local area to join our committed and friendly group of trustees. At this time we are especially keen to recruit some volunteers who have a particular skill set in business or accounting.

We are here to help you, if you need help, advice or support.

Telephone: 01865 236700. Email: <a href="mailto:info@mapletree.org.uk">info@mapletree.org.uk</a>

Website: <u>www.mapletree.org.uk</u>

Facebook: <u>www.facebook.com/TheMapleTreeWheatley</u>

### Laura Spencer

The Maple Tree Centre Manager



The Maple Tree is a community charity (registration no. 1174117) based in Wheatley, aiming to replace some services that were lost when local Children's Centres closed in 2017. We serve families from Wheatley and surrounding villages, including Stanton St John, Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley and Beckley.

#### The Magic Potion

#### A short story by Kate MacFarlane

Nelson and his friends were in the home corner. He held a large blue tyrannosaurus by the scruff of its neck. His friend Amrita was making an orange pterodactyl snap up some carrots and drop them in a silver cake tin. The tyrannosaurus put its head into the tin. "Mmm mmm what a lot of juicy carrots," it said, pretending to sniff. "I'm making a carrot cake, silly ..." Amrita replied, using the pterodactyl as a spoon. "Mummy's making me one with lots and lots and lots of icing, like that ... that lady on the telly ... the demented goddess." Mr. Yan said "I think you mean 'domestic' goddess Amrita love; she's Nigella Lawson ..." Amrita looked up and waved the pterodactyl through the air like an aeroplane doing loop the loops. "Yeah, daddy said to mummy ... "Ooooh you're a real demented goddess aren't you" ... and Mummy let me dip my fingers in the icing ... then she let me put some teeny weeny carrots on top ..." Mr. Yan smiled as conversations about birthday cakes and Amrita's party rippled around him.

Everyone said Nelson was lucky to have a new brother like Victor. They all cooed over Victor. Sometimes, Nelson felt a bit sad - not glad - when he peeped into Victor's crib. The baby had croup and his crying sounded like a siren, especially in the middle of the night. Sometimes Nelson wasn't allowed to sing in case he woke Victor up. Nelson heard Victor crying in the night and he knew one of his mums took the baby to bed. He longed for his bedtime story to keep going, even when Lilian read it over and over and over. Being with Kasuo, Leo, Freddie, Talula and Amrita at school made him feel grown up - a big boy, like Mummy Chimamanda said.

Then the lockdown closed the school and Amrita's party couldn't happen. Lilian said they would walk around the block and give Amrita her present in case she felt sad. Lilian dug out some of the dinosaur fabric she'd used for Nelson's special pillow case and made him a mask. She said Victor was too little to want to have his nose all covered up. Nelson wished he could swop places with Victor as he trotted along, holding onto the buggy. He looked at all the muzzled faces of the passers-by. He snatched off his mask and threw it in a hedge.

One morning, as Victor's crying faded down the corridor, Nelson went and got the pestle and mortar from the kitchen cupboard. He climbed up on

his chair and pulled handfuls of petals from the pink roses standing in an enormous vase on the dining room table. He was busy pounding petals into

a paste when Chimamanda snatched away the pestle and yelled "What on earth are you doing with grandma's flowers?" Distraught, he burst into tears. "It's a magic potion ..." he howled. "... like the one in that special bottle ... the ... the one that stops Victor from crying, and stops you from scowling and stops Lilian from shouting ...I'm making a magic potion so I can fly like a pterodactyl and see Mr. Yan and Amrita, and Leo ..."

Chimamanda's face turned tender. She took Nelson on her lap and stroked his head. "Do you know what, Nelson," she whispered, "the real magic potion isn't in



the medicine chest, it's in your tears, love. It's so hard for us all. I'm sure you're missing your friends, and Victor's crying tells us what he can't put into words and ..." Chimamanda dropped the pestle into the mortar's sludgy contents. They sat there quietly. "There's nothing like a good cry to get through to your silly old mums," she said, blowing her nose loudly. "Let's go for a walk and get some fresh air, shall we pet?" The rain battered itself against the kitchen window. She put him down and helped him into his waterproofs. Nelson wiped away some tears. "Did you know that tears tell us more than words could ever say ..." said Chimamanda as they walked out the door "... there are happy tears, angry tears, sad tears ..." Nelson's hand felt hot as they waited at the lift. He sniffed and said "Mr. Yan says when you cry, everyone knows that you need a dose or two of love." He watched as tears rolled into Chimamanda's mask. When they got to ground level, Chimamanda said there was a special new potion called a vaccine. She said her tears were happy and sad - happy about the vaccine and sad too. How on earth was she going to tell him about Mr. Yan.

