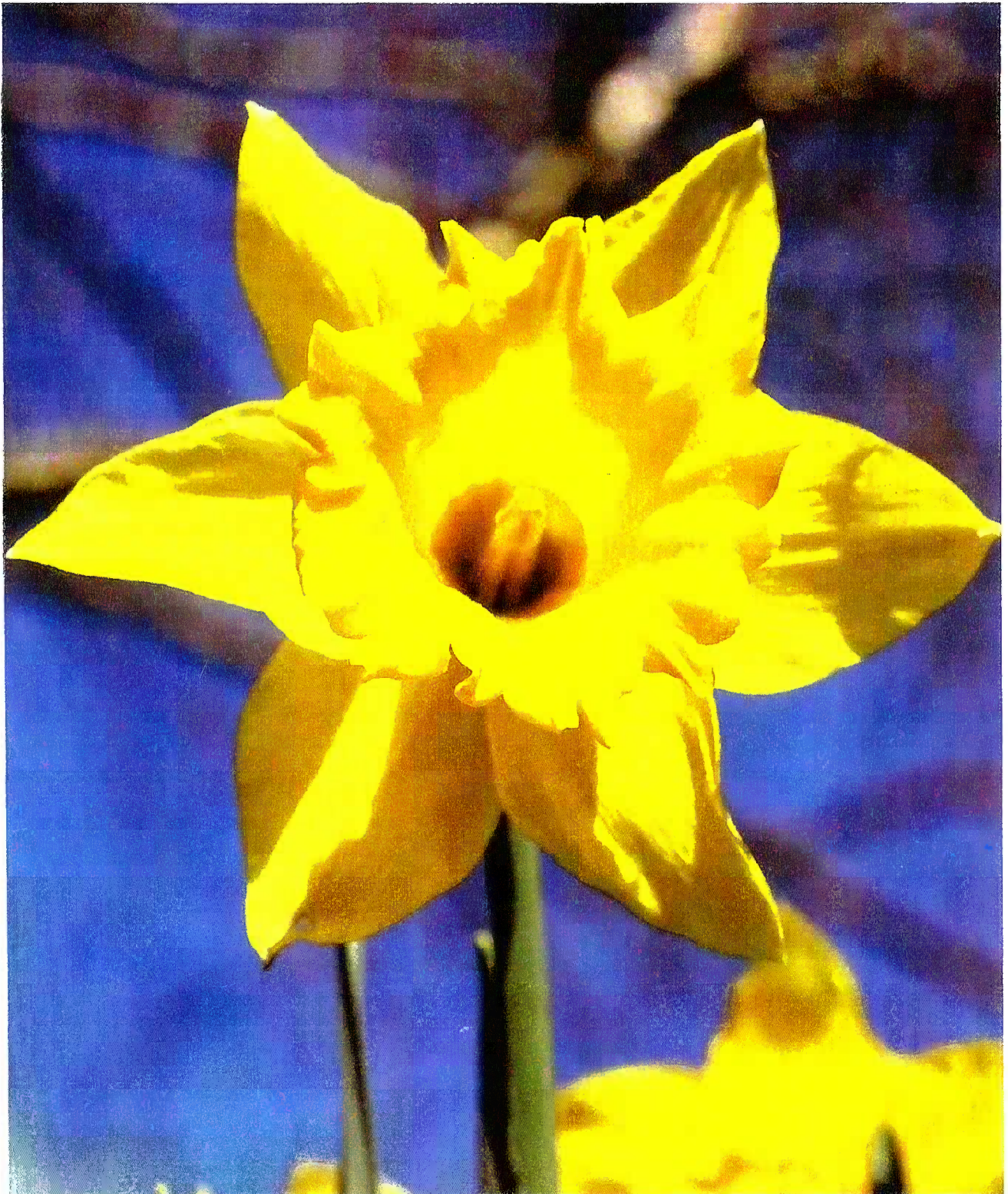


# THE CHRONICLE

Aston Abbotts Parish Magazine



# EDITORIAL

THE CHRONICLE

Issue 350

April 2015

I often wonder as I sit and compile this “does anybody actually bother to read it”?

One of our regular contributors tells me that none of his neighbours even glance at the Chronicle. My feedback is slightly more positive than that, although I do hope the efforts of those that get it printed and distributed are worthwhile. Let me have your feedback on both the Chronicle as currently presented and what you would like to see in it, [corriganpc@aol.com](mailto:corriganpc@aol.com) or 01296 688191.

In this issue a host of theatre reviews, what a cultural lot you are, and information on forthcoming events in the Village, particularly the Ball which raised almost £4,000 last year, more details in the next Chronicle and also the Village Fete now under the stewardship of David Gray. Also an intrepid voyage by our very own Alan Whicker, Ches, and yes I tracked the voyage to see where we had to leave the flowers if it all went wrong!

As ever this has been finished in a rush, so usual thanks to Phil Spooner for the cover photo, our usual contributors and those who get it through your doors even if you do only use it to line the Budgie or Hamster cage.

Finally the usual apology for any errors or omissions

Phil Corrigan

## Snippets & Miscellanea

### **Royal Oak News**

Roast lunches every Sunday,  
recommended that you book.

#### **Guest beers:**

London Pride

Timothy Taylors Landlord

### **Quote of the month (it's back)**

**Simon Guy to an unnamed male "would you like to nibble my ears"**

### **Quaglinos Restaurant 20.3.15**

I did witness this Ed

Ellie & tom (16 years old) are available for babysitting, dog sitting and walking, looking after all animals from horses to hamsters, plus lawn mowing and odd jobs. Phone 681182

### **Future events**

**Aston Abbotts Summer Ball July 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Village Fete July 25<sup>th</sup>**

# THE ROYAL OAK ASTON ABBOTTS

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**COME AND TRY THE NEW MENU**

## STARTERS

- Salt & Petter chilli squid & dressed leaves
- Smoked Haddock & spring onion fishcakes & homemade tartare sauce
- Goats cheese & caramelised onion tart
- Feta & Olive salad
- Field mushroom stuffed with goats cheese on garlic toast
- Homemade soup of the day with crusty bread

## MAINS

- Ribeye steak garni
- 1kg Moules mariniere on wholegrain mustard mash with pancetta & onion gravy
- Oven roasted lamb rump served with dauphinoise potatoes, mint jus
- Tagliatelle with olives, sun dried tomatoes, pesto & mozzarella served with garlic ciabatta
- Pan roasted Gressingham duck breast, braised red cabbage & apple, garlic saute potatoes & cider jus
- Beer battered cod, hand cut chips & minted mushy peas served with homemade tartare sauce

