

The Four Parishes News Magazine

BECKLEY
FOREST HILL
HORTON-cum-STUDLEY
STANTON St JOHN



Giant Pumpkin Competition, Horton-cum-Studley

November 2020

The editor writes:



As I write, the prospect that Oxfordshire will be subject to another phase of Covid-19 'lockdown' restrictions seems to be looming ever closer. I have no doubt that we will continue to do whatever we can to look after the most vulnerable in our communities and we must all hope that anyone who needs help or support will feel able to ask for it.

One positive aspect of the disruption to all our lives during 2020 is an increased interest in creative hobbies, such as photography. I have been delighted to be able to publish most of the excellent photographs that have been sent to me, and there are more in this month's magazine. However, I have now run out, so please keep the pictures coming!

We may not have many events to publicise in November, but there are several interesting articles to enjoy. As always, I urge you not to pass over the advertisements at the end of the magazine. We have more new advertisers, and the range of services offered is becoming ever more diverse.

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 ...

Is by Cathy Jenkins, who writes:

"I think this is a good display of some of the pumpkin entries outside my front door. Modesty would not let me send you a picture of me with the winners trophy!!!"

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.

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The closing date for the Dec 20/Jan 21 issue is 15 Nov 2020

The Four Parishes News Magazine is produced under the auspices of our four village churches for the benefit of the whole community. It is funded by advertising revenue, which is used to cover the printing costs.

We are dependent on volunteers to assemble the content, book and invoice the advertisers, compile and edit the magazine, collect it from the printers and distribute it throughout the four parishes. If you are interested in getting involved, please email Julia at 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com

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

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Assistant Editor: Jonathan Barker

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To advertise in the magazine please email JULIA
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Benefice of Beckley, Forest Hill with Shotover, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John

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Church Services in the Four Parishes, November 2020

	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 Nov <i>All Saints</i>	11am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Morning Prayer
	4pm Family Church via Zoom			
		6pm Taizé		
8 Nov <i>Remembrance Sunday</i>	10.50 at War Memorial followed by Remembrance Morning Prayer	9.30am Remembrance Holy Communion	10.45am Remembrance Morning Prayer	10.45am Remembrance Morning Prayer
15 Nov	11am Morning Prayer <small>(Book of Common Prayer)</small>	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion <small>(Book of Common Prayer)</small>	11am Morning Prayer
	4pm Family Church via Zoom			
			6pm Iona Service	
22 Nov <i>Christ the King</i>		9.30am Holy Communion		
	11am Joint Benefice Service via Zoom			
29 Nov <i>Advent 1</i>		9.30am Family Service	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Holy Communion
	4pm Choral Evensong <small>(Book of Common Prayer)</small>			

Covid-19 Risk Assessments have been completed for all our churches and we are observing social distancing and recommended hygiene precautions. Wearing of face masks is mandatory in places of worship. If you would like to attend a service and have any questions or concerns, please contact Anthea Beresford (details opposite). Keep an eye on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk for any changes.

All are welcome to join our 'Zoom' online services. Simply get in touch with Anthea to request an invitation.

A letter from Anthea

Hi everyone,

What a difference a day makes! Yesterday, not only was I getting back into things following my holiday, but the dark day, constant rain, and thought of the clocks changing, all affected my outlook. Today, the sky is bright blue and the sun is shining beautifully, and how different do I feel! I wonder if any of you are affected by such things. And this was despite me having been fortunate enough to have been on holiday! I appreciate not all have managed that this year, or indeed for some, possibly not for quite some time. I found a change of scenery and a chance to blow away some cobwebs a blessing, despite me living somewhere beautiful anyway!



While away, we did very little, which was ideal for a restful break. We saw some beautiful scenery and the lovely sandy, expansive Pembrokeshire beaches were a welcome sight. Until last week I had not been to a beach this year which is unusual. I went armed with suggestions from friends of beaches to visit, and we were not disappointed.



Bertie learnt a hard lesson - do not drink sea water when fetching your ball, it really is not good for you! Benji, another dog in the party, caused us a fright. He decided to climb down rocks into a cove. Coaxing him back out before the tide came in was somewhat stressful! I was beginning to wonder about the need to call the coastguard when he found his way back!



I managed to finish a book that I started before I moved here in the summer but had not touched since doing so!

And in good holiday weather style we got absolutely soaked one day - my nephew and I were the only people silly enough to be on the beach that day - the dogs still loved it though!

Now back home I was pleased Bertie was shattered after a week with three other dogs, as the weather was so grotty and not at all inviting for a walk.

That said, I need to get exercising after holiday indulgences! The sunshine of today is so much more inviting!

Yesterday, saw the clocks go back - despite people understandably saying they do not want another hour of 2020! I enjoyed the extra hour in bed, and the lighter morning, but will not like the sudden darker evenings.

So, winter beckons. And this winter I think will be especially tough. Coming



home on Friday got me back from Wales before they went into a 17-day countrywide lockdown. Some areas had already been locked down. I think the thought of another lockdown is tough as we now know how hard it is having already been through it once.

