

Finstock News 124

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CHANGE IS WITH US

It is with pleasure that we thank all of those in the village who have contributed to our lives during this extraordinary time of Covid-19. Shutting down the nation was not a decision taken lightly, but that decision flipped our former everyday life. Isolation has meant learning new ways to work, shop and play, but most of all, helping our neighbours.

First on that list will be Karen at the Woodpecker Community Shop and Post Office. Karen worked closely with others in the village to find the items we needed, including toilet paper! Clive, her partner helped at the start of the shutdown when she could not call on those 'not in her household'. He made it possible for her to keep going in the early uncertain days. She has been running the shop and Post Office pretty much on her own as the social distancing rules mean the shop is too small for two workers plus customers. Thank you Karen!

My next shout-out goes to Pete and Annie who organised Finstock Self-isolating Support. Together with other volunteers, this group picked up and delivered essential prescriptions and food to those who could not go out due to their health. They continue to deliver some food as needed. They are village heroes. Contact details - finstocksis@gmail.com or 01993 868140.

Finally, we acknowledge the community spirit that saw many of us knocking on our neighbours' doors or telephoning to check that they were all right. Isolation can be very daunting. One cartoon that I read during this time said – I need a dog to walk to give me an excuse to get out of the house.

We know that social distancing has curtailed our social life, but The Plough began making take-a-ways to serve the community, which helped to give us something to look forward to beside our own cooking and our own company.

Now the government is re-imposing strict rules on gatherings once again after only a brief break and a modified resumption of work and play. We will face this new world order and come out the other side with possible major changes to our lifestyle. We will not be returning to a world we once knew, but they do say that change is good for us. I say, keep a sense of humour, I think we are going to need it.



News from the Parish Council

We are all facing very tricky times, we need to remember those who are most at risk and behave responsibly at all times. Restrictions are very frustrating, but appear to be widely endorsed and undertaken by us in Finstock.

You will find a copy of the Village Survey in this issue of the *Finstock News*. The survey is a vital piece of data that guides the Parish Council in better meeting the hopes and wishes of all villagers. It is undertaken every few years or so and allows a careful tracking of changes and developments that are wanted. Additionally, all consultations from outside bodies always want to know how regularly the PC consults with villagers. Therefore, please take a few moments to fill it in – your views are important. The results will be published early in the New Year in the FN.

Please return your Village Survey by November 1st!

We continue to hold PC meetings virtually using Zoom. These meetings remain open to all and the relevant codes can be obtained from the Clerk (june.pratley@btinternet.com).

A timely reminder is that the speed limit throughout the village is 30mph especially when coming down the High Street.

A reminder for all dog owners, please exercise your canine friends away from public spaces particularly the playing field where non-dog owners enjoy walking and where dog fouling is a dreadful nuisance and a health hazard.

Hywel Davies for the Parish Council



VILLAGE EVENTS



Remembrance Sunday November 8th



It is not certain at this time if a service can be held, but announcements will be made closer to the date if the service can proceed.

There will be no Poppy sales this year due to Covid-19 restrictions and vulnerabilities.

Finstock Local History Society (FLHS)

Rather than creating and announcing a programme of talks this autumn, with the likelihood of having to cancel or rearrange at very short notice, the Finstock Local History Society Programme Committee has reluctantly taken the decision to postpone the resumption of FLHS meetings at least until next spring when, Covid 19 guidance allowing, we will offer you a programme of open air events for the late spring and early summer. We hope to resume 'normal' meetings in the Village Hall from October 2021.

The Chipping Norton Theatre pantomime has been postponed until next year.

North Leigh History Society

Our History Society was due to meet in September to start the new series of talks. However, continuing levels of infection and possible local lockdowns and the uncertainty as to what the next few months will bring have meant that we have decided to change our plans. The committee of the North Leigh History Group has reluctantly decided to cancel all face-to-face meetings for the forthcoming year.

Angela Kyte

Bottle caps raise funds Finding Cures for Blinding Eye Diseases

www.giftofsight.org.uk

"The Gift of Sight Appeal was established with the aim of funding world-class research into the prevention and treatment of blindness.

Your generous philanthropic gifts, including Legacies and Direct Debits, have helped us increase the number of staff employed in our vision science research group, enabling us to train the next generation of academic ophthalmologists and visual scientists. We know times are hard during the time of the coronavirus pandemic but any help you are able to give to help us continue our vital research will be gratefully received."

Your soft plastic bottle tops can be donated to me to help raise funds for The Gift of Sight. We collect only milk bottle tops; that is, blue, green, orange, yellow and red variety. We cannot accept anything else. Please drop your milk bottle tops off at 63 High Street, Finstock.

Joy Murphy

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!

Regenerate our countryside

Join the regeneration with CPRE, the countryside charity

<https://tinyurl.com/y2c5t9js>

Public rights of way

To report a footpath problem go to www.oxfordshire.gov.uk Then environment and planning > Countryside > Countryside access > Public rights of way > Reporting an issue on a public right of way.