I wrote this story on 30 December 2020, the day the AstraZeneca vaccine was officially approved for use. I wanted to highlight how hard it is for mothers who are holding the fort during the pandemic and to examine the long-term impact on very young children. KM

#### Lockdown Blues

This poem was sent to us at the end of January by Dawn Dunbar from Forest Hill. Dawn wrote "My daughter Joy felt inspired to write this amusing poem yesterday. We thought it might cheer a few people up."

"We're bored!" said the kids. "We've got nothing to do. If you don't help us quickly, we'll scream til we're blue."

"I know!" said Mum. "You could make a great den. Use bed sheets and towels til it's as big as Big Ben."

"What a rubbish idea!" they were quick to reply. "What else could we do? We're so bored we might die."

"What about taking a tray for a ride?

Down the stairs (if you dare) like a super fun slide?"

"Nah!" sighed the children. "We'd be way too scared. You wouldn't suggest things like that if you cared."

"I'm sure in the garden there's plenty to do.
Use mud, twigs and acorns to make cake or a stew.

Hunt for some bugs or climb up a tree.

Skipping or scooting? A game of frisbee?"



"Oh Mum, you're so boring, with such naff ideas!" And the children dissolved into floods of hot tears.

Mum summoned her strength for one final try. "We have oodles of toys that could help you get by...

Pictionary, bingo, charades or Guess Who? Read Wind in the Willows or Winnie the Pooh. Draw a nice picture, play drums on some pans. Stick leaves on a collage or practise handstands.

Write Grandma a letter, make an obstacle course. Dress up your dollies, ride the mop like a horse. You could help with the washing or tidy your room. The floor needs sweeping, I'll get you the broom. I'm making you breakfast, you could help me out..."

"How could you, you meanie!" they started to shout. "We just want TV, we promise we'd sit, quietly and watch and not fight for a bit."

It went on for some time, all this to'ing and fro'ing. The children were bored and the mother just knowing, that come time for bed when she turned out the light, the children would speak up, their eyes would be bright.

"We've had an idea, we just need more time. An hour or two and then we'll be fine. We'd quite like a bath (it's been almost a week). A quick game of sardines, you hide and we'll seek.

We've made up a play, it's really quite good. You must see our performance. Oh really, you should! Then we must jump on Daddy and sit on his head. There's so much to do, you can't send us to bed!"

But that would all come later on and for now, she still had to amuse these children somehow. These children filled with energy plenty, who'd run out of ideas and were bored by 8.20.

## STANTON ST JOHN

### St John the Baptist Church

Details of all church services can be found on page 5. Any changes to the published schedule will be listed on our website <a href="https://www.fourparishes.org.uk">www.fourparishes.org.uk</a>.

#### Snow picture

Sue Baker sent us this lovely picture of Stanton Church, taken on 24 January, after the first snowfall this year.



# Stanton St John Parish Council

# The Traffic Survey

You may remember that our last report about the parish traffic survey was published in the December Four Parishes Newsletter. We would now like to update you on the matter as much as we are able. The PC would like to remind everyone that progress will be slow and for good reasons:

- We have limited power we are obliged to consult with other authorities on this matter
- We have limited funds although you will be pleased to know that we have put by parish funds in anticipation of this emerging need. We have also been given some discretionary funds by our OCC councillor Tim Bearder and are applying for a similar award from our SODC councillor Sarah Gray.
- We need to seek a broad consensus within the parish on what we can achieve considering the above constraints - this is never an easy matter, for the reason that everyone has, and is entitled to hold and to express an opinion on the matter. We wish to consider all of your opinions in reaching workable solutions with limited funding.

We have discussed the survey at our last two PC meetings, and it will continue to be a regular important item on the PC agenda and outside of it. We have also begun to look at some possible solutions, bearing in mind cost implications. We have been making preliminary enquiries with both OCC and SODC regarding some ideas from parishioners. We continue to put our energy into this project away from the meetings. For example, councillors have been on the ground looking around the parish at the roads and at the traffic issues identified by you to see what might work in an efficient and cost-conscious way.

In short, we are moving forward with this project, cautiously. We are using the survey to guide us in seeking solutions that have a chance of a consensual outcome. We will not be spending money until we have had a chance to get majority support with the suggestions we will be putting forward for all to discuss - in due course.