As I reflect, I am interested to notice how easily my spirit can be affected by outside circumstances: dark, drab, wet days or days of blue skies and bright sunshine. All too quickly, I can overlook my blessings! At such times I pull myself up, as I am not reliant on my circumstances, but something much deeper. Today, as I write this letter, we are celebrating Bible Sunday in the Church calendar. And it is to the words from today's blessing I want to turn and share with you:



*Go now in peace,
knowing that you have been born again,
not of perishable seed, but of imperishable,
through the living and enduring word of God.*

It is to the Word of God we can turn when times are tough, to words of comfort and encouragement, that endure, despite what is going on in the world around us. My prayer for us all as we potentially face a difficult winter, is that we find God's Word sustaining and comforting.

If anyone is struggling, please do get in touch, and do not struggle on on your own. Sharing our troubles can be so helpful, even if they do not go away. And knowing that people are praying for us in our troubles can bring great comfort too.

Keep safe and God bless you.

Anthea

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD

Two messages from Anthea:

- All Souls'

This is a time when we remember and give thanks to God for loved ones no longer with us, and I had hoped to hold a service to mark this occasion. Unfortunately, due to current restrictions, I have decided to mark the occasion myself. If any of you have a loved one you would like remembered, please give me their name, and I will light a candle in their memory as I follow the service, for this year, on my own. This does not have to be someone who has died recently. I plan to mark the occasion after the Taizé Service on 1 November. Please let me know the name of anyone you would like remembered before then. Hopefully, next year we can be together for the service.

- Ordinands

I have been delighted to have been approached by Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, to have Ordinands come and preach at some services as part of their practical experience for their Ordination training. Please look out for Ordinands with me in November, and probably again in February/March next year. These are difficult times to make people welcome but please do. I really valued my context training, so am pleased to offer this opportunity.

'Open the Book' Volunteers

When Betty Dye moved to Beckley, she decided to start a small group of volunteers to act out bible stories in assemblies at Beckley School. The 'Open the Book' team became a regular fortnightly fixture and the stories proved very popular with the children, but, sadly, Covid-19 restrictions have put an end to school visits for the time being.

At the Beckley Family Harvest Service in October, Betty and three 'socially distanced' helpers presented the Old Testament story of Ruth, which was very well received. We plan to make this type of storytelling a regular feature of Family Services but we need more volunteers to make it possible. If you would like to know more about what is involved, please contact Betty (betty.dye10@gmail.com) or Julia (julia.stutfield@gmail.com).

Four Parishes 'Virtual Choir'

Many thanks to all the musicians who contribute to the recordings of hymns for our monthly 'Zoom' service. We can always use more singers so, if you enjoy singing, and are missing it at the moment, please email julia.stutfield@gmail.com to find out more about what's involved.

GENERAL

Four Parishes Calendar

Thanks to an initiative from Beckley residents Geoffrey and Christine Tagg, there will be a Four Parishes Calendar for 2021, which will be on sale in the next few weeks. Further details will be available in the December magazine and on the Four Parishes website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Spotlight on Local Government

Editors' Note: councillors from all political parties have been invited to contribute to this feature. Since there is currently no Labour councillor representing our area, we've invited a local Labour Party member to write a piece from a Labour point of view.

From Stephanie Kitchen, Wheatley Road, Forest Hill Covid and Cuts to Public Services



As a further round of local government spending cuts was approved by Oxfordshire County Council on 8 September 2020 - of c.£15m, to fill a budget shortfall of c.£20m with anticipated impacts on youth and children's services - it seems the austerity policy of the last decade is set to continue.

In the area of the Four Parishes, we have seen the complete loss of public buses, as the subsidy scheme was abandoned. An incremental charging regime was introduced for school buses. Sixth formers and children attending a school that is not 'the closest' to where they live face charges of several hundred pounds per child per year. This applies to primary children living in Forest Hill attending Beckley School for example, and to sixth formers in all Parishes travelling to Wheatley Park School on a school
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bus. Such a policy clearly disadvantages our primary school's ability to recruit, and hence their funding, as families may opt for other schools. The discrimination against Years 12 and 13 from using school buses seems to have little to do with education, as this is compulsory until 18, and more with finding ways to raise revenue outside formal taxation channels. Of course, such regressive measures always affect the less well off more than the better off.

Our local state schools themselves strain to be adequately resourced. Wheatley Park School is closing early on Fridays due to budget shortfalls - a pre-pandemic decision that has continued, despite the well documented negative and disproportionate effects Covid closures have had on children's education, and government rhetorical gestures about 'catch-up'. The reality on the ground is that families are being asked for voluntary donations to purchase materials in some subjects.

Services affecting the youngest in our community are also depleted. The Maple Tree Children's Centre at Wheatley is solely volunteer-run owing to loss of government funds; Sure Start funding that Barton Children's Centre received has been lost. Other services that families in this area depend on such as the swimming pool in Barton and the library in Wheatley remain closed post the lockdown. In 2010/11, Oxfordshire County Council proposed withdrawing funding entirely from almost half the county's libraries - which effectively would have closed them - a programme that was only rescinded through vigorous public campaigning.

Slowly but surely such basic services - transport, schools and children's services, leisure facilities, libraries - we have taken for granted have been eroded by a decade of austerity which looks set to continue post-Covid. We need to remain alert to the coming cuts as the true costs of the pandemic become clear at every level of society; to do what we can to oppose them politically, and in the community support those most impacted by their effects.

Stephanie Kitchen

Forest Sun, Wheatley Road, Forest Hill
stephanie.kitchen@btopenworld.com

Increasing connectivity or 'un-pausing' the Ox-Cam Expressway

England's Economic Heartland's (EEH) transport consultation (now closed), mentioned in the September Newsletter, identified nineteen possible road corridors across the region, amongst which was an 'Oxfordshire Milton-Keynes connectivity' study.