You can report any problem including: Bridge/crossing; Crops; Definitive map issue; Fence; Gate; Livestock; Obstacles; Post/waymark; Signs; Steps; Stile; Tree; Vegetation.

The Finstock Village Hall 2020 AGM will take place on Monday November 16th at 8.15pm. In common with other organisations, we will meet online through Zoom to comply with Government guidelines. If you wish to join us, please contact rod.ireland@sky.com to request an invitation. All are welcome.



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Village Hall

www.finstock.org.uk/village-hall and follow the booking instructions,
Email villagehallfinstock@gmail.com

Finstock Village Hall

The Village Hall reopened on August 24th. It has been thoroughly cleaned (thank you, Kelly) and is festooned with myriad posters advising on covering faces, washing hands, using sanitiser, distancing, following one-way systems and many other constraints based on the forty pages of advice the trustee team received from ACRE (the organisation that advises community halls in rural England).

We are working firstly with our major customers (village clubs and organisations, dance classes, yoga, etc.) before we open up to private bookings. We are aware that community halls in other West Oxfordshire villages are being more cautious in declaring a date for reopening, but knowing that our Hall is so important to so many of you, the team worked hard to implement the advised changes to get going again.

Our 2020 AGM will take place on Monday November 16th at 8pm. At the time of writing, it had yet to be decided whether to hold a virtual meeting via a platform such as Zoom, or a "live" meeting in the Hall, which would potentially be subject to a limited attendance due to distancing requirements. But a lot can change in a couple of months, so we will publish details on the Village sites once they are finalised.

Rod Ireland, Chair

Finstock Craft Club

It was thanks to the hard work of the trustees and everyone connected with our lovely Village Hall, that although we are not yet ready to celebrate, a few craft club members were delighted to be back, and were the first user group to meet in the hall on August 24th. I can promise that there was 'no singing'.

We did what we do best, crafting and chatting as there was lots of catching up to do! Other members, understandably apprehensive, will be joining us in due course, but we also look forward to welcoming new members. Of course our greatest wish is that if everyone follows the Village Hall and the government's Covid-19 safety measures, we can continue to use this amazing facility.

Please contact me for any information about the above requirements if you haven't already received them, prior to joining us on any Monday evening (except Bank Holidays) from 7.30 to 9.30pm. rosacharlesworth@icloud.com or telephone 869283.



Great to be back in the hall which greeted us all spick and span and gleaming. One way system in place works well. Plenty of hand sanitiser in place with clear signage and guidance on how to keep everyone safe in these challenging times.

White Tiger Martial Arts

Finstock Baby and Toddler Group

Normally at this time of year we would be settling into the autumn term at Toddler Group, getting together for fun Wednesday play sessions and seasonal crafty activities. Although schools have returned and more gatherings are allowed, with the current Government guidelines as they are, we don't feel we can commence Finstock Toddler Group at this time. This makes us really sad and we are missing our weekly meet ups with you all - seeing how the little ones have grown over the summer and welcoming new arrivals.

We will keep reviewing the guidance; however it may not be until the New Year when we are able to look into starting the group again. We're sure you can appreciate how difficult it would be to open up with the restrictions in place; we hope to bring you good news soon, and our fun Wednesday group can open up again in the future.

All the best, Helen and Tammy

Covid-19

Play your part to help stop the spread of Covid-19: keep your distance, wash your hands regularly, wear a face covering and avoid car sharing if you can. If you have any coronavirus symptoms, you must self-isolate immediately and call 119 to book a test.

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Lending Library

Started on a whim, the Lending Library has proven a huge success thanks to the many contributions of books from many villagers. The Lending Library, really only a wooden box on stilts located at 63 High Street, has been in action for most of this lengthy lockdown. The evolution from a surplus of jigsaw puzzles, which quickly disappeared, changed to reading material; books that had been read but were not going to be read again. You are free to take any book, but the idea is bring a book and take a book. If you simply want to leave a book that is fine, but please do not bring along all your donated books in one go as the space is limited. To date we have taken seven large bags of books to various charity shops (Big Thank You to Tony Cooper from Oxfam!). Once you learn to read, you will be forever free.

Cotswold Railway

I attended the Cotswold Line Promotion Group AGM via Zoom in August and raised the question of the absence of a waiting shelter at Finstock. I am told that it is due to be replaced. One train a day in each direction is again calling at Finstock and you never know there may be a chance for more in the future! A Saturday shopping service has been talked about it but as you know the future of rail, like other things, is a topic for debate.

Mike Breakell

Having trouble with the crossword?