**PHONE : 01296 681 262**

## What's on in April

Thurs 2nd	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10-12n
Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup> Good Friday	Hot Cross Buns		
Sun 5 <sup>th</sup> Easter Sunday	Easter Communion	St James	10.30 am
		No evensong	
Wed 8 <sup>th</sup>	Parish Council	Village Hall	7.30pm
Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee shop	Village Hall	10-12n
	Bingo		7.30pm
Sun 12 <sup>th</sup>	Rambling Club	Apsley Wood	2pm
Tues 14 <sup>th</sup>	Mobile library	The Green	2pm
Wed 15 <sup>th</sup>	PCC / Vestry Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Thurs 16 <sup>th</sup>	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10-12n
	Whist Drive		7.30pm
Thurs 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10-12n
	Whist Drive		7.30pm
Sun 26th	Village Footpath walk	The Green	2pm
Thurs 30th	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10-12n
	Whist Drive		7.30pm

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## 19<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2015

As I write this, sitting beside our lovely log fire, I am struck by how cold it is outside and how Spring seems to be on hold for the present. Yes, we have quite a few flowers out in the garden and even a frog in our little pond – I seem to remember we need two! BUT there is not a sign of any green in the hedgerows around the village. Although Pussy Willows are out along the Buckingham bypass there is no sign of them here – Spring is decidedly a bit late.

How dry it is, we have had very little rain since the beginning of February and the ground is too dry for the time of year. Of course when you read this it will probably be pouring with rain and the allotments will be too wet to work.

We have had a few warm afternoons and are delighted to report that all three of our bee colonies have been busy collecting pollen from crocuses and hellebores. Bees will also be looking forward to the Pussy Willows supplying them with much needed Spring food when the sun next shines.

The dry conditions have been perfect for arable farmers to get on the land and spread fertilizer on their overwintered crops. You have probably noticed that although they haven't grown much, some fields have turned that really dark green that shows the effects of Nitrogen fertilizer. Again, they need warmth and moisture before they really grow.

How perverse professional conservationists appear. Two weeks ago a beautifully produced leaflet came with our post appealing for money to save the Barn Owl in Bucks. It stated that Barn Owls had endured two disastrous breeding seasons and their numbers were desperately low. The very same week I read a report in the paper saying Barn Owls were doing well thanks to two good breeding years helped by mild winters and lots of food available from the field vole population – amazing, isn't it! I actually agree with the latter report.

Watch out all you small nesting birds. I disturbed a group of 8 Magpies this morning. There is nothing Magpies like better than eggs and young birds

A thank you to the villagers who reported frogs in their ponds – if our frogs don't produce spawn I'll be round to beg for some.

Lastly, this month's Star Prize goes to the Camellia at 20 The Green. Unfortunately it is against a brick wall so its colour doesn't shout as loudly as it could but it is still a beautiful tree – as it has been for many years now.

Peter Knight



# PLANT SALE

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## Countryside matters

Some of you, like myself, may have been wondering about the large amount of replanting being carried out by various farms in the neighbourhood, especially for instance, on the large 100 acre field known as Wing Park field, on the Wing to Mentmore road. Not so long ago, we all would have put this down to poor seed germination in the autumn, or in the case of oil seed rape, excessive pigeon damage. Now this is not solely the case, the main reason to 90% of the damage in rape is the banning on a seed dressing called Neonicotinoids, this has been vital for the control of Flea Beetle that eats the emerging shoots as they germinate, with obvious disastrous consequences. Brussels in their infinite wisdom, have put a two year ban on the seed dressing whilst further tests are carried out. The dressing albeit drilled to a depth of a couple of inches together with the seed, is thought to affect bees in the later part of foliage growth of the oil seed rape plant, months later in pollination, when the bees are active on the now famous yellow flowering heads. Up till now no scientific proof has been forthcoming. Let's hope that a solution can be found shortly. While on the subject of chemicals, a local arable farmer told me that due to the ban on neonicotinoids, he has had to spray an extra 5 times, with another inferior chemical, just to control the spread of the flea Beetle. They are also, again due to Brussels, losing or have lost half of their frontline weed killers and insecticides in the last few years, to fight pests and weeds. This might sound music to some ears, but when for instance blackgrass no longer responds to chemicals, new ones have to be found, or the crop fails, leading to shortfalls in the supply chain. Lastly a small rant about Fracking in the countryside, albeit the price of a barrel of oil has temporarily crashed to under \$55 a barrel and long may it continue to do so, until the Arab nations stick it out and bust the rest of the world oil producers, then put crude through the roof again, we should be using this time, finding cleaner and better ways of producing the oil and gas right under our feet. The Americans have cut their own foreign oil dependence by billions of dollars in the last few years. Instead of which we are faced with a howling mob of left wing greens, and guardian reading, sandal clad lefties, who forgot what fuel actually powered their ancient VW campervans to their squalid camp sites in the first place. James.

James Henderson  
Wingbury Courtyard Business Village  
Upper Wingbury Farm  
Wingrave  
Aylesbury  
Bucks  
HP22 4LW

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**Registered Member**



## Aston Abbotts Postbox

Welcome to the launch of the Aston Abbotts email service.

Firstly who is the team? Well its Phil Spooner, Stuart Burgess and Steve Markwell, with Phil heading up the team.

You will have subscribed hence getting this email and so you are aware you can unsubscribe at any time, we will not pass your email on to any third party but in terms of any other terms and conditions we will develop these as we go and with your input. However one small rule that has surfaced is do not attach any files or photographs, but small pictures can be pasted into the body of the message.

So what can you use this service for?

Want to sell something - send an email describing the product price etc. and send it to [POSTBOX@ASTON-ABBOTTS.CO.UK](mailto:POSTBOX@ASTON-ABBOTTS.CO.UK) this will then be reviewed by Phil and as long as it's appropriate forwarded to all subscribers. Any responses will then be forwarded to you. This is not a discussion list, so responses will not be posted back to the group.

Want something – send an email and the above process will take place

Want to tell fellow villagers about an activity send an email etc.

Seeking help and want to find someone send an email etc.

So there are many uses and there is no charge

Obviously commercial operations may use the email service and we would seek a donation for the village and we may want to choose the type of commercial operation that can use the service but its early days

But its a service for the villagers and your input will help determine how the service is used and managed, so on that note get those emails flowing.

Please forward this to any friends that you may have in the village so that as many people are aware of it as possible.

Look forward to hearing from you

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## VILLAGE ORCHARD AGM

The meeting in the Village Hall on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March was well attended. Wine, cheese and biscuits added to the pleasure of the event.