#### Stanton St John WI

#### Annual Meeting- 16 March

March is the month for our Annual Meeting. This is the chance for members to vote for their Committee and President. As we are unable to meet normally, we will be organising our ballot by Zoom. Members will be asked to use a simple voting form online to take part in a secret ballot and then we hope to continue the meeting afterwards.

Membership has been extended until the beginning of April and we hope to welcome some members from Horton-cum-Studley to join us when their WL is closed.

# Thought for the month

To Zoom, or not to Zoom, that is the question, Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer The slings and arrows of impersonal technology, Or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And by opposing, mute them.

'Anon 2021' with apologies to W. Shakespeare

#### No formal LitterBlitz but the war on litter continues

For many years in the early spring we have organised a group of valiant volunteers from Stanton St John who have battled against wind, rain, cold and occasional sunshine in order to take part in the county's LitterBlitz, aiming to remove the rubbish from our local verges and hedges. You may have noticed our annual tidy piles of filled blue bags, at strategic places from where the council efficiently removed them within a day or so. It is a very sobering thought to think what our green and pleasant countryside would now be looking like if all this refuse had not been removed over the years. It will not disappear by itself.

However, this year it is very unlikely that as a group we will be able to carry out this task and that is a worrying thought for the year ahead.

We know that all our footpaths and country routes have been well trodden over the last few months and we all appreciate how lucky we are to be living in such a rural environment. The enjoyment is spoilt though by thoughtless people rejecting their litter along the way presuming that it is no longer their concern.

With this in mind it would be wonderful if we could all do our own bit against this rise of rubbish. The council have in the past lent us litter pickers and high viz jackets for the task, but these can also easily be purchased on-line and then your household has them for life. So, although there'll be no formal LitterBlitz, we can switch to 'little and often' tactics. Of course, all safety issues must be considered and great care must be taken on roads, but it is amazingly satisfying to clear an area and then return the next day to enjoy a pleasant green bank.

If you are looking forward to getting out and about, please consider doing your bit for the environment and for all of us who live here and let's wage war on litter.

If large or unsafe items are found, please do not remove but refer to the SODC webpage about flytipping.

Sally & Nicholas Braithwaite

#### **FOREST HILL**

#### St Nicolas Church

Details of all church services can be found on page 5. Any changes to the published schedule will be listed on our websites www.fourparishes.org.uk or www.stnicolasforesthill.org.uk.

At present the Church is locked, but it is open for private prayer on Wednesdays and Sundays, 10am - 4pm. We hope that you will venture out on those days: the Church is quiet and peaceful, a place to give you strength during this difficult pandemic.

#### Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council

Households across Oxfordshire will be asked to take part in Census 2021 this spring.

The Census is coming on 21 March. Information from the digital-first Census will help decide how services are planned and funded in our local area. Census outputs inform where millions of pounds of public funding is spent on services like transport, education and health, and on cycle routes, schools and dental surgeries. Everyone will receive a letter with a unique access code in the post, allowing them to complete their questionnaire online. Paper questionnaires will be available on request. For more information visit Census.gov.uk.

Parish Council meetings continue to be held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions and residents are welcome to join the meetings. The date of the **next meeting is Thursday 8 April**. If you would like to attend a meeting via Zoom or have issues you would like raised on your behalf, please contact the clerk.

During COVID-19 restrictions, agendas with planning application details and minutes of meetings will be posted on the website only, along with other Parish Council information:

<u>www.parish-council.com/foresthillwithshotover/index.asp</u>. You can contact Helen Cross, the Parish Council Clerk, tel: 0844 884 3328, during the hours 09:00 - 17:00, or email: <a href="mailto:theclerk@foresthillwithshotover-pc.org.uk">theclerk@foresthillwithshotover-pc.org.uk</a>.

#### **BECKLEY**

# **Beckley Church**

Details of all church services can be found on page 5. Any changes to the published schedule will be listed on our website <a href="www.fourparishes.org.uk">www.fourparishes.org.uk</a>.

#### **Beckley & Stowood Parish Council**

The March PC meeting will be held remotely on Thursday 4 March at 8pm by Conference Call. Parish Council information, including agendas and minutes, is available on the website <a href="www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk">www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk</a>. The Clerk's email address is <a href="clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk">clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk</a> if you wish to contact the Parish Council to raise a question for the next meeting.