Dehydration is a common cause of a number of problems in older people that is frequently unrecognised and can lead to or exacerbate a number of quite serious conditions such as:

Confusion; disorientation and memory loss; lowered blood pressure with dizziness and falls; irritability and mood changes. In normal conditions daily fluid intake should be some 1.7 litres (about 3 pints) and more, of course in hot conditions or if working outside. So monitor yourself are you drinking enough?

Water is life's matter and matrix, mother and medium.

There is no life without water.

Albert Szent-Gyorgyi

Dehydration occurs when you use or lose more fluid than you take in and your body doesn't have enough water and other fluids to carry out its normal functions. If you don't replace lost fluids, you will get dehydrated. Anyone may become dehydrated, but the condition is especially dangerous for young children and older adults.

The most common cause of dehydration in young children is severe diarrhoea and vomiting. Older adults naturally have a lower volume of water in their bodies, and may have conditions or take medications that increase the risk of dehydration.

This means that even minor illnesses, such as infections affecting the lungs or bladder, can result in dehydration in older adults.

Dehydration also can occur in any age group if you don't drink enough water during hot weather — especially if you are exercising vigorously.

You can usually reverse mild to moderate dehydration by drinking more fluids, but severe dehydration needs immediate medical treatment.

The Plough, Finstock

A huge thank you to everyone that has supported the pub during these difficult times.

As a reward, during October and November we are offering you 20 percent off all food orders on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. There will be 10 percent off on all food ordered for take away. According to the government's latest instructions, the closing time is now 10pm, therefore we will be opening at 5pm instead of 6pm.

Telephone 868333 or visit www.theplough-inn.co.uk.

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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Lesley Dore	868280	Distribution
Tony Hirstenstein	868600	Member
Joy Murphy	868575	Editor

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Photographs thanks to staff members and others.
Read the *Finstock News* online at www.finstock.org.uk; 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.

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Tel: 01993 868333
www.theplough-inn.co.uk



Sometimes it can be hard to remember life before the pandemic. The shop doors were closed on colder days so it was warm inside, and the myriad of activities involved in running the shop and post office were shared among loyal volunteers. Fast forward to today, and the door has to be open in all winds and weathers, volunteers are excluded from working for their own protection, and Karen has to wear a mask and stand behind a Perspex screen. It is very fitting then that she was recently invited to the High Sheriff of Oxfordshire's Garden Party to celebrate the heroes who have done so much for their communities during these difficult times. Some other community shop managers from across the county were also honoured, but in sharing stories it is apparent that few have managed to ensure the same availability and range of service that we have enjoyed in Finstock.

As schools reopen, and many of us continue the transition back to our old ways of working, it could easily happen that trade at the shop begins to slow. Remember that before our world was turned upside down, our shop and post office were within weeks of going out of business. Yet when you needed them most, they were there for you. We are grateful for your support and the wonderful tributes you have paid through the tough times. **Please stay with us so we can always be there for you when the need is greatest.**

Another way you can help us is to join our 100 Club. Every month, we pay out £300 in prize money, and the odds of winning are high. At last year's AGM, over three quarters of those attending had won at least once, and several on multiple occasions. Call in at the shop and ask Karen for details.

Our AGM will be held on November 4th at 8pm. We have decided to follow Government guidance and broadcast the meeting on an interactive

technology platform. All shareholders will receive the normal documentation in advance by post. We are aware that any "live" meeting would likely be constrained by attendance limits, distancing requirements and wearing of face coverings, if it were permitted at all! To register for online attendance, please call at the shop and provide Karen with your contact details. If you are unable to use this kind of technology, we will do our best to offer an alternative report.

Rod Ireland

Village Shop hours:

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
and Friday 8.30am – 3.30pm
Tuesday 8.30am – 1.30pm
(main delivery day)
Saturday 9.00am – 1pm

Post Office hours:

Monday – Friday 9am – 1pm
Last acceptance time
for postage 12noon

www.facebook.com/woodpeckercommunityshopfinstock
www.finstock.org.uk/village-shop

Single use plastic carrier bags will cost shoppers 10p at all shops from April 2021. The previous exemption for smaller shops will be removed.

*Your future self is watching you
right now through memories.*

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Girl Guides

Rainbows are excited to be returning to face-to-face meetings in September. We have found a lovely secure outside area where the girls can work following all the current guidelines. We are taking the opportunity to start working towards our camping badge, learning how to cook without a kitchen and create dens.

Guiding HQ has just released guidance for inside face-to-face meetings which we will begin working on ASAP to get our Brownie and Guide units meetings.

We are still looking for volunteers to help our units remain open once we get back to physical meetings. If you would like to help, please contact Sian or Kim on the emails below.

All sections meet on a Wednesday. If your child is interested in joining please email the below contact depending on age:

Rainbows - for girls aged 5 to 7 years.
Contact for Rainbows is Sian
finstock-rainbows@outlook.com.

Brownies - for girls aged 7 to 10 years.

