



The Parish Magazine for

£1

STOCKBRIDGE LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD

April 2024



The Parishes of Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford in the Mid-Test Benefice

Rector: currently no incumbent

All Services during the interregnum covered by the Ministry Team

All Enquiries, including enquiries about Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals:

Please contact the Benefice Administrator, Lois Opperman

Phone No: 07900 927913 or midtestbenefice@gmail.com

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St Peter's Stockbridge	St Mary's Longstock	St Nicholas' Leckford
<i>Churchwarden</i>	<i>Churchwarden</i>	<i>Churchwarden</i>
David Williams 811072	Madeleine Hedley 810284	Vacancy
<i>Hon Secretary</i>	<i>Hon Secretary</i>	<i>Hon Secretary</i>
Micki Nadal 810567	Richard Robinson 810388	Micki Nadal 810567
<i>Hon Treasurer</i>	<i>Hon Treasurer</i>	<i>Hon Treasurer</i>
Jean Farnan 07590 532460	Madeleine Hedley 810284	David Barnes 810516
Beavers	Pastoral Visitors	Stockbridge Parish Council
Frances Waghorn 01962 776048	Vacancy	Chair: Derek Halle
Bell ringers (Longstock)	RBL (Houghton branch)	Derek@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk
Chris Reynell 810569	David Williams (Chair) 811072	Clerk: Belinda Baker 07770 406607
Bell ringers (Stockbridge)	New Secretary to be appointed	clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org
Micki Nadal 810567	Angela McMeekin: Poppies 810236	Stockbridge Pharmacy 810624
Brownies (meet in Chilbolton)	Scouts	Stockbridge Police Station
Julie Shone 01962 761269	Mark Lovell 07786 435847	(Non emergencies) 101
Church Mouse Books	Scout Group Explorers	Stockbridge Primary /Pre School
Micki Nadal 810567	Andrea Zanchi 07747 720735	Emma Jefferies (Head) 810550
Cub Scouts	Louise Henderson 07436 899054	Stockbridge Rec Ground
Mo Collins 01256 895534	St Thomas More Church	Mike Porter (Chair) 810595
HCC County Councillor	Father Mark Hogan 01962 852804	Mob 07775 632632
Cllr David Drew 357024	Stockbridge Church Flowers Sec	Stuart Mawson(Sec) 07766 150055
mob 07738 289902	Angela McMeekin 810236	Stockbridge Surgery 810524
Kent Hill Scout Hall	Stockbridge Community Cinema	<i>Out of hours urgent treatment /advice</i>
Leigh Dance 811074	Paul Kidd 811179	<i>Hants Doctors On Call freephone 111</i>
Leckford Parish Council	Stockbridge Community Market	Stockbridge Town Hall
Vacancy	Carol Preston 07925 287870	Kim Candler (Chair) 811776
Longstock Garden Club	Stockbridge Court Leet	<i>On-line bookings</i>
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peter.r.moore@gmail.com	810614	or phone 513299
Longstock Parish Council	Diana Tym (Bailiff) 810363	Test Valley School
Chair: Selina Musters 810459	Stockbridge Dramatic Society	Ms Jo McKeown (Exec. Head) 810555
Clerk: Gill Bulpitt 07763857512	Mark Frank 810562	Trout 'n About
Longstock Village Hall	Stockbridge Football Club	Bob Powell 01264 810966
Selina Musters 810459	Bob Powell (Chair) 07802 524433	TVBC Councillor
Longstock & Leckford WI	Rob Blandford (Hon Sec) 07799 289756	Cllr Ian Jeffrey 01794 388872
Sue Hill 811779	Email: stockbridgefc@hotmail.com	Unity Transport (Dial-a-Ride shopping bus) 356808
Neighbour Care 0845 0943713	Stockbridge Music	
<i>Calls cost 7p/min +network charge.</i>	Paul Wing 07764 581601	



Magazine Subscriptions

- an urgent plea

Subscriptions for 2024 are due.

Thank you those readers who have already renewed their subscription to the magazine.

This is a reminder to those existing subscribers who are yet to pay their subscription for 2024.

If you would like to continue to receive regular copies of this magazine **now is the time to act.**

For full details of how to pay please see page 7

From the Editorial Team

March was a month of contrasts. There has been some very pleasing news. Our contentment with life in our three parishes was endorsed in a Sunday Times article nominating Stockbridge as one of the top ten places to live in the southeast of England. One of the factors which will have contributed to this accolade is the lively arts scene, which we recognise in this issue of the magazine with reports of stunning concerts organised by Stockbridge Music in St Peter's Church (p28). We celebrate a fresh enthusiasm for singing with our new choir mistress, Sarah Seymour, encouraging and inspiring the church choir, and we also welcome the two new singing groups getting underway in the Town Hall.

On a less positive note, pollution of the River Test has become a major concern. A Pan Parish Group has been formed to put pressure on Southern Water (see p23), and we include a passionate article by Catherine Hadler, our National Trust Ranger, about discharges into Marsh Court stream (p27). The National Trust has now started its own water quality testing programme.

And sadly in this magazine we report the deaths of several longstanding local residents, all of whom have contributed greatly to the life of our community. They will be sadly missed.

Frances Candler, Jennifer Kidd and Thea Taylor

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Cover Photo: by Nigel Rugman

Stockbridge Music concert 'And the Trumpet Shall Sound' - David Hill at the organ in St Peter's Church. The mirror enables him to pick up cues from his fellow performer, trumpet-player Crispian Steele-Perkin^S



Stockbridge Community Cinema



Anatomy of a Fall (15) **Friday 19 April** **7.30 pm** (2hrs 32min)

For the past year, Sandra, her husband Samuel, and their son have lived a secluded life in a remote town in the French Alps. When Samuel is found dead below their chalet, was he murdered or was it suicide. What follows is an investigation into the circumstances of Samuel's death but also an unsettling psychological journey into the depths of Sandra and Samuel's conflicted relationship. *[In French with subtitles]*

20 Years in Mariupol (18) **Saturday 20 April** **5.00pm and 7.30 pm** (1hr 34min)

An Associated Press team of Ukrainian journalists trapped in the besieged city of Mariupol struggle to continue their work documenting atrocities of the Russian invasion. As the only international reporters who remain in the city, they capture what later become defining images of the war: dying children, mass graves, the bombing of a maternity hospital, and more. *A fundraising film for Stockbridge Ukraine - Tickets £12.50*

The Miracle Club (12A) **Wednesday 24 April** **5.00 pm and 7.30 pm** (1hr 30min)

Ireland 1968: 3 close friends win the trip of a lifetime - a pilgrimage to Lourdes. With each woman desperately in need of a personal miracle, the trip seems like an answer to all their prayers. But when they are joined by another friend, returning after decades in America, deep wounds from the past are reopened and bitter truths exposed. As they confront one another and embrace their shared past, the group reckon with revelations that will change them forever.

Wonka (PG) **Sunday 28 April** **3.00 pm** (1hr 56min)

Based on the extraordinary character at the centre of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Roald Dahl's most iconic children's book and one of the best-selling children's books of all time, "Wonka" tells the wondrous story of how the world's greatest inventor, magician and chocolate-maker became the beloved Willy Wonka we know today. *A fundraising film for the Friends of Stockbridge School*
Tickets - Children £5.00 Adults £6.00

Tickets £6.00 (£5.50 + £0.50 booking fee), unless otherwise shown, available online via our website stockbridgecinema.org.uk or via the Ticketsource telephone booking service **0333 666 3366** (no additional fee)

Stockbridge Town Hall Events



Weekly

Mon am	Pilates with Paula
Mon am	Pilates Unlimited with Clare
Mon pm	Sing for Fun
Tues am	Iyengar Yoga with Melissa
Tues am	Michelle Buhl-Nielsen Art Class
Weds am	Yoga with Dionne
Weds pm	Kathryn Campling Yoga
Thurs am	Stockbridge Community Market
Thurs am	Su Joy Art Class
Thurs pm	Jo Caley Joga
Fri am	Moo Music

This Month

Apr 1-3	Infinito
Apr 2	Stockbridge Drama Society
Apr 6	Antique Fair
Apr 7	Hants Assoc of Cricket Officials
Apr 8-10	Jennifer Gay
Apr 10-12	Stockbridge Drama Society
Apr 13	Stockbridge Posh Bric-a-Brac
Apr 14-15	Jules At No.43
Apr 16-17	Capital Cashmere
Apr 18	Stockbridge Parish Council
Apr 19	Stockbridge Community Cinema
Apr 20	South Central Makers
Apr 20	Stockbridge Ukraine FILM
Apr 21-24	Wild Bazaar
Apr 23	Stockbridge Football Club
Apr 23	Longstock and Leckford WI
Apr 24	Stockbridge Community Cinema
Apr 25	Stockbridge Parish Council
Apr 27-28	Antiques and Curios
Apr 27-28	Hawkmoor Books
Apr 28	Stockbridge Community Cinema
Apr 28	Nick Sibley
Apr 29-30	Wild Bazaar

Wherwell History Group

Friday 19th April
8pm at Wherwell
Village Hall



Tim Craven
presents

Capture the Castle : The Story of Castles through Artists' Eyes

For further details, please check our website at
<https://www.wherwellhistory.com>
(£5 entry fee for non-members)

Bean Car Club Daffodil Run 2024



Sunday 14 April



Stockbridge is on the route of this traditional vintage car run. The cars will be gathering near the Grosvenor Hotel at about 10.30am providing a spectacular display of Classic Cars.