Peter Knight outlined the progress that has been made over the last year. In total the Village Orchard now has 111 fruit trees of 84 different varieties. Where possible varieties have been planted that have close association with Buckinghamshire. One of the pear trees is very rare, possibly one of three known to exist. There is the capacity for at least 140 trees. There is also the possibility of adding two additional rows in the future. Our Village Orchard is a legacy for the village.

The 111 trees are made up of 40 apple (33 varieties), 21 pear (19), 16 plum (7), 9 gage (3), 10 cherry (10), 3 damson (2), 2 medlar (2), 4 mulberry (3), 2 quince (2), 2 walnut (1), 1 apricot & 1 fig.

Peter commented that as the winter has been relative dry it would be very beneficial during the summer months, if there is little rain, to water your tree. A water trough and buckets will be available for the purpose. It is also a good idea to keep a 1m square around the tree free of grass and weeds.

During the year a bench has been installed (a kind donation). The trig point, that used to be at the top of Lines Hill some years ago, had been rescued and especial thanks are due to David Brandon and Roger and Ian Towle for their help in its installation and to Les Smith and John Dixon for painting.

Despite the weather the Picnic held last year was a great success. The wind blew away a couple of gazebos and tried really hard to uproot a marquee even though it had been nailed and tied down as well as possible. With a kind donation of £50 towards the cost of the event a total of £150 was raised. It was hoped that during May this year a family event/picnic can be organised.

Brigitte Gutierrez kindly offered to run a stall at this year's Fete on behalf of the Orchard.

Peter will be harrowing the orchard very soon. Moles have been very busy producing molehills and these need to be scattered in advance of grass cutting later on. Improved guttering has been provided for the shed, and it will be repainted later this year.

Gordon Smith has updated the Orchard Book. This lists all the trees and the family connections associated with each tree. Copies of the book are available in the shed if you would like to use one whilst visiting the Orchard.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to Peter and Alex for all their hard work.

*John Hardcastle*

# *The Astonians Part 7*

## *Aston Abbots Mini Market Day*

Contains some strong

Astonpete

*All characters are fictional and hold no association to anyone*



I'm looking forward to Mayday in the village and the expected Morris dancers whom I will endeavour to mow down when I see them ringing their bloody ankle bells. Anyway as for today's activities on the village green, it's the April Aston Abbots Mini Market Day.

Bert Cartright, the old git who stands at the front of the Green each morning passing out poo bags to all dog owners who pass by, asked me to take over his plants stall whilst having a butchers' at the crap on sale across the Green. (For God's sake if it's broken throw it away. Don't sell it on to some poor resident you will have to talk to again!)

Anyway Mrs KirkPatrick, the whacky widow from Warwickshire, now a resident of Aston Abbots, came up to the plants stall and pointed to a tray of plants asking what they were. Well, not having much of an education in horticulture I thought best to bull shit my way through the answer. I said, "That Mrs KirkPatrick is the semi hardy Astonian variety of the Snifferelium, very partial to attracting the Lesser Spotted Bibbalonga Bird from Hackney Wick to your garden!"

She replied, "I'll take half a dozen please". Kirching!!



Volunteers are needed to keep the Village Plan document up-dated. It is thought the work will involve meeting for about 30 minutes 2 or 3 times a year. If interested and prepared to help please contact either Peter Shorrocks on 681260 or [petershorrocks@gmail.com](mailto:petershorrocks@gmail.com); or Paul Bruton on 682322 or [pbruton@pbfs.co](mailto:pbruton@pbfs.co)



## The Jewellery Lady

Dear Astonians,

'Holy Cow!! Home' are physical now! As well as being online, we have moved into rear of The Jewellery Lady shop.


The shop has quirky handmade gifts and scents for your home and all occasion jewellery, handbags and scarves for you.

We'll apply a 10% discount on all purchases until the end of June 2014. Just mention that you've seen our advert.

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 [www.facebook.com/holycowhome](http://www.facebook.com/holycowhome)



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## Letters Page

### Eclipse in Aston Abbotts

Back in 1999 (?) we climbed up Castle Crag in Borrowdale and watched the partial eclipse turn a summer day into twilight – “top of the biscuit tin”, said an Australian backpacker who joined us halfway through. Hoping for another biscuit experience I took a half-day holiday for this one and dug out the old solar viewing shades. Cloudy. Tried to remember where the sun ought to be, and walked hopefully across the first of Chapman’s fields. After 20 minutes’ leaning on the gate and shivering (it did get cold), I caught a glimpse – a bright crescent through dark clouds, seen for a couple of seconds and gone again. There were clearer views a few minutes later, but that first “wow” moment had it all. I hope others were also as lucky, and as thrilled!

Caroline Lane

Dear Sir

On Sunday 7 June WheelPower are organising our annual Mix96 Tour de Vale, which is Buckinghamshire biggest community bike ride.

We would be delighted if you could help promote the ride in your area. The attached information can be used on your website or social media. We also have A4 posters, so please contact me if you have where suitable to distribute.

There is also the promotional video you can share from [Youtube](#) or download from [DropBox](#).

As you may know, WheelPower is a charity based at Stoke Mandeville Stadium, and the bike ride is a fundraiser to help transform the lives of disabled children and adults through sport.

Up to 2,000 cyclists are expected to take part from the local area so please share this opportunity.

Ollie Moore  
Education, Fundraising, and Communications Manager

[ollie.moore@wheelpower.org.uk](mailto:ollie.moore@wheelpower.org.uk)

T: 01296 395995

F: 01296 424171

Stoke Mandeville Stadium, Guttman Road, Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire, HP21 9PP

— *invitation* —

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## VILLAGE FETE 25<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Tradition dictates that the Aston Abbots fete takes place on the  
Saturday nearest to the Festival of St. James which is 25<sup>th</sup> July.  
This year the 25<sup>th</sup> is a Saturday so the 2015 fete day is set.

So now is the time to get those diaries and calendars (paper or  
electronic) that Santa so thoughtfully left you for Christmas and make a  
note of the date.

If you are inclined to spring clean between now and then please put  
those unwanted books or presents and surplus knick-knacks to one side  
for us to collect before the fete.

If you can help, either on the day or with distribution of raffle tickets or  
collecting stuff for the stalls in the weeks before the fete then give me a  
call on 681952 or email [ukdavidgray@gmail.com](mailto:ukdavidgray@gmail.com) Thanks

**Aston Abbotts Parish Council**  
**Summary of Parish Council Meeting**  
Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015

**Present:** - Cllr's P Shorrocks (Chair), Mrs J Hardcastle, Mrs K Curry, P Spooner, C Higgs, B Carvey, P Bruton (Clerk), and 4 members of the public.