Households across Oxfordshire will be asked to take part in **Census 2021** this spring. The Census, run by the Office for National Statistics, is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every ten years since 1801, with the exception of 1941. This year, for the first time, the Census will be digital first. All households will receive a letter in early March with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on 21 March on their computers, phones or tablets. Visit <a href="https://www.census.gov.uk">www.census.gov.uk</a> to find out more.

**The Otmoor Flyer** - The service is currently suspended.

For information on **Beckley Village Hall** please see <u>www.beckleyvillagehall.org</u> and to enquire about a booking please contact Stuart Marshall at <u>booking@beckleyvillagehall.org</u>.

**Fix My Street**: anyone can report a road or street problem on the County Council website at <a href="https://www.fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk">www.fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk</a>.

Reminder from the Parish Council: Please clean up after your dog and dispose of bagged waste and litter in your Grey bin at home or in the dual-waste litter bin on the playing field. Please don't leave bags on the verges and pavements, in trees and bushes or outside the Village Hall, Church gate, School or Abingdon Arms Pub. Thank you.

# Beckley and Area Community Benefit Society More than a Pub program. https://bacbs.org/events

The monthly Sunday evening talks by Zoom continue and remain popular with 30-60 people 'zooming' in. The talks range across many disciplines and remain very varied. The last talk, "Walls of sure and solid stone - presented by Dr Tara Stubbs and Jane Haigh, based on Shamus Heaney's poem 'Scaffolding', session was a great success.

The last pub quiz (Wednesday 3 February) went down really well, with 40+ 'quizzers' zooming in. Andreea did an excellent job managing the whole exercise and the technical complexities, many thanks to her and her 'team'. For questions and answers email <u>john.stradling@ouh.nhs.uk</u> for the link. The next quiz is on Wednesday 3 March at 8pm, go to https://bacbs.org/events for further information.

This is the current Sunday evening program so far, with more events in the pipeline:

**Sunday 14 March 2021: 6.30-7.30pm**: *Great Horkesley to Eight Ash Green*. An East Anglian rewrite of 'Larkrise to Candleford'. Join Betty Dye (who lives in Beckley) on a journey which takes you from "settin-on-em-up" in August to the turkey stubbing marathon in December, via glass accumulators and the two-seater privy. This is no nostalgic amble down country lanes as she hated, she says, both "settin-on-em-up" and turkey stubbing, but it is an oral history of things you might also remember.

Zoom access details are distributed nearer the time. If you would like to watch previous talks then email Adrian Hampshire at <a href="mailto:info@bacbs.org">info@bacbs.org</a> with your request.

Family Treasure Hunt - a real (non-zoom!) quiz and hunt for children (with accompanying adults!) featuring aspects of some of the villages of our community. Watch <a href="https://bacbs.org/events">https://bacbs.org/events</a> for further information!

The Abingdon Arms continues to do a variety of take-away options, see <a href="https://www.theabingdonarms.co.uk/">https://www.theabingdonarms.co.uk/</a>, or ring 01865 655667 (Wednesday to Sunday), or email <a href="mailto:theabingdonarmsoxford@gmail.com">theabingdonarmsoxford@gmail.com</a>.

#### **HORTON-cum-STUDLEY**

#### St Barnabas Church

Details of all church services can be found on page 5. Any changes to the published schedule will be listed on our website <a href="www.fourparishes.org.uk">www.fourparishes.org.uk</a>.

There has been some concern over flooding of graves on the left hand side of the path to the Church entrance following wet weather. The PCC will review the position.

#### Thank you from Lyn and Pete

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone who donated to our Christmas lights, we raised £192.22 for St. Barnabas Church. Thank you from the Whitakers.

### Horton-cum-Studley Women's Institute

We hope everyone is bearing up in this winter lockdown and already looking forward to brighter evenings and some springtime weather. As we confirmed in the last Four Parishes News, Horton-cum-Studley WI has unfortunately reached the stage where we can no longer continue as a village group and we are finding alternative ways to carry on. We are now in the final stages of the process that offers us the opportunity to join with Stanton St John WI and should know the outcome soon so hopefully will be able to confirm in the next publication.

As ever, please contact the committee via our Secretary, Jane Pennington (01865–358800) or President, Barbara Raleigh (01865–358955) for information or support.