Only thirteen corridors survived a sifting process and only nine of these were shown on a map in the Transport Strategy document, none along the Oxford Milton-Keynes route. Was this option one of the six rejected corridors, or one of the four sifted corridors not shown on the map?

Plans for the EEH region, slightly larger than the Ox-Cam Arc region, also involve a total of 862,000 new houses by 2050. EEH did not specify where any of the half a million houses not yet in any Local Plans might go, even though corridor selection appears to have been based on future housing potential.

On the eve of the EEH consultation deadline the Ox-Cam Arc Leadership Group (ALG) put forward its own Economic Prospectus for developing the businesses of the Ox-Cam region in which it identified "a need to look again at the links between Oxford and Milton Keynes... to improve connectivity between the M40 and the A14 (Huntingdon to Cambridge road)".

Bridget Rosewell of the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) that first put forward the Ox-Cam Arc proposals, went one further in a public meeting in September and said that she will continue to press for the Ox-Cam Expressway, although probably delivered in sections. She admitted that the western end of the expressway is "both challenged and challenging". The one million new houses target was, she said, "a nice round number" and urged us all not to worry too much about it because it was "only 30,000" new houses a year over the next 30+ years (currently Arc authorities are delivering about two thirds of that number).

We thus have three different bodies (EEH, ALG, and the NIC), each responsible to a different arm of Government, all now promoting improved road connections between Oxford, Milton-Keynes and Cambridge - either expressway-lite or the real, (still officially 'paused') Ox-Cam Expressway, plus significant additional housing developments. NEG will continue to monitor developments carefully.

David Rogers

SODC Local Plan - A view from Sandhills

Editors' Note: Mark Hanger from Sandhills contacted us after seeing some of our recent coverage of the Local Plan, so we invited him to contribute a personal perspective on this important local issue.

A man, some paint and a conscience.

As a father of three, in the 'afternoon' of life, having left full time employment to have more family-time, I've now added 'mid-life' to the regular list of crises (housing, climate, bio-diversity, pandemic etc.). This has culminated in me becoming an 'activist' - not so much Swampy, more John Lewis, - so how did this happen?

Having always enjoyed outdoor activities as a youngster, I've continued to share this enthusiasm with my family. We've had many 'adventures' around the local area and whilst together we discuss a wide range of matters including the crises mentioned above. Our eldest child has always shown a keen interest in the natural world and environment, and fuelled by the Attenborough and Greta era is very environmentally conscious. The other two do the prodding.

Our adventures take us through the A40 subway opposite Sandhills, with its positive messages (see photo) on our way to Shotover. We've witnessed the conversion of Neilsons to Thornhill Park (134 flats) and discuss the impact of another 400 dwellings behind. We walk to Sydlings Copse and see the Barton Park development and discuss the impact of further development. We have lived and breathed Sandhill's fields daily, see, hear and appreciate the wildlife it supports, and whilst we explain to our children about the need for affordable housing, I'm met with quizzical faces: "but what about"



The situation started to worry me, as it does our children, and I didn't have the conviction of any meaningful answers.

With the need to better understand what was going on I took decisive action ...and joined a Zoom call (camera off) to discuss the SODC Local Plan. I learnt of the complex issues, political, historical, and sensed the frustration, anger and despair at the process and situation. It was evident

that a lot of effort had been done to communicate with the planning process (and continues to do so) with disappointing results.

With my virtual head above the parapet, I realised being passive wasn't an option, it was time to step up and do my bit. I wanted to think like a child about how the messages of addressing climate change and biodiversity loss can be reconciled with the need for housing and economic growth. So I got the paints out and the Save Our Sandhills Greenbelt Notice Board was born .

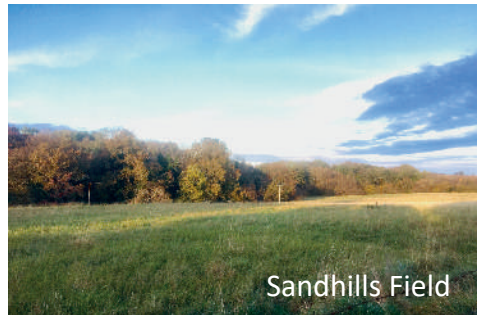
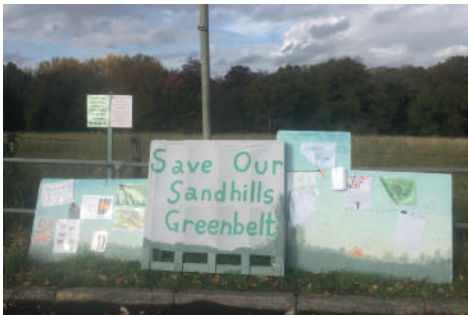
The idea was to create an area where all the community, but especially the young, can write, paint, draw, photograph anything that concerned them. This would then be communicated via a daily video posted on Facebook and Twitter to share and express concerns, create content and keep up momentum. The notice board has given a physical focal point, stimulating conversation with residents.

By using social media, we can reach out to other local communities to pool resources, share ideas, knowledge and support and reach a larger audience. I would love to hear from any other interested people and groups who can help us explore the topics and especially engage with the younger generation, who after all, will inherit the communities we build and leave.