The Clerk advised there was a consultation on Bucks Replacement Minerals and Waste Local Plan and online representation could be completed by visiting <http://buckscc.objective.co.uk/portal/mw/mwlp>.

We had also received a request to confirm we were taking over the maintenance of 2 of the streetlights at the Wingrave crossroads. Additionally our Street Light Contractor had submitted his quote for next years maintenance contract. It was RESOLVED to accept their quote and request they add the additional lights to the schedule.

**Best Kept Village Competition** – We had received the annual invitation to this competition. It was AGREED that Cllr Spooner would place the details in the Village Postie to see if a volunteer would offer to enter the village in the competition.

**Abbotts View Farm** – Cllr Shorrocks advised the meeting that he and the Clerk had met with the owners of the property and it was apparent that AVDC had not been providing Council with the relevant information and the owners had acted correctly throughout the whole process. It was noted that in future Council would consider the most appropriate way to address issues with individual residents.

**Parish Clerk vacancy** – It was noted that the Clerk would be standing down from his position due to work commitments and after discussion it was AGREED that the vacancy would be advertised

**County Councillor Mrs. N Glover** had sent her report and the main items of note included the confirmation of a new Chief Inspector in Aylesbury Vale, advice that BCC Council tax was proposed to increase by 1.99% with additional monies being spent on children's services and vulnerable adults as these were strongly supported in the recent consultation undertaken. Work is due to start in Aylesbury Town Centre on the old County offices.

**Community Right to Bid** – The Clerk reported that he had received a letter from Solicitors acting on behalf of the tenants of the Royal Oak. The details of the registration were discussed and it was AGREED that the Chairman would write to the Solicitors explaining that at this time we would be unable to write a letter in the form requested.

**Litter Blitz** – The Village Litter Blitz was scheduled for Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

**Czech Celebrations** – The 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Czech Ambassador's association with the Village is in May 2015. After discussion it was AGREED that a suitable celebration would be considered and a note for volunteers and organisers would be placed in the Village postie

**Moat Lane Gritting** – As with previous years there has been a number of accidents along Moat Lane once the bad weather arrives. Recently the School Bus had experienced considerable problems. The matter had been reported to County Council and it has been raised every year. The item will be raised at the forthcoming LAF meeting by our representative for a direct response from Transport for Bucks.

**Neighbourhood Plan** – Cllr Shorrock had circulated a report/summary on Neighbourhood Plans based on his research. Council discussed the matter at length and it was AGREED that at this stage he would approach the Planning Consultants identified to obtain further free advice that hopefully would help further in providing information that will help Councillors balance the risk of major development in the Village with the associated cost of developing a Neighbourhood Plan.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall.

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# The Arty Bits .....Books.....Music....Theatre...Travel & Food

## Book Club

February Book Club

Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand

It was my choice in February and I decided on the biography of Louie Zamperini who I had never heard of until a Radio 4 advert for a programme about his life. I missed the programme but checked out his details on the internet and it seemed a fascinating story. On receiving the book I was somewhat disconcerted to discover it was quite long and in small print and (worse still) written by the same person who had written the story of Seabiscuit the legendary US racehorse. I had struggled and given up on that book so was worried about how the other book club members would get on with it.

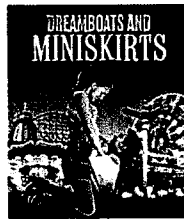
In the event the book turned out to be highly readable. Zamperini's story is fascinating beginning as a young tearaway encouraged to take up running by his brother he eventually proved an exceptional athlete winning a place in the US Olympic team for the 1936 games in Berlin. Following that he joined the US Army Air force and survived many missions in the Pacific before crash landing in the Pacific. He survived with his friend and pilot plus one other young airman who did not survive. Eventually they washed up on Japanese held territory after 46 days at sea in a life raft with no provisions and little fresh water. Already emaciated they were then imprisoned in a series of Japanese prison of war camps. Eventually separated from his friend, Phil, Louie was picked out by a particularly vindictive guard and treated appallingly in the last camp, being close to death by the time of liberation. Returning to the US he had to overcome all the Post Traumatic Stress of his wartime experiences. With the help of his wife he eventually overcame his problems, becoming a religious convert, after hearing the famous Evangelical Billy Graham. In later life he set up a scheme to help delinquent boys. Visiting and forgiving his former captors he carried the Olympic torch at the opening ceremony of the Tokyo Olympics.

Various prior engagements reduced the number attending the meeting down to 8 though we were pleased to receive reviews from some absent members. The book was generally well received though some found the details on the Japanese camps hard to take. The book has been made into a film that one member had seen but had found it somewhat disappointing.

Sally Palmer

## Theatre & Music

### Dreamboats and Miniskirts A review by astonpete



This is a 'must see' show even if you, like me, were not around at the time. 'Dreamboats and Miniskirts', obviously the sequel to 'Dreamboats and Petticoats', is loaded with great music from the 60s and takes off from the opening with a visit to the 'Ready Steady Go' set, the then only real pop show of the day on this side of the Pond.

It's the usual love and climb to fame story of a young band struggling to be noticed by a record label.

When you hear the great music so well performed by the company, and well directed by Bill Kenwright, you think to yourself, no story is required. It generates a great sense of sheer well-being. They wear their beehives, Sixties geometric frocks and snake hip slacks with great panache and do their damndest to give the songs as much welly as is humanly possible, which drew sheer appreciation from the mainly aging audience.

Alex Beaumont and Elizabeth Carter as the love interest Bobby and Laura, two young performers, who are wonderful to watch, work harder than ever to convince us that Bobby really is not a tosser and really does love Laura.

But for me it was the wonderful songs like, Telstar, I only want to be with you, Twist and shout, Groovy kind of love and the haunting version of House of the rising sun together with It's over and Pretty woman, that made a great evening of entertainment, not forgetting my guest.

Thanks John Hardcastle for making these trips to the Waterside Theatre possible.

## Arcadia

'Arcadia' by Tom Stoppard is a play that uses as its base 'chaos theory' and the 'second law of dynamics' – if this leaves you in the dark then join the club. I had been warned to pay attention and keep my concentration at full charge.

I came away thinking it is a play you need to see twice so that the 'order and disorder' being discussed could be better understood. Full marks to the excellent cast for convincing performances in what I judge must be a very demanding play. Robert Cavanah in the role of Bernard Nightingale was particularly good.

Tom Stoppard's plays are always beautifully crafted; my enjoyment of the evening was clouded by my general ignorance and inability to draw conclusions.

