

Finstock News 115

Serving Finstock, Fawler, Wilcote, Mt. Skippett and Finstock Heath

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Even before Easter we have been enjoying a glorious early spring with snowdrops and crocuses in full flower before the first of March. Perhaps that was the incentive to get everyone planning this year's fêtes and festivals. Details of various events are scattered throughout this issue, including our front page report on a Victorian Music Hall. Please read the Parish Council report on page 4. We also have reports from our District and County Councillors and our MP. The school reports on the singing, dancing and outdoor activities that make classroom work more enjoyable. You should find something to read that will suit your own interests.



Finstock Upon the Hill and Fawler Down Derry

The Finstock Local History meeting on April 12th will be very special. We will be presenting short extracts from the forthcoming book entitled -*Two Wychwood Villages: Finstock Upon the Hill and Fawler Down Derry*. It is an historical account of both villages from earliest times to the Second World War and also celebrates the work of the society since it began 45 years ago. The author, Shaun Morley and a number of contributors will present pieces from the book and we will have artefacts on display in the Village Hall.

This will be the first book to be published on the two villages since John Kibble's books on the Wychwoods in the 1920s and is a hugely exciting project that has been engaging the society for the last three years. The book has been thoroughly researched, is well illustrated and will be a very good read for everyone interested in our past. The book runs to over 300 pages and we are planning to apply for grants to help to publish it.

Our Victorian ancestors often published this kind of book by subscription and we are going to follow in their footsteps by asking for subscribers to commit to purchasing a pre-publication copy of the book. All subscribers will have a numbered copy of the book; their name printed inside and are invited to the launch party for the book in 2020 when it is published. The subscription price is £30 per copy.

Do come along to the Finstock Local History meeting on the April 12th at 8pm in Finstock Village Hall and find out more about this project and enjoy hearing about the history of the two villages. Admission is free and wine and nibbles will be served.

Tony Cooper

Victorian Music Hall in Music and Song featuring Aunt Mary's Canaries

Caroline Butler, Dave Townsend, Ian Giles

Finstock Village Hall on Saturday, April 20th; Victorian dress optional

Bar open 7pm; Concert begins at 7.30pm

Tickets only £5. Reserve your ticket from Mike Breakell
Tel: 868201 or email mjbreakell@aol.com

Finstock Spring Plant and Book Fair

Saturday May 11th from 10am -12noon (Note the time - in the morning)

Finstock Village Hall Free Entry.

There will be plants aplenty, loads of books, a raffle and chocolate tombola, plus cakes and preserves. Tea, coffee and homemade biscuits can be enjoyed.

Donations of plants, cakes, and raffle prizes are always very gratefully received. Do come and support us. We always enjoy catching up with friends and meeting new faces and hope you do too.

Elizabeth 868203
Kirsten 868634





VILLAGE EVENTS



April

- 5th School term ends
- 12th Finstock Upon the Hill and Fawler Down Derry FLH
- 13th Bridewell plant sale
- 20th Victorian Music Hall
- 23rd School Term begins
- 26th Retracing a Victorian Expedition
- 27th FoFS Quiz
- 28th London Marathon

May

- 11th Finstock Plant and Book Sale
- 11th FoFS Garage Sale
- 17th The Health Service before the NHS FLH
- 18th – June 2nd Chiltern Walking Festival

June

- 1st FoFS Sponsored Walk
- 21st-22nd Finstock Festival and School Fête

Finstock Local History Society

April 12th Two Wychwood Villages: Finstock Upon the Hill and Fawler Down Derry.

May 17th The Health Service before the NHS, by Dr Jeanette Cayley A short history of medicine in England, from Roman times to the mid twentieth century. The emphasis is on Oxfordshire, especially the needs of working people. Jeanette is a medical doctor and historian and is secretary of the Medical Art Society.

All meetings at 8pm on Fridays unless otherwise stated, at Finstock Village Hall, OX7 3BU. Refreshments available from 7.30pm. Entry £2.50. Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FinstockLocalHistorySociety.

Ladies, give us your support!

Give all your unwanted old bras a new lease of life and help raise money for breast cancer research. Bring them to Joy Murphy at 63 High Street. Against Breast Cancer will receive a donation based on the weight of bras we collect, so every bra counts!

Enjoyable Drawing Courses and Workshops in local community places. For more information contact Gabriele

at gabrielekern31@gmail.com or ring 880430.

North Leigh History Society

April 2nd Pagans and Puritans by Tim Healey

May 7th Archaeological finds of a detectorist in Oxfordshire. Talk by Michael Hodges

On April 2nd we welcome back Tim Healey, who will be delighting us with stories of the May Day celebrations in Oxford in his talk, Pagans and Puritans. In the past, May Day has been a hedonistic time when rules are temporarily abandoned as we welcome in the summer, and many of the old traditions and customs are still celebrated in our city and county today. Come and find out more with us so that you're ready to join in the festivities in Oxford on May 1st this year.