Mark Hanger markhanger276@gmail.com

TWITTER  @Sandhillscommu1, @Bayswaterbrook

FACEBOOK  Save our Sandhills, Beautiful Barton



“Notes on the Rural Landscape”: Growing Potatoes

During World War 2 the Ministry of Agriculture Committee determined all food production and virtually all farmers grew potatoes for the war effort. Post War many farmers continued to grow a few acres of potatoes for local consumption and when Tom Stanley took on the Rectory Farm tenancy in 1954, he grew about ten acres. Harvesting the crop was a labour-intensive job and a large local workforce, of mostly women, were employed to do this seasonal work. All the potatoes were dug up by a tractor and then handpicked into baskets and loaded into sacks. The hessian sacks would be loaded onto the lorry by hand to be delivered to the local Potato Merchant who would sell them on to the local greengrocers and markets: no forklifts or pallet trucks in those days!

There are now only three potatoes farmers in Oxfordshire and one of those concentrates on growing seed. So why do we grow potatoes when everyone else in the area has given up ? Well Rectory Farm has invested in irrigation with its first reservoir built in 1963 and two more in 1993, which is vital for the production of potatoes. When Rectory Farm moved its yard in 2002 a 900-ton potato cold store was built for the winter storage of the crop. The farm has continually invested in machinery and the mechanisation of the process of growing and harvesting potatoes. Our annual crop of 2500 tons are now lifted straight into 14 ton bulk trailers in the field and graded into 1 ton boxes for storage before being sent to packhouses for the supermarket trade: the Co-Op, Waitrose, Tesco etc. Last year some of our potatoes went into storage in Shropshire, then to Scotland for packing, before coming back via various supermarket depots, appearing packed back in the Co-Op in Headington!



We grow two of the three types of potatoes, fresh ones (our baby salad potatoes) and the larger main crops and chipping potatoes for McCain's and MacDonald's. We do not grow the third sort of potatoes used for crisps. There is no tradition of that in Oxford and no crisp factory here.

The varieties of potatoes all taste different and are grown for a specific use, like crisping or a good mash. We grow Maris Piper, a popular all-rounder that is good for chips, which we have not yet lifted because of the wet weather. Our current favourite all-rounder good eating quality potato is Jelly, a German bred variety pronounced "yelly". We often grow Saxon, but a shortage of seed meant that we have had to grow Orchestra this year. There is always a demand for Red potatoes, and we have grown Camel, which is a modern replacement of the popular Desiree. We are often asked about King Edwards which are



a very well-known potato. We have grown them, but we do not have a suitable type of soil and it is hard for us to get a good skin finish and good yields on this variety.

We still bag about 15% of our potatoes for our own customers and sell them straight off the farm, through the farm shop and to a number of local shops and outlets such as the Oxford Covered Market and local Farmers Markets. Some readers will remember well up until 1990's the days of us driving around Forest Hill and Stanton St John twice a week, Tuesday and Friday in the pickup truck with someone ringing a handbell to sell our new potatoes.

Carla Stanley, Rectory Farm

“Knowing our Neighbours” (page 16)

This month we are, once again, celebrating one of the remarkable people living in our Four Parishes. Our aim is to focus on each village in turn, and the fourth article in this series is about Jane Walker from Forest Hill.

Please do let us know if you have ideas about someone we should feature who has an interesting story to tell - in business, the arts, academia, healthcare or any other area. Please contact Jonathan Barker: 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com.

“Knowing our Neighbours”: Jane Walker

Jane Walker will be a familiar face to many people living in our Four Parishes and Forest Hill in particular; be this through her tireless work for the church, the vegetables she sells outside her house, or more generally from the helping hand she offers so many. "I can't help it" she admits while recounting her experiences in and around Forest Hill, where her family has been since the late nineteenth century.



Jane grew up on Vent Farm, on Wheatley Road, which she remembers fondly, not least because of how it allowed her close access to all manner of animals. She lived with her father, her mother, her brother and her cousin, who called her 'Baby Jane' throughout his life, which is still the source of some amusement.

Increasing the size of the family were two German prisoners of war, who much like everyone that comes up in conversation, Jane remembers close details of. She still has a hazelnut basket made by one of them, Hans Schröder, in her kitchen.



Beyond this, she learnt to drive at around the age of 10 in the farm's Land Rover; other villagers say they remember Jane driving a zippy sports car when they first moved to the village. Indeed, Jane is known to most people, and she offers valuable insight to how the villages have changed over the years.

Due to the greater number of businesses present in the villages in the mid-20th century, there were fewer connections between the four villages. Jane did not attend the school in Stanton St. John, but she says that would be the main cause for traffic between the villages.

In fact, even within the villages there were sometimes lines in the sand. Each village would likely have had two pubs whose fortunes were subject to the fickle whims of the villagers. Jane remembers The King's Arms being popular, with one of the regular patrons, Frank Badger, returning home at a sensible

time to his wife, before claiming he had to take his dog for a walk and going back until the wee small hours.

For all that Jane is able to reveal about the village though, her journey to being a respected ward sister and district nurse are the most fascinating. Taking up a course in shorthand and typing, she shared a dormitory with other women from around the world, and so aged 21 asked her parents if she might take some time off to visit them in Trinidad and Venezuela.

While on a boat in the middle of the Atlantic, Jane says that she came to know exactly what she wanted to do with herself, and so it was the case that back in England she underwent nursing training and became a ward sister at the Churchill Hospital.

