

Village News

for Bishopstone & Hinton Parva

May 2017

Country Garden Fêtes Saturday 10th June

Prebendal Farm, Bishopstone
Fête Noon - 4.00pm

Grand Opening by Tara Fitzgerald

Actress in Game of Thrones & Waking the Dead



Wine & Song Evening

7.30 pm Thursday 25th May
Hinton Parva Village Hall

Following the huge success of last year, we are delighted to say that Luiza Staniec has agreed to entertain us once more, this time with some of her friends. Come and sip a glass of wine or two and try some tasty nibbles on a lovely summer evening, relax and listen to the music and possibly join in the singing.

Tickets £10.00 - only a limited number
Contact: Mogs 790 626 or Jo 790 485

all profits to go to the church funds

The Village Hall, Church &
Recreation Ground, Lyddington
Fête, 2.00pm
Grand Opening by Mrs Sarah Troughton
Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire

There will be a double helping of Fêtes across the villages. What an opportunity to have a visit to both. Only four miles apart. How about lunch at one and tea at t'other?

We very much hope that villagers and friends are able to support both events. Some of the attractions will be completely different, although others, like cakes and teas will be on offer at both, and out of this world! There will be *Live* music wherever you are.

You will get a welcome at both so please come and go on June 10th. We look forward to seeing you there!

Fiona & Jo

Fête Meeting

11.00pm Tuesday 23rd May
Prebendal Farm, Bishopstone

All Welcome
contact Jo 790 485

Continued page 3

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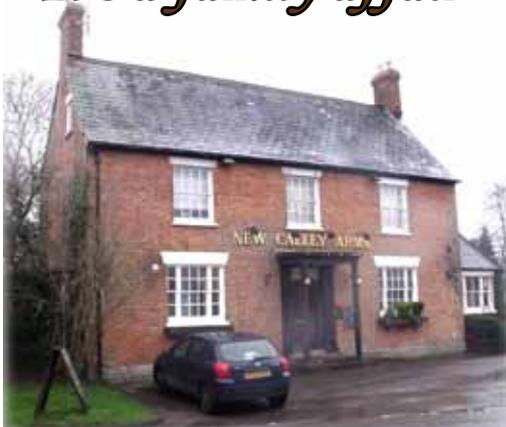
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The Fêtes - *Continued from front page*

Lyddington

Stalls and Activities: Jewellery; Crafts; Cakes & Preserves; Tombola; Hoopla; Beat the Goalie; Barbecue; Beer Tent; Coconut Shy; Pony & Trap rides and more.

Grand Draw: many good prizes including an activity package for children at PGL Outdoor Pursuits Centre in Lyddington; a luxury hamper; a celebration cake; meal vouchers at local venues and many more.

Tickets are now on sale and will also be on sale on June 10th at Lyddington Fete. Please buy generously.

Lyddington Church Tower and Bells

The church tower will be open for viewing on fete day. People will have an opportunity to see the old bells and also the new bells which were installed last year.

Bishopstone

Raffle Prizes

First prize £100 cash (donated by The Hills Group Ltd & Alfresco Childcare)

Eddingtons Ltd Cool Box Trolley Set (worth £80)

Goody bag from Emma Cripwell
Arkells pack of 6 x organic beers
Hairdressing voucher from Charlotte Bentley

£50 Boden clothing voucher

Various items of kitchenalia (donated by Eddingtons Ltd)

And many more prizes

Buy your tickets from

Sheila 790 358; Jo 790 485 and Mogs 790 626

Fête Advertising

Angie Alcock 07976 645 229 & Mogs Boon 790 626

Stalls

Accessories	Leslie Coates 790 520
Books	Andy & Caryn Greenhalgh 791 469
Bottle stall	Linda & David Wade 790 803
Children's toys	Karen Walker 790 363, Mandy Ridler 791 163
Country larder	Jane Golding 791 488
Plant stall	Marion Peck - Hinton 791 001, Sarah Best - Bishopstone 791 121
White elephant	Leslie Coates 790 520 - Hinton & Jo Selbourne - Bishopstone

All contributions for the stalls will be gratefully received by the people listed above: **Please note** can all **second hand books** for the fête be delivered to Old Farm House, West End Lane, Bishopstone, SN6 8PX, **before** the day. **No** books will be accepted on the day. Unfortunately it is not possible for us to sort books to display if they are left at the stall. Sadly many bags are also left with rubbish and non-book items for us to sort. If you would like us to collect books from you prior to the fete if you are unable to deliver them yourselves, we are very happy to do so. Just call Caryn or Andy on 01793 791 469. Please bring White Elephant things and bottles, for the stalls to Prebendal Farm; please ring Jo first 790 485.