Guides - for girls aged 10 to 14 years.
Contact for Brownies and Guides is Kim -Kimberley.lovelock@yahoo.co.uk.

*It is the 150th anniversary of
Charles Dickens death. Visit a
virtual tour exhibition:
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Dickens. tinyurl.com/ydczsxeb*

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Great works are performed not by strength, but by perseverance. Samuel Johnson

Lost by David Wagoner

Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you
Are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here,
And you must treat it as a powerful stranger,
Must ask permission to know it and be known.
The forest breathes. Listen. It answers,
I have made this place around you.
If you leave it, you may come back again, saying Here.
No two trees are the same to Raven.
No two branches are the same to Wren.
If what a tree or a bush does is lost on you,
You are surely lost. Stand still. The forest knows
Where you are. You must let it find you.

Earthworms

"We love eating your waste; the dirtier it is the better. We will love it to bits; we will make friable soil from it; and we shan't charge you a penny."

Can you believe every advertisement you read? But if this were an advertisement it would be true in every particular. Earthworms are the very basis of fertile soil. I have heard that when walking on some organic land in this very village you can hear the ground squelching; it is not the sound of your boots, but comes from the extraordinary number of worms in the soil.

The soil is a living entity; and it is made so by the actions of worms and even smaller bacteria, some of them microscopic.

"Earthworms can be called biological indicators of soil fertility, for soils with earthworms most definitely support healthy populations of bacteria, fungi, actinomycetes, protozoans, insects, spiders, millipedes and a host of other organisms that are essential for sustaining a healthy soil. Earthworms not only inhabit the soil, but by virtue of their activity, contribute to the physical and chemical alterations in the soil, leading to soil fertility and plant growth. Soils inhabited by earthworms have casts which are, in turn, inhabited by microorganisms." ('The Earthworm Book,' Sultan Ahmed Ismail)

There are worms who work at the surface and ones who dive deep in the earth. The two types you are most likely to see are grey and red. Grey worms live near the surface but are not attracted to organic waste, which is the choice of the red, or brandling worms. My Hotbin is full of brandling worms; so are ordinary compost heaps when they are working at full strength.

Worm compost consists of casts full of rich earth. It can also be encouraged in wormeries, which can be anything from three plastic containers with a lid to more elaborate structures. The top layer is for the scraps fed to worms; the middle layer is where the worms store their compost; and the bottom contains the liquid from the composting process, which is itself a rich food for plants. (tinyurl.com/y3rynyz7)

What's not to like?

Tony Hirtenstein

TOE is helping local people

TOE is helping local people restore nature, tackle the climate emergency and connect with Oxfordshire's wild side. (Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment – Your local environment fund) We're Oxfordshire's independent environmental funder. Our Local Environment Fund raises money and allocates grants for local projects that benefit wildlife, people and the planet. If you'd like to contribute to TOE's Local Environment Fund, or if you've got a great project that needs funding, we'd love to hear from you. www.trustforoxfordshire.org.uk

Bumblebees

www.bumblebeeconservation.org

There are currently 24 species of bumblebee resident in Britain. Bumblebees are large, furry, and charismatic four-winged insects that belong to an order called the *Hymenoptera*, which also includes sawflies, ants, and wasps. They are well-known for their meandering, "bumbling" flight, and their distinctive buzz – which is where their Latin name *Bombus* (meaning "booming") originates. They pollinate our fruit trees and tomatoes. But, our tomatoes are grown using immigrant labour, which requires about 7m imported bees.

*Plastic bag sales are down
95 percent since the 5p charge
was introduced.*

Bikes for Key Workers scheme continues

The #BikesforKeyWorkers scheme is continuing through the work of Active Oxfordshire, Broken Spoke Bike Coop and CycloX. Over 120 bikes have been donated, repaired and passed on to key workers. A fundraising appeal to cover the cost of the work is nearing its target of £10,000. You can make a donation online, donate bikes in good or reasonable condition, or offer your help as a volunteer mechanic. (CAG newsletter).



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An Update from Finstock School

The last year for our school can only be described as the most challenging academic year of our lives. We all had to adapt to the very different ways of working and respond to the ever-changing guidance from the government. We are incredibly grateful for all the support our school community have provided not only for our children, but us as a school. We held a virtual Sports Week, delivered resources, work packs, food vouchers, science kits, made phone calls, held SEN reviews, recruited new staff, gained qualifications such as paediatric first aid, enabled staff at high risk to remain at home, provided child care, welcomed back children from all year groups and launched virtual lessons. I am so very proud of all our staff members. Our teachers have provided outstanding lessons which have produced some of the most amazing work by our pupils. Based at Queen Emma's our support staff ensured we could provide a safe and stimulating environment for children of key workers as well as supporting our families whilst our school site was closed.

