

May 2020

# *The* **DEDDINGTON NEWS**



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# The DEDDINGTON NEWS

I think it's fair to say that we are fortunate to live in Deddington. With so many people volunteering with the Covid-19 Response Group and many others doing their own thing, helping friends and neighbours, and many local businesses doing what they can to stock things that everyone wants and several offering a delivery service. On top of that, we have the space and beautiful countryside to walk in. You might think there won't be much in this issue. You may be surprised. Please read to the end, I promise, you won't be disappointed. **JC**

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**BARFORD ST JOHN** Helen Honour

Our beautiful cover this month was taken at the Satin Lane allotments when they and some parish gardens were open to the public last year. The promise of things to come, we hope.

Submission of any article to the DN carrying personal information (for example names, locations, pictures) will imply that the person submitting the article has obtained the necessary consent from the individual (or parent/guardian in the case of a minor) /company/organisation for this information to be used both in print and online. Contributors should be aware that the monthly issues are posted online and therefore any personal contact details given are there in perpetuity.

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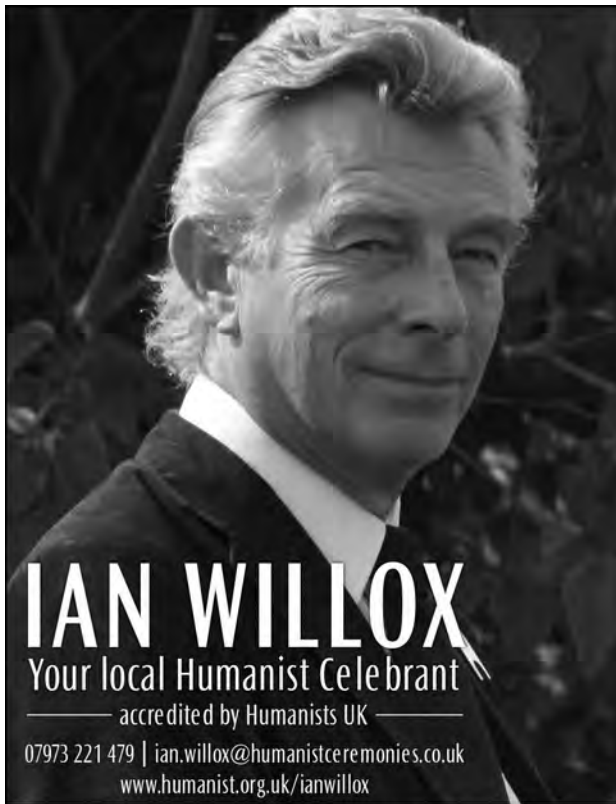
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## DEDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

15 April by Skype

Attending: Alan Collins, Maureen Cox, Jo Eames, David Rogers (Chair), Helen Oldfield, Stella O'Neill, Mary Robinson, Martin Squires, Mark Swadling, Terry Timms, Jonathan Watts and the parish clerk.

If anyone would like to join the next meeting which will be held via Skype on 20 May, please contact the parish clerk [deddingtonparishcouncil@googlemail.com](mailto:deddingtonparishcouncil@googlemail.com) or David Rogers [david@karmilla.co.uk](mailto:david@karmilla.co.uk).

**Co-option of Councillor** – Stella O'Neill was co-opted.

**Update from District Councillor Bryn Williams** – Bryn had advised that each district councillor has a budget of £2,000, provided by Cherwell District Council, to provide additional support during the Covid-19 emergency. The three councillors covering Deddington ward have identified groups within their parishes and District Councillor Williams has already approved a donation to the Deddington volunteer group through the PC.

Residents in north Oxfordshire are asked not to light bonfires to dispose of additional waste but rather to store large items until the home and garden excess service resumes or until Oxfordshire County Council recycling centres reopen.

### Finance and General Purposes:

The Windmill Management Committee had submitted an invoice for £1,600 electrical work. This work had been agreed by the WMC prior to the lockdown when they had anticipated having income to cover the cost. The PC agreed to pay the half the invoice but would ask the WMC to submit a request to the PC before committing to expenses that they are unable to pay.