Hands to help are always needed, enthusiastic volunteers to keep the village tradition going would be great. Please ring Rob or Jo. 790 485. Many thanks



Attractions:

Bar & B.B.Q; Cream teas; Ice creams; Stocks; Smash a plate; Face painting, tattoos & nails; Chocolate tombola; Antiques; Wood turning; Honey; Cheese; Pottery; Paintings; Bouncy Castle; Vintage cars, bikes & steam engines and our own parish archeaology website & exhibition and last, but by no means least, 3 (yes 3!) Bands

Follow us on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/events/1783052371946770/>

Thanks be for passing places

It's probably not escaped Bishopstone residents' attention that the road closed signs on the route from Bisby to Bourton (the so-called New Road, built on shifting sands) have masked an idle, slow labour force making two passing places in almost 3 weeks, to motorway construction standards at an estimated cost of £30,000 of public money. Some farm boys working alongside the *construction site* all day saw a posse of workers arrive, take the tarpaulin off the digger, sit down and eat tea and crumpets, smoke fags and then replace the tarpaulin, and disappear into the wilds of Swindon. My mole on the Parish Council spoke disparagingly about dealing with SBC, showed amazement that £30k (probably much more) is available for pathetic jobs such as this in a time of austerity, and wondered aloud why it wasn't possible to approach the farmer in question and ask him to fill in some potholes in the existing pull off spaces at a more sensible cost of about £200—my guess. Laughable—this is not a poke at the parish council, much more at that lunacy being perpetrated in Wat Tyler House, or wherever they sit and spend it. The new kerbs, aesthetically disgusting, will rip your wheels off far better than the previous pot holes.

The Village Hall, Bishopstone - May

The hall is cleaned	Mondays		8.30 - 10.30am
Taekwondo	Tuesdays	2 nd , 9 th , 16 th & 23 rd	7.00 - 8.00pm
Mothers & Toddlers School	Thursdays	4 th , 11 th , 18 th & 25 th	9.30 - 11.00am
Coffee Morning	Thursdays	4 th , 11 th , 18 th & 25 th	3.15 - 4.15pm
Plant Sale	Wednesday	3 rd	10.00 - 11.00am
Village Hall Mtg	Saturday	6 th	8.00am - 12noon
Gardening Club	Monday	8 th	6.00 - 7.30pm
Daily School Dinners (not holidays)	Wednesday	10 th	7.00 - 9.00pm
		Subject to bookings	11.45 - 1.00pm

All bookings for the Village Hall Bishopstone will be taken via Bishopstone CE Primary School. In term time, call 01793 790 521 and speak to Sue Tremlin, or leave a message on the answerphone. During school holidays there will be a message giving an alternative number to contact. We look forward to receiving your bookings for Bishopstone's excellent Village Hall. Cost for hiring the hall: £7.50 per hour for Bishopstone and Hinton Parva residents. £11 per hour for all other bookings. Cost for hiring the hall for a full day is £55.

At <http://bishopstoneandhintonparva.org/bishopstonevillagehall/> you can find a link to more helpful information about the Hall and the terms and conditions of hire.

Squirrels have Eaten Joanna's Christmas Tree! & Other Tales from The Village Hall, Bishopstone

Skittles Evening

The Flat Earth Society set an early pace, with a total score of 100 left to beat for a place in the final. In the excitement that ensued, the other place in the final changed hands no less than four times between the WI, The Village Vikings, Seeing Double, and Looking4, who stormed into the last round with a magnificent 107! During the final, The Flat Earth Society set a respectable target and the scores were neck and neck. It was nail biting stuff but as spokesperson for his team Looking4, Richard lamented later: *We was robbed by one point.* Thus, The Flat Earth Society became victorious this year. Richard Walker (Chairman of the Hall Committee) presented the impressive Challenge trophy to the team captain, Joy. (See picture right)

Thanks to all those who attended to support this fundraiser. Not only was it a great, fun evening but it also raised almost £500 for the ongoing upkeep of the Hall and grounds. Special thanks to Carol and Doris for preparing platefuls of Ploughman's to keep us going and Mike Welsh for keeping a



control on the evening's proceedings.

Big Lottery Fund Award

We are also delighted by the news that thanks to David Wray's great perseverance in completing a most lengthy Big Lottery Fund application, the Village Hall has received an

award of £9,900, enabling the committee to proceed with plans to provide a Community Cinema. Improvements will include upgrading the curtains, chairs with storage trolleys, and broadband connectivity. Hopefully this will keep the village hall capable of supporting village activities well into the future millennium as technology drives ever forward.

Squirrels?? You must be joking! Upon further investigation, the last verifiable sighting of the Hall Christmas tree was at 3.50pm on Thursday 30th March. It appears that the idea that the tree was eaten by *grumpy squirrels* (evicted from the Hall roof-space) was possibly a thinly veiled attempt, under the guise of 'All fool's day, to distract us from the fact that the tree has been regrettably mislaid? Joanna Jenkins (a former trustee for many years) had kindly donated the tree from her garden. It was planted after the Queen's Jubilee.

Bob (unpaid etc.) & Phil

See next month's edition for further revelations.