The Run is open to all cars manufactured before 1940. For further details, see

<http://beancarclub.org.uk/Daffodil-Run/>



Stockbridge Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting 7.00 pm Thursday 25th April in Stockbridge Town Hall

The Parish Council will be displaying the designs for the Blandford Row Park that have been produced by students of Sparsholt College. Members of the community are invited to come along and vote for their preferred design.

There will also be an opportunity to talk to the Councillors and find out about other Council projects.

Residents are invited to join the Councillors for a glass of wine



TERSTAN Longstock, Stockbridge SO20 6DW

Opening :
Sunday 21st April
2pm to 5pm

Pre-booking available

Admission : £5.00 children free. CASH ONLY

Refreshments : Home-made teas.

A garden for all seasons with exuberant and colourful planting surrounded by beautiful countryside. Penny is an artist and writer with an eye for design, colour and texture. Visitors will find harmony and contrast, vistas, an unusual gravel garden, a kitchen and cutting garden and lots of plants they may never have seen before. Terstan is surrounded by views across the River Test to the Hampshire Downs and you can sit, relax and enjoy gentle summer music in an informal setting.



<https://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/22660/terstan>

ALSO OPEN BY ARRANGEMENT

for Groups of 10+ from April to September.

Contact : paburnfield@gmail.com



St Peter's Church Stockbridge Flower Festival 2024 This Year's Theme: HOBBIES AND HOLIDAYS

Friday 3rd – Monday 6th May
Friday 3rd, Saturday 4th & Monday 6th
10am - 6pm
Sunday 5th
Noon - 6pm

Teas on the church lawn
Saturday, Sunday and Monday from
2 – 5pm



Test Villages u3a

**Thursday 11th April
at 2pm in Chilbolton Village Hall
Maggie Sheldon presents
'Hampshire's Chalk Streams'**

Maggie, a landscape ecologist with the Hampshire and IOW Wildlife Trust, helped co-ordinate the community-led, Heritage Lottery-funded project called Watercress and Winterbournes. She will describe how the communities of the Test and Itchen headwaters set up projects and initiatives to improve the health and heritage of their beautiful chalk streams.

Doors open at 1.40pm for the presentation, followed by refreshments.

Test Villages u3a meets on the first Thursday of every month in Chilbolton Village Hall.

New members are very welcome, and we look forward to seeing you at one of our meetings.

u3a is a UK-wide network of groups that provides the opportunity to socialise and learn for fun.

Find out more at u3a.org.uk,
or see the latest on Test Villages group at u3asites.org.uk/test-villages



**Bach
St. John
Passion**

Andover Choral Society
Westminster Chamber Orchestra
St Mary's Church, Andover
Saturday 4 May, 7.30pm

Tickets £15, available from choir members,
from The Lights box office on 01264 361161
and online from ticketsurfer.co.uk

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Copy for Magazine

Copy date for the May Magazine:
15 April 2024

Please send emails to:

editorsstockmag@gmail.com

or phone Frances on 01264 811776

Jennifer on 811179 or Thea on 07730 964481



LONGSTOCK & LECKFORD WI

Tuesday 23rd April

Stockbridge Town Hall 6.45pm for 7pm start.

Terri Robinson

presents

'Unusual Plants of America'

Guests always welcome.

Please contact Sue Hill on 811779 for further details



Houghton WI

**Monday 15th April
at 10am in**

All Saint's Church, Houghton

Julie Moldon and Iona Priestley will give a guided tour of the church's architecture and items of special interest.

There will be refreshments in the church afterwards.

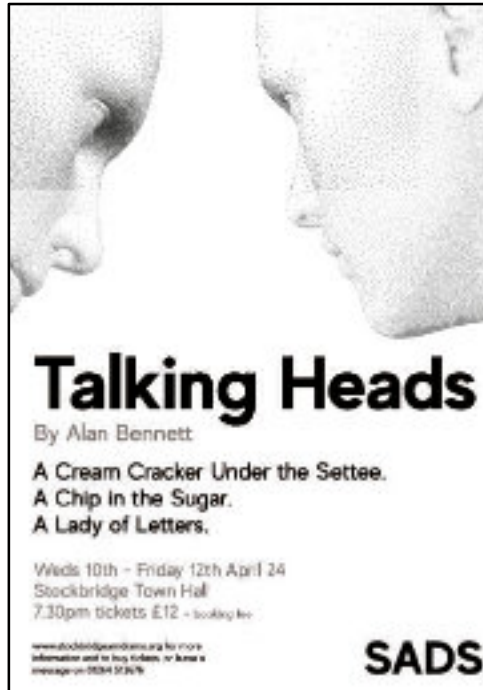
Visitors welcome. Further information from Jane Anderton 01264 810928

April will be a busy month for SADS

On 2nd April we will hold our monthly Curtain Call meeting - this time with readings on the theme of polar exploration. As always, anyone is welcome to attend - 7:30pm in the Town Hall. We only ask £1 to cover the cost of the room and a cup of coffee.

The following week is our production of three more of Alan Bennett's *Talking Heads* monologues - for titles, see poster on right.

Anyone who has seen them on TV will know that they are Bennett at his very best - witty, profound and moving.



Performances will be **Wednesday 10th, Thursday 11th and Friday 12th April** (note - there is no performance on the Saturday). Tickets are £12 on sale now. Go to www.stockbridgeamdrms.org.uk for more information and to buy tickets, or leave a message on 01264 513676.

Later in the month we will have a reading and auditions for our joint production with Salisbury-based group JT Productions of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* which we will be performing in August. The reading will be on Thursday 18th April at 7:30pm in the Scout Hut (the Hall is in use that evening). It is a chance for anyone interested in auditioning to find out more about the production and also for anyone who just wants to come along and read or listen with no plans to audition. The auditions will be at 2.30pm on Sunday 21st and 7:30pm on Monday 22nd April in the Town Hall.

It is a brilliant play with lots of good parts, so we encourage anyone who is interested in being in it to audition - you don't have to be a SADS member. In particular the director, Tom Humphreys of JT Productions, has got permission to make the central character a girl and he will welcome young(ish!) actresses who want to take on this challenge.

Mark Frank

How to subscribe to the Magazine

A subscription for 2024 costs £10 and for this price the year's 11 copies are delivered to your door

This is a reminder to those existing subscribers who haven't yet paid their subscription for 2024. If you would like to continue to receive regular copies of this magazine **now is the time to act.**

Payment.

To pay online, which we prefer, bank details are as before. Please pay £10 to:

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Please use the reference section to indicate your address as clearly as possible (IMPORTANT!)

However, your deliverer is still able to collect your £10 subscription if you wish.

Alternatively, drop an envelope enclosing £10 and your full name and address and contact details through David's door at 'Touchwood', High Street, Stockbridge (pink house opposite The Three Cups).

Thank you.

We trust in the loyal support of our subscribers

We very much welcome new subscribers

For new subscribers, see the details above for payment but please also ensure that you notify David Barnes, our Treasurer, so we can make sure that you are on our delivery lists. David's telephone number is 01264 810516. or please email barnsiesdandj@yahoo.co.uk



Longstock Garden Club

Tuesday April 9th

Mr Roger Butler

will give talk on

Growing Pelargoniums

and bring plants for sale.

We meet at 7.30pm in Longstock Village Hall

(Doors open at 7.00pm)

Guests welcome £3 each evening.

Raffle tickets are still only £1.

Please bring, if you can, a contribution to the raffle prizes.

<https://longstockgardenclub.com/>

Peter Moore 07881573493

Join Lisa in discovering the natural world in St Mary's Churchyard

At the end of January, we took part in the Big Garden Birdwatch organised by the RSPB - using the churchyard at St Mary's as our 'garden'.

Why take part?

This is the biggest citizen science wildlife survey in the UK and the RSPB use the results to see how our bird community is doing.

What did we see?

Blackbirds, robins, wood pigeons, starlings, chaffinches, jackdaws, green finches, great tits, blue tits and a black cap. We heard many more including coal tits, song thrushes, goldfinches and a great spotted woodpecker. If you have space on your smartphone, I would recommend you download the *Merlin* app - it will help you identify the birds you can hear but can't see and it adds a whole other level to a country walk to know which birds are alongside you.

What do the results mean?

At the time of going to press, the RSPB were still collating results so we don't know the big picture yet. Those results will be released in April. But we do know that we saw fewer individuals than the Hampshire average - maybe not surprising as we don't have a water source or regular bird food put out in the churchyard.

Would I recommend this?

Absolutely. We sat for an hour under a blue sky just listening to birds and enjoying God's Creation. I haven't felt so calm and relaxed for ages!