### Windmill:

WMC has asked the PC to waive fees for the season as they have no income because of the cessation of play by the Cricket Club for an unknown period. PC agreed to keep this under review as it's possible that cricket could be played later in the season.

### Planning:

Several councillors declared interests in some of the planning applications.

### Objection

Chapman's Lane, Deddington – tree works. There is an existing tree preservation order on the two trees under consideration. Agreed that these are mature trees and there is an amenity value.

### No objection

3 South View, Goose Green, Deddington – single storey extension. Request that skips are on site and any damage to verges and paths be made good.

Northcote, Chapel Square, Deddington – tree work.

Dragon Cottage, Tays Gateway, Deddington – single

storey side extension with new vehicle access.

Agreed to relist the registration of an Asset of Community Value on the Duke of Cumberland's Head in case of an application for a change of use.

### Environment and Recreation:

**Grass cutting** – Thomas Fox contractors have reported they have put their employees on furlough so that verges will not be cut until the end of lockdown. Green Scythe is complying with social distancing regulations and will continue to cut the playing field.

In particular during the current restrictions the PC requested that people should respect the countryside code, as set out below.

### Highways:

There have been reports of tractors speeding through the villages. Local contractors will be contacted and reminded to adhere to speed restrictions.

Councillors and members of the public are requested to keep an eye out for fly-tipping and report any observations to the PC.

With the new development west of Wimborn Close, there will be £21,000 from S106 pledged to OCC for the bus service that connects Deddington to Banbury and Oxford. The PC suggested that this could fund Our Bus Bartons to consider a detour to Hempton. Councillors thought it unlikely to be of interest to residents living in Clifton.

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### Countryside Code

#### *Respect other people:*

Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors

Leave gates and property as you find them and keep to public rights of way

#### *Protect the natural environment:*

Take your litter home

Keep dogs under effective control and pick up after your dogs

---

There has been an increase in undesirable activity locally including trespass on people's properties and activities related to Covid-19. Please keep your doors locked, even during the day.

There have been incidents locally of scammers presenting themselves as charities, both online and calling at people's homes. If you want to give to a charity it's best to go direct to the particular charity to be sure your money goes where you want it to. Ignore requests to donate money through a money transfer company.

These Parish Council notes are the view of our reporter, Jill Cheeseman, and not the official minutes. To see those, go to <http://www.deddingtonparishcouncil.org/2020.html>.

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## Down On George's Farm



Locked down, banged up, locked out! As a poster that is doing the rounds from the local ag college depicting a view from a tractor cab puts it, 'Government: self isolate and socially distance yourself'. Farmers: business as usual then.'

But every cloud has a silver lining. As I bash this out the North Aston organic flock is under way and producing some very good lambs. They started some two weeks early because a gate was left open by careless footpath walkers and the rams were let out. Over the years we have had a number of veterinary students from the Royal College and, this year is no different, although they arrived early as the 'virus' had closed their colleges – more than a little disappointing for the Farm Student, Ben, as he was in his last term before taking his finals in June.

The same thing happened to me 55 years ago during the mid-sixties foot and mouth outbreak. I was at the same college and we were 'gated' for eight weeks and not allowed to leave the college grounds. If, as I was, you were on livestock duties, you had to wheel your bicycle through a disinfectant bath before moving between the two college farms. It was not all doom and gloom as I played a lot of cricket and tennis on the college hard courts. The village pub was next door and not put out of bounds and there were always letters from Mother and my elder sister, and they always included a five pound note. It should be noted that the government of the day closed all public rights of way, something that happened again in the 70s and the 90s. *(George tells me that these were local incidents of foot and mouth centred on Bicester but causing restrictions as far as Deddington and Clifton. He escaped culling as his flock was inside for lambing but was unable to turn out anything after lambing. Bryony had to give up her job as she had to travel from a livestock farm through the foot and mouth restricted area to the care home where she was a nursing sister. Ed)*

The flock at Clifton is now back at grass in the river valley. I say 'at grass' but in truth, after the very wet winter with the meadows under water for a long time, the grass is very patchy with large areas covered in silt and the curlew have not returned.

The bees had a difficult winter but made a good start in the spring only to be hit by the local badger population which trashed eight hives in one night. I can replace the shredded woodwork and breed up some replacement bees but it will take time. I can do nothing about the badgers as they are a protected species.