Monthly Coffee Morning

10.00 - 11.00am

The Village Hall, Bishopstone

The 1st Wednesday in the month

3rd May

Contact: Doreen Cooper 792 965

Jane Manktelow 790 503

Wanborough's Farmers' Market

9.00am - Noon

Saturday 20th May

Wanborough Village Hall

High Street

Lower Wanborough

On sale will be:

vegetables; meat; cold pressed rapeseed oil; honey & preserves; cakes & pies; milk from JoJo's dairy at Lotmead Farm; herbs & other plants, and fairly traded goods.

For more information contact:

01793 790 438

sbirley@gn.apg.org

Hinton Parva Village Hall May

Beginners' Bridge	Wednesday 3 rd , 12 th , 19 th & 26 th	6.45 - 9.15 pm
Bridge	Friday 5 th , 12 th , 19 th & 26 th	7.00 - 10.00pm
WI	Thursday 11 th	7.00- 9.30pm
Wine & Song Evening	Thursday 25 th	6.30pm

The most pretty Hall around, and free parking .
 Bookings Secretary Janet 791 391- Please leave a message if required
 £6.00 per hour for residents of Bishopstone & Hinton Parva
 £8.00 per hour for those living outside the parish

Private Parties	Catering may be available
Meetings etc welcome	Free Parking

An Amazing New Dance-Fitness Class Created from:

Strictly Come Dancing

Featuring moves from the Jive, Cha Cha, Rumba, American Smooth, Quickstep, Charleston and more – all to music you'll know and love! No dance experience or partnering required!

Everyone welcome, children must be age 10+

Just dance to get fit!

Free taster session,
Wednesday 3rd May, 3.15pm
Wanborough Primary School
 Classes will run every Wednesday, from 10th May, at 6.00pm
 contactpta@wanboroughprimary.org
 or 01793 790 363 for details



In Days gone by - There Be Dragons in Hinton Parva

In a sady forgotten incident, circa 1967 the village was plagued by a vicious dragon. The day was saved by the brave young members of the *Spiders Web* Youth Club (now less glamorously renamed the Village Hall). Dragon slayer Martin Holborow, Trevor Harrison right and the handsome chap on the left, Gordon Hatch. Perhaps we should have a bank holiday to celebrate this noble deed. Could it have been connected to Wanborough Carnival? Thanks to Bob, our roving reporter (unpaid) for this fascinating piece of history.



Rainbow

Baby and Toddler Group

Bishopstone Village Hall
 Every Thursday during Term Time
 9.30 - 11.00am
 £2.50 per family, 1st session free

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Saturday 19th August The Wanborough Show Society 86th Summer Show

The Flower and Produce Show

The gardens have really come to life now. I think we must have had good weather for flowers as there seem to have been more abundant Spring flowers than normal this year.

The Wanborough Show is now only 4 months away and I thought you might like a bit of advance warning about some of the special classes this year. Hopefully they will encourage you to be an active participant in the brilliant **Flower and Produce Show**.

Mobile Garden Competition: Last year we had some unusual and imaginative gardens on the theme of *An Artist's Garden*

Once again this year you can create a living garden in the confines of any wheeled conveyance about the size of a wheelbarrow. It must contain plants and any other added materials to fit the theme. The theme for 2017 is *A Classic Fairy Tale Garden*. This garden should be inspired by any Classic Fairy Tale from around the world.

Hanging Basket or Planter: There is also a competition for the best hanging basket or planter in the Parish. So why not have a go at winning the Parish County Trophy with your best creation. You do not even have to bring it to the show, we will judge it in situ.

Photography Competition: Why not get out with your camera and take some photos for this year's competition. The themes are as follows:

1 A Summer's Evening; 2 Water; 3 Pretty Baby – human or animal & 4 Patterns in Nature.

We hope that helps you get going with your entries for this year's show. If you would like to see more of the schedule for the show then just go on line to www.wanboroughshow.org and follow the link to the August Show and then the Flower and Produce Show.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Sue & Adrian Dent

A Day in the Life of a Small Builder - 5

Online, I found a dilapidated but serviceable cherry picker. If you are not sure what one is, it's a machine that hoists you aloft for working at height. The one I found was a trailer version called a Niftylift – talk about doing what it says on the tin. It works via a 110V mains feed or from a generator and we used it for all sorts of things from painting facades of buildings to gutters, fascias & soffits, working on chimneys etc.

You might have seen it sitting outside my house (now sold) but it was an ugly looking yellowish rusty job. The mudguards were only half there, bits had fallen off and, after sitting idle for long periods, it would develop stiff joints, become a bit of a pig to manoeuvre into position and require copious amounts of oil and grease to get moving. There might have been a bit of oil escaping from the hydraulic rams too, so this gives you the picture as to its state.