### The Otmoor Flyer

The Otmoor Flyer is currently suspended but it is possible to book individual journeys for two people only, at a cost of £6.00 each for a return trip from Beckley and Stanton St. John, and £9.00 from Horton-cum-Studley and Forest Hill. Half these amounts for a one-way trip. You will be picked up from your home and returned likewise.

To book, contact Comet, Tel. 01865 323201. Any queries to Jill Meyjes 01865 351496.

#### Horton-cum-Studley Gardening Club

A cold snap and a sprinkling of snow today, but by the time you read this, I hope that spring will have arrived. Daffodils should be in full flower; primulas, marsh marigolds and snakes head fritillaries will be enjoying the soggy ground around our pond, (difficult to believe the ground will ever dry out after this very wet winter), tulips should be starting to put on a wonderful show, potatoes should be chitting and my early Irish rhubarb will be ready for pulling.

Spring meetings will be held remotely at 8pm using Zoom. Mary Stuck is talking to us about R.D. Blackmore's gardening skills on Tuesday 17 March and Avril Hughes will be inspiring us on Tuesday 20 April with her talk about Bulbs of the Peloponnese. The full programme, including details of future garden visits, is on the village website <a href="www.horton-cumstudley.org.uk/community/clubs/">www.horton-cumstudley.org.uk/community/clubs/</a>.

Visitors are welcome to our meetings - please ensure we have your email address, so you get the Zoom link. New members are very welcome, and we are looking for new committee members. If you would like to know more about the Gardening Club, or would welcome some advice about your own garden, please just contact me on 01865 351310. I hope gardening and gardens and especially tulips will raise your spirits in these difficult times and that you stay safe.

Susan Burge, Chairman

### Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council

The Parish Council continues to meet virtually on the 2nd Thursday of every month, if you wish to attend please email <a href="mailto:Hortoncumstudleyparishclerk@gmail.com">Hortoncumstudleyparishclerk@gmail.com</a>.

The Parish Council is aware of the current state of footpaths in and around the village, this is due to a combination of the current spell with wet weather, and the increased use of footpaths during lockdown.

The Parish Council continues to work with Oxfordshire County Council to bring these issues to their attention. The Parish Council would like to recommend to Parishioners that the maintenance of roads is the responsibility of Oxfordshire District Council and the best way to register potholes is using <a href="https://www.fixmystreet.com/">https://www.fixmystreet.com/</a> this website is accessible to all.

#### Allan Tuckley 23.7.1929 - 2.2.2021

The 1960's were a period of flowering creativity and growing optimism. The villages to the East of Oxford experienced an influx of new residents looking for an ideal place to put down roots and bring up a family. Allan Tuckley, who sadly passed away in early February aged 91, together with his wife Ann, and two (later three) young sons were among the new arrivals. Horton-cum-Studley has been their home, and much of their life, ever since.

Allan spent his early career over the border in Buckinghamshire, working for the County Council as an Architect, designing schools. When, in 1963 he successfully got a promotion to The Oxford Regional Hospital Board, he, and colleague Ken Bartlett (who also sadly died in December 2020), looked at ways of using their talents to locate new homes locally. In those days, in the infancy of the Green Belt, village expansion was possible, and together they did a deal to purchase land on Brill Road with the co-operation of local farmer Jack Badger. During 1964 the two young architects built complimentary but very different houses. What joined them were the unrivalled views across the Danesbrook valley to Bernwood. Both homes are characterised by upstairs sitting rooms with large floor to ceiling windows taking in the magnificent Oxfordshire scenery.

Professionally Allan committed himself to public service and especially the national health service. This was in the days when dedicated in-house design teams fuelled the development of new health and other public facilities. Initially his work was mostly centred on Oxfordshire, and there were few local hospitals (and therefore lives) that he did not have a hand in shaping. Later this spread far and wide, including hospitals and health centres such as Wexham Park, near Slough, Stoke Mandeville, and High Wycombe. The latter was visible from the M40 and regularly received a family wave as we drove by.

Allan made many contributions to village life over the six decades Horton-cum-



Studley was his home but the main ones were through horticulture, culture and the church. He was for many years responsible for the charity plant stall at the annual village horse show and Fete, and later (after sterling work by friends such as Basil Lyster) at the Otmoor challenge. Each spring would see our house and

garden become the nursery as the greenhouse overspill was relocated. The day itself was always exciting, as we helped him load his VW Camper van with its green cargo. Later he was the chairman of the village Gardening Club, and was one of the instigators of the colourful and attractive drifts of daffodils and other flowering plants that now adorn the village. Some, I believe, may even have been early illustrations of what might now be termed guerrilla gardening!