With so many badgers setts on the farm – the last count was 40 – I just wonder if it is really worth the time and expense to rebuild the bee enterprise.

The pandemic has confined us all to barracks but we are allowed out for exercise and there have been a few complaints about rabbit holes in Green Lane. Rabbits unfortunately have a nasty habit of digging their burrows in the most inconvenient places and the large hole just down the footpath from the Green Lane bridle gate is, in fact, a protected badger sett that has been in use for some years. It will take the OCC footpath officer months to get permission from Defra to remove the badgers and relocate them. The footpath gates are festooned with OCC warning notices so please don't blame me.

Spring has sprung with skipping lambs, bird song, which for once I can hear as we are in lockdown and there is little traffic noise coming through the village. The spring flowers, the hedgerows and the trees are all coming into leaf and the hawthorn and blackthorn are in bloom, the spring planted crops are looking good but it could all do with a drop of rain!

The saga of the ditch is dribbling on and if the Clifton correspondent in last month's *DN* is to be believed, it's all down to climate change and George. The truth is that the offending ditch is not part of my farm and is now in the control of Thames Water and they have come up with a dastardly plan to reduce the water flow by filling the nine inch culvert pipe, taking the water from the ditch down to the river with concrete and in-setting a two-inch pipe, so all that will happen is that the ditch will overflow with the water running down the road, so we are back to climate change and George. Thames Water experts seem to think that soil run off from the surrounding fields is the cause of the problem but they have not visited the site (only their contractors.) If they had, they would have seen the 12m grass strips on the field side of the hedge that run from the farm buildings to Jerusalem Lane. These were established some 20 years ago to prevent any soil run-off getting into the ditch, although our clay based soils don't run off. This hare that was kicked up by Thames Water and a concerned resident has a lot more water to run down the drain yet.

After an operation on his paw and nearside front leg to clear the infection after his snake bite, Otter is back to his usual self and has restarted his gun training but is more interested in chasing squirrels, now where did that go Dad? Many thanks to the Deddington and Hook Norton vet team.

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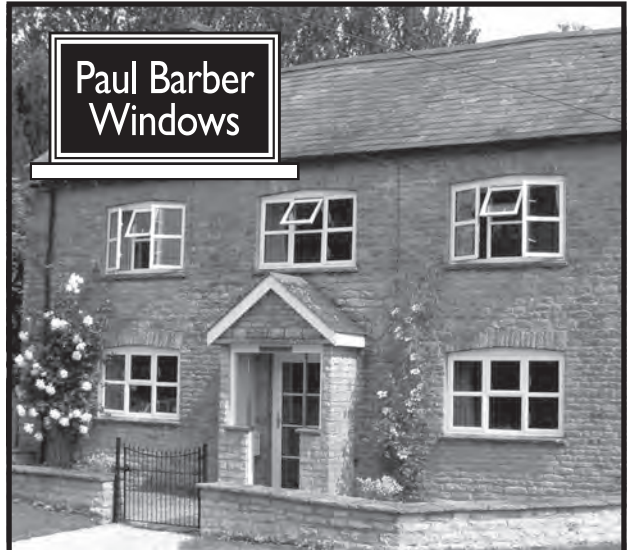
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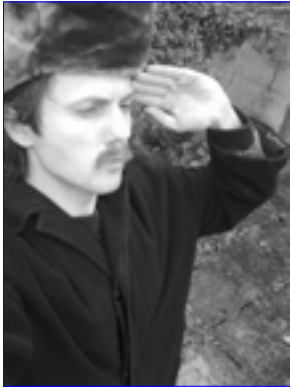
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## BLISSFUL THINKING



'There is a fifth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, between science and superstition, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge'. Being a huge fan of Rod Serling, I thought it was apt to quote his opening lines

to the groundbreaking show it often feels like we're living through currently – the *Twilight Zone*.

This is a totally new paradigm of existence, and we all have to recalibrate our sense of normality. Bemoaning the relative freedoms of yesterday is only going to instigate a permanent sense of despair, so there is need to recognise and accept this temporary new actuality and attempt to survive and flourish within its confines. I think the book *Freakanomics* spoke about

the phenomenon of the most mind-numbingly repetitive jobs generally having the best productivity outputs, which turned out to be because the people doing the job had mentally reconstructed their mundane tasks as challenges to pit themselves against: setting targets and trying to break them each hour.