Our talk on May 7th is by Michael Hodges who is a detectorist. If you've ever been tempted to get a metal detector and go searching for buried treasure, come and find out how it is best done, and what contributions can be made to archaeology through this method. It might spark off a new hobby for you!

We meet in the Turner Hall, Church Road OX29 6TX at 7.30 pm. Everyone is welcome. Visitors £4, Members free. Further details from Diana Power 882301.

Charlbury Museum

Saturday April 20th reopens

Saturday from 10.30am – 12.30pm, Sunday and Bank Holidays 2.30pm – 4.30pm. Open Fridays in August. Open during June 8th – 15th Charlbury Festival and August 3rd during Wilderness Festival

ChOC Films

Memorial Hall · Browns Lane · Charlbury

Sunday April 14th at 7.30pm: **A Star is Born** Oscar nominated in several categories, with critically acclaimed film stars Bradley Cooper and Lady Gaga.

Sunday May 12th at 7.30pm: **The Old Man & The Gun** starring Robert Redford and Casey Affleck. The film is based on a true story, and is widely reputed to be the final movie of Redford's illustrious career.

Joan Annie Mary Quibell

March 19th 1925 – February 12th 2019

Joan was born in 1925, sadly contracted Polio at a very young age, therefore coped with mobility problems all her life, but this did not deter her. She trained as an Auxiliary nurse, met Don, (Obituary last newsletter) supported him throughout his Game-keeping career, was an avid gardener, fantastic flower arranger and lovely lady. I miss them both.

Viv Wightman

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FISH & CHIPS

The Codfather

The Codfather Fish & Chip van is by Finstock School every Saturday from 4 to 8pm

Thank you for your continued support

The Codfather van is in Charlbury at Spendlove every Tuesday and Sunday 4 - 9pm

The Codfather Shop in Witney's Thorney Leys provides gluten free fish and chips every Thursday

VILLAGE HALL ACTIVITIES

Bookings for the Hall remain good and it continues to be an asset to the village. However, we are still looking for a permanent booking for Tuesday evenings and if anybody would like to put something on on those nights, please email villagehallfinstock@gmail.com.

Dominoes

Second Saturday of the month beginning at 7.30pm. All welcome. Bar open. Food available.

Finstock Woodpeckers Short-Mat Bowls

We continue to meet twice weekly at 2pm on Mondays and Thursdays at the Village Hall. The club is thriving and enjoy both the participation and social aspect of bowls and we always welcome anyone who wants to try our bowls - all that is needed is a pair of flat shoes like trainers as we have everything else that is needed. Just come along or email me at morley.shawn@gmail.com for more information. The first week is free, then just £1 per session. Five of our members now also play for Charlbury Bowls Club, all year round - indoor in winter and outdoor in summer.

Several members also represent Finstock Woodpeckers in the Witney Town Triples League on Wednesday mornings and after 19 of the 20 games we sit in mid table in our first year - a

credible achievement for a team that includes several in their first year of playing. In fact, we have beaten every team in the league but also lost to each one! Once our last game is completed, we then enter the five-game play-offs for final positions and possible cash prizes for the club.

Shaun Morley



Ian Lever (left) and Nicky Higgins in action in the Witney Town Triples

Retracing a Victorian Expedition

Mike Breakell has invited John Pilkington to give his annual talk for Prostate Cancer in the Village Hall on Friday April 26th.

In 1868 Queen Victoria's government mounted an extraordinary bid to rescue a small clutch of European hostages in the Abyssinian highlands. They built a Red Sea port, then a railway across the coastal plain, and finally brought in 44 Indian elephants and took on 26,000 local people to serve the soldiers and carry their heavy guns into the heart of Africa. A hundred and fifty years

later, John followed their route, partly on foot with a donkey, and compared Eritrea and Ethiopia then and now. He found today's people spirited and energetic, living in dramatic and extremely challenging lands. It was history, geography and adventure combined!

Finstock Craft Club

Craft Club continues to meet at the Village Hall on Mondays at 7.30pm (except Bank Holidays).

Festival Season

Marmalade Festival April 9th – 12th
Finstock Festival see page 5
 Charlbury Festival June 7th – 16th
 Nocturne Live Festival at Blenheim Palace June 20th
 Charlbury Beer Festival June 29th
 Cornbury Festival on July 5th-7th
 Wilderness Festival at Cornbury Estate August 1st-4th
 The Big Festival is August 23rd-25th



The Finstock Plough reached the final three of the West Oxfordshire Business Awards 2019.

Eynsham Hall

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www.theplough-inn.co.uk

Dear Editor:



I am planning to run the London Marathon on Sunday April 28th to raise funds for Helen and Douglas House. This will be my first ever marathon and so far my training plan is going well. If you see me running through the village be sure to say hello and if you have run a marathon before, feel free to give me advice.

Having friends that have benefited from the care, support and facilities that Helen and Douglas House provides it is a great opportunity to raise awareness and money for such a remarkable charity.