So here are a couple of dates for your diary:

June 8-16th is 'Love your burial ground week' An opportunity for communities across the UK to celebrate the unique places that are our churchyards and burial grounds etc. In urban parishes, burial grounds might be the only green space around. And in our beautiful rural parishes, church yards can still provide a unique set of habitats for God's creation, often being some of the most undisturbed green spaces we have. In the UK, we've lost over 50% of the number of creatures in priority species since 1970 - a very scary statistic - but I've included it to underline how important our burial grounds are for nature.

We're hoping to host a couple of events at St Mary's Longstock churchyard during that week. A big part of the week is the 'Church Count on Nature', so important that the church's legislative body, the General Synod, has recently voted to ask all churches to take part in this every year. Here are details of our planned count sessions:

When?: Sunday 9th June 2-4pm and Wednesday 12th June 7-9pm

Who can come?: The more the merrier

Preparation: If you have a smartphone please download the free *iNaturalist* app as we'll be using that to help identify what we find and report our findings.

To bring to the session: Any of your nature books, magnifying glass, binoculars, other nature-spotting paraphernalia that you might have, weather-appropriate clothes and shoes - and a responsible adult if appropriate!

Plea for help: If you have a particular interest in nature, know how to tell the difference between various bugs, plants etc. and would like to help us identify what we find, please contact me. I'm sure your help will be useful.

And if you want to learn more about nature in the meantime, why not get tickets for a talk entitled

Stopping Extinction - an Atlas of Endangered Species at The Lights, Andover on 2nd May.

The speaker is **Megan McCubbin**, a star of Winterwatch and Springwatch and also President of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, see <https://thelights.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/shows/1173639428>

Hope to see you there.

Lisa Trailor
lisalamberti@hotmail.co.uk



Easter Bank Holidays

Both Stockbridge and Broughton Surgeries are closed on Friday 29 March and Monday 1 April.

GP trainees

We are very pleased to be helping to train the next generation of GPs. Currently within the practice, we have the following GP trainees; Eleanor Rahmany, Farshid Bayat, Charlotte Hobby and Agboola Taiwo. Juliet May is leaving us this month. The trainees are fully qualified doctors and are with the practice for either 6 months or 12 months.

Measuring your blood pressure

Recently, we have been asking patients via text to send in a blood pressure reading if they are aged 45 or over and we haven't had a blood pressure reading from them in the past 5 years. If you receive a text message, you can use the blood pressure machines in our waiting rooms. If you are known to have high blood pressure, it is important to have your blood pressure measured at least once a year.

Ann Spooner
Practice manager

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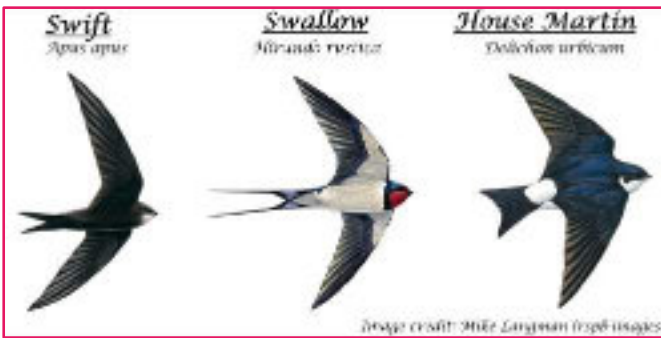


SAVE OUR STOCKBRIDGE AND SAVE OUR SWIFTS

Swifts

We write in March to catch the April edition of the Parish Magazine because at the very end of April the swifts, we hope, will return to Stockbridge. They are such a wonderful harbinger of summer – think of those early evenings when you are sitting in your garden watching them swoop and swirl together or you are walking along the High Street and a wonderful high-pitched call assails your ears. You will then know that the swifts have come back. The Town Hall has installed another swiftbox because, last year, it was successful in enticing some swifts to nest in its original box. Those of us still waiting for swifts to nest in our swiftboxes must keep our fingers crossed. However we will have the 'swift caller' installed by the end of April to try and attract swifts into some of the swiftboxes at the east end of the High Street.

Know the difference :



Flood management

SOS, like many who live, work and visit Stockbridge, has been so grateful that, despite the very heavy and persistent rain we have suffered all winter, there has been no flooding of the village.

The Common Marsh has become waterlogged, the water meadows to the north and south of the High Street have absorbed a great deal of water or allowed it to collect in pools, and the ditches round the meadows have filled up with water. Above all, the flood defences, with the help of the River Keeper of the Houghton Club, have kept the water flowing down the River Test as it should. You may well have noticed the marker in the river by the bridge. It is back to number 7, which is high, but is not currently at the dizzy heights of number 9 which it has been on occasions.

Our work continues ...

SOS continues to try to maintain the charm and character of Stockbridge. We are currently drafting our response to the TVBC draft Local Plan which will last until 2040. As we have said before, our aim is not to preserve Stockbridge in aspic, but we do want it to keep its character and specialness not only for all of us, but for future generations too.

Jean Boney, Chair of SOS

Marjorie Andrews



St Mary's was filled for the funeral of Marjorie Andrews who had died just short of her 90th birthday.

Marjorie's son Charles and three of her four step-children gave a beautiful and often humorous joint eulogy, detailing her full life, from early years in India, then Dublin and Hampton Court Palace before building Carnesure House and moving to Longstock in 1978 with her husband Terry, in part to indulge their passion for fishing.

Terry retired in 1982 from The John Lewis Partnership hoping to spend many years here, but, sadly, died in 1992. Undeterred, Marjorie continued to throw herself with relentless energy into anything where she thought she could make a difference, always taking the view that anything worth doing should be done to the best of one's ability.

She did so much for the community, quietly and without fuss, forever mass-producing cakes for fundraising sales or village gatherings and was the driving force behind so many Longstock institutions like the church, the WI and the village hall. She worked tirelessly to make sure that the Nissen hut which had served as the village hall until it was beyond repair was replaced by the modern one of today.

Marjorie was chairman of the fundraising committee and then the new hall for about 20 years until she downsized to Stockbridge, always full of ideas of how to raise the large sums needed, and to recruit helpers. She was president of the WI probably for more years than she wanted – always armed with wine for the outings, or holding tea parties to celebrate milestone birthdays.

Selina Musters

FLOWER FESTIVAL 2024 St Peter's Church

Bank Holiday Weekend of May 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The Theme: Hobbies and Holidays

Angela McMeekin and the team would welcome any newcomers who would like to join them in helping to make this event its usual success.

Please phone Angela on 01264 810236



Come & Sing!

Southern Voices are inviting local singers to come and sing with them in a choral workshop as part of their 40th Anniversary Season on Saturday 4th May, at St. Paul's Church, Winchester, SO22 5AB.

Find out what it's like to sing with the choir and their fabulous conductor, Jamal Sutton. The programme has a 'joyful' theme, with works from the English Choral Tradition by Finzi, Elgar and Wood with some Bob Chilcott thrown in to add even more fun. It's on the ambitious side, but all enjoyable music and you will have a good sing!

The accompanist will be the immensely talented George Castle. Registration starts at 10am. Bring your own pack lunch and complimentary hot drinks and biscuits will be available. The day concludes with a free concert for your friends and family at 3pm in the church.

The workshop costs £20 (£10 for those 21 and under) including music; please buy your tickets at <https://www.southernvoices.co.uk/ComeAndSing>

Car parking is limited at the church; please use nearby Winchester car parks and allow time to walk to the church.

Don't be shy, come and sing with us – we really look forward to seeing you there!



Sing to Boost Your Health

In a recent Times newspaper article, Peta Bee outlined seven ways in which singing has been demonstrated to boost one's health. All, or even one, of these benefits would be worth having and might inspire you to give it a try.



Memory

Researchers at the University of Exeter found that music and regular singing were linked to better brain health through improving memory and the ability to solve complex tasks.

Stress reduction

Research conducted by the Royal College of Music has shown that singing in a relaxed environment can reduce levels of the hormone cortisol which is released in response to stress.

Snoring

Weak muscles in the soft palate and upper throat are a common underlying cause of chronic snoring and medical research showed that 20 minutes of simple singing exercises performed daily for three months helped to strengthen these muscles, reducing the frequency and severity of snoring to improve sleep quality when compared with those who didn't sing.

Combating anxiety and depression

Researchers at the University of East Anglia's Norwich Medical School found that for some, social singing, as part of a choir or community group, helped alleviate low mood by promoting a feeling of belonging, security and wellbeing.

Boosting immunity

Researchers at the Royal College of Music found that singing in a choir for just one hour a week led to improved levels of cytokines, immune system proteins that help the body fight serious illness.

Breathing

Singing is a form of controlled breathing that has been found to have similar benefits to the breathing exercises in Yoga. These effects have been shown to impose a calm and regular breathing pattern that has a positive effect on the heart rate and on general health.