One cold autumn day I hitched up my yellow contraption and headed for Ramsbury in order to fit a chimney liner for a wood burning stove. For some reason I was alone (there is a common theme here) and even getting the machine to the right spot

was an effort. Finally it was in position but crucially, in my haste to get the job done, I had forgotten to extend one of the four stabilising legs.

Now this machine allows a working height of 36ft. and an outreach of 12ft. or so. A small movement at the bottom of the machine translates into a much larger movement at the top. Climbing into the cradle and manhandling the stainless steel flue pipe into it with me, I used the controls in the cradle to rise up and outwards towards the chimney.

As I topped eaves height some 20ft. up, the whole machine slewed over and I was sent lurching towards some power lines. Ducking them, I braced myself ready for impact with I knew not what, perhaps a wall, the ground or some other obstacle. Miraculously, one of the legs then touched the ground and halted my unappealing journey towards pain and embarrassment. I had missed the power line, the telephone line and there was no damage either to me, nor the property with which I had been entrusted.

Better still, nobody had noticed and I was able to complete the job without any further hitches. Another reprieve, for which I am most grateful,

but the story did not end there.

It transpired that my client had no money with which to pay the modest bill for my endeavours. Now when one has risked life and limb (OK, I admit unnecessarily) on someone's behalf, it's a bit galling when payment is not forthcoming. Even more so, when she returned one day announcing that she had bought a caravan because it was *a complete bargain*.

I resigned myself to the fact that this was one of those jobs, decided not to pursue the debt and moved on. But I had another stroke of luck. The client's father died shortly afterwards leaving her a useful inheritance and she paid me in full but, more importantly, my faith in humanity was restored.

Tom Cripwell

Bishopstone 100 club

April Winners

1st 30 Hilary Newton

2nd 17 Les Morris

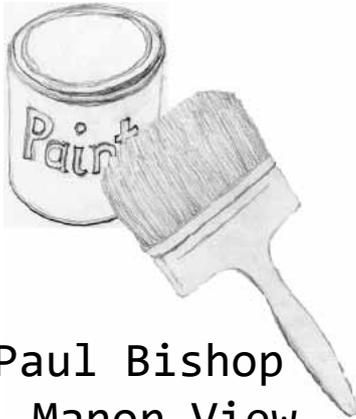
3rd 90 Doug Stevens

A reminder

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look at our village website
www.bishopstoneandhintonparva.org

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CHURCH SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE

Wednesday	3rd May	7.00pm	Midweek Communion	Wanborough Vicarage
Sunday	7th May	8.30am	Holy Communion	Lyddington
	4 th Sunday of Easter	10.30am	Family Communion	Bishopstone
		6.00pm	Evensong	Wanborough
Wednesday	10th May	7.00pm	Midweek Communion	Wanborough Vicarage
Sunday	14th May	8.30am	Holy Communion	Bishopstone
	5 th Sunday of Easter	10.30am	Family Communion	Lyddington
		6.00pm	Evensong	Hinton Parva
Wednesday	17th May	7.00pm	Midweek Communion	Wanborough Vicarage
Sunday	21st May	8.30am	Holy Communion	Hinton Parva
	6 th Sunday of Easter	10.30am	Family Service	Wanborough
		6.00pm	Evensong	Lyddington
Wednesday	24th May	7.00pm	Midweek Communion	Wanborough Vicarage
Sunday	28th May	8.30am	Holy Communion	Wanborough
	7 th Sunday of Easter	10.30am	Family Communion	Hinton Parva
		6.00pm	Evensong	Bishopstone
Wednesday	31st May	7.00pm	Midweek Communion	Wanborough Vicarage
Sunday	4th June	8.30am	Holy Communion	Lyddington
	Pentecost, Whit Sunday	10.30am	Family Communion	Bishopstone
		6.00pm	Evensong	Wanborough

Changes to the routine pattern of services in the United Benefice of Lyddington, Wanborough and Bishopstone with Hinton Parva

From 1st May the pattern of Sunday services will revert to a format similar to that which operated during the latter stages of Revd Cardwell's tenure. It is unfortunate that the revisions which changed the pattern over 2013-15, though well intentioned, destabilised the pattern to the extent that some services, particularly those at the eastern end of the Benefice were put in competition with each other.

Reversion to a pattern that is very similar to the one which operated during 2009 to 2011 has been discussed with your PCC and while not a perfect solution for all, removes most of the problems. We trust that you will find it acceptable.

The Vicar's Letter

Dear Friends and Neighbours,
So Spring has Sprung, and to some extent the church and the agricultural year seem to be in sync this year. Snowdrops have grown, blossomed and faded away over the same kind of time period as the church shared stories of Jesus' ministry growing, blossoming and apparently, at the cross at least, fading away. But of course this is where the similarities cease, unlike Jesus. Not only was He born to die, He was also born to rise again. Some consider this to be mere fable but the point about Easter is that we don't only celebrate Jesus' death and resurrection, we also celebrate the fact that so many of the things foretold in the Bible, even before He was formed in His Mother's womb,

have come true. Forty four concerning the Messiah, three hundred and fifty three Hebrew texts are shown to be fulfilled in New Testament texts and a number of statisticians have shown that in terms of probability there isn't much room for doubt.