My Just Giving page is www.justgiving.com/fundraising/nina-gibson

Nina Gibson,
Kookaburra Coffee

Green Banks Fields

Once again, as summer approaches, would everyone please keep to the two footpaths that go along two sides of Green Banks Fields: up the right-hand side of the field through the main gate, and the one straight across the top of the field, between the two field-gates up there. Also, you **MUST pick up your doggie poo**, as this is very detrimental to the hay and is especially dangerous to sheep if they eat the contaminated hay.

Many thanks for your co-operation.
Viv Wightman

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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Photographs thanks to staff members and others.
Read the *Finstock News* online at www.finstock.org.uk; join the Finstock Yahoo group – groups.yahoo.com/group/finstock; or write to us at 63 High Street, Finstock Oxon OX7 3DA.

Plan ahead – Know the deadlines

Issue	Deadline
Feb/Mar	First of January
April/May	First of March
June/July	First of May
August/September	First of July
October/November	First of September
December/January	First of November

Please keep articles short. As space is limited, the Editors reserve the right to shorten long pieces in the interest of balance. *Finstock News* does not necessarily share the views expressed in readers' letters.

News from the Parish Council

The Gigaclear installations are almost complete. If you have any problems or snags that need rectifying by the Company, please contact Louise Appleton, Gigaclear Community Engagement Manager who will be able to help. Her no is 07790 821873 or louise.appleton@gigaclear.com.

The Churchyard stone walls are in need of significant repair in many places. The Wychwood Project has volunteered to undertake some work and is keen to enlist volunteers. If you are interested, please contact Mike Woodfield on 868672. The Parish Council is very grateful to all the volunteers who help out as the cost of wall repair is very significant and is now the responsibility of the Parish Council.

The PC is looking for a person to undertake general maintenance jobs that arise in the village from time to time. The person will be self-employed and each job costed separately and subject to approval by the PC. If interested please contact June Pratley, the Parish Clerk on 868570.

Finally, a reminder that the election for the Parish Council is scheduled for early May. If you are interested in being a member of the PC, please contact Mike Woodfield, Chair of the PC for further details. Mike Woodfield mike.woodfield@btinternet.com.

Hywel Davies for the Parish Council

District Council

By the time you read this, the aftermath of the diggers who invaded the villages bringing to us the possibility of faster broadband/internet coverage and in the process digging trenches on the pathways and the once green verges on the Witney Road will have become a distant memory. Let us hope so as both Cllr Liz Leffman and myself called the company to account for leaving such an unsightly mess particularly on the Witney Road but also causing some damage in the High Street.

Taking photos of the damage and talking to residents and relaying this to the company concerned brought an immediate positive response and it was good to see them back to repair, reseed and put things aright.

The weather and Mother Nature will do the rest.

Andy Graham, District Councillor

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FINSTOCK FESTIVAL 2019

FRIDAY JUNE 21st and SATURDAY JUNE 22nd

We really need your support to keep our Festival alive and rockin', so get the dates in your diaries. Don't forget **this is again a free entry event.**

MUSIC

The band line up has been finalised as follows:

Friday night - we have Growler & Paradox

Saturday afternoon is an array of local musicians.

Saturday evening we start at 4.30pm with Wood Green School Band followed by Mid-life Crisis. Then our headline band The Village Idiots takes to the stage.

FOOD

Friday evening we have a BBQ.

Saturday afternoon from 2pm -- 4pm a BBQ.

Saturday evening The CODFATHER will be on the field from 4pm until late. Yet to be confirmed is an Asian food caterer.

DRINK

We will have approximately six Real Ales and two to three Lagers.

The Gin/Pimms bar returns again

Also there will be a selection of wines, spirits and soft drinks

WEDNESDAY June 19th

We start Wednesday morning at 9am putting up the large marquees, which is a big job. Please come if you have the time as the more people who help the faster the job gets done. We work every day and evening through to opening the Festival on Friday night.

SUNDAY

This is pulling down day. We are offering free drinks including beer for anyone that helps on the Sunday. If you fancy a cheap beer but don't have time to help, we will be selling beer, lager and cider at £1 a pint until it runs out.

Rock on Finstock Festival 2019

Colin Stringfellow Chairman

All it takes is one distraction

Did you know that one in three people rescued from house fires in Oxfordshire are rescued from cooking fires? Or that distraction is the main cause of cooking fires?

It's easy to get distracted if the phone rings, someone's at the door or a TV show catches your attention. If you need to leave your cooking, even for a couple of minutes:

- turn down the heat
- set the timer
- or ask someone to watch it for you

Or you could find Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service firefighters joining you for dinner!

Find out more at: www.365alive.co.uk/cooking.

Pop-up Feast

Local food writer and cook Kathy Slack, founder of award-winning blog Gluts & Gluttony and formerly of Daylesford Cookery School, has recently launched a seasonal pop-up feast on the last Friday of every month (give or take) in Chipping Norton.