Language learning

Researchers at the University of Edinburgh found that people who adopted a singing approach to learning a difficult language became twice as good at speaking the new language than those who repeated the same phrases by speaking them. Singing words to music appeared to create stronger links in the brain, with the melody providing an extra clue to jog memory.

Reflections on...

WELLBEING OF...

... Singing

Sarah Seymour



A search on Google for the benefits of singing will deliver many anecdotal and scientific reasons why singing is good for you. It boosts happiness; releases endorphins that give us a sense of well-being and raise our pain thresholds; improves our sense of connectedness with others; stimulates brain function and memory; benefits the lungs; relaxes the muscles; improves posture; and seals friendships. The list goes on. Of these, I would say my personal favourites are the happiness factor and the friendship effect. It took me about a year of singing regularly in a choir to realise that after every single choir practice, I felt happy. Even if I arrived at the rehearsal stressed out and exhausted, as I often did, I would leave feeling uplifted and good. It's still true, twenty years on.

The friendship effect is curious. It seems to me that some choirs contain quite diverse individuals who struggle on a one-to-one basis to communicate with each other at all. However, there is something about singing together, especially when you sing in parts, that creates trust and allows you to be with people, to feel close to them, to feel emotional and moved and somehow not to feel awkward. Those choirs of 'misfits' are often the ones that turn up for each other, make the effort to stay in touch and genuinely treat each other as valuable. It doesn't matter what you do, look like or wear, as long as you can sing that difficult interval and make a nice sound at the end of that anthem, people will value you and your shared treasury of musical skill like a special currency. Maybe you don't make a nice sound, but, if you work on it together and build a team, your singing buddies will be looking out for you eagerly at the next rehearsal.

Although science tells us that, with patience and commitment, everyone can learn to sing (something I have heard with my own ears), the old myth that some people are 'tone deaf', which is not even a real condition, still persists in the minds of some people. If that's you, you can either de-bunk it yourself by getting some lessons with an experienced teacher with a track record of success with late-developing singers, or you can join a singing group that openly markets itself to people who 'can't' sing.

The benefits of singing together are open to people at all skill levels and there are choirs working at all levels, both performing and non-performing. The thing is to find the right one for you. There is a group for everyone. Like Mr Olivander's shop in the Harry Potter books, which matched different wands with the right individuals, our 'inner magic' will have

a special affinity with certain types of music. It's not something you choose; it's something you are.

At school, I quite enjoyed singing. I was always up for anything our music teacher threw at us; musical theatre, classical, folk, spirituals - it was all fun. But I never thought of myself as loving music. That all changed when I walked into a church and heard a choir singing *Jesus Christ the Apple Tree* by Elizabeth Poston. The four-part, *a capella* harmony shot an arrow straight into my heart. I had NEVER heard anything more moving and I knew instantly that I wanted to be part of it.

C S Lewis once wrote of a kind of serious happiness that makes you more happy than any kind of cheerfulness. This is what I discovered in traditional church music. When I sing it with others, I feel a serious joy that makes me sad and happy at the same time. If there is a 'peace which passes all understanding', then I find it singing sacred music in a church with a motley band of wonderful misfits.

It never ceases to amaze me that a little team of ordinary, flawed humans with imperfect individual voices can combine to produce so much beauty by singing anthems by Tallis, Byrd, Bruckner, Rutter and so many more great composers. We all have different tastes and should respect each other's musical preferences. Music that one person responds to wholeheartedly can leave another cold or wanting something different. It is worth being choosy and seeking out the music that is calling you and resonates with everything you believe in . . . even if you don't know what exactly that is.

It may seem strange, but sometimes a single chord, or even a note, sung well by my choir can turn an average day into one where I feel deeply happy inside and hug the memory of that moment like a hot water bottle at the end of the day. For others, that happiness may come from belting out a pop song or a song from a show. So for happiness and friendship why not search out your choir? There are so many to choose from in Stockbridge!



This group started in Stockbridge Town Hall in February this year led by Louisa Revolta and has already gained 20



enthusiastic singers.

Louisa is a professional musician, most well known for her work with her singing group *The Spitfire Sisters* who specialise in vintage inspired vocal harmonies. Louisa also teaches piano, saxophone, flute and clarinet. She loves the friendly environment that Sing for Fun creates and enjoys helping people realise that actually everyone can sing! There are well-structured personalised arrangements, a wealth of online learning materials to give support between sessions and wonderful additional standalone events to get involved with.

The Summer term starts on **April 15 at 1.00pm**

To sign up for a free taster, visit

singforfun.co.uk/stockbridge

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Stockbridge Ukraine showing the Oscar-Winning Documentary 20 Days in Mariupol

On 20th April, Stockbridge Ukraine will be showing the film *20 Days in Mariupol* to raise funds to send SUV's to Ukraine to act as ambulances. This extraordinary account of the desperate times in Mariupol as Russia closed in has won 12 international awards, a BAFTA, and recently won the Oscar for best documentary. The New York Times described it as 'Essential. A relentless and truly important documentary.'

A big problem for those serving on the front line in Ukraine is simply a lack of transport for day-to-day tasks such as getting wounded back from the front to medical care. There just aren't enough military vehicles and units have to find their own solutions. One option is to convert an ordinary civilian 4x4 SUV into a makeshift ambulance but they are very hard to get hold of in Ukraine. An effective alternative is to buy vehicles here and drive them out to Ukraine. The vehicles can also be loaded with badly-needed medical and other humanitarian supplies. Other groups are already doing this very successfully so the process is established.

Stockbridge Ukraine has planned a series of events throughout the year to raise money to buy suitable second-hand SUV's here and send them out. **20 Days in Mariupol** is the first of these. The film will be shown twice in Stockbridge Town Hall on the 20th April; once in the evening and once as a matinée (the matinée is subject to demand). Tickets are available through the Stockbridge Community Cinema website <https://www.stockbridgecinema.org.uk> (Thank you, Paul Kidd, for the support of the Community Cinema).

Subsequent events include:

6th June : Garden Visit - a trip to the exclusive Mill Gardens in Gloucestershire including lunch and return transport from Stockbridge on 6th June (tickets are available from <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/stockbridgeukraine/1163839>).

28th June : Taste of Stockbridge - a tour of ten of Stockbridge's wonderful local shops, pubs and restaurants where you can sample some fabulous food and drinks on a 'safari supper'. At the end of the evening, we will finish at The Grosvenor to include acoustic music. Tickets are available from <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/stockbridgeukraine/1184742>

4th October : Musical Evening featuring the Larondina Dance Company (more details and tickets available later in the year).

15th October : James Holland - a talk by this historian, author and broadcaster, and co-founder of the Chalke History Festival. Tickets available later in the year.

All events and links for buying tickets will be posted on our website www.stockbridgeukraine.org.

Rymma Khoroshko (one the Ukrainians living in Stockbridge who have become so much part of our community) is in contact with friends on the front line who are badly in need of such support. Many of their vehicles were destroyed in the battle for Bakhmut. So we have a personal link to those in need and we can help, with the minimum of bureaucracy or overheads.

It costs up to £10,000 to find a vehicle, repaint it, service it, fit new tyres and transport it to Kiev. However, thanks to generous donations, and the tickets we have already sold, we are well on our way to raising the money for the first one. During the year we hope to be able to fund several more.

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Social evenings are held on the first Wednesday of most months in the Greyhound on the Test

Dirk Hartog, a 17th Century Dutch Mariner

Early European voyages to the southern oceans were often shrouded in mystery. The uncharted waters surrounding the southern continents had intrigued Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch mariners. Some explorers were convinced that there must be a large land mass in the southern hemisphere to counterbalance the northern hemisphere. European cartographers from the 14th Century imaginatively depicted a vast irregularly-shaped region across the bottom of a world map which they

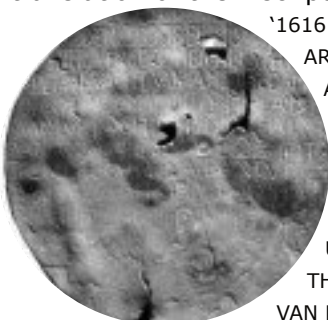


labelled *Terra Incognita* (Unknown Land), as shown on the map. There is an example of this type of map in the Doge's Palace in Venice, labelled *Terra Australis* (Southern Land) and depicted by a faint wavy line petering out halfway across the map.

The desire to expand empires and find new trading partners encouraged European maritime nations to search for new sea routes to the east. Early in the 17th century, sponsored by the Dutch East India Company, Dutch mariners reported sightings and mapped landmasses in the southern hemisphere they called *Eendrachtsland* (Land Of Eendracht), *Hollandia Nova* (New Holland) and *Terre de Diemen's* (Van Diemen's Land, later to become Tasmania).