She felt that her work came to be most valuable though in the 21 years she spent at Chinnor, working with Iain Rennie nurses to give care to those who need it most. Jane feels particularly positive about this work, and is hesitant to even call it as such, opting instead for the phrase "pure bliss". She expresses regret that she couldn't help people more during the current pandemic, but the level of fulfilment she got from her work as a nurse speaks to a lifetime of help.



Even after retirement, Jane finds herself helping people in all manner of ways. She has been an active member of the church throughout her life, as a parishioner, a member of the PCC, and a church warden. She will be known to some through her work with the Horton-cum-Studley Horticultural Society, though she laments how they have been unable to meet as of late, and she runs a vegetable stand where villagers and passers-by can benefit from the significant work she puts in to her impressive garden, including a three year crop rotation schedule.

Currently, Jane has been enjoying the lessened responsibility that comes with the pandemic: "If somebody asks me to do something there is a real reason for why I can't do it". She nonetheless hopes to see things up and running soon.

Theo Howe, Forest Hill

BECKLEY

Beckley Church

18 adults and 8 children came to our Family Harvest celebration on 11 October. During the service, for the first time, the 'Open the Book' team, who normally take part in assemblies at Beckley School, acted out the first reading. Very many thanks to everyone who brought flowers, fruit and foliage to decorate the church. Special thanks to Judy Bushrod, who provided delicious cakes and coffee in her garden for all who came to help, and made it a really festive occasion. The church looked beautiful. The harvest gifts were taken to the North Oxfordshire Community Food Bank in Kidlington.

Remembrance Sunday, 8 November

The Act of Remembrance will start in the churchyard at 10.45am. After the sounding of the Last Post, the 2 minutes silence at 11am, and the Reveille, the service will continue in the church.

Family Service, 29 November

The November Family Service is in **Stanton St John** (please note date, due to Remembrance Sunday being on the 2nd Sunday of the month).

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Beckley's APCM has been postponed to 17 November at 7.30pm via Zoom.

Beckley and Stowood Parish Council

The next PC meeting will be held on Thurs 5 Nov at 8pm in Beckley Village Hall. This may change at short notice if there are further Covid-19 restrictions. Parish Council information, including agendas and minutes, is available on the website www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk. The Clerk's email address is clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk.

The children's playground, green spaces and tennis court are all open for use. Please follow government guidance on social distancing and if the open spaces are busy, you should not use them. Please take your litter home.

The Otmoor Flyer – The bus service has resumed on Tuesdays and Fridays in Beckley. Please see notices on the High Street and Village Hall noticeboards and on the Beckley website. Tickets available from the Abingdon Arms. Seats must be booked in advance.

For **Beckley Village Hall**, please see www.beckleyvillagehall.org. To enquire about a booking, contact Stuart Marshall at booking@beckleyvillagehall.org

Fix My Street: to report a road or street problem please go onto the County Council website at www.fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Reminder from the Parish Council: Please clean up after your dog and dispose of bagged waste and litter in the dual-waste litter bin on the playing field.

Beckley Bonfire and Firework Night, planned for Saturday 7 November 2020, has been CANCELLED for this year due to Covid-19 restrictions on events.

Beckley & Area Community Benefit Society

Even More than a Pub programme - talks broadcast live by Zoom

Further information including access details at bacbs.org/events

Sunday 8 November, 6.30-7.30pm: *Owen Barfield of Bee and Church Cottage: the first and last Inklings* - a talk by Owen Barfield, grandson of the first Owen Barfield who lived in Church Street, Beckley for a time in the 1920s. A noted philosopher, Barfield was a founder of the Inklings, the literary group associated with CS Lewis and JRR Tolkien. His daughter Lucy gave her name to the heroine of Lewis's Narnia books.

Sunday 13 December, 6.30-7.30pm: *The Secret World of Codes and Ciphers* - a talk by Roger Heath-Brown FRS, Emeritus Fellow at both Worcester and Magdalen Colleges, Oxford. Professor of Pure Mathematics at the University of Oxford until his retirement in 2016, Roger's research interests centre on the study of prime numbers. His talk will look at the history of codes from ancient times to the internet age. It will be accessible to all, and will involve audience participation!



Autumn Curtain of Virginia Creeper, November 2019,
Photo by Alex Wood

FOREST HILL

News from St Nicolas

Please see page 5 for details of all church services during November or visit our website www.stnicolasforesthill.org

Our **Harvest Festival** took place on Sunday, 4 October. Thank you to Judy Brown, Lora Cull, Linda Hurren and Rosemary Waknell who decorated the Church so beautifully. Because of the Coronavirus we were unable to take the Harvest produce to Helen and Douglas House in Oxford, instead we put the produce on the Saturday Plant and Produce Stall outside Lyttleton in Main Street and asked for donations. Thanks to all those who gave so generously we were able to send £75.38p to the Hospice.

A message from Pat Fraser

A big thank you to all you kind people who sponsored me for **Ride and Stride** in September. I visited five Churches and I raised £107: unfortunately Holton was not taking part, but I needed the exercise so no harm done! The other four churches all had tables set up outside, so we could sign in without having to enter the building.

Church opening times

During the winter months, the church will be open on Wednesdays and Sundays from 11am to 4pm for private prayer. Our monthly choral evensong services will also be at the earlier time of 4pm.