The menus are a feast of four courses with vegetables at the centre that showcase the harvests from her organic kitchen garden. It's not vegetarian, but vegetables are the star of the show, supported by the seasonal ingredients from local producers. As spring arrives, Kathy will be cooking things like pickled red cabbage and trout, nettle pasta, wild garlic pesto and celebrating the first of the broad beans with crispy bacon, pork belly and broad bean broth.

The next supper clubs are on Friday April 26th, May 24th. To book online visit www.glutsandgluttony.eventbrite.co.uk or email kathy@glutsandgluttony.com.

Broken Spoke Bike Co-operative

Learn the skills to ride and repair your bike. bsbcoop.org

Safe Places

'Ask for Angela' is a nationwide phrase that can be used at participating premises by anyone feeling unsafe or threatened whilst on a date, and it lets someone know that they would like help. The phrase would be recognised by staff and they would take action by helping that person to leave the venue discreetly and get home, or be taken to a place of safety. This service is offered by businesses for anyone feeling lost, worried or threatened when they are out. Under Safe Places, vulnerable people can also request a special card when they are out and about which will have details of someone, such as a partner, friend or carer, who can be contacted if that person needs help.



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COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION

If I keep a green bough in my heart, The singing bird will come.
Chinese Proverb

Bridewell Gardens

**Seasonal Plant Sale on Saturday,
April 13th 11am to 2pm**

A variety of herbaceous perennials at reasonable prices. Do come along and support our charity which promotes gardening for better mental health. Please note that this is a plant sale ONLY and the gardens will not be open to visitors.

**Open days for 2019 are: May 19th,
June 23rd and July 28th.**

Bridewell Gardens, Wilcote,
OX7 3DT; Tel: 868313 www.bridewellgardens.org.

Chilterns Walking Festival

A 16-day programme of guided walks and special events taking place from May 18th – June 2nd. The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covers the rural countryside of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire on London's North-West doorstep. There will be an exciting programme of over 80 guided walks and special activities led by expert local guides who will bring the area to life! For more information go to www.visitchilterns.co.uk/walkingfest or find us on Facebook at ChilternsWalkingFestival.

Animals and birds under increasing threat from plastic waste

Wildlife and pets are under increasing threat from plastic waste and litter, according to new data from the RSPCA, which shows the number of incidents of animals hurt by plastic litter, has risen sharply on previous years. Plastic litter led to 579 cases of damage to wildlife or pets that were reported to the animal charity in England and Wales in 2018, up from 473 in 2015. Water birds and marine animals were particularly at risk, with 28 incidents involving seals hurt by plastic litter in 2018, compared with five in 2015. Among birds, swans were among the worst affected, followed by geese and gulls. (Wild Oxfordshire)

Oxfordshire Household Waste Recycling Centre

Unwanted items can be given a new home through the county council's Reuse scheme at the Household Waste Recycling Centre, including Dix Pit, near Witney. Before placing reusable items into the skips, speak to a member of staff for advice. Dix Pit household waste recycling centre - Linch Hill, Stanton Harcourt, OX29 5BB (Postcode for Sat Nav - OX29 5UX).

Oxford Green Belt Way Guidebook

The updated Oxford Green Belt Way guidebook with full colour, maps, interesting facts and information. £9.99 plus p&p. www.cpreoxon.org.uk/resources/publications.

(Wild Oxfordshire)

Costing the Earth, BBC Radio 4

The Future of Our National Parks 2019 is the 70th anniversary of the creation of the first national parks in the UK. Tom Heap finds out how these landscapes can work better for people and wildlife. www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0001f0w.

Windrush Bike Project

A community interest company based in West Oxfordshire bringing together cycle training, maintenance, campaigning and culture. Second hand bike sales, bespoke refurbishment, repairs and servicing. Located at 152b Corn Street, Witney OX28 6BY. Contact us by email (best), or phone 07554 363635 (leave a message if we are not in). We accept donated bikes. <http://windrushbikeproject.uk>

The case for using LED lights

LED lights use very little energy, last a very long time (lasting for 25-30 years, depending on which one you buy and how you use it) and, unlike regular energy-saving bulbs, they are instantly bright when switched on. You can have bright, efficient LED bulbs that look like traditional bulbs. Prices are getting lower and the energy savings they will provide in your home make them well worth considering.

LEDs are the most energy-efficient bulbs. They use 90 percent less energy than traditional incandescent light bulbs. The upfront cost might be more expensive, but you'll notice the difference in your annual energy bills. By contrast, Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) use 60-80 percent less energy than incandescent light bulbs, while halogens use 20-30 percent less.

Installing LED bulbs and changing from a B or C-rated appliance to an A++ rated one, can halve your energy use.

Studies show making products more efficient has, along with other factors, already been slightly more effective than renewable energy in cutting CO2 emissions. EU product standards on light bulbs, fridges, vacuum cleaners and other appliances have played a substantial part in reducing energy demand.

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Art Weeks May 18th – 23rd.