We are incredibly fortunate to have plenty of space both inside and outside at Finstock Church of England Primary School. We have created two 'bubbles', each bubble having their very own building and play ground and outside learning areas. Class sizes are small, so we can observe social distancing. We have had a new handwashing station to speed up our regular hand washing slots throughout the day and have managed to continue to serve hot school dinners.

In September, we welcomed back all our children, who were amazing; our school is once again filled with the excited chatter of learning. Our team worked hard to set up the school site to ensure it was safe and inviting for all our children – the site looks brilliant! Our reception and nursery children have just completed the project ***Do you want to be friends?*** They have looked at what makes a good friend, people who help us and how they can be helpful. It's been lovely to watch our children doing kind deeds for each other.

Our Infants have immersed themselves in ***The Scented Garden*** project exploring their senses within the natural world and looking at the factors that help seeds to grow. They have developed some wonderful scents in the classroom! The junior children were transported back to the times of the plague with the ***Peasants, Princes and Pestilence*** project. They have learnt about life in the medieval times and how the plague spread, which led to some wonderful scientific investigations. We have thoroughly enjoyed our music and PE lessons that have been taught by specialist subject teachers from The Henry Box School.

We are excited to be starting our next projects: ***What's that sound? Movers and Shakers*** and ***Darwin's Delights***. We look forward to updating you on our learning.

If you would like your child to attend our amazing school, please do get in touch with the school via office.3040@finstock.oxon.sch.uk to arrange a conversation.

Leanne Dixon
Finstock Headteacher

Cosy Homes Oxfordshire

<https://cosyhomesoxfordshire.org>

Cosy Homes Oxfordshire is a one-stop-shop home retrofit service, enabling homeowners to improve the energy efficiency of their homes throughout Oxfordshire. By working with us you will have the opportunity to:

Have the stress removed from home retrofit as we support you and manage the process from start to finish; Be introduced to trusted contractors who will undertake the work recommended; Have the quality of the retrofit monitored through our quality assurance process; Reduce the carbon emissions of your home; Lower your energy bills; Have a more comfortable home, warm in the winter and cool in the summer; Have a healthier home, eliminating damp and improving ventilation; and Improve your home's EPC rating, unlocking long-term value.



Life after lockdown – Village Survey

While lockdown has been a time of stress, deprivation, anxiety and loneliness, in some ways it has also been a time of good things in our village: clean air, birdsong, wildflowers, and bugs and butterflies all thriving, family walks, children out on their bikes on newly safe roads. Of course, normality must return, but could we agree on some way to mark this strange year and preserve some of these good things? Perhaps making suggestions in our replies to the Village Survey would be the place to start. **Ros Faith**

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'Beautifully relaxing classes but they're also powerful...I come away feeling relaxed yet invigorated for the day ahead...' LD

purerelaxationuk@yahoo.co.uk
Facebook: Pure Relaxation Yoga
Text: 07990 513121

(NB: Temporary class in Leaffield Hall every Thursday 7pm while Ramsden Hall is closed for refurbishment)

Deborah Manning

School of Dance

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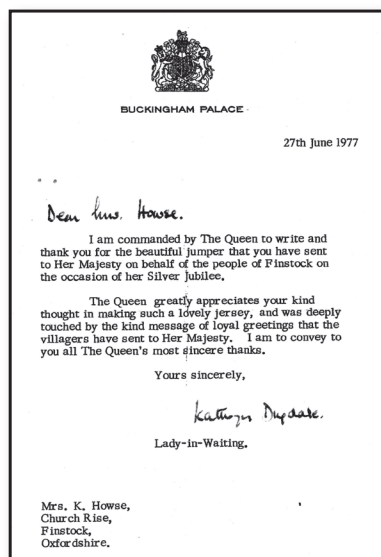
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A Very Exciting Discovery

Most of you will know Kath Howse, 94yrs old, from Church Rise in Finstock. She and Reg were one of the couples that celebrated 70 years of marriage, and went on to celebrate 73 years before Reg died two years ago.

Kath rang me in great excitement and asked if I was here for the Queen's Silver Jubilee – in 1977 – to which I replied I was, and why? It would seem that Kath decided she ought to sort out her 'Memory Box' on top of her wardrobe; apparently Reg had sorted out his before he died and had put everything to be disposed of in a bag, which she had put behind his chair. And there it had stayed. She got that out first, gave it to her son Terry and asked him just to go through it before burning it, which he did. He came to her with an unopened letter, addressed to her, with the Official Stamp of Buckingham Palace, and also the Crown and ER stamped on it, dated 27th June 1977. Kath opened it with curiosity and was so excited to find a personal letter to her, from H.M. Queen Elizabeth, written by her Lady-in-Waiting and printed here, thanking her for the lovely sweater!