Allan and Ann were stalwarts of the village drama and music scene. His tenor voice was an important element of the Studley Singers, not to mention the

church choir. Many memorable performances by the group, lead by Gordon Curtis, included the annual Christmas Eve carols at the Studley Priory Hotel. His particular favourite was Gilbert and Sullivan and he featured in many productions by the Otmoor (and later Islip) Players staged across Oxfordshire including in the old



village hall (on the hill) and the larger premises in Islip. He even shaved off his beard for a performance of the Chocolate Soldier, rapidly re-growing it when his children said they did not recognise him. Later he, together with colleagues, including Nick Meyjes, were invited to join the Lime Walk troupe, Allan regularly performing in Headington in front of various of his eight grandchildren (and a packed house!) until his late 80's.

Allan and Ann had met at Manchester University, brought together by the Student Christian Movement. Both from Methodist families in the north and midlands, they shared similar values of hard work, education, humility and community service. Clearly this has rubbed off, as all three sons became public servants. Allan soon found a home at St Barnabas Church and became more involved following his retirement in the late 1980's. Sunday would see him walk down through the village to join the congregation, on occasions reading the lesson, and only stepping back when Ann became ill in the last year or two.

He will be sadly missed but has left a lasting legacy shared by his family and beyond. Each spring the daffodils flowering along the village verges will remind us of him.

Will Tuckley

### 'There is a green hill far away': the story behind the hymn

There is a green hill far away
Without a city wall
Where our dear Lord was crucified
Who died to save us all.

We will soon be singing this Easter Hymn, but have you ever wondered who wrote it? It was written by Cecil Frances 'Fanny' Alexander (nee Humphrey) who lived from 1818 to 1895. She also wrote 'All things Bright and Beautiful' and 'Once in Royal David's City.'

Her hymns especially appeal to children because of their simple words. They were all part of a book called 'Hymns for Little Children' which she wrote with the intention that it could be used by clergy and Sunday school teachers throughout the year. Fanny had this idea from John Keble, the Oxford Don, because she much admired his work - 'A Christian Year of Verse' - and wanted to write a version for children.

Did you know she was also a pioneer of education for deaf children in Ireland? Fanny and her sister, Annie, were very involved in local church activities in Strabane, Ireland where they lived. They used to visit local families and on one visit to a poor family, they met a small, deaf boy. They were saddened by the barrenness of his existence and the bleak future he faced as well as being cut off from knowledge of the love of God. They persuaded their father to let them have use of a small building in the garden of their home to set up a tiny school for four or five deaf children. Later, proceeds from 'Hymns for Little Children' made a significant contribution to the Derry and Raphoe Diocesan Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb, the foundation stone of which was laid in September 1850.

However, Fanny, who was married to Church of Ireland minister William, will probably always be most remembered for the three beautiful, well known hymns that so many of us grew up singing.

Carol Welch

(Ref. Mrs Alexander: A life of the Hymn Writer by Valerie Wallace)

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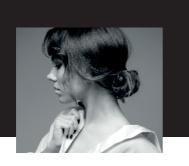
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# Another Lockdown Recipe: Marmalade Gingerbread

#### Ingredients

Half a pint (300 ml) milk

2 tsp bicarbonate of soda

8oz (250g butter (melted)

8oz (250g) marmalade

8oz (250g) soft dark brown sugar

12oz (350g) plain flour

1 rounded tablespoon ground ginger

2 tsp ground cinnamon

2 large eggs, beaten

4oz(100g) raisins

6-8 pieces preserved ginger - chopped

#### Preparation

Butter an 8-9" round or square tin - line with baking paper

Warm the milk and bicarbonate of soda together and set aside

Mix together the melted butter, the marmalade and soft dark brown sugar

Sieve the flour, ginger and cinnamon together and mix into the melted butter,

together with the beaten eggs. Mix well.

Add the warm milk and bicarbonate of soda and beat really well together.

Mix in the raisins and chopped ginger.

Put into prepared tin and bake in a gentle oven, 160C or 310F, on the bottom shelf for one and a half hours.

Leave to cool in the tin.

This is a recipe by Sarah Nesbitt from The Holy Island Cookbook and is described as: An excellent cut and come again standby cake for your cake tin. Just the thing to have ready when unexpected guests drop in for coffee. (Obviously, pre-Covid and Lockdowns!). It's delicious!

Pat Moss