In 1616, Dutch skipper, Dirk Hartog, with a merchant Gillis Miebaais, in the ship *Eendracht*, accidentally discovered the west coast of the Unknown South Land while sailing northwards. Hartog sailed from the Netherlands on 23rd January 1616 heading to the East Indies. The ship was laden with cargo to be traded for spices and other products. *Eendracht* became separated from the fleet in a storm and took an easterly route across the Indian Ocean before turning north towards Macassar in eastern Indonesia. That is why he was far enough east to encounter the unknown continent *Terra Incognita*. After landing on several small islands, now known as the Aboelhos Islands, the crew of the *Eendracht* left an engraved pewter dish on the mainland to mark their landing and to proclaim it for future visitors. A translation of the inscription -

'1616 THE 25 OCTOBER IS HERE ARRIVED THE SHIP EENDRAGHT OF AMSTERDAM THE UPPERMERCHANT GILLIS MIEBAIS OF LIEGE SKIPPER DIRCK HATICHS OF AMSTERDAM. THE 27 DITTO (we) SET SAIL FOR BANTAM THE UNDERMERCHANT JAN STINS, THE FIRST MATE PIETER DOOKES VAN BIL. ANNO 1616'



'1616 THE 25 OCTOBER IS HERE ARRIVED THE SHIP EENDRAGHT OF AMSTERDAM THE UPPERMERCHANT GILLIS MIEBAIS OF LIEGE SKIPPER DIRCK HATICHS OF AMSTERDAM. THE 27 DITTO (we) SET SAIL FOR BANTAM THE UNDERMERCHANT JAN STINS, THE FIRST MATE PIETER DOOKES VAN BIL. ANNO 1616'

The dish is now preserved in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. The pewter dish and the wooden post to which it was attached are the earliest confirmed evidence of a European presence in Australia. The sheltered moorings where Hartog stayed for a few days were named the Dirk Hartog Roads. Passing other islands, they observed, and then landed on, the mainland coast. Hartog called the new land *Eendrachtsland* (after his ship). The name was noted in the East India Company files and used by cartographers on charts from 1627. The part of the coast where Hartog landed is now called Shark Bay on the coast of Western Australia. The landings were the first of a succession of explorations by Dutch, and later English and French navigators. According to the engraving, they were headed for Banda. *Eendracht* arrived home on 16 October 1618 carrying a cargo of cloves for The East India Company.

Here I should note that Captain Cook arrived in Botany Bay, Sydney, on Sunday 29th April 1770, 154 years after Dirk Hartog's visit to Shark Bay.



Shark Bay is an isolated area with very white beaches mostly made of seashells. The waters around the bay, including Dirk Hartog Island, are protected as a Marine National Park. There is an abundance of marine life

in the waters including sharks. Dugong are common, grazing peacefully on sea grasses, as are turtles and large rays. There is a small museum at Shark Bay describing Dirk Hartog's visit with a copy of the pewter dish.

The Bay, in an area known as Hamelin Pool, is one of only two places in the world to have *stromatolites*. These are complex ecosystems where different species of bacteria and other microbes work



together in communities that depend on each other. The structures take many years to build into rounded low pillars. Stromatolites in the

shallows of Hamelin Pool show what marine life was like three billion years ago. They are only found in shallow pools as some of the microbes forming them, cyanobacteria, require sunlight and, importantly, produce oxygen from a simple form of photosynthesis. They are the precursor to all green plant life.

Jill Goodwin

MANOR AND BOROUGH OF STOCKBRIDGE

Courts Baron and Leet - News from the Meeting of 13 March 2024

As always, the evening was one of light-hearted pomp and ceremony, opened by the Town Crier in resplendent robes. This year, Peter Hughes performed the honours.



*Peter Hughes as
Town Crier*

Guy Boney, Lord of the Manor, opened his address by informing the assembled company that his busy little team, otherwise known as the Officers of the Courts Baron and Leet, was about to lose a most important member, in fact its principal member, the Bailiff, Dee Tym. He told the audience, 'As Bailiff, Dee is the chief executive whose task it is to set up these annual court sittings. She books the hall, chooses the jury and then lines them up for attendance, all the while keeping the Lord of the Manor more or less pointing in the right direction.

Since 2003, I have been lucky enough to have been served by four bailiffs, Laurie Stares, Paul Robinson, Christopher Robathan and Dee, each of whom had their own particular talents. Dee is a particularly fine organiser and a natural diplomat, and having served a valuable ten years or so in office has chosen her moment to retire, and I just want to thank her very deeply for all she has done for me personally and for the National Trust, but in particular, to thank her for all she's done for Stockbridge in keeping this valuable tradition alive.

My most distinguished predecessor, Professor Rosalind Hill, who was Professor of Medieval History at Westfield College, London University, and Lady of the Manor here from 1945 to 1988, knew more about the history of Stockbridge than anyone. She had no doubt that the Lordship of the Manor went back right to shortly after the Norman Conquest nine centuries ago. So it's a part of our distant history which, if you care for these things, is well worth preserving.'

The Lord of the Manor then welcomed Dee's successor, Andy Soper, who was sworn in by the Clerk to the Court. Officers and members of the Jury for 2024/5 were also appointed and sworn in.



Retiring Bailiff Dee Tym with her successor, Andy Soper

The Lord of the Manor paid tribute to burgesses who had died in the previous year, highlighting legacies of admirable service and achievement. He then entertained the gathering with tales of Stockbridge's (frequently less-than-reputable) past.

Our National Trust officer, Catherine Hadler, took questions from the floor and reported on ongoing issues, in particular the parlous management of sewage discharge into our rivers - see p27 for more.

The Lord of the Manor having brought the meeting to a close, the Town Crier dismissed the gathering with due aplomb.

Winnie of Winchester R.I.P.

Many of you will have seen in the news that, sadly, Winnie, our wonderful female peregrine falcon, died in early March. She was given an almost half-page 'obituary' in *The Times* - not on the Obituaries page admittedly - but a larger spread than many of the most illustrious who are so honoured.

Winnie had captured the hearts of so many of us who have watched her nest over many years on the north parapet of Winchester Cathedral, having migrated from Winchester Police Station when it was demolished in 2017. She and her then partner, Chester, continued to raise chicks from that vantage point and you may recall that in 2020 Winnie laid 5 eggs, all of them hatched and were raised by their diligent parents until they flew the nest. Five chicks are very rare in the peregrine world.



Chester died in 2021 and then another male peregrine, William, came on the scene. He and Winnie mated and produced chicks in 2022 and 2023. In 2022 they produced two fledglings and in 2023 just the one. The parents returned to the Cathedral recently but so did a new female and there seems to have been a 'scuffle' between Winnie and the new female with, sadly, Winnie coming off worse for wear. She was found dead the next day.

That is the bad news. But the good news is that nature continues and William and the new female are both going to the nest on the parapet. So the hope is that they will mate and she will produce eggs. You can watch what is happening by going to the Cathedral website, click on *explore* and then click on *peregrines*. You will find two live camera pictures so that if the peregrines are at home you will see them up close!

Jean Boney

(Photo credit : Steve Payce)



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Potting Shed Cuttings for April



New gardening books to try:

A Year in a Small Garden - Frances Tophill

Outside In: A Year of Growing and Displaying - Sean Pritchard

Drawn to the Garden - Caroline Quentin

The First Time Forager: A safety first guide to edible wild plants
- Andy Hamilton

Pruning

Vigorous fig trees can be pruned back this month, as can spring-flowering shrubs such as forsythia, which have finished flowering. Cut out dead hydrangea flowers and prune flowering shoots to the first healthy bud from the dead flower head. Any diseased shoots or any which cross over can be taken out as well. Cut penstemon stems at the base of the plant, provided new shoots are appearing. Winter-flowering heathers should be trimmed after flowering has finished and narcissi and tulips dead-headed once flowering is over.

Sowing

A huge variety of vegetable seeds can be sown this month: carrots, beetroot, lettuce, leeks, radishes, spring onions, spinach, chard and summer cauliflower can be sown outside; under glass sow tomatoes, cucumbers, celery, aubergines, marrows, courgettes, sweet peppers and celeriac. For the flower garden, annuals such as alyssum, cosmos, marigolds, sunflowers, sweet peas and nasturtiums can all be sown. Check on the seed packet for instructions on whether they should be sown outdoors or under glass.

Planting/Potting Up

Sweet peas sown in the autumn can be planted out now; ensure the soil is well fed with manure and that supports are in place to secure the shoots as they grow. In the vegetable plot, main crop potatoes should be in by mid-month. Continue earthing up first and second earlies. Established perennials such as hostas and primroses can be lifted and divided before replanting. Provided the weather is mild, dahlias and gladioli may be planted out. If evergreen shrubs and trees need to be moved, do so now, unless the soil is still frozen or waterlogged. If you have a greenhouse or conservatory, hanging baskets and containers can be planted up now and kept frost-free until May, when danger of frost has passed. This will give you a head start on plant and flower growth when they are eventually planted out.