*John Hardcastle*



### **SONGBIRD: THE MUSIC OF EVA CASSIDY**

This was a fantastic concert performance by Sarah-Jane Buckley supported by a brilliant on-stage live band and video footage. She tells the story of Eva Cassidy, a talented American musician and singer who, apart from having the voice of an angel, had the ability to re-arrange and interpret well known, well-loved and timeless songs in a way that made them her own. The music of Eva Cassidy only came to prominence in the UK following her untimely, early death at 33 but she went on to become the most successful posthumous female recording artist. Sarah-Jane plays Eva to perfection, her voice almost an exact copy. Renditions included True Colours, Autumn Leaves, Route 66, People Get Ready, Time After Time, Ain't No Sunshine, What a Wonderful World, I Know You by Heart, Chain of Fools and most memorably Songbird, Fields of Gold, and Somewhere Over the Rainbow.

Sondra Dickason

## Blood Brothers

I was fortunate to win two press tickets to see Blood Brothers, thank you very much The Chronicle. This show has been running for 29 years now and loads of people have been to see it, (including some that I know), but no one ever told me that it is a musical. Not that this was a problem, it was just a surprise. I should have known really, as Marti Pellow (from Wet Wet Wet) and Maureen Nolan were both in it, and I knew that they both sing.

The play is about twin boys who are separated at birth and grow up on opposite sides of the track. Their paths cross throughout their lives but it all eventually ends in tragedy. The acting was brilliant although I had trouble understanding some of what Marti Pellow, who was the narrator, was saying and singing with his put on Liverpudlian accent. Maureen Nolan sang beautifully, even when she sometimes slipped back to her Irish twang. Sean Jones (you may have seen him in Emmerdale or Hollyoaks) was outstanding as the 7 year old Mickey and equally as good as an older Mickey.

The show was captivating and somewhat emotional in places. It seemed that the whole audience enjoyed it as much as I did, and the actors received a standing ovation which they totally deserved.

Well worth going to see this show if you haven't already done so.

Mel Smith

# Travel

In some respects I should never have gone to Brrridggettttes farewell party.

It was there I was approached to teach someone sailing in the Solent on a brand new boat. Let's call the would be owner TBR or the Boy Racer.

Then sometime later I got a phone call from SOS (Son of Shozza) to announce that TBR had bought a newish boat but it was at Almeer, on the inland sea east of Amsterdam.

Would I skipper it back in March?

The crew would be SOS and TBR, who both had boat handling skills but no sailing experience.

I said it needed one more experienced sailor and Father of Owner (FOO) was volunteered. At least he had been on a sailing boat across the channel but again with limited experience.

What had the boat got on it?

Loads of electrical boy's toys I was told. But, what about life jackets and life raft? No, was the answer. I made out a long list of the minimum kit that had to be on board before we stepped on the boat.

Before I flew out I had gone through the charts and had worked out a route with overnight harbours and safety harbours in case the weather turned nasty. So the navigation was done, it was a delivery trip which, in theory meant, going in straight lines

I had a quick look at the weather and it was totally crazy. The forecast was for 4 m seas and force 7 winds. However there was a possible ridge of high pressure centred on the North Sea which would give us a good wind angle and reasonable sea state...if it lasted. I said it could take 6 days if the weather was OK but much longer if we were stormbound anywhere. I also checked on Ship Finder to see if the AIS system was working so that I could identify the boat. It wasn't.

After much to-ing and fro-ing TBR was persuaded to buy a UK boat Radio licence which gave something called an MMSI number, which once put into the system made the AIS work and allowed the boat to be identified. It was a big surprise to find that both my family and friends were tracking us for the entire voyage as we tacked across the North Sea. Corrigan made it a nightly discussion subject down the pub.

I flew out to Amsterdam in early March with FOO and went to the marina on the end of the North Sea Canal, to find TBR and SOS there complete with the yacht. Vaelis was 45 ft. of gleaming fibre glass, complete with all the toys and most of my list of essentials.

That night it was blowing very hard and the seas state was high. I'm not going out in that I thought. We got up at 6am and were surprised that wind had gone and the sea moderated. So off we went. I called up the harbour control for permission to leave and was told there was one out going ship and one incoming. Before we got to the outer arms of the harbour we quickly came up behind a dredger and TBR wanted to overtake. In spite of warnings he pulled out only to find a big freighter coming in and blocking our way. So we rapidly tucked in behind the dredger.

Once out in the open sea we set a SW course and picked up a decent wind to sail. Quickly we were doing a nice 7 knots in the direction we wanted to go. Whilst below SOS and I heard TBR yell out that he was doing over 9 knots. Only problem he had turned the boat around and was going back in the opposite direction.

The boat is a 45 ft Benneteau Oceannis and is terrific, full of boys toys such as flat screen TV and DVD, radar, bow thruster, microwave, chart plotter with AIS which not only tell boats who you are but also tells you what the boats are that you can see and if they are going to hit you etc. and radar.



The plotter almost knocks on the head all of the old navigation methods, but paper charts are still essential. The boat actually steers itself to the waypoints you put in. However with all the gadgets we were using more power than the batteries can hold.

We did the usual sail manoeuvres during the day coupled with a bit of sail training and got Scheveningen (Near the Hague) in good order. First day 35 miles. We stayed overnight in the marina and got away nice and early the following day. To the north were masses of wind farms on the horizon.

Remarkably the weather was still favourable and we headed for Zeebrugge. To get there we had to pass the Hook of Holland. When we had looked on Ship Finder there was always a dense run of traffic in and out of the Maas River. So I called Maas control on the VHF and got permission to cross the shipping lane. Our AIS system showed us all the ships heading for us and identified their name, speed and direction

As with any long voyage sometimes the tides are with you and sometimes against, so there were times when our speed over the ground dropped to 3 .5 Knots. Zeebrugge is a big big commercial harbour and we had two waypoints inside to make sure we found our way to the grandly titled Royal Belgian Yacht Club. Nice marina, no club house. Everything was visually austere.

On the way in the harbour cranes were backlit against the setting sun and made a fantastic picture. 65 miles on Day 2.

Another early start had us heading now to Dover down the Belgian and then French coast. Here we needed tight navigation to avoid the shallows and sand banks off Dunkerque. Again we ran foul of the tides and had to make our way from Buoy to Buoy until we were south of Calais. Then turning at 90 degrees we crossed the traffic separation zone in the channel. We sailed across in text book fashion doing 10+ knots and had no big ship avoidance issues, all done whilst the eating dinner.

Food was one of the highlights on the trip since TBR displayed his culinary talents to the full.

We arrived at Dover entrance and the sea was very rough, and SOS had to deal with a five knot cross current and he skilfully navigated us in basically by looking at the chart plotter. In amongst it all TBR lost the same halyard as the one I had lost previously, due to a worn fitting. It was recovered with a fishing rod.