Robert Courts MP



We all have a personal story of how the NHS has provided help and care when it was most needed. It is an institution that has been there for our family, our friends, and for those who have no one else to turn to. The NHS has a special place in our hearts, and it is right that we ensure it is protected and supported for future generations.

In January, the Government launched its NHS Long Term Plan: a 10-year plan setting out how our NHS will continue to help those who need it most, overcoming challenges and making the most of opportunities in the years to come. This Plan has been developed and driven by clinicians, medical experts and – perhaps most importantly – patients. I welcome the content of the Plan and its central principle, in particular, that prevention is better than cure. This is what our modern, growing population needs: support to keep people healthy, with a focus on preventing illness as much as curing it.

Of the £20.5 billion that will be injected into the NHS over the next five years, the biggest increase in funding will go to primary and community care. GPs are the bedrock of our NHS – especially in rural areas such as West Oxfordshire – and it is right that our GPs receive this increased support for the vital work that they do. When I am out and about knocking on doors in the local area, the importance of GP services is frequently raised by constituents, so I know this will be welcome news locally.

Other elements of the plan include a flagship ambition to improve cancer survival rates with earlier screening programmes and diagnosis; improvements in the prevention, detection and treatment of cardiovascular diseases; better access to mental health services; fighting inequalities by expanding support for veterans and 'care after custody' services; making digital health services a mainstream part of the NHS and making the NHS a world-class employer, focusing on the improvement of working conditions for those who have dedicated their lives to helping others.

In the coming months, NHS services will work with communities to shape how this will look at a local level, ensuring each area has the right support according to local needs. Again, this is welcome news as the needs of West Oxfordshire healthcare services are entirely different to those in, say, Manchester, and it is right that this is reflected in the Long Term Plan.

This new vision for our NHS – along with the management and funding to deliver it – is something to be celebrated, and it is a hugely encouraging step forward for the future of healthcare services.

Robert Courts, MP

Charlbury Medical Centre (CMC)

said goodbye to Dr Helen Bayliss at the end of January 2019 after more than 30 years of service to the community. Two GPs have joined the practice, initially for a trial period. Both will work part time. People who had been patients of Dr Bayliss will be transferred to another GP over the first quarter of 2019. Patients can express a preference for a particular GP. The practice will do their best to meet such requests.

Charlbury Medical Practice online information: When registered online patients can book appointments, request repeat prescriptions and view their medical records (but not their hospital records) and view test results requested by the GP. To register, visit reception at the medical centre and complete a Patient Access form. Proof of address is required and recent photographic ID. More information at: patientaccess.com.

Charlbury Patient Participation Group.

Review a health or care service

Healthwatch Oxfordshire's Feedback Centre allows you to leave reviews of health and social care services in the county. Share your experience, good or bad. Visit this link: healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/services.

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Finstock Baby and Toddler Group

As you read this we'll be heading into the Easter break; our last session will be Wednesday April 3rd where we'll have our usual end of term party, this time with an Easter twist! We then return on Wednesday April 24th for the start of the summer term.

Over the past few months Toddler group has been very well attended. We all love meeting up with our regular attendees and we have welcomed some new families too which has been brilliant. It's great to have such a lovely, warm and large space to get together and see the little ones having so much fun! We have held more Music Time sessions, much enjoyed by all, and we provide a variety of crafts/activities themed within the season - we have recently celebrated Chinese New Year, Valentines Day and World Book Day and have been looking forward to spring and Easter.

We meet every Wednesday in term-time from 10 - 11.30am in the Village Hall. It is only £2 per family, which includes a snack for the little ones and hot/cold drinks for adults, plus there is always cake for the adults (kindly donated on a weekly rota basis by parents that attend). We set out a range of different toys each week to cater for all ages of our attendees (0 - 4 years) including baby toys/mat area, ride on toys, role play, trains sets, building blocks, books and puzzles.

If you haven't tried us out before, come along for your first free session! We look forward to seeing you there.

Helen Fallows

Friends of Finstock School (FoFS)

Coming events:

April 27th – Evening Quiz at the Village Hall. Bookings taken via this web link bit.ly/2siUOMo

May 11th – Garage sale. To book a pitch collect a form from the Village Shop

June 1st – Sponsored walk of the Wychwood Way

June 22nd - School Summer Fête with the Dog Show and Finstock Festival

FoFS Garage sale around Finstock village

Saturday May 11th 10am - 2pm

Please purchase your map on the day from Finstock Village Hall, where there will also be teas and cake available.

Sponsored walk

Two school dads, Rob Barkworth and Paul Coombes are in the midst of planning for a sponsored walk on June 1st along the challenging Wychwood Way. Joined on the walk by fellow enthusiastic walkers from the school community, the plan is to start and finish this walk at the Plough. At 38 miles, it will be a VERY LONG day and big challenge even for experienced walkers. For those who want to take part but don't fancy the full distance, they can join at Charlbury at midday and walk the final 20 miles. All the participants will be raising sponsorship for their efforts, if you know someone taking part please support them. If

you would like to sponsor the group as a whole or take part yourself please contact Rob Barkworth rbarkworth@finstock.oxon.sch.uk.