Miscellaneous Jobs


Keep mowing and continue to lower the blades slightly. If you have applied a weedkiller, do not put the mown cuttings on the compost heap. Aerate the lawn and rake up moss and dead leaves; apply a spring 'weed and feed' and re-seed any bare patches or lay new turves. Read the instructions

for 'weed and feed' products carefully; if no rain is forecast in 3 or 4 days after applying, you should water the lawn. Mulch and feed mixed borders and containers. When applying plant feeds, remember the uses for the 3 main elements: N (nitrogen), P (phosphorus), K (potassium). Nitrogen-rich mixes, such as pelleted chicken manure, do promote seed and fruit growth, but are primarily used for healthy leaf growth; potassium-rich mixes such as tomato feed (or banana skins) promote fruit growth; and phosphorus, essential in converting solar energy, promotes strong, stress-free plants with good root growth, encouraging the production of sugars, starches and oil and can be found in such brands as *Miracle-Gro*. Alternatively, choose a good all-purpose feed such as organic fish, blood and bone, or *Growmore*.

Micki Nadal

jennifergay and artisan route

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Watch Out, Hornets About!

LOCAL BEEKEEPERS URGE PUBLIC TO JOIN FIGHT AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE INVASIVE SPECIES

Beekeepers across Andover & the Test Valley are calling on the public to help spot and report Asian Hornet sightings as we head towards spring.

The destructive insect poses the greatest threat to our native honey bees in a generation.

Experts warn there could be catastrophic consequences for the UK's wider ecology if the insects are allowed to become established here.

Asian Hornets can become aggressive when defending nests, posing a risk to public health.

More nests were discovered in 2023 than in the previous six years combined.

The cost to the economy in France, where Asian Hornets have become established, is estimated to be in excess of £26 million every year.

Local members of the British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) are calling on the public to be vigilant and look out for Asian Hornets and nests as we head into the warmer months.

Asian Hornets are an incredibly destructive invasive species that specialise in preying on honeybee hives - one Asian Hornet alone can kill 30-60 honeybees per day. First discovered in the UK in 2016, the insect has travelled to our shores from northern Europe, where there are now over half a million nests annually in France alone.

By 2022, just 16 Asian Hornet nests had been discovered in this country. By 2023, this increased dramatically to 72 nests in 56 different locations, with Kent and the South East most predominantly affected. But there have been sightings in many other locations, including as far north as Scotland, and a credible sighting already reported in January this year, sparking fears the non-native insect may become established in the UK.

Experts are keen to point out that this is not just a problem for beekeepers but poses a significant risk to public health. Asian Hornets are aggressively defensive of their nests,

which are often built in hedgerows and brambles, meaning disturbances by unsuspecting individuals could have dangerous consequences.

An Asian Hornet can be identified by its very distinct markings - a similar size to a European Hornet, which is two or three times the size of a common wasp - and has a mainly black body with distinct yellow lower leg.



The public is being urged to stay vigilant - particularly in early Spring and into May when the Queens emerge from hibernation - and is encouraged to report any suspected sightings on the Asian Hornet Watch app, which is available to download on iOS and Android.

Expert teams from the National Bee Unit, part of Defra, will then be deployed to track hornets back to their nests, which are then destroyed.

Reporting a possible sighting of an Asian Hornet is quick, free, and easy and has the potential to make a huge difference in the fight against this invasive species.

Further information and national updates can be found on the BBKA and National Bee Unit websites :
<https://www.bbka.org.uk>
<https://www.nationalbeeunit.com>

For local contact : Tom Vail, beekeeper and member of Andover & District Beekeeping Association (which includes Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford), email thomasvail@gmail.com

Think you've seen an Asian Hornet? Report it!

Insect	Scientific Name
Asian Hornet	<i>Vespa velutina</i>
European Hornet	<i>Vespa crabro</i>
Wasp	<i>Vespa vulgaris</i>
Honey Bee	<i>Apis mellifera</i>

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Stockbridge Parish Council News

Parish Meeting

Stockbridge PC will be holding a Parish Meeting 25th April in Stockbridge Town Hall at 7.00pm. The Sparsholt students' designs for the new Blandford Row pocket park will be on display and community members are invited to join the Councillors for a glass of wine, view the designs and vote for their preferred choice. It is hoped that the designs will provide for a pleasant and appealing community garden that will enable local residents to have an outside area to relax in and enjoy the flowers and their perfume.

D-Day Anniversary

It is unfortunate that the National Trust will not allow Stockbridge Down to accommodate a beacon for celebrations for the 80th anniversary of D-Day. The National Trust is worried about ground-nesting birds and other small animals that might be affected. The PC looked into alternative beacons which would have been on a stand and used on the Recreation Ground or on the High Street but, unfortunately, these proved too expensive. However, the church bell ringers will be contributing to the Ringing Out for Peace World Event at 6.30pm on the evening of 6th June. Please take a moment to enjoy the peal of bells.

River Test - Pollution

The Parish Council is part of the Pan Parish Group that has been set up by Houghton PC to work together to put pressure on Southern Water to stop dumping untreated sewage into the Test. The Pan Parish group met at the end of February and will do so again in early April. The group is hoping to share information about the extent of the pollution and alert parishes when there are major discharges into the river. Hopefully, these warnings will mitigate some of damage and warn people to keep pets and children out of the water. The group will also campaign to stop further river pollution incidents and is calling on the Environment Agency and other relevant bodies to enforce existing regulations and bring Southern Water to account. Houghton Parish Council is buying a water monitoring unit to be placed permanently in the river in Houghton to monitor, constantly, the water quality and send alerts when pollutants exceed safe levels. This device will provide hard data. At the moment, monitoring of water quality is done by the EA and is sporadic and when the data is released, it is retrospective - see more on this on p.27.

Council Tax

The first instalments of the 2024/2025 Council tax will be due in April. Stockbridge Parish Council's precept has risen by £1330 which is approximately 4%. This will mean a rise of approximately £3.80 per house per year (depending upon the Council tax grading). HCC is one of the largest local authorities in the UK and a large proportion of the County Council's budget is spent on providing social

care for both older and younger adults as well as children. This work includes protecting children from harm and neglect, social care for Hampshire's growing older population, supporting adults and children with disabilities and additional needs and providing school transport for children with special educational needs. Like other councils across the country, HCC is finding that the costs of delivering these social care services are increasing because of inflation and price increases by care providers, as well as demand being at record levels, which has pushed up our overall costs by an extra £152 million a year from April. Therefore, 2% of this year's council tax increase will go specifically towards helping meet these financial pressures in adult social care. HCC's other responsibilities include roads, libraries and household waste recycling facilities. HCC needs to think about reducing the facilities that they provide in these areas in order to cut costs. This why HCC is considering closing Bunny Lane recycling centre and reducing the number of recycling sites to only one per borough.

Stockbridge Recreation Ground Trust

The Trust is working on improvements at the Recreation Ground. Unfortunately, there was a break-in at the club house in January and some items were stolen. The Trust is focusing on providing ladies and disabled toilets which will make the provision at the ground more inclusive. The Trust also needs to replace the fencing around the ground. The Trust has approached the Town Hall for a donation and will be investigating other sources of funding as well.

Next Meeting

Stockbridge Parish Council will meet on 18th April for the Parish Council meeting but at the earlier time of 7:15pm (which is the new time that the Council will meet) and 25th April for the Parish Meeting at 7.00pm both in Stockbridge Town Hall.

Belinda Baker
Clerk to Stockbridge Parish Council
clerk@stockbridgeparishcouncil.org.uk

Don't forget to Vote! Thursday 2 May

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4 Generations of Family Service

Dear Reader

I recently read an extraordinary true-life story, written by someone who entered service at the age of 14. It was an amazing insight into social history, now over a century ago, but it also included some great household tips that are just too good not to include in this and future articles! I hope you find them interesting.

Now for the recipe.

Strawberry Shortcakes

The clouds are still firmly in place as I write this! So, I thought we should start getting ready for afternoon tea season. Simple to make and a lovely alternative to the usual scone - but just as tasty!

Ingredients (for 8 shortcakes)

- 350g self-raising flour, plus extra for dusting
- 100g cold butter, cubed
- 100g caster sugar
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 vanilla pod, seeds scraped
- 100ml milk, warmed
- 1 egg, plus a second egg beaten for glazing
- 1 lemon
- 1 tsp icing sugar
- 227g clotted cream
- 250g strawberries, thickly sliced
- Strawberry jam

Method

Heat the oven to 220°C/fan 200°C/gas 7 and lightly flour a baking sheet.

Place the flour, butter, sugar, half the vanilla seeds and ¼ teaspoon salt into a food processor or bowl. Pulse the mixture or rub together until it resembles fine crumb or breadcrumb. Tip into a large mixing bowl.

In a separate bowl, beat together the milk, egg and a good squeeze of the lemon. Then tip into the bowl of crumbs and bring the mixture together with a knife. Use a cutting action until you have a clumpy dough, finishing with your hands if needed. Lightly flour the work surface, tip the dough onto it and quickly shape it into a 'smoothish' disc. Using a rolling pin, roll it out to about 2cm thick.

Cut out 8 rounds with a smooth 7cm cookie cutter, pinching together odd pieces to make the final ones.

Glaze just the tops with the beaten egg and transfer to the baking sheet. Place in the preheated oven and bake for 10-12 minutes until they are risen and golden and sound hollow on the bottom when tapped. Leave to cool on a wire rack.