Remembrance Sunday, 8 November

We hope to be able to meet by the War Memorial at 10.50am for the usual Act of Remembrance, but, given the current situation, it would be wise to check on our website www.stnicolasforesthill.org nearer the time.

Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council

The Parish Council has continued to conduct council business remotely during the lockdown. Residents are welcome to join the meetings. If you would like to attend a meeting via Zoom or have issues you would like raised on your behalf please contact the clerk.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 5 November, at 7pm and the following on Thursday 10 December. Agendas, with planning application details and minutes will be posted on the main notice board outside the Village Hall and on the website:

www.parish-council.com/foresthillwithshotover/index.asp

You can contact Helen Cross, the Parish Council Clerk, tel: 0844 884 3328, during the hours 09:00 - 17:00, or email: theclerk@foresthillwithshotover-pc.org.uk

* * * * *

Emma Carr-Jones

Emma Carr-Jones sadly passed away on 24 September and a private funeral was held at St Nicholas Church on 16 October.

Emma was loving, generous and courageous, with a wonderful zest for life. Emma involved herself in many aspects of the village, and for a period of time volunteered as Treasurer to St Nicolas Church and the Holford Pre-School Centre, and Auditor of Forest Hill Village Hall.

When Emma was 7 she suffered a stroke which inhibited movement of the right side of her body; however this did not stop her as she fought tirelessly to overcome her limitations. Emma is much loved and missed, by her husband Ian, and two children Olly and Elsie.

A web page <https://emmacarr-jones.muchloved.com/> has been set up for people to post messages and pictures, and to donate to Emma's charity "Different Strokes – Support for Younger Stroke Survivors".



In loving memory of
Emma Ruth Carr-Jones

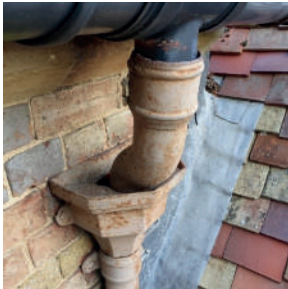
HORTON-cum-STUDLEY

News from St Barnabas

Our annual meeting (APCM) was held on 7 October and we were delighted to elect Carol Welch and Annie Payne as new members of our Parochial Church Council.(PCC). Annie was also elected as our Deanery Synod representative.

Sunday services continue to be held in church in accordance with coronavirus restrictions, as well as online via Zoom, Including Family Church. Anyone wishing to receive information about services, please email stbarnabaspchcs@gmail.com or phone David Slingo on 07850 004700.

Project Rainwater (roof repairs and rainwater goods replacement) is well underway. Photos taken at a recent site meeting show the 'before and after' of moss clearing on the northern roof, sadly revealing considerable patches of tile damage. Also evident is an example of disconnected rainwater 'hoppers' and guttering, most of which will be replaced. The PCC has ensured funding is available, although much fund-raising will be needed in the year ahead to restore our finances.



What is Family Church?



Family Church was 'planted' in 2015. It was initially 'Messy Church' (Sunday afternoon Christian-themed children's crafts, songs, stories and cooked tea) in Stanton village hall run by a small group of local parents: Ordinand, Jo Allen, along with Rev. Andrew Pritchard Keens and his wife, Fenella, who saw that there was demand among local families for a low key family-friendly church.

When it was noted that the parents attending Messy Church were curious about Christianity and had questions, but were not drawn to attend traditional church - a 'Cafe Church' was set up. It is a relaxed, dynamic and creative environment where everyone is welcome no matter whether they

have faith or not. In our group there are attendees who are agnostic and others who have previously been disenchanted with the church, but who feel comfortable exploring faith again in this setting.

Pre-lockdown, our typical sessions would involve meeting in the Millennium Hall, singing modern worship songs with a live band, prayer, and then splitting off into groups - the children would go into children's groups with the children's leaders to look at a Bible theme and play games and crafts and have discussions. Meanwhile, the adults would sit at a set of cafe-style tables and study a theme in the Bible such as 'feminism', or 'marginalised' and would read a couple of related passages and have a discussion and ask questions. No questions are off limits. We then meet back together and share a hot meal.

The other monthly session was an 'Agape meal', which involves sharing supper at one of the families' homes. We start by reading a passage in the Bible, and the adults and children discuss questions about the passage during the meal. The session ends with prayer - we take a moment to reflect on any problems, or difficult situations people may be encountering and we pray for them.

Family Church is a Fresh Expressions church: it is under the umbrella of the Church of England, yet is a modern and relaxed setting, where you can ask questions about Christianity and be part of a friendly community of local families.

Contrary to modern misperceptions of Christianity, having faith and a relationship with God is liberating, it enables you to break free from the stresses and anxieties of modern life and is so rewarding. I know that my family and I always feel joyful, uplifted and relaxed after Family Church. And through it, we have built really wonderful friendships and grown in our faith. I highly recommend it to everyone. All are warmly welcome!

Since the onset of the pandemic, we have had to evolve. We currently run a twice monthly 'Kids' Zoom' on a Sunday afternoon - a short half an hour session of crafts, song, Bible story and prayer. We also run an adult Bible study for the parents on a Sunday evening at 8.30pm - we look at a topic in the Bible, through reading a passage and having a discussion and then we pray for each other.

If you are interested in any aspects of Family Church, please feel free to contact me on the email below.