It gives some people hope that the rest of Jesus' promises are true and enhances their trust to some extent. But none of us fall in love with a bunch of facts and statistics. We love family or friends because of the people they are, we fall in love with our vocations, be they pastimes or careers, because of the benefits that we hope they might bring to those we are called to serve, and so the whole notion that our love of certain people or things can survive on routine and fact alone is flawed if not mad. It's all about re-

lationship, and it is relationship that Jesus is constantly calling us to.

Our nation's press would have us believe that we are a bunch of self seeking individuals and that being better than someone, if not everyone else, is all that counts in life. And yet, on a bright chilly Monday morning a band of villagers gathered to support a couple that had not been blessed with the best of health, in celebrating their marriage and the fruit of that marriage. Villagers gave of their time and of their resources freely, simply for the joy of it. And a good day was had by all. It was a relationship that was celebrated, nothing more and nothing less, and the simple truth of this particular fact was not lost. When Jesus comes again, He will marry His bride the Church. Her Bridal gown will be made up

from all of the kindness that we have bestowed on others as we have gone through life. All of this weaved into a wonderful fabric. Some of it intentional, some of it unwittingly, but all of it without an ulterior motive. The *Link* is another example of people helping others selflessly. Giving lifts to those who would otherwise struggle to get their shopping or make medical appointments. Its recent AGM showed again both the need and the response, some volunteering even when their own health is less than tip top. For all of this I give thanks. It really does restore so much faith in our capacity to care rather than compete. Have a great spring.

Church Wardens' Activities

Following up, and on a more serious note from the April Fool article in last month's newsletter, the problem of the churches' finances are real and need to be addressed. Church wardens are entrusted with the protection and maintenance of church buildings, many of which are large and ancient - 900 years old or so in parts. These cost a great deal to maintain and improve. The churches need heating and lighting, upkeep of the grounds, supporting the organists and the choir, cleaning and decorating each month, plus general repairs. There are many kind volunteers who help in keeping these things going for the benefit of everyone in our communities who use the churches, either weekly or just for special occasions.

Bill

There are some urgent improvements needed at present. The heating system in St. Mary's is getting beyond economical repair and needs replacing to ensure that the church is warm when opened for activities. We are also planning to provide a water supply, WC and connection to the mains drain, and an upgraded electrical supply.

This will enable us to not only heat the church properly, but to open the church for other events such as general meetings, social events, school events, concerts, plays, and events such as harvest suppers. To do this we need toilets, a small kitchen and the ability to move pews around.

At St. Swithun's, we plan to repair or replace windows as needed because some are in a very poor state. Security is another concern as is improved lighting and making the buildings more accessible, comfortable and appealing for worship and village events.

The churches are a great asset to our villages, and using them for more widespread village activities as in times past, without detracting from their religious use, has clear benefits for the wider community. In the next few months, we will be unveiling our plans for the churches, and the likely costs involved, with a view to raising the money through grants, fund raising activities, and other means. We welcome suggestions and ideas from anyone in our four villages, and those who would like to be involved.

Rather than just maintain these lovely

buildings, we are going to upgrade them, sympathetically, and ensure that they not only survive but that they thrive and serve the community for which they were built. If the people in our villages had the resources, ambition and drive to build them all those years ago, we can do as well or better now. Please join in and help to make these wonderful spaces shine again.

Emma, Tom, Alan and John

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

7.30pm Monday 8th May

St Swithun's Hinton Parva

Prayers

If you have anything that you would like our village prayer group to pray for please

telephone - 790 088 or

email - villageprayers@gmail.com

Bill

Contacts

The Vicar: the Rev Bill O'Connell
The Vicarage, Church Road,
Wanborough, SN4 0BZ

01793 791 359

villagevicar@hotmail.co.uk

The Churchwardens: St. Mary's

John Lowry 01793 790 271

john1000000@live.com

Alan Taylor 01793 791 666

R2attayloralan@aol.com

The Churchwardens: St. Swithun's

Tom Cripwell 01793 791 148

tomcripwell@gmail.com

Emma Cripwell 01793 791 148

emma@angelpublicity.com

The Acting Secretary: Alan Taylor

Charlbury Cottage, Westend,
Bishopstone, SN6 8PX

01793 791 666

R2attayloralan@aol.com

The Parish Safeguarding Officers:

Jill White 01793 791 102

List of Other PCC Members:

Karen Stevens (Treasurer)