Apparently, in all the villages and towns around the country folks had been asked to make something for Her Majesty to celebrate the Silver Jubilee. The best three from each community were sent to Buckingham Palace where there was a big exhibition of them. Kath, who had a special knitting machine, made the Queen a sweater in Royal Blue with all the members of her family in gold somehow on it; this was one of the three chosen from Finstock. Sadly, no-one took photographs of it and Kath cannot now really remember what it was like.

Kath then went off to America for a month to visit her cousin, who had married a G.I. The day she left, an official, general letter came from Buckingham Palace thanking everyone who had sent in a gift, which Reg forwarded on to her in America. On her return, a group from Finstock went up to Buckingham Palace to go round the Exhibition. Kath said there were thousands of articles there and, although they had a good look, she couldn't see hers anywhere! Someone later told her they had seen a member of the Queen's family wearing it somewhere, which she was very excited about.

The big mystery, of course, is 'When did this letter arrive? Why did her husband Reg. not give it to her?' It must have come whilst she was still in America, but not enough time to forward it on, How did it come to be in His 'Memory Box'? How did he put it out with all his 'rubbish' to be disposed of even though it had all that on the envelope to tell him it was important! What a good thing Kath gave the bag to Terry to look through!

WHAT A FIND - 43 years later.

Viv Wightman

Over 1,000 Visitors to Villa Mosaics in 2020

The North Leigh Roman Villa Volunteers were established last summer to work with English Heritage to improve access to the 3rd century AD mosaics housed at the Villa. These are the finest Roman mosaics in Oxfordshire still in their original location and were last regularly open to visitors about 30 years ago. The third and final Open Weekend of a covid-truncated summer season saw the 1,000th visitor to the mosaics this year.



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District Councillor Report

What a year! And it is not over yet. Firstly and most importantly, I hope you are all well and that you're surviving the impact of Covid-19, which has been stressful for all of us - some more than others.

As one of your District Councillors and leader of the liberal democrats I have been working very closely with officers to support the roll out of the grant/loan schemes for local businesses as well as the opening of the leisure centres and gyms and ensuring the collection of household waste has been kept on track.

I have also been monitoring the increased homeless situation caused by the pandemic ensuring that rough sleepers and those in need of accommodation were provided for. Work has advanced to find more permanent solutions, which I campaigned for years ago and are finally coming to fruition. More positive news will be announced shortly.

I was in the village talking to residents (note social distanced) in the High Street about the smells from the drains particularly acute in the summer months and have brought this to the attention of Thames Water. This clearly is long standing and as many of you know, I have had long running battles with Thames Water over the flooding and sewerage issues. At least, we have

a short term solution with a six month maintenance clear out to avoid the flooding. After all the badgering and cajoling, they know Finstock is on the map and we won't accept 2nd class service for a 1st class village!

One other serious issue which I wanted to alert you all to is how the government is looking to overhaul the planning system at very short notice, which will have a major impact on our ability to have some real say on what gets built, where and when and how. This could mean decisions could be fast tracked leaving local councils powerless without a voice and giving a green light for developers to build homes without the need to allocate social housing provision. (Currently 1 in 10 houses is the ratio and this could be changed to 1 in 50.) We will be fighting these proposals this autumn as this is not the way to sustain our villages and towns, and with little time for any real consultation, the local voice so important to be heard is in danger of being muted or totally ignored.

I will write more on this with Cllr Liz Leffman and send you a letter/leaflet with more detailed information in the next few weeks.

Thank you for your continued support.

Cllr Andy Graham

andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk

Salisbury Cathedral Wiltshire 800th anniversary

In the early 1220s when Bishop Richard Poore, the medieval bishop of Salisbury, moved the cathedral and its community from Old Sarum to its present site. Driven by the need to access fresh water, and desperate to escape bad weather, royal supervision and regular harassment by soldiers stationed at Old Sarum Castle, his actions changed the community and landscape of South Wiltshire forever.

By April 1220 the foundation stones for what was to become an iconic national landmark were laid and expansion of the city we know and love.

Salisbury Cathedral was built over a period of 38 years. The cathedral building was constructed 'floating' on a bed of sand, gravel and water, and just over 50 years later it boasted a soaring spire which to this day is the tallest medieval spire still standing in this country.

The Wiltshire cathedral was moved 3km (two miles) from Old Sarum to Salisbury in 1220 - making it the only English cathedral to move location. Phil Harding, former Time Team presenter, said the cathedral's relocation had been "politically, logistically and commercially bold. It was made with an ambitious building plan that would challenge even modern, technologically-advanced builders", he said.

The cathedral is home to the "finest preserved" of the four original copies of the Magna Carta. Signed by King John at Runnymede in 1215, it is seen as the foundation of constitutional law in England. It outlines basic rights with the principle that no-one was above the law, including the king; it charted the right to a fair trial and limits on taxation without representation.