Laura Mermet-Burnet

mamancoton@gmail.com

The Giant Pumpkin + Sunflower Competitions: 2020

With us all at home a lot more this summer it was the perfect opportunity to spend time in our gardens, so no excuse for not growing a giant pumpkin.

This year we had 15 entries - the biggest ever. Pumpkins were delivered in wheelbarrows, the boot of an estate car, a carrier bag and even a small pocket! The winner was a surprise also! Cathy, after 11 years of near misses, managed to grow her heaviest ever at 108 lbs: still short of the H-c-S biggest ever pumpkin, Richard's 141 lb whopper, and the British record of 2,593 lbs (we still have a bit to go). Pete S also grew his best ever, 89¼ lbs, but his entry came in 2



minutes after the prize giving so it was lucky he was second or Cathy would have had to give back the BIG POTY trophy! Third and fourth were Derek (74½ lbs) and Alan (51 lbs); the latter winning the cup for the best combination entry (302 cm sunflower). Having won 4 times, Bronwyn came an unexpected fifth (46¾ lbs) with Alex sixth (45¾ lbs). Chris P grew a 16lb pumpkin and a beautiful 76cm sunflower and along with his cunning idea of an algorithm to combine the measurements to gain victory managed to win the mug for (this year's) good idea! Other entries came from the Campbell Family (26½ lbs), Pauline (1 lb... yes one pound!), Mary (14¼ lbs), Angie (25½ lbs) and 2 first time entries from the Ragnalls Lane co-operative (Jenna 6 ounces and the Alison and Peter Barnes 29½ lbs). Special mention must go to Matt who snuck in an imposter from Asda, Angie and Chris for



bringing along assorted other big veg and also to Jenna's horses for the plentiful supply of "compost".

We had 9 entries into the sunflower competition. Special mention to brothers Jo and Will whose sunflowers were 281cm and 187cm respectively and to Ellie, whose dainty little sunflower head was on a 210cm tall stem.

There were 2 (sunflowers) with massive heads, Andrew Pennington 28cm and Jenna 29cm; however these didn't beat Chris Pugh's 33cm head in 2019.

Thank you to everyone for bringing all your produce along for a socially distanced weighing/measuring in the rain. The competition will be back again next year so start preparing your ground now for a winner in 2021.

Horton-cum-Studley Gardening Club

Autumn has brought rain and misty mornings. It is time to go out and collect leaves to make leaf mould - beech or oak leaves are particularly good. Many churchyards have fine trees and I am sure your offer of doing some leaf clearing would be welcomed.

Store the leaves in bin bags (pierced with holes for airflow) or a large chicken wire frame, keep the leaves damp, wait for 18 months (gardeners have to be patient) and you will be rewarded by wonderful crumbly brown material that can be used for seed-sowing or as a soil conditioner. Snowdrops love it.

My first snow drops (*Galanthus peshmanii*) appeared in September and in October (*Galanthus reginae-olgae*) so the season will be well under way by the time you read this article. Don't forget to plant your tulips now and I hope the thought of all that spring colour will lift your spirits in these difficult times.

Our autumn programme has been cancelled. We hope to start up again in 2021 but will probably have to meet remotely. For more information about our club contact the chairman, Susan Burge 01865 351310 or see the website: www.horton-cum-studley.org.uk/community/clubs/

Horton-cum-Studley Women's Institute

Unfortunately, we are still unable to meet as a group and it looks like further restrictions will prevent even small meetings for the foreseeable future. However, we continue to keep in touch with members via email, post and telephone. We are seeking advice from the Oxford Federation on how we might move on with our reducing number of members and will keep you updated as soon as we have any information. We hope everyone is keeping safe and well and wish everyone continued good health. As before, we encourage members to contact the committee via our Secretary, Jane Pennington (01865 358800) or President, Barbara Raleigh (01865 358955) for news or support

Horton-cum-Studley Tennis Club



At the time of writing this (mid October), we are still allowed to formally organise social tennis, as long as we comply with current & new restrictions and the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) guidance. Since September the committee has been inviting members to play social tennis on Sunday mornings. So, if you're a member and would like to meet and play with other members, please come and join in - email for more details and to book your place. Our Facebook page and website have updates to our local Covid 19 restrictions:

<https://www.facebook.com/hstennisclub>

<https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/HortonCumStudleyTennisClubOxford>



Survey

Members of the club have been emailed a survey on how you think we should improve the facilities. Please fill in and return to us on email.

Membership

Tennis is a great way to have fun and exercise, whilst socially distancing, with simple precautions it is really safe and the perfect sport for these times! There are 2 excellent courts right on your doorstep and membership is very affordable.

If you are not already a member of HCSTC why not get in touch?

Membership secretary Bex Hopkins: bex.hopkins@btinternet.com or chair

Morten Schmidt: morten.schmidt@laureus.com

Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council

Helping each other during Covid-19 & other emergencies

The Parish Council continues to offer support to any villager during emergencies, bringing together individual volunteers within the village and organisations providing services. As winter months approach and with the prospect of further coronavirus measures, we will find ways to help each other.

Below is a 'contact card' inviting you to explain your individual needs, **either now or at any time during the months ahead**. If you have access to e-mail and a scanner, simply complete the 'contact card' and return it to the e-mail address HortonParishCouncilHELP@gmail.com. Alternatively, the card can be collected from your house if you would prefer to call any of the Parish Council numbers shown below.