01793 791 107

kschurchview@gmail.com

Doug Stevens 01793 791 107

doug@mowerfixer.co.uk

Roz Boot 01793 790 508

Sara Hall 01793 791 202

thecourthouse@gmail.com

Cleaning Rota - St. Mary's Church, Bishopstone

May Chris Thomas & Gill May

June Maggie Gill & Jane Golding

July Liz Warwick & Jane Manktelow

August Sarah Best & Jenny Isles

September Mary Darling & Lisa Fitchett

October Lorna Ford & Linda Matthews

November Karen Stevens & Sheila Collins

December Caroline Brandi & Gill White

Many thanks to all those who have helped to keep our church cared for and clean. We always welcome more volunteers on the rota, if you or anyone you know might like to join us

Sarah Best 791 121

Bishopstone Gardening Society

The March meeting of the B&D garden club was a *Gardeners Question Time* session. Peter Biggs along with his father Bob, from their nursery in Wanborough, were there to field the questions. The nursery was started by Bob, concentrating on his first love, herbs, but as Peter's interest in horticulture grew he joined the business and they expanded to encompass almost every plant imaginable, even winning a silver medal at Chelsea some years ago, something Peter would like to try his hand at again! Then we were off, question after question: big plants/little plants; shrubs/herbaceous plants; fruit trees/soft fruit; ground cover/climbers; to prune/not to prune; bugs/diseases... So many and varied topics and all were answered without hesitation. We could have gone on longer but time (and that cup of tea) brought the discussions to a close. We came away with renewed enthusiasm, ready for action in our gardens, many of us with yet more plants in hand from the large selection that Peter and Bob had brought with them. A big thank you to Peter and Bob for a very informative evening and helping with some of our garden conundrums.

Marion Peck

On the hottest day of the year (so far), Sunday 9th April, we visited Whichford Pottery, Shipston-on-Stour. A rambling cottage garden led us past a brood of chickens, to the pottery, shop and restaurant. From there we drove to a nearby NGS open garden. The Court House, Stretton on Fosse, was worth a visit with its beautifully planted extensive gardens and relaxed theme. For me, the fritillary meadow was the winner for the day, closely followed by a cream tea before heading home.

Meanwhile, coming up at a rate of knots:

The *Annual Plant Sale* on *Saturday 6th May*, at Bishopstone Village Hall. If you're going to donate plants please label them and bring them to the hall from 8.30 – 9.30am for setting out. Doors open to buyers at 10.00am and shut at 11.00, so get there early to grab a bargain. The green-fingered Garden

Club have been busy on your behalf, raising colourful bedding plants, tomato plants, vegetables, herbs and fruit. Those of you that have been to our plant sale in past years know these splendiferous plants are all good quality and will be unbeatable in price. Hitch-hiking snails are usually free.

Wednesday 10th May.*Plant Propagation: Victoria Logue from Whitehall Farmhouse Plants, Cheltenham, will tell us about how to get the best from plants by using different methods of propagation. Victoria runs a small specialty nursery producing a range of interesting and easy hardy perennials which you're unlikely to find in your local garden centre.

Wednesday 14th June.* Thank you, Sarah, for your stroke of genius suggesting we invite *Elliott Neep*, the award-winning *wildlife photographer*, writer and guide to come and entertain us with his superb wildlife photographs. Elliott has a strong connection to Bishopstone and Helen Browning's Organic Eastbrook Farm, where he has photographed butterflies, badgers, brown hares, roe deer, barn owls, little owls, red kites, buzzards, skylarks, buntings and a wealth of other species. An evening which should appeal to anyone interested in nature, gardeners and photographers alike.

*All the above speaker bookings are at Bishopstone Village Hall, for 7.30pm start.

Membership subscriptions are now due for 2017: £5 per person per annum (or £2 on the door per person at speaker evenings.) Tea/coffee/raffle. Newcomers most welcome!

Sheila & Sarah can both be contacted at:

banddgardeningsoc@gmail.com

Dickie's Diary

Is it my imagination or is the white blossom on the blackthorn stronger than ever this year? A nice warm rain would be welcome.

March 16th was one of those days you wish had never happened. I had just got home, rather lighter in the pocket from the Cheltenham Festival, look-

ing forward to some supper. There had been a nasty accident involving our cattle on the Idstone road out of Ashbury. It was dark and our men Peter and Martin needed help so out I went. Fortunately no human casualties, but a suckler cow lost her life that night and Tony Constance's new BMW was badly damaged. Apparently he had no chance to avoid her when she jumped down a bank into the road right in front of him. I wrote about this cow last November; she had calved unexpectedly and suckled her calf over the autumn and winter into a strong young heifer that was ready to be weaned. We had kept them in separate sheds and fussed over them, and they had escaped. Then we had the difficult task, with torches, of manoeuvring the confused calf in the dark into our neighbours' shed at Idstone farm where she would be secure for the night.