Dawn Simpkins

Bicycle lights

The rule of thumb is when the street lights are on so should your bike lights. Too many people are cycling on the roads and cycle paths without any lights or reflective clothing thinking the reflectors do the job.

Rule 60 of the Highway Code states: At night your cycle MUST have white front and red rear lights lit. It MUST also be fitted with a red rear reflector (and amber pedal reflectors, if manufactured after 1/10/85). White front reflectors and spoke reflectors will also help you to be seen. Flashing lights are permitted but it is recommended that cyclists who are riding in areas without street lighting use a steady front lamp.

There have been major collisions involving cyclists due to having no lights in the past! Please don't put yourself at risk or anyone else for that matter.

Thames Valley Police

Wychwood Walling: Learn An Ancient Art

Learn the art of Cotswold Drystone Walling: "toppers", "hearting", "throughs" and base stones on Wednesday May 15th. This day-long event carries on from where other courses have finished. You will use local stone and local methods to gain experience with the tools and techniques necessary to build a drystone wall in the authentic Cotswold style.

Please wear stout boots or shoes and bring gloves. All other tools and equipment provided.

The event is at: Foxburrow Wood, Milking Lane, Witney OX29 9UN. Parking available. Training course runs: 10am-3pm and costs: £35. Booking essential.

To book your place: www.wychwoodproject.org; Tel: 07584 262437; info@wychwoodproject.org. uk. Contact on the day Toby Swift 07891 134804.

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Finstock C of E Primary School News

At the start of the New Year, all the children enjoyed outdoor learning sessions covering a whole range of areas such as storytelling, outdoor maths and orienteering. These sessions were with the wonderful Mandy from The Hedgehog Club and the children thoroughly enjoyed them. We are hoping she can visit again in the summer term to further enhance the children's learnings.

Spring seems to have sprung rather early in February! It has been wonderful to be able to get the children out of the classroom a bit more and explore the beautiful area around us. Oak Class, which supports our younger children, are enjoying their 'Enchanted Woodland' topic and spent a morning exploring outside before beginning to turn their classroom into their own woodland!

Sport features highly here at Finstock Primary School and the children have been taking part in many sporting events, most notably 'Sports Hall Athletics' where some of our amazing athletes in Y5 and Y6 performed brilliantly. We have also been taking part in a netball tournament in the last few months and I am both pleased and proud to announce that our team has secured a place in the final! Not to be outdone, the Year 1 children have come back positively beaming from a dance workshop having boogied the morning away.

The Year 2 children visited The Blake School to learn a number of songs, which they performed in a concert on March 12th along with other local children. I am sure they had a wonderful time.

Beech Class (Year 3 and 4), are having an explosive term as they begin their new topic of 'Tremors'. So far they have learnt all about how volcanoes are formed; have planned how to make their own volcano and have just started to build them. When they are completed, the children will be adding various ingredients to simulate a volcanic eruption – we promise to leave Finstock Village intact!

*Laura Dodgson-Hatto
Headteacher*

Our term ends on Friday April 5th at 2pm and Term 5 begins on Tuesday April 23rd at 8:40am.

Combe Mill

Oxfordshire has its own gem of the Victorian industrial age in the guise of Combe Mill (by Combe Station). The Mill is run by volunteers as a working museum with a steam beam engine and line shafting at work, being 'in steam' on the third Sunday of every month until October. There has been a Mill on the site since before the Domesday Book, using the readily available power from the River Evenlode. The current Mill was converted to supplement energy with steam power in the second half of the 1800s. The 1852 dated steam beam engine developed a fault and fell out of use in 1912, to stay dormant until the mid 1960s when a team of volunteers repaired the damage and brought it back to life. Sadly the head race that fed the waterwheel was filled in during the 1970s, but more recently the Combe Mill Society have got things working by pumping water from the surviving tail race into the waterwheel buckets. The Mill has working blacksmiths who share the hearth and can offer visitors the chance to make their own poker, a keen activity, especially amongst the young.

"At Easter we have the first of our Easter Markets followed by our Easter Egg Trail on Easter Sunday." www.combemill.co.uk

Travel Choices - stay informed about roadworks (Oxfordshire County Council)

Get the latest information on the transport projects that affect you by signing up to Travel Choices bulletins with regular news updates from the major project site teams to help you stay informed about each stage of the improvement works and travel choices to find active, environmentally friendly way of getting around Oxfordshire. tinyurl.com/y55zk5za.

Oxford Art Society

April 6th–April 28th

Selling exhibition with paintings, sculpture and print making of the highest quality by artists in Oxfordshire. Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock. Free admission

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Finstock community woodland

Finstock has no community woodland, unlike its neighbours: Leafield, Ramsden and Charlbury. But there must be some neglected land that could be used as a forest garden to provide food for the community, which is becoming an urgent need. Even a small amount of land can serve if used in the right way.