Finally tied up all safe on the waiting pontoon at 2 am, very tired having done a 14.5 hour sail and had done about 130 miles.

In the morning we heard a knock on the hull and it turned out to be three burly Border Force Officers to check us over. We genuinely were pleased they were there. One chatted to me below doing a gentle interrogation and the others looked at passports on deck. They checked VAT paid and had a good nose around. We were happy they were doing their job.

I asked him if knew of John Whyte and he said, yes, the little Scottish fella?

Once they had gone we set off for Brighton and FOO was on the helm when he said 'there's a football in the sea' and promptly ran over a fishing buoy. Fortunately it only slowed the boat down for a few minutes and then cleared itself. A big lesson learned!

I wanted to go in straight lines but SOS wanted to sail and so diverted from the planned course. I had not realised how much until, making our way slowly against the tide to Dungeness when we were called up on the VHF radio. Then the voice on the VHF radio said 'Yacht Vaelis, are you planning to tack?'

'Why?' said I

'Because this is the military and you are about to enter a live firing zone.'

We tacked out to sea.

Very slow progress was made, with lumpy seas and gusty wind, round Dungeness and Beachy Head. We had sailed through thick fog with visibility about 500 m. Even in the fog you could see and identify any ships around you on the AIS system. What I found astonishing was that during the night under the spray hood TBR and SOS were navigating the boat from their iPad, complete with AIS and Radar overlay. As if the other four navigation screens on board were not enough!! Super bit of kit that self-steered the boat to the course I set and then compensated for tidal drift. Amazing. Eventually I put it on my iPad as well so I could monitor the boat's progress.

South of the South Sovereign Shoal we could hear the Buoy in the fog because it has a whistle. Very eerie.

We arrived in Brighton at 2am in the morning, another 14-hour day and had probably done 110 miles. Back up at 7 on Day five and whilst we waited until 9.30 for the tide to be high enough to get out we refuelled with 160 litres.

We set direction for the Looe channel, which is off Selsey Bill. This is about 3 miles south of the Bill and is about 400 m wide. I'm told there is a petrified forest below which creates the rough seas around the channel. The seas were much calmer and the wind was around 12 knots. There were many fishing buoys around the channel which had to be avoided.

We had a really good sail and for once the tide was with us so when clear of the Looe we were able to straight-line it past Portsmouth into the Solent and almost to the mouth of the Hamble River.

Again we were lucky there were no big ships to cause us problems and we did it on one tack.

With the benefit of the tide we hit 11.7 knots over the ground for the section.

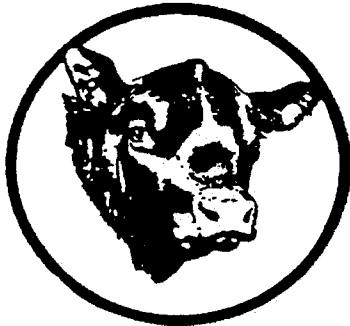
Down with the sails and an easy motor up the Hamble to Hamble marina to tie up and a well-earned drink.

The four of us had done nigh on 400 miles in 5 days and were blessed with the good weather to make it possible.

Biggest conclusion was that Greece is much warmer. At the end of the trip I did email Alan, who had taught me Yacht Master Navigation some 20 years ago, just to thank him because, without what I had gleaned from his lectures I would have not been able to do this trip.,

Unfortunately this contributor has expressly asked me not to make comments or amendments to his copy, shame could've had great fun with this. Ed

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Duties include amongst others: preparation of Agendas and Minute taking at Parish Council meetings and advising on procedure and legal matters, upkeep of Parish accounts, and dealing with day to day correspondence as required by the Council.

This is a very varied role, which will require you to have access to a computer and printer, basic computer skills, including word processing and spreadsheet maintenance; and most importantly a flexible attitude.

A full hand-over will be given and training (if necessary) will be to the successful applicant.

Please apply in writing to either: Paul Bruton, 51 The Green, Aston Abbots, HP22 4LY or Peter Shorrock, Oak Farm House, Wingrave Rd, Aston Abbots, HP22 4LU. Should you wish to discuss the role further please contact Paul by email: [paulbruton@pbfs.co](mailto:paulbruton@pbfs.co) or by phoning: 01296 682322 OR Peter by email: [petershorrock@gmail.com](mailto:petershorrock@gmail.com) or by phoning: 01296 681260.



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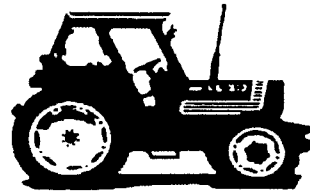
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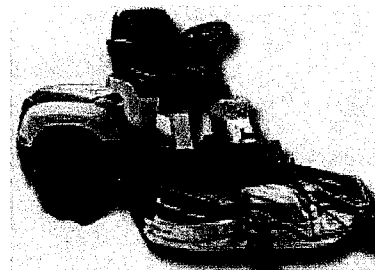


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Volunteers are needed to keep the Village Plan document up-dated. It is thought the work will involve meeting for about 30 minutes 2 or 3 times a year. If interested and prepared to help please contact either Peter Shorrock on 681260 or [petershorrock@gmail.com](mailto:petershorrock@gmail.com); or Paul Bruton on 682322 or [pbruton@pbfs.co](mailto:pbruton@pbfs.co)



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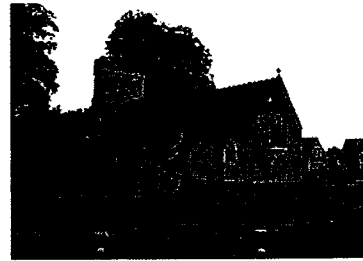
Packed lunch session: daily, noon – 1pm

Contact: Kelly Targell – Pre-School Manager 01296 682217



# Church Matters

The diary of St. James's



Snowdrops or Galanthus, from the Greek gála (milk) and ánthos (flower) are one of the first signs of Spring. Thanks to Andy Bystra the Churchyard is now dotted with groups of snowdrops, many of which have been out for several weeks. The crocuses (starting with the early yellow ones) are also out and the daffodils are not far behind. It also means that we need to get the mower out this month. If anyone would like to join the rota for mowing the Churchyard then please contact Gordon Kemp.

Pancake Thursday at the Village hall was well attended and raised £100 for the Church. Thanks to all those who supported the event and particularly to April who had the idea and made the pancakes and to Caroline and Gay who served.

By the time you read this we will have had Mothering Sunday on 15<sup>th</sup> March with tea at the Village Hall followed by a short service in the Church and later in the month the Easter Services on Palm Sunday and Easter Day.