We will then arrange for one of our volunteers from within the village to contact you and respond to your needs, taking care to act in accordance with government advice on Coronavirus.

Some utility companies (e.g. SSE and Thames Water) also operate a 'priority registration' service through which support can be offered if there is an interruption to their services. More information is available on their websites and by phone or go to [www. http://www.horton-cum-studley.org.uk/](http://www.horton-cum-studley.org.uk/)

Parish Councillor	Phone 01865	e-mail
Sarah Foxcroft	358928	hcspcfoxcroft@gmail.com
David Slingo	655960	hcspcslingo@gmail.com
Colin Badger	351240	hcspcbadger@gmail.com
Barbara Jewell	351315	hcspcjewell@gmail.com
Andrew Payne	351018	hcspcpayne@gmail.com
Parish Clerk - Alexia Lewis	351025	hortoncumstudleyparishcouncil@gmail.com



Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council – Contact Card

The Parish Council is co-ordinating volunteers in the village, so let us know what your needs are.

Shopping Posting mail A friendly phone call

Medicines Surgery name.....

Other (describe).....

Your details:

Name

Address

Phone e-mail

Return this by e-mail to HortonParishCouncilHELP@gmail.com or we can collect it if you call one of the Parish Council numbers above. Information provided will be used solely for emergency issues and may be shared with emergency services.

Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council

The Parish Council would like to thank everyone for the entries in the Village Photo Competition, a record 85 entries were received this year. The 12 top entries will be included in a Village calendar.

The Parish Council has been made aware of several attempted burglaries in the last few weeks. Please ensure that you remain vigilant and call 101 if you see suspicious activity. The Parish Council has been in contact with Thames Valley Police liaison team, and requested more regular patrols in the area.

It has been suggested that Parishioners should set up a neighbourhood watch, please use the Village Facebook page to express your interest. If you are not a member of the Facebook page please send your details to the Parish Clerk

It is Bonfire season, if you are planning to have a bonfire please be courteous to your neighbours.

The Parish Council continues to meet remotely on the second Thursday of every month, if you would like to attend please email the Parish Clerk at hortoncumstudleyparishcouncil@gmail.com

* * * * *

STANTON ST JOHN

Stanton Church

Please see page 5 for details of all church services during November or visit our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Harvest Festival

Deirdre and Sheila would like to thank everyone who decorated the church for the harvest festival so beautifully. The fruit and vegetables were taken to the Porch on Cowley Road where they were cooked for the homeless. They were so grateful and wished to thank everyone for their support.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Stanton's APCM has been postponed. The new date will be advised shortly via email and a notice in the church.

Remembrance Sunday

Bar any changes to the Covid-19 rules between now and then, we will be having our Act of Remembrance and Remembrance Sunday Service of Holy Communion at 9.30am on 8 November. Given the current situation, it would be wise to keep an eye out for any update by email. The current plan is to meet at the War Memorial in the churchyard at 9.30am for the Act of Remembrance and for the Service to follow straight on afterwards. For anyone unable to meet in the churchyard, the church will be open.

Family Service, 29 November

We are holding this month's Family Service in Stanton St John on **29 November** at 9.30am, rather than the usual 2nd Sunday of the month, because of Remembrance Sunday. We look forward to welcoming you to this service.

Stanton St John Parish Council

Temporary Road Closure

Oxfordshire County Council have informed the parish council that a temporary road closure of Mill Street will operate on 4 November 2020 between 09:30 and 15:30. Access will be maintained for emergency service vehicles and for those frontages within the closure area, subject to the progress of the works and liaison with the works supervisor. A copy of the drawing showing the extent of the closure and also the alternative routes for traffic will be displayed on the parish council notice board outside the village shop.

Dog fouling

The vast majority of dog owners are careful and considerate enough to clear up after their pet. We ask every dog owner to please clear up after their dog. Please bag and leave your dog litter in one of the dog waste bins situated around the village or take it home with you for disposal. Your co-operation would be greatly appreciated by all residents and visitors to our parish.

Garden bonfires

Please be considerate and careful if you choose to set a bonfire. Please remember that smoke and odours travel well beyond physical boundaries and may be causing discomfort and distress to those with breathing issues, washing on the line or simply trying to enjoy a day in the garden.

(Continued over)

Building work

We ask those carrying out such work to be considerate to others likely to be affected by their activities.

Attending PC meetings

Due to Covid-19, meetings are being held remotely on Zoom. Please email the parish clerk Julie Stoye at stantonstjohnpc@gmail.com if you would like to attend. The next meeting is on Monday 16 November at 7.30pm.

Parish Council Information sites

Public notices can be seen on the notice board at our village shop or on the Parish Council website <http://www.parish-council.com/stantonstjohn>

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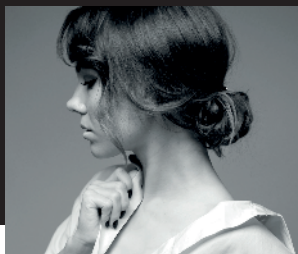
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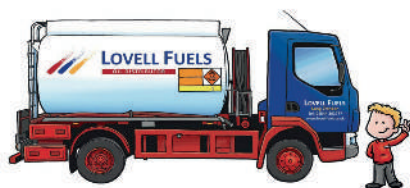
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**Autumn Curtain of Virginia Creeper, November 2019,
Photo by Alex Wood**