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County Councillor report

"In the last issue of Finstock News, I wrote that Oxfordshire was in line to receive £600,000 to support their Active Travel programme in June but failed in their bid and only received 50% of that amount. A second tranche of £2.38 million is now available for the county and the bid for that went in at the end of July. I was particularly concerned that this time Oxfordshire gets all the support it can, so I requested a special meeting of the Performance Scrutiny committee, at which officers and the Cabinet Member for Environment were asked to present their plans for the second tranche application. Members of the committee, of which I am one, questioned why the first bid had failed, what lessons had been learned from that experience, and how those lessons could be applied to the second bid. The general feeling was that we had been very unambitious in our first application. We are now waiting for the government to decide whether to allocate the full amount to Oxfordshire this time.

However, we should not expect too much for Charlbury, Finstock and the surrounding area. Most of the money will go to support initiatives in the main towns and in Oxford, with relatively little coming to rural areas. This is disappointing but understandable as in the great scheme of things £2.38 million is not a huge amount of money and will only go so far.

The real need in rural parts of the county is for improved bus services. With this in mind I have been working with officers at the County Council to identify pots of money from developers that can be used to support the X9 bus service. As a result Pulham's has been able to improve the service and from September 1st buses began to run hourly every morning Monday to Saturday.

At the District County level the emphasis recently has been on ensuring that shops, pubs and restaurants can open safely. There was some concern expressed recently about safety at local campsites, and officers have been very helpful in making sure that the owners are aware of their responsibilities, which from what I have seen, they are. It has been very encouraging to see how well District and County staff have worked together during the pandemic, and I hope that this will continue in the future.

Liz Leffman
liz.leffman@oxfordshire.gov.uk
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Charlbury Surgery **Goodbye and Welcome**

In mid-August the Charlbury Medical Centre said goodbye to Dr Jacqui Maroni. Dr Laura Gillgan will now see Dr Maroni's patients. Dr Gillgan will initially be working three days a week and will be training to become diabetic lead for our practice.

When is my GP or nurse on duty?

You can find out who works when, and what services are provided by going to: www.thecharlburymedicalcentre.nhs.uk and clicking on Menu>Opening Times>Surgery Days and Times.

Arranging an appointment

The practice manager reminds us that Monday mornings and Fridays are the busiest times for reception staff. If possible, please delay ringing reception until they are less busy. The appointment of Dr Gillgan brings a full complement of GPs to the practice.

People who work, or are family carers can ring reception the day before, from 3pm, in order to make an appointment for the following day.

You can send your enquiry to the practice online by using e-consult (small blue box on the home page). The practice will endeavour to contact you by the end of the next working day.

Urgent appointments

If you need urgent attention during practice hours, please telephone the practice and speak to a receptionist. The receptionist may ask you a number of questions in order to assess your needs. A doctor will then phone you, and decide on the next steps.

In a life threatening medical emergency, for example a suspected heart attack, or stroke, dial 999.

For more information see www.nhs.uk.

NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and can help you if you have an urgent medical problem.

There is more information about appointments on the practice website.

Susan Smith

Charlbury Patient Participation Group,
steering committee

If you wish to advertise in Finstock News please contact Ann Sullivan at advertfinstocknews@btinternet.com
Tel: 01993 868597

Finstock Unplugged – live at The Plough

(Final Monday of the month)

In July we were so looking forward to being permitted to return to The Plough, albeit outside in the garden. But then it rained solidly on Sunday and gusty squalls continued into Monday.

Discouraged by the uncertain weather, many people sent apologies. Disheartened, I began to issue cancellation notices, only to find that my computer wasn't working. Everything seemed to be going wrong. I went down to The Plough, thinking I'd better stay there for a while to explain the situation to anyone who turned up. Luckily Brock and Vixen decided to come along anyway, and so did Josie (playing accordion as well as cello); Simon, Anabel, Matt and Georgie, Claire and of course Rachel soon followed. Suddenly we had a quorum of hardy souls ready to perform.

We managed quite well out in the garden and Matt, with Claire on accordion, sang powerful versions of *Liverpool Town* (Dubliners) and *Rosie* by Tom Waits, but by 9.30 it was getting dark as well as cold, so I tentatively suggested that as we were a small number, we could adjourn to a socially distanced indoor session (with open windows and doors) in my kitchen. A couple of people had to leave, but the others went for the idea and followed on back to my house. Anabel arranged the chairs according to correct social distancing, and we sat singing and playing till after 11.30pm. Everyone was in excellent form and there was much cheerful jamming, with Josie providing some lovely mellow cello harmonies to melodies played by other performers. Simon, as well as more personal solos, sang some classics so we could join in on the choruses, and at the end of the evening we also enjoyed singing along to Anabel's gentle versions of some chilled Paul Simon songs. It was a lovely conclusion to a session that had looked a 'goner' earlier in the day. I felt very lucky to be a part of it.