The ever popular Beetle Drive with a Sausage & Mash supper is planned for Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March, match report to follow next month.

Rob O'Connell (07855 236726) has started work on the refurbishment of the boundary wall. He used to live on The Green (No. 53) and has done a number of building jobs in the village over the years. Using a special mix of Lime Mortar (as approved by the Church Surveyor), the 100m long wall will be repointed and over 300 bricks that have decayed (spalled) by frost action, will be refaced. There is also some further work on the rainwater disposal pipework. The total job, costing over £8,000, should be finished by mid-April. If you have any building work give him a ring and get an estimate.

Down on the Allotments things are stirring. It is good to see that the number of Allotment holders has increased. This has been achieved by splitting some of the larger plots. Thanks to the Allotment holders for paying their rent for 2015. We look forward to a bumper season for runner beans, pumpkins, etc.

The Novice



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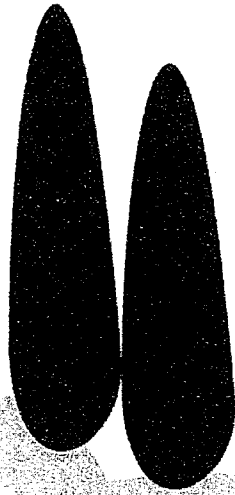
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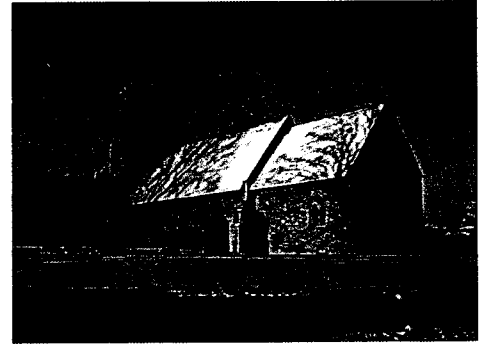
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**Services at  
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April 2015**

<b>5<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Easter Day Communion</b>	<b>Rev Roger Hale</b>
<b>12<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Rev. Peter Binns</b>
<b>19<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>10.30.am</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Rev. Roger Hale</b>
<b>26<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Rev. Roger Hale</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> May</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	<b>Evensong</b>	<b>Rev. Philip Derbyshire</b>

**We look forward to seeing you**

**100 Club Draw - March**

**1st Prize, £50**

**Ian Smith**

**2nd prize, £10**

**Bob Bean**

He is risen indeed, alleluia!"

So goes the great Easter acclamation, A great message of hope and positivity in a world sadly lacking in both.

On the 4th. Sunday in Lent we heard Jesus telling His disciples that He must suffer at the hands of the authorities and poor old Peter's anguished response of rejection of this unpalatable fact. How can his great friend and mentor be killed by others who are nowhere near His level of care and love and honesty? How is Peter supposed to cope, to go on without this inspiration?

Despite roundly telling Peter he is way off target in his understanding nevertheless Jesus goes on to entrust the future of His 'Church' into Peter's hands, clearly seeing greater strength and depth in him than he saw himself. Peter, an ordinary fisherman was entrusted with great responsibility and his example has inspired many apparently unremarkable people ever since to step out in faith and take on seemingly impossible responsibilities on behalf of others.

We live in a very cynical and materialist world but there are still billions of individuals who seek and find inspiration in a faith which is not about stand up/knock down arguments but about a relationship with no lesser being than the one who started the whole thing off and took the risk to enter 'our' world. If Good Friday looks like a defeat (and in many ways it certainly does) there is no ambiguity about the victory of Easter Day. What we need to do is trust, however falteringly like Peter, in the reliability of the master he strove to serve.

Have a great Easter and a good break if you're having one.

God Bless, Philip.

**Reverend Philip Derbyshire**  
**The Vicarage**  
**2 High Street North**  
**Stewkley**  
**Leighton Buzzard**  
**Lu7 OHH**

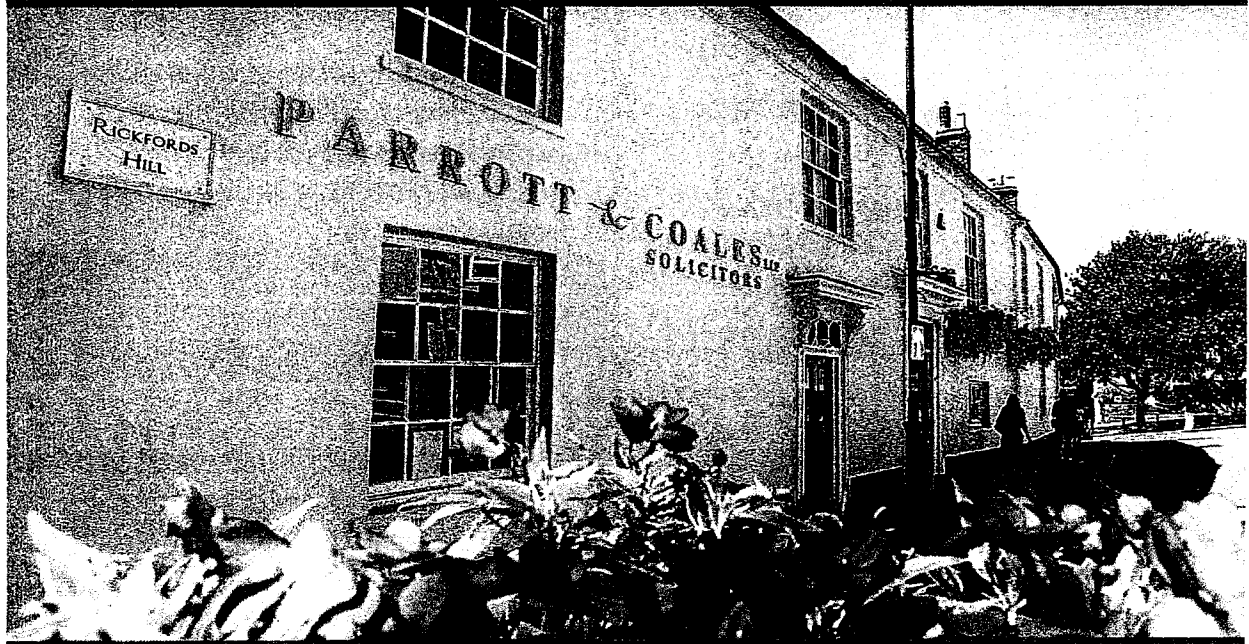
## Church Duties April

	<b>Cleaning</b>	<b>Flowers</b>	<b>Mowing</b>
Apr 4 <sup>th</sup>	Colin/ Caroline L	Easter	Gordon / Andy
Apr 11 <sup>th</sup>	Gordon / Ann	Easter	
Apr 18 <sup>th</sup>	Alex / Anita	Donated	
Apr 25 <sup>th</sup>	Gay / Colin	Donated	
May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Colin / Caroline L	TBA	