Beat the remaining vanilla seeds and icing sugar into the clotted cream. It will be runny at first but . keep beating and it will thicken.

To serve, slice the very top from each of the shortcakes, then spoon over 1 teaspoon of jam. Top with a good dollop of the cream mixture and finish with a layer of strawberries.

Divine!!

Housemaid's Tip

Never throw away leftover pieces of lemon. Instead, place them around your taps overnight and in the morning any scale will have disappeared.

Linda Hotchen

Mike Bailey

We are sorry to learn of the death of Mike Bailey at the age of 89.

Mike had lived for much of his life at Roman Road. He played for Stockbridge Football Club from the age of 14, later becoming its manager, groundsman and vice-president.

Having been widowed in 2018, Mike is survived by his daughter Karen, two grand-daughters and four great-grandchildren.

Mike's funeral was held at Salisbury Crematorium on Tuesday 12th March.



In 2013 Mike was awarded this plate by the North Hants Football Association for 25 years' service to Football.



Mike, centre, with the Stockbridge Football Club squad of 1960-61.

Lay Vocations Morning

With regret, it has been decided to postpone the event scheduled for Saturday 6th April at All Saints Church Hall, St Leonards & St Ives. Please look out for details of the re-arranged event later in the year.

Contact : Tracey Nicholls
tracey.nicholls@winchester.anglican.org

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A Message from Catherine Hadler - our National Trust Ranger

It would be hard not to have noticed the many recent news stories regarding water companies and their hideous abuse of our watercourses: sewerage overflow, discharge events, storm outflow pipes pumping into our rivers and seas whilst the bosses appear to pocket huge bonuses from billion-pound profits. It's disgusting.

Look closely at the photos below. This is your own Marsh Court stream, the tributary of the Test that runs alongside the Marsh. What do you see? A precious chalk stream habitat rich in biodiversity and thriving with life even in these older months?



Nope. Instead, you can see the plastic-lined remains of a sanitary towel, with sewage algae growing on it, gently rippling in the current and hanging off the storm overflow pipe that flows from the water treatment works across the road, under the Marsh and out into Marsh Court stream. You can see sewage fungus growing on the surrounding vegetation, the plants themselves long dead and decaying.

This pipe supposedly only flows untreated waste during rare, extreme storm events when the tanks get full. Yet, according to the Rivers Trust sewage map it flowed 30 times in 2022 for a total of 328 hours. No data exists yet for 2023 or 2024 but, given what we are seeing, it is likely to be the same sad, depressing story. Southern Water is dumping sewage in our rivers up and down the valley and no enforcing bodies seem able to stop them. The system is broken, with legislation and enforcement seemingly non-existent. Where is 'The Polluter Pays' principle? Companies must be made to use their profits to sort out the infrastructure and the system to prevent them from depositing filth in our waters.

We started doing water quality testing on the Marsh in March, to get a true picture of what was happening. We took samples from just below the pipe and from further upstream. This tests for ammonia, phosphate and nitrate levels and, needless to say, whilst the upstream results weren't too bad (although higher in nitrates than we'd like), the results from just below the pipe were horrifying. We discovered elevated levels for all three chemical compounds indicating extremely poor water quality, indicative of the pipe being very much in use.

This is in an SSSI chalk stream habitat! How is this happening!?? How can it now be the norm? I have been following, with despair, the protests and reports regarding the discharge events occurring in Test Valley throughout this winter. But to see the evidence so brazen and blatant in our river has enraged and sickened me more than I can say. When and how will this stop? There is no one solution to what is a multitude of problems, but things need to be shouted about and awareness grown. If you have any power or influence, use it to spread the plight of the Test, and all our rivers, far and wide. Tell your friends on councils, write to your MP, and report any pollution incidents to the Environment Agency 24/7 Hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Raise awareness of what is happening. Make the enforcing bodies take action.

Check out the Rivers Trust website for the 'State of Our Rivers' report and the sewage map. Learn about our chalk streams, our riverine and estuarine habitats, and what SSSIs represent. Learn what privatisation has done to our water systems and how years of government under-funding have contributed to infrastructure that is not fit for purpose. Understand the full extent of the problems that face us. Our rivers are rotting. Our wildlife is dying. Nature is weeping soiled tears and bleeding sewage through the watery veins of the land and it is being allowed to happen! We must shout it out loud to be seen and heard - if people don't know, they won't care.

As the saying goes, 'What is the extinction of the condor, to the child who has never known the wren?'

(Catherine has asked us to point out that her views are based on her local knowledge and observations and do not necessarily represent the view of the National Trust. - Eds)

Well-attended protest at the Fullerton Wastewater Treatment Works on 18th March



Church News

St Peter's and Old St Peter's Stockbridge



The forty days of Lent ended with Easter Sunday on 31st March. We now start the month of April in Eastertide which lasts for 50 days until Pentecost on 19th May. Mothering Sunday fell on March 10th. Geoff Cox led the meaningful service for which our flower volunteers, Mary Matthews, Liz Cox, Morella Cottam and Gail Bailey, had prepared beautiful posies for all the women in the congregation. In recognition of this day and of International Women's Day two days before, our organist Sarah Seymour played on piano the *Prelude and Fugue in B flat (No. 2 from Three Preludes and Fugues Op. 16)* by Clara Schumann before the service, setting the tone for honouring all women.

All the Benefice PCC's got together in the Town Hall on March 12th for a meeting held by Archdeacon Jean Burgess, and our Area Dean, James Pitkin. They laid out the road map for appointing a new Rector and enabled those attending to ask many questions. The hope is that the process for a new appointment now moves smoothly and quickly.

We had a joyful Baptism on March 3rd. The Campling family brought 3-month-old Matilda Rose to be baptised at the font during the Eucharist. The Rev'd Canon Linda Scard led the service and Matilda behaved immaculately.

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Marjorie Andrews. She came regularly to our services, in recent years pushed in her wheelchair by her faithful carer, Sonya. Some months ago, Marjorie had wished to attend a service in Old St Peter's but her carer could not push her wheelchair over the shingle on the path leading from the gate. Prompted by this and other problems of access, the shingle has now been removed, enabling anyone to reach the old church or the quiet garden outside. Marjorie's funeral was held in St Mary's, Longstock on 18th March.

Looking Ahead

Sunday, April 7th: Tea and cakes in the church for those who live alone.

Thursday, April 25th: Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) at 7pm in St Peter's Church. Everyone who is interested in the life of our two Stockbridge churches is invited to attend, even if they are not regular church-goers.

Janet Williams

Music in St Peter's Church

St Peter's hosted a marvellously-entertaining recital, *The Trumpet Shall Sound*, for Stockbridge Music on Friday 1st March featuring Crispian Steele-Perkins on trumpet and David Hill on organ.



Crispian Steele-Perkins shows his versatility by playing on the garden hose!

The following morning, David Hill, a professional organist and Master of Music, gave a Masterclass in the church using a large 3 Manual Viscount Organ. Sarah Seymour was the volunteer. After explaining the difference between our normal church organ with pipes and this digital version, David gave a fascinating tuition session to Sarah on the Viscount, which not only benefitted her, but also gave us in the audience a great deal of inside knowledge about this impressive instrument. To finish the class, David gave us a wonderful demonstration of his talent on the organ.



David Hill on the 3 Manual Viscount Organ brought in for the concert on 1 March

On March 16th, also in St Peter's, in association with the Stockbridge Music Society, the Salisbury Chamber Chorus, accompanied by a string quartet, piano and organ, sang the *Symphony of Psalms* by Stravinsky. This was followed after the interval by a beautiful rendition of Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem*. Fauré himself said that this piece of music was 'dominated from beginning to end by a very human feeling of faith in eternal rest'. Hearing the *Pie Jesu* (soprano) and the haunting choral finale *In Paradisum*, none of us could fail to be swept away by his sentiment.

Janet Williams

Church News

St Mary's Longstock



During Lent there were four different Lent Study Groups, all discussing the Book of Ruth. The groups considered relationships, the reasons for doing things, faithfulness and loyalty and seeing God's Plan in action.

As Easter was early this year, we had Mothering Sunday on 10 March, with the making of the posies being done at the Old Vicarage on 9 March. Thank you to Sophie for her hospitality. We had a very good group of four grown-ups with at least nine children helping. The posies were done in very good time over lots of chat, cups of tea and cake. Mothering Sunday was a joyous occasion with 46 attending. Ten children helped distribute the posies, with those left over being given to friends and neighbours unable to be at church. Many of the children took part in the service.

As there was no Communion on Mothering Sunday, we arranged for Parish Eucharist to take place on 17 March. The vicar, from the clerical registry was Rev'd Linda Scard, who I met some years ago when we worked together. We had a good congregation, with plenty of time to chat after the service.

The funeral for Marjorie Andrews took place on 18 March at 1.45pm. Many will remember Marjorie at Longstock, masterminding teas, refreshments for the May plant sales, fundraising for a new Village Hall and so much more, for example, many years on Longstock PCC. She was never happier than when fishing for trout – and then letting the fête sell them. Marjorie was one of those people that when you knew they were around, everything would be OK. May she rest in peace.