"A forest garden is a food-producing garden, based on the model of a natural woodland or forest. It is made up of fruit and nut trees, fruit bushes, perennial vegetables and herbs. It can be tailored to fit any space, from a tiny urban backyard to a large rural garden.

"A close copy of a natural ecosystem, it is perhaps the most ecologically friendly way of gardening open to us. It is also a low-maintenance way of gardening. Once established there is none of the digging, sowing, planting out and hoeing of the conventional kitchen back garden. The main task is picking the produce!" (How to Make a Forest Garden by Patrick Whitefield.)

The details of the land to be used, and the work to be done, need to be discussed; and the purpose of this article is to make contact with people who can help.

If you are interested in helping to realize this dream please write to tonyhir@gmail.com or ring 868600.



County Councillor report

In my last update, I wrote about the fact that Oxfordshire is among the best recycling counties in the country. Still on the subject of rubbish, it is disappointing to have learned in the past month that Ubico, the company that took over recycling in 2017, has overspent the agreed budget by £500,000, and will continue to do so in the future. Because Ubico is owned by WODC together with councils in Gloucestershire, we have no choice but to absorb that overspend. When I say "we", I mean us, the council's tax payers. It amounts to around £130 per household. There are a number of reasons that the Environment Committee was given for this, but the bottom line is that Ubico management did not do their homework properly before they agreed a fee for the contract. This is a failing on the part of Ubico management, but also WODC, which agreed the contract. The Environment Committee will be asking for regular updates and will keep a careful eye on future expenditure. Having said all of that, Ubico has improved its service in the past few months – I get a lot fewer complaints about missed collections now, and the crews do a very good job. If you have any issues to do with your rubbish, please do let me or Andy Graham, District Councillor know.

The County Council has now approved the budget for the coming financial year and we have a lot more money available for highway repairs than previously. That said, the County is not awash with money so while the worst roads will be done as soon as possible, some may have to wait a bit. But the plan for the future is to ensure that when roads are repaired, it is done properly with a lasting surface, so that regular maintenance will keep them up to scratch. The extra money, which was originally proposed by the Lib Dems on the County, will, we hope, mean that eventually our roads will be up to the standard of nearby counties, which they haven't been for a very long time.

Liz Leffman
County Councillor

Girl Guiding meeting times

All sections meet on Wednesdays

Rainbows - for girls aged between 5 and 7 years. This group meets from 4.45pm until 5.45pm. Contact for Rainbows is Amy Fox; 07495 064634

Brownies - this group is for girls aged between 7 and 10 years and meets from 6pm until 7.30pm. Contact for Brownies is Amy Fox; 07495 064634

Guides - for girls aged between 10 and 14 years. This group meets from 6pm until 7.30pm. Contact for Guides is Karen Williams – phoenixlights@hotmail.com; 07809 724065

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Contact your GP for a free health check if you are aged between 40 and 74. Visit the website to learn more: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/nhshealthcheck.

Witney Shopmobility

Witney Shopmobility is a FREE service run by WODC and is open to anyone with mobility problems, young or old. It is based in Langdale Gate and a range of scooters and wheelchairs can be hired with full training provided in a safe environment.

Witney Shopmobility is open four days a week: Mondays, Wednesday, Thursdays and Friday from 9.30am – 4.15pm. There is disabled parking nearby. To book Shopmobility, telephone 864787 / 861000 or email enquiries@westoxon.gov.uk.

Live Better. Live Well Oxfordshire

Looking for information about services and activities in Oxfordshire? Then Oxfordshire County Council's Live Well Oxfordshire directory is the place to start your search – it's easy to use and brings together over 2000 services and activities across the county. You'll find useful information and advice on a range of subjects – all aimed at giving you greater choice and control over the support and services you or a loved one need www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/livewell.

See a GP at Weekends or in the Evenings

GP access hubs in Oxfordshire can offer you a routine appointment to see a doctor or practice nurse at these times. You can book a hub appointment at a time to suit you by contacting your own surgery.

Seeing a doctor at the weekend or evening could prevent a cough or cold from getting worse, and frees up your own GP to see more vulnerable patients. For more information tinyurl.com/y7nx52uo

Oxfordshire County Council - Shared Lives Scheme

If you have a spare room to offer and would like to play a key part in making a positive difference to a vulnerable adult's life, then we really want to hear from you! Call the Oxfordshire Shared Lives Scheme on 01865 897971 or visit our website www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sharedlives.

Rogue Traders

This is a reminder to not engage with people who try and sell things at your door. Call 101 or Trading Standards on 03454 040506 as soon as possible to report them. Take as many details as you can – vehicles, descriptions, company names. Always call 999 in an emergency or if you feel threatened. The quicker we get the reports, the more chance we have of catching them in the act.