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## Aston Abbotts Telephone List

100 Club	David Gray	07935 414495
630 Club	Andy Bystra	681690
AVDC	Switchboard	585858
Baby & Toddlers Group	Kim Gayler	681123
Bingo	Pam Dixon	681626
	Sondra Dickason	682249
Book Club	John Hardcastle	688070
Bus Enquiries	Travel line	0870 6082608
Buses	L & S	415468
Chronicle Advertising	Phil Corrigan	688191
Chronicle Distribution	Marisa Abel Smith	681411
	Zandy Ayres	682419
Chronicle Editorial	Phil Corrigan	688191
Church Mowing Rota	Gordon Kemp	681763
Church Room Hire	Tracy Hinds	688479
Citizens Advice	Aylesbury	0870 1264056
Bucks County Council	Switchboard	395000
County Councillor	Netta Glover	688357
Dial-A-Ride		330088
District Councillor	Peter Cooper	681250
Doctor - emergency	(out of hours)	331511
Fete Coordinator	David Gray	681952
G.N.O.M.E.S.	Carol Spooner	681544
Hospital	Stoke Mandeville	315000
Ladies Club	Shirley Ford	681865
Member of Parliament	John Bercow MP	714240
Milkman	Ron Miller Dairies	482838
Mobile Library	Buckingham	01280 813229
NHS Direct	24 hr Advice Line	0845 4647
Parish Clerk	Paul Bruton	682322
Parish Council Leader	Peter Shorrocks	681260
Police Emergencies		999 or 112
Police Non-Emergency		0845 8505505
Police	Wing Police Station	396163/4
Railways	Chiltern Railways	0870 5165165
Ramblers Club	Colin Higgs	681343
Rector	Rev Philip Derbyshire	01525 240287
Refuse Collection	Enquiries	585510
Royal British Legion	Alan Jones	682366
Royal Oak	Teri & Gary Moulton	681262
RSPCA	Enquiries	08705 555999
Scouts	Nikki Reeve	681372
Whist	Colin Higgs	681343
Wingrave Pre School	Kelly Targell	681127
Wingrave Post Office	PO Only	682964
Wingrave Post Office	Stores	681696
Wingrave School	Office	681436

The neighbourhood policing team works on issues identified by local residents and businesses.

To contact them call

**101**

This is a non-emergency number.

Alternatively, email them on:

WingNorthNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk.

## WINGRAVE POST OFFICE AND STORES

21 Winslow Road, Wingrave

SHOP 681696 POST OFFICE 682964

Fresh food available to order: Fruit and Vegetables - order by Wednesday, collect on Friday/Saturday Bread baked fresh daily - Large White Split Tin, Small White Farmhouse, Large and Small Wholemeal, French Sticks and Baguettes Pastries on Saturday and Sunday - Croissants, Pain au Chocolat. Pain au Raisin

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£6 per hour for residents

(Plus metered electricity)

£20 per hour for non-residents

(Plus metered electricity - a returnable deposit of  
£50 at the time of booking is required)

Please note that an additional hour over and above  
the period of the event must be booked to cover  
setting up and clearing away.

Weddings and Christenings -

a fixed charge of £50.

Please contact Tracy Hinds on 688479 if you wish to  
book

## **YOUR PARISH COUNCIL**

Peter Shorrocks (Chairman)

Oak Farm House – 681260

Paul Bruton (Parish Clerk)

51 The Green – 682322

Colin Higgs (Vice Chairman)

6 Wingrave Road – 681343

Richard Clarke

Maplewood, The Green – 681007

Judy Hardcastle

Marloes, Lines Hill – 688070

Kate Curry

2 Norduck Cottages, Moat Lane – 681137

Bob Carvey

12 The Green – 681053

District Councillor

Peter Cooper

Brewhouse Lane, Rowsham – 681250

County Councillor

Netta Glover - 688357

## Address

Please note that all  
Submissions for the  
Chronicle should be sent to  
Phil Corrigan  
5 Nashs Farm, Aston Abbotts

Email submissions to:  
editor@aachronicle.co.uk

Please don't forget to tell us of  
any events that you would like  
included in the What's On list

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corriganpc@aol.com

## Classified

CLASSIFIED ADS ARE

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Phone us on 01296 688191

## Parochial Church Council

Rev. Philip Derbyshire 01525 240287

Caroline Abel Smith

Churchwarden 681001

Colin Higgs

Deputy Churchwarden 681343

Ann Goodman 681763

Anita Parker 681325

Gordon Kemp 681763

Caroline Lane Sec 681373

David Gray 681952

Treasurer & Synod Rep 07935414495

Gay Walker 688632

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ASTON ABBOTTS

## WATCHTOWER

### **Dirty Pictures**

Ever wondered what those Gnomes get up to? We hear that a senior Gnome has been sneaking off to 18-rated movies with her friends. Yes, Queen Gnome went to see 50 Shades of Grey. She didn't pick up any useful tips though - just looking bewildered later that evening when she spotted the roll of Duct Tape her hopeful husband had left on her pillow.

It appears she is not the only one going to the movies for titillation - we also heard that the Welshman from Nash's Farm went to see Shaun the Sheep...

### **Easily Bought?**

I realise that political comment has no place in The Chronicle, but last Friday at the Royal Oak I couldn't help celebrating my evening's saving of four whole pence, thanks to the penny off a pint budget 'giveaway'.

Yeah... That's sure bought my vote George...

### **Fat B\*\*\*\*\*!**

Spare a thought for a certain former Chronicle editor. One March morning he stood on his bathroom scales, as per his normal daily routine. This time there was a loud cracking noise, the scales readout displayed "Error", and they never worked again.

He claims the scales were ten years old and the plastic must have become brittle, but we think there is a message in there somewhere Phil...



### **Sunshine (1)**

You will rarely hear Dave Lewis admit he that needs glasses, but he has let slip that he has pairs all over the place—just for small print you understand. And we have heard that a former policeman from Aston Abbots also has several pairs of glasses stashed around the house. He even admits to having a pair stashed in his windowless toilet - and they are *sunglasses*!

So just where do you think that sun is shining from in your toilet then Jeff??



### **Sunshine (2)**

So does Bob Bean hold the record for being the first person this year to be out on his sunbed?

We are not surprised at Bob being first to sunbathe in March, just surprised that he did it on the day of the eclipse!

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