In August the weather was a little better, but the days were getting shorter and the air more chill. Yet the 'hard core', bless 'em, still rolled up to the back garden of The Plough and we had a good hour and a half of music. We were all suitably wrapped up and provided our own lanterns and extra chairs. Brock and Vixen performed some of their lovely traditional melodies on accordion and guitar; Jim sang some of his own excellent songs as well as leading us in singalong classics like *Dirty Old Town*; but the highlight of the evening was definitely the close harmony singing of classic songs of the 1930s, as performed by Rachel, Claire and Rosie C. - Andrews sisters, watch out! Later in the evening as it began to get cold some left for home, while the rest of us retreated to the warmth of the pub to chat companionably over a drink.

Who knows what will happen in October/November? If the rules remain strict about indoor singing in public places we may have to revert to Zooming, but maybe things will ease?

Thinking positive!

Ginnie

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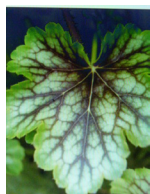
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Wow to Autumn



Heuchera are famed for there superb range of spectacular foliage and late spring colour giving an extra "Wow to autumn".

My new Wow plant is the beautifully coloured and marked foliage of the *Heuchera*, which I discovered at an Autumn Malvern RHS show. A superb range of spectacular foliage and attractive late spring/summer flowers, really stand out and the leaf colour becomes more vibrant in September and October. The amazing coloured and veined foliage and vibrancy of leaf colour alone makes these semi-evergreen perennials a must have.

I have found an area of partial shade produces the best results, but *Heuchera* are also versatile enough to cope in the full shade of tricky, hard to fill spots in the garden as well as full sun. They like nutrient rich, well-drained and slightly acidic soil with good drainage. *Heucheras* 'Coral bells' and 'Alumroot' are native to North America and were first introduced to the UK in 1882. Belonging to the *Saxifragaceae* family, they have a low-growing, compact habit, perfect for the front of a border but also do well in containers. In late spring and early summer, *heuchera* send up delicate bloom stalks of red, white, or pink bell-like flowers.



Heuchera are resilient perennial plants retaining the majority of their foliage throughout the winter months. When the display of flowers have finished, most garden perennials are little noticed, but Coral bells, in contrast, give interesting shapes and amazing colours on their leaves. The leaves can be of purple, burgundy, amber, red, peach or lime green, often with eye-catching veining and shadings; some even have frosted white margins. In addition to gorgeous leaf colour, many varieties have wavy or ruffled edges that provide interesting texture as well. Some cultivars, such as 'Tiramisu' and 'Autumn Leaves,' go through several colour changes throughout the season.

Heuchera are easy to propagate and an excellent alternative to annual bedding plants. They just need to be divided every 3-4 years to preserve their good looks and vitality. Feeding in the spring with a half-inch layer of compost or a light amount of slow-release fertilizer enhances the colours. Hostas are also recommended for shady spaces, but they are poisonous to both cats and dogs whereas *Heuchera* are a pet friendly garden plants and add that extra bit of colour during the darkest, dullest days of winter, needing little maintenance.

Alumroot gets its name from the astringency of the fleshy root and has been useful as an alum substitute in fixing natural dyes. It has been used in medicines to treat external sores and wounds and internally for various gastric ailments, also a treatment to rub on the gums of teething babies.

I enjoy a bit of cheer in the garden, at this time of year,

Robert Bigwood

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Peter specialises in creating unique and hand-crafted objects which exploit the properties of metals: reflectiveness, ductility, strength and colour. He works in gold, a variety of silver alloys, precious and semi-precious stones, titanium, nickel-silver and cast-iron. As well as Peter's handcrafted pieces he takes commissions and repairs.

Laraine's stoneware, sculptural ceramic forms are extracted from negative space drawings observed within natural landscapes. Each piece is unique, and hand built using a variety of stoneware. For the festive season Laraine has created an affordable range of unique, hand painted ceramic Christmas decorations representing local wildlife and pets.

For information about future exhibitions and sales please contact us on:

Instagram: [Laraineatno4](https://www.instagram.com/Laraineatno4)

Email: laraineatno4@gmail.com

Instagram: [peterchildatno4](https://www.instagram.com/peterchildatno4)

Email: Peter_Child@hotmail.com

Web: wilcoteart.wordpress.com

The United Nations is celebrating its 75th birthday. In 1945, the 50 founding members signed the UN charter, in the hopes of learning from the past and ending wars. Now every country in the world is a member. There are 195 countries in the world today. This total comprises 193 countries that are member states of the United Nations and 2 countries that are non-member observer states: the Holy See and the State of Palestine.

Hope

"Hope is an embrace of the unknown and the unknowable, an alternative to the certainty of both optimists and pessimists. Optimists think it will all be fine without our involvement; pessimists adopt the opposite position; both excuse themselves from acting. It is the belief that what we do matters even though how and when it may matter, who and what it may impact are not things we can know beforehand."

Rebecca Solnit (The Key Newsletter)