Some 25 years ago, we had seven Angus heifers escape, and they led us a pretty dance. Five were recovered in a few days from the steep cutting above the road on the Peploe's land, where they had been lying up in the shade by day in hot weather. But two more wandered as far as White Horse Hill. With no water and little fencing on the downs we found they had drunk from a wet dew pond above Woolstone and they had turned feral. It was suggested to me that they should be shot but I would not entertain it. I used to get up early in the cool mornings searching for them with binoculars. Spences were still milking then and eventually, after several weeks, we managed to drive them into their coombes field above Ashbury where they had a bunch of their own cattle. We were so grateful for our neighbours' help in this matter that we had Bill and Cherry Mawle and Mac and Elisabeth Spence to dinner as a thank you.

Why do they stray? Sometimes it is human error, sometimes gates are not shut by walkers, it can be fences cut by hare coursers which we farmers hate. It seems it is rarely the most obvious thing such as they are hungry, or they have pushed over bad fencing.

Richard Green

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The Royal Oak Diary



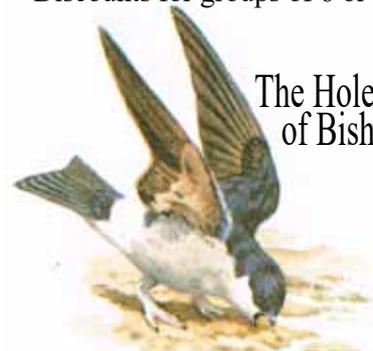
Darlings, and I include all of you in that for a change...without some of the great villagers we'd still be at base camp. That's people who use the place, and people who've helped us with our major refurb. David Wray specifically asked not to be mentioned in this column, so I'd just like to say a big thank you to David Wray and Jackie, who are transforming our borders and planters; they have re-sown a lawn that was destroyed by our builders, and are planting an apple tree hedge, much to my surprise, like most things. Meanwhile, Russell *The professor* Hatch has built planters, re-built the cellar, hung pictures, and, most challenging of all, helped the glorious Italian hotelier Valerio Reale to make IKEA furniture for his flat—*why has thees furniture arrived een a flat box?* he squeaked when the van arrived with his wardrobe. *How I hang my cravats and theengs in this? You mean things or thongs?* I asked. Ref the olde True Heart, the generator has departed, after witnessing almost a stand up fight between two blokes from the major electric companies in the car park arguing over whose job it was to switch the real power back on—and then they looked at their watches and it was almost 4.00pm, so they had to leave, and came back the next day to sort it out—so only without power for 36 hours, cold showers never did anyone any harm, I am told.. .but I did advise guests that night that they'd get a hot shower if they got up before 6.00am (for reasons too complex to explain). Not my best move. And the outside lights. Liz Warrick reports that she can see the place from the moon at night, via a third party. I thought for a minute she'd popped up there to have a look. The good news is we're looking for some grilles, to attach to the external covers, that deflect light downwards rather than straight into her living room, for which I apologise. The really great news is that I've finally discovered who the bottle man

is, after 10 and a half years of poor detective work. I was behind him in the queue at 10.30 am in the Co-Op in Watchfield on a Sunday, looking the worse for wear, when I saw him buying a bottle of the branded whisky we find on our doorstep every 10 days or so, neatly wrapped in supermarket, and Co-Op, plastic bags. It's a fair cop. However I have decided not to divulge his name on the grounds that I might be wrong, and he might be embarrassed, and I might end up doing social work in Swindon in my time off. All of you who follow this indelicate saga, I will advise when I next see you privately. It will be a big disappointment. Funnily enough, I saw that Helen Brown dropping a box full of empty bottles at the pub only 10 days ago! They were all mine, she said. In terms of real fun, The International **Pig Racing Day** is staged on **Sunday 4th June**; event starts at noon, first race 1.30pm, last race 3.30pm, live music in the garden after that. All day betting, full health and safety etc now completed, three or four places to buy food in the garden after last year's farce; plus a proper bar in the garden, and a gin and tonic tent. 8 pigs need sponsors—make that 7, I'm having one this year, named Trotsky, after my recent political conversion; it's £40 and you get naming rights and a rude mention in the event programme. That money goes to charity, as well as any surplus off the tote. Beneficiaries this

year are Swindon and N Wilts Deaf Children, always because of Tom and Millie's and Tab's amazing efforts; and Prospect Hospice, where Helen B is now a patron and working hard to find me a place there asap. The village hall also gets a mention and some dosh, for helping us to organise everything and running car parking.

Cricket: Ashes star Ashley Giles, from the 2005 Flintoff team of winners and drinkers, and known fondly as The King of Spain (find out why), comes for supper here on **Wednesday 28th June**, with our long standing mate and raconteur Pat Murphy, from BBC 5Live sport. Supper, mingling with guests, chat, questions and answers—overall should be a great night of food, fun and drink. Room for 50 people, £50/head. This is the week before Test series against South Africa starts. Come and enjoy yourself. Discounts for groups of 6 or more.

Pip, pip



The Holey Roads of Bishopstone

Don't to fill up those mud puddles, we have enjoyed quite a long dry spell now, the House Martins will be arriving soon.