- Use a door chain so you can check whose calling without opening the door fully
- Don't trade on the doorstep
- Always ask a trusted friend or neighbour for advice
- Display a no cold calling sticker

Please keep an eye out for neighbours and relatives who are suddenly having work done and report anything suspicious.

Scam Prevention Advice

If you're called out of the blue, you should be suspicious. If you get a lot of cold calls, use a call blocker to block unwanted phone calls. You can also sign up to the Telephone Preference Service

register. You can find more advice on how to stop nuisance calls and texts tinyurl.com/z3uglxv.

Age UK research found that more than a fifth of older people across the UK who feel like they've been targeted by scammers didn't tell anyone because they felt too embarrassed. There is help and advice available. Contact the Citizens Advice or report scams to Action Fraud.

If you think you or someone you know is receiving scam mail you can report it to @RoyalMail by FREEPOST, email scam.mail@royalmail.com or Tel: 0800 0113466 (message service only). You can see more information on their website

Don't forget, you can: Get advice from the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline: Tel: 03454 04 05 06

Report scams to Action Fraud on tinyurl.com/yxdwz3e.

Thames Valley Police

George and Ruth Ealey were the landlords at The Crown Finstock for 36 years beginning in 1934. The pub had been run by George's father for 15 years prior to that. This photo was taken when they announced their retirement. Our thanks to John Chipperfield at the Witney Gazette.



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Fragrant delights

On May Day in France, a gift of Lily of the valley (*Convallaria majalis*) to a loved one symbolises the bringing of luck and prosperity for the New Year. This fragrant flowering plant is also used in wedding bouquets, perfumes and in gardens. Usually with blazing-white pendant bells borne on 8" stalks with green spade-like leaves, they make excellent buttonholes. Some varieties exhibit smart yellow striped leaves, others have pale pink flowers.



Another of my favourites flowering in May with a haunting perfume, has a charming combination of large, pure white reflex petals and a yellow cup, edged red and a bit of green inside. *Narcissus poeticus* "Pheasant's Eye", a very old, ancient cultivar, a true heirloom species, ranked among the oldest members of the daffodil family,

and is very close to the true wild form. This daffodil is cultivated in the Netherlands and southern France for its essential oil, used as a principal ingredient in 11 percent of modern quality perfumes—including 'Fatale' and 'Samsara'—as a floral concrete or absolute. The oil's fragrance resembles a combination of jasmine and hyacinth. *Narcissus* has long been cultivated in Europe, its name coming from the Greek legend of a vain lad, called Narcissus, who kept admiring his reflection in the water so the gods turned him into this attractive flower.

One of the sweetest smelling plants ever grown in British gardens is the Parma violet, (*Viola odorata*) their scent taking me back down memory lane! These delicate-looking violets are sweet enough to eat - when sugared, the flowers can be used to decorate cakes, but they are tough customers too, taking anything the winter brings. Once established, these hardy little plants will provide you with sweet smelling, spreading carpets of flower in wooded or shady areas of your garden. Parma violets are steeped in history and folklore, prized for their fragrance and medicinal uses. Lauded by the ancient Greeks and adored by Napoleon and the Empress Joséphine, their popularity, particularly as a cut flower, reached a height in Victorian and Edwardian times. Dorset, Devon and Cornwall were centres of sweet violet growing and production peaked in the 1930s. You can still see the remains of walled flower fields, known as quillies, on the western tip of Cornwall, where violets were cultivated to send to Covent Garden market.

I always prefer a perfumed variety of plants in a garden, which gives an extra relaxing calm.

Robert Bigwood

Brilliant Finstock

Al Ryan from BBC Radio Oxford interviewed five Finstock residents during the second week in March on the Breakfast Show as part of their "meet the street" programme.

Charlbury Garden Society

Spring Show Saturday April 6th
Plant sale Saturday May 11th

National Garden scheme

www.ngs.org.uk

The National Garden Scheme has open gardens all year round for you to visit. There are around 3,500 breathtaking private gardens opening for charity – take a look to find yourself a fantastic day out.

Cleaning Naturally

Clean Your Loo With Cream of Tartar!

Just a couple of level tablespoons sprinkled round the bowl and over the water removes lime scale and keeps it lime scale free for quite a while!

To keep toilets clean and fresh - put eight tablespoons of bicarbonate of soda in the bowl. Leave overnight.

Sprinkle bicarbonate of soda onto a damp cloth to clean toilet seat and cistern, then wipe with a wet cloth.

Baths, shower doors, tiles and grout:

Tackle body oils and soap scum with two parts soda to one part vinegar or lemon juice. The thick paste should be applied with a damp cloth. Leave for 10 minutes then rub with a brush or sponge. As you rinse it off, drains will be kept fresh too. Use this mix on shower doors, sinks, tiles and grout. If cleaning grout, rub with a toothbrush.

Mildew and mould:

Banish black spots with one part vinegar or lemon juice to one part bicarbonate of soda. Apply and leave for one or two hours. Rinse off. It may need to be reapplied or left longer, depending on how severe your mould or mildew is.

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