The human mind is remarkably adaptable to adversity, particularly, as Serling would say, when it travels through the dimension of imagination. Orthodox routines have dissolved; food shopping has become an odyssey; outdoor exercise the highlight of some people's day. We must master our minds to weather the storm and help others, knowing that we are living through history right now. To coin a corny cliché: what you will tell your grandchildren you did during the great Covid-19 outbreak of 2020, and what new world did you build in its wake? Stay safe everyone. It's still a good life and, if we stick together, stay positive and do what we can we will get through this ... without having to be sent to the cornfield.

**Aaron Bliss**

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## Wine Time

Getting the wine you want, other than from your own in house stash, may prove difficult as we continue our virtual house arrest. Recent shopping trips have shown that, in addition to other essentials wine, beer and spirits have also been snapped up, although higher priced bottles remain in stock. If you are lucky enough to get a delivery slot with one of the major supermarkets you will still be at the mercy of what they have available. There are wine merchants who are delivering – Majestic and Slurp were both (at time of writing) willing to do doorstep deliveries. Some pubs are doing off-sales for beer and wine, so call and see what they have. I am sure they will be pleased to get any business they can.

Virtual wine tastings are a very good way to pass the time. It's better if those taking part to have the same bottle of wine – but not essential. Members of one enterprising online drinking club can be spotted driving around our villages delivering wines to various doors in preparation for collective online get-togethers. Why not set one up? If you don't have the same wine then have a go at describing the wine you have to each other. If that is too exciting, content yourself with simply making sure you are not drinking alone but together, virtually.

The situation we are in presents a perfect opportunity to get adventurous with the wines you drink. If you can't get your usual or favourite, then why not try something similar or go for a grape variety you like from another part of the world. If New Zealand sauvignon blanc is your usual, why not try Chilean sauvignon blanc? If you can't get your favourite Rioja then try other wines from Spain, such as from Calatayud or Ribero Del Duero. Similarly, a good alternative to Argentinian malbec might be a French Cotes-du-Rhône.

Personal 'lockdown' experiments have included a Priorat from Sainsbury's Taste the Difference range.



This is, usually, an excellent region in Spain which produces deep, complex wines from old vines (mostly grenache/garnacha based). This one was disappointing. It was Hgh in alcohol so was out of balance and lacked the range and depth of aromas and flavours I was expecting. At £12 (reduced to £10) it was over-priced for what it was (and Priorat is usually quite pricey) – not bad, but not a good representation of Priorat, so I won't be buying it again.

Another small adventure was CVNE's Selection De Fincas Ribero Del Duero 2018, Tesco and Sainsbury's – £10. This turned out to be very good indeed and dangerously drinkable. Using a local clone of the tempranillo grape, of Rioja fame, Ribero is a region that has been producing top quality wines for some time. Richer, rounder and with less oak/vanilla than nearby Rioja, it is worth exploring. This wine, a young and early drinking example by one of Spain's most famous and skilled wine companies, was a perfect introduction. If you can find it, give it a go.

The hot weather hit and we had a taste of summer as Chapel Down's English rosé made a welcome appearance – Sainsbury's £10 and widely available. A beautiful deep pink wine made from an interesting blend of grapes, including one, early pinot noir or pinot précoce, it is giving hope to those like me who are yet to find a good drinkable English red. Pinot précoce is a mutation of a German strain of pinot noir and ripens earlier than other variants of pinot noir. Is this the grape the English wine industry has been looking for – a fresh, fruity red which does not need as much sun as other varieties? If its contribution to this delicious, strawberries and cream, English pink wine is anything to go by, it might be.

**Charles Elvin**

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## Deddington Primary School

Like everyone else, we are in the strangest, probably the most difficult times we have ever faced, all being separated and kept at home to stay safe from the Coronavirus. Despite the fact we have been apart now for almost four weeks, we have been able to support each other and continue to learn from our homes.