Iva Shooful

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Exhausted of Hinton Parva

Who was it that said

Spring is sprung,

The grass is ris,

I wonder where the birdies is. . . ?

Well, they need wonder no more. I know just where they is. Outside my bedroom window, singing their great auk sized hearts out at 5.30am, that's where they is.

This is one of my beefs with Spring. Don't get me wrong, it's nice to see the sun once in a while, and the flowers are all very pretty. But Spring does bring with it a few annoyances. It's not just the great auks (which, to be fair to auks, could be bald eagles; I'm no ornithologist. All I know is that they're loud and they're right outside my bedroom window); it's also the whole *grass is ris* thing. Once it's ris to a reasonable height, why doesn't it stop ris-ing? Why does it feel the need to impose *The Tyranny of the Lawnmower*, which lasts for several months, right from the First Mow of the Season to the Last Mow of the Season? (Cue several small children singing One Man Went to Mow; thankfully, we don't have a

meadow, but our bit of lawn is more than enough) This is preceded by the *Starting of the Lawnmower*, an annual event which is, I'm sure, celebrated in households around the world, accompanied by the ritual words *Well, it started fine last time I used it*, followed by much muttering, changing of spark plugs and scratching of heads. And shouting. Lots of shouting.

Spring also brings with it a plethora of Clothing Dilemmas. Each morning, we assess the temperature and try to second guess the clouds. If it's cold now, will it be hot later? Will it rain? Will there – and it's been known – be snow? Dressing in Winter is easy – cater for *cold* and you can't go wrong. Spring, however, demands that an entire wardrobe accompany you on every outing. And the outings, while generally involving lambs and such loveliness, do seem expensive and calorific. Cream teas are creeping onto menus, as are grim picnics, eaten outdoors (even on the cold days) and involving much running away from wasps.

Generally, despite all this, I can cope with all that Spring throws at me. Two things depress me utterly, however. The first is the retirement until next

Autumn of my boots. I make no apology for this; I love my boots. I have several pairs of boots. Not as many as my husband would have you believe, but enough to ensure that I have the correct pair for every eventuality. If I could wear my boots through the Summer, I would – but I suspect that Summer dresses worn with boots would look just plain wrong.

The second, most unbearable, aspect of Spring is the return to the roads of the MAMILs; all those middle aged men in Lycra, cycling around the highways and byways. What are they thinking? Are they thinking? Lycra is no-one's friend. Do cyclists travel two or three abreast in the hope of diverting attention from themselves to their fellow pedallers? I realise that some of you may be muttering *She's only jealous*; after all, it's only a matter of months since I was trying, and failing, to master the art of riding a bike. Believe me; even if I was the most proficient of cyclists I would eschew the wearing of Lycra; I care too much about my fellow man and woman to inflict such horror on them. Summer dress and boots, though – I may just give them a go . . .

Mrs. Mantelpiece

And Almost Finally.....

My Easter was spoilt by some people sending late copy; the deadline is the 15th but by then all the space is taken.



On a more cheerful note, I will be following the fashion of wearing boots with my frocks this summer, Mrs. Mantelpiece, we'll look so cool. It brought to mind the time we were digging at Alchester. To set the scene I have to tell you that archaeology isn't the glamorous, romantic profession that for some weird reason people imagine... It's long hours doing hard physical work in the boiling sun, rain, or even snow, for minimum wages - some fools even pay to do it! To alleviate the hardship, archaeologists play jokes on each other, act the fool and spend the rest of their life in the nearest pub. One morning, we got up to discover that our male supervisors

had attired themselves in long party frocks and, naturally, their work boots for the day's toil - what a jolly jape, it was a laugh (I do have the photos somewhere). How were we to know that English Heritage were to turn up on an unannounced inspection to see that we were all behaving ourselves?

mogs

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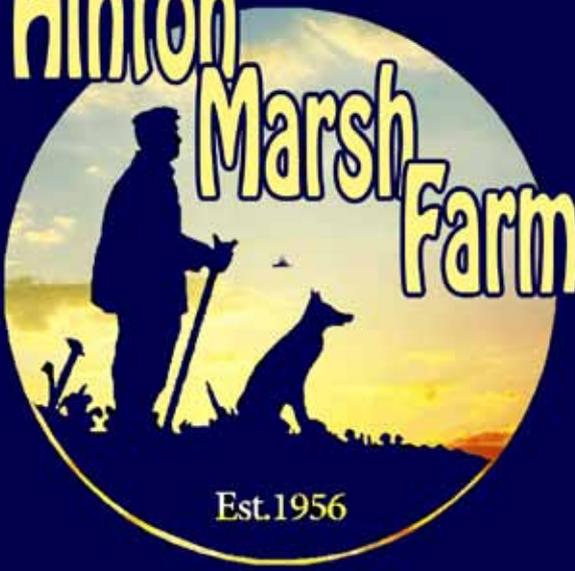
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