There was a full church with her family and friends and, of course, many from Longstock and Stockbridge wishing to say their goodbyes.

Sadly, the Good Friday walk along the River Test was not possible this year – we did a risk assessment and felt that, with the river running so high and fast, it was just too risky. We did have the walk, but on a different route, with readings and a summary. The walk ended back at the church where we had coffee and buns.

Easter Day

Unfortunately, the clerical registry was not able to supply enough clergy for all the churches to have an Easter Eucharist. Leckford and Old St Peter did not have a service, and Longstock had an All-Age Easter, but without the communion. The remaining four Churches were all able to have an Easter Communion. At Longstock we had our All Age

Service and celebrated the joy of Easter, with an Easter Garden, built by the young people present. The Easter Egg hunt took place after the service. This year, Easter day brought official summer time when the clocks 'sprang forward'

Having two spring-clean dates was a big ask but volunteers arrived both days, (16th & 23rd) so the church was polished and brushed to be at its best and the churchyard was cared for with the removal of ivy, cleaning graves and generally being spruced up. Thanks to all who came and helped.

The church, as part of the work to gain the next step up from bronze - the 'Silver' Eco award - now has an owl box, plans for new benches, the start of a wild flower area and the beginnings of a compost area. Many thanks to Lisa Traylor, (née Stone) who is now running this project - see her report on p9. Please note, whenever possible, we will use 'fair-trade' products for our tea and coffee.

April and May

Both months will be busy as the parishes of the Mid-Test work together to produce a 'Benefice Profile' approved by all parishes and then put forward for the Archdeacon's approval. This document will then be used for the Rector recruitment process. We hope to advertise in June, with, subject to receiving applications, interviews in July. Please pray for this process.

Longstock ACM will take place in the church on 16 April 2024, at 7.30pm. Please do come to elect your churchwardens – we still have a vacancy – and the PCC members. There will be a short presentation on what we are doing for the next level – silver – for the Eco Award, so this is a chance to come and ask questions. If anyone would like to stand for election as a Church Warden or PCC member and has any questions, please contact me on 810284. You do need to be on the church electoral roll in order to stand for election.

9th May is Ascension Day with a service at 7.30pm at St Andrews Church, Mottisfont. At this service, the new PCC's will be commissioned and this year we are fortunate to have the Archdeacon, the venerable Jean Burgess, to lead the service.

Pentecost comes on 19 May and at the Morning Worship service at St Mary's we will do our best to celebrate the church's birthday in style. Please put the date in your diary.

For details of Church Services at St Mary, Longstock for April 2024, see page 31.

If you have any queries during the interregnum please contact Maddie Hedley Churchwarden, 810284; *email* mjh723@btinternet.com, or the Benefice Administrator, Lois Opperman at midtestbenefice@gmail.com *Maddie Hedley*

Church News

From the Ministry Team

Choices

The Lent course this year focussed on the Old Testament book of Ruth. Tucked away at the beginning of the Bible just after the awesome book of Judges is Ruth, a heart-warming story of famine, death, separation and loyalty but which ends with a perfect romance, a marriage and a direct line to Jesus. The book of Ruth starts as a study of the choices that confront us as humans each day of the week. Someone once said 'It's not the chances we take that determine the course of our lives but the choices we make'. As we considered the choices that Ruth and her relatives had to make and as we swapped famine for war and economic and political persecution, we realised just what a contemporary message the book of Ruth had for us all.

Choices we make as individuals so often have a longstanding effect on others. The impact of the choices we make about our life partners and occupations live with us throughout our lives. We might also ask whether it is possible to make choices in this life which will affect the direction of our eternal lives? Joshua said to the Hebrew people he led 'Choose you this day who you will serve'.

We know that decisions we make in our secular lives often influence our mental and spiritual lives. But can the choices we make now affect our eternal destiny? Jesus said to Nicodemus (John 3) 'I tell you the truth. No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.'

As a benefice, we will soon be making choices about a new vicar to lead the benefice. It may not be obvious who that person should be and so we need to be listening to God to perceive the person of his choosing.

Samuel, the great prophet, was given the task of finding, identifying and then anointing the new king of Israel who would be a forebear of Jesus himself. He was led to visit Jesse, a noble man with eight sons all of whom might have fitted the bill as a potential king. Samuel had to meet all eight sons before realising that David, the youngest and thereby the least qualified, was the person who God had chosen as their leader. And what a leader he became. Yes, David made mistakes but he understood his people and listened to God when he needed guidance as to the way forward.

Do pray with us that the person of God's choosing will be appointed as our new vicar. Thank you.

John Rennie

Change and Growth

Welcome to April! By the time you read this there will be dates set for the Annual Parochial Church Meetings when a new selection of people will be elected to serve as Churchwardens and be on our Parochial Church Councils. There has also been some movement of clergy across the Deanery – we now have a vacancy in the Mid-Test Benefice and Rev'd Sara-Jane Stevens has joined the Thorngate & Blackwater Benefice (living in Wellow). So, change for all of us. I think it is good to look back on where we have come from. It is important that we should not view the past through 'rose-tinted spectacles'. Some aspects of church life have changed in the last 50 years.

Although we no longer have so many Sunday Schools, we probably have more contact with children than ever before. People from our Churches go into our schools to help with reading, to be Governors and to lead Collective Worship (Assemblies) – some even have an 'Open the Book' Team helping children explore Bible Stories through drama. We now have liturgy that is in modern language – easier to understand than the language of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP). However, for those of us who like the rich language and inheritance of the BCP, its services are available several times each week.

One change for this month is that I have been encouraged (by Bishop Philip, the new Bishop of Winchester) to revert to calling myself your Rural Dean (rather than Area Dean). I think this better reflects the nature of our parishes!

Your Rural Dean, James

Rev'd James Pitkin - jamespitkin@priest.com

Church News

Prayer for April

We thank you Lord for times and seasons, but Lord, while we thank you for the rain to water the earth, could we now please, have sunshine to encourage lightness of heart, to grow the seeds for harvest and the flowers in the gardens.

We thank you for all the blessings in our lives and pray we can be generous to those who have little, or are sad and lonely. Help us to help them know the love and care you will provide.

There are too many tensions in the world, too much hatred and wars that go on for too long. Give us peace, Lord, especially in Ukraine and in Israel. Let this Easter be a time for new beginnings, peace and harmony.

Lord, the Mid-Test is now in vacancy, so we pray for all who are working on our profile, which we hope will draw candidates to apply for the post we have here.

We pray you will provide strength and blessings to all who are working to maintain our services. We are thankful for the support of the Clerical Registry and the opportunities to meet and hear from different members of the clergy. Thank you for their teaching.

Most of all, we thank you for the sacrifice of your Son, our Lord Jesus, who died so we could have new life. You have redeemed us and called us by name. We pray that Easter is a joyous time for all.

You made a beautiful world and saw that it was good. Help us to keep it that way.

Amen

Iris Pitman

I am very sorry to report that Iris Pitman, late of Longstock, died on 11 March at Royal Hampshire County Hospital, Winchester at 91 years old. Iris was born in Longstock, worked for the Leckford Apple Farm, and was a lovely warm person. She was a regular at Church and an occasional passenger on the Community Bus.

Iris moved to Millway House Nursing Home, Andover, a couple of years ago. Her funeral service will be on Thursday 18th April at St Mary's Church, Longstock at 11.30am. The committal service will follow at Salisbury Crematorium at 1.00pm. *Maddie Hedley*

April Services for Stockbridge, Longstock and Leckford 7th April (Easter 2)

08.00 **Leckford** BCP Holy Communion

09.30 **Longstock** All Age Service

11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist

14th April (Easter 3)

08.00 **Old St Peter** Holy Communion

09.30 **Longstock** Parish Eucharist

11.00 **Stockbridge** All Age Service

17th April (Wednesday)

10.00 **Old St Peter** Holy Communion

21st April (Easter 4)

09.30 **Longstock** Morning Worship

11.00 **Stockbridge** Parish Eucharist

18.00 **Leckford** Evensong

28th April (Easter 5)

11.00 **Stockbridge** Morning Worship

Hampshire Downs RC Parish St Thomas More

Services are held on Sundays at 9.00am

The Column for March

Baptisms

The Baptism of Matilda Rose Camping took place during the 11am service at St Peter's Church, Stockbridge. Baby Matilda is welcomed into the Christian Family. May she always know your love.

Weddings - There were no weddings

Funerals


The funeral for Michael Bailey, late of Roman Road, Stockbridge, took place at Salisbury Crematorium at 11.00am, on Tuesday, 12 March 2024.

The funeral for Marjorie Andrews took place on Monday, 18 March at 1.45pm at St Mary's Church, Longstock. Marjorie lived, worked and served in Longstock for many years, before moving to Stockbridge.

Christine Leslie


Christine Leslie, a long-standing member of our congregation and resident of Stockbridge, sadly died on Monday 18th March, after a long struggle to recover from critical illness following surgery in September.

The family wishes to thank everyone for their care and prayers.



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