Teachers have been teaching from a distance and our children have been working hard and enjoying their learning with great support from their parents and families. As a staff we thank parents and families for their time and energy in helping our pupils to work with such en-



thusiasm. Seeing photos of our children tackling different tasks has kept us all inspired from our homes too.

Of course, we do not know when we will be together in our school family and wonderful community but we look forward to that time with great hope that it will not be so very far away. As a staff we pray we all stay well and safe in our homes.

We all send our best wishes to all of you during these unforgettable times.

**Denise Welch**

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## POSTCARD FROM AMERICA

### *A Rant on the Inadequate Guy Who People Believe*

I woke up this morning with a sore throat and started worrying that the virus had got me. Then I remembered, it's fine, it's all a hoax.

My working life used to involve a lot of travel but the pandemic means I have had to cancel three internal US trips. Today I spent two hours trying to get a refund out of American Airlines for an Australian trip scheduled for May. They had cancelled the LA to Sydney leg without telling me but left me with the internal flights to LA. The lovely lady on the phone wanted me to stay in LAX (Los Angeles airport) for two weeks. So now I am in an argument about a refund on a trip that there is no flight for and where the destination country won't let me in. Don't ever book with AA.

There is one key issue about the country I live in that I didn't really understand until I had been here a while. There are 50 states with very different perspectives on life, conflicting laws and in many ways very different people – the not very United States. Earlier this week He Who Must Not Be Blamed (HWMNBB) went on TV and announced that he had full control of when the lockdown would end and would tell us all shortly when we could go back to normal. All hell broke loose, apparently the constitution says he can't do that, so now he has announced that the state governors will be responsible for opening up their own areas.

He then announced that the testing regimen is down to the governors as well. Don't ever tell me that TOWCBB (The One Who Can't be Blamed) isn't a canny political operator: he lost on the control issue, but then turned it round and gave the governors ownership of the next no-win problem. The US is nearly as far behind as the UK on testing, but the man in the White House isn't going to be held responsible any more for anything. On the day that 4,500 Americans died he resorted to Tweeting to his supporters to reopen the economy, directly counter to the scientific advice from his administration.

The response in each state has been different and the whole debacle has now become extremely political. In his daily briefings, HWMNBB blames everyone. This week it was the World Health Organisation and then a female journalist who dared to ask him what was happening with regard to the lack of testing. In his world nothing is ever his fault. The *Washington Post* reckons the exaggeration (or lie) count since he came to office is now over 18,000. But I have a bigger problem. Why on earth would 40% of the population of an educated democracy believe a word he says?

This week he has taken to Tweeting 'Free Michigan'. This came about because in a Darwinian move certain parts of the population of that state rose up earlier in the week demanding that their Democratic governor let them socially un-distance. They demon-



strated on the steps of their state offices – side by side.

The other man who made my head hurt this week was Dr Oz, one of the talking heads that they regularly roll out on Fox. His message to the world was that we should be reopening schools now, 'it may only cost us 2–3% in terms of total mortality'. Fox is the most watched news channel in the US with 3.5m tuning in

every prime time and lapping this stuff up.

In Colorado, we are all in a lockdown that is being pretty well observed. The governor is a Democrat, and he has played it very safely. But last week I spoke to people in Texas who were determined to get back to the office next week and there were churches in Florida suing the state for permission to open. Wyoming, which is less than 200 miles north of us has no lockdown at all and in South Dakota the governor is claiming they don't need one. The death rate there is soaring, centred on a plant which processes 20,000 pigs a day. I wonder why? They had 3,700 people working there in an unprotected environment. It is the Republican states that are not observing long-term lockdowns, aided by an obsession with freedom and not being told what to do.

In total 22m people in the US have filed for unemployment, 14% of the workforce, an astounding figure over four weeks. Many Americans live a hand to mouth existence, and the stories are rolling out of evictions and of utility supplies being terminated. As always it isn't the rich one per cent who are going to be the most affected.

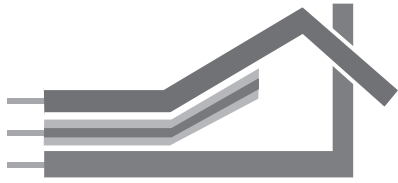
Meanwhile TOWCBB finds it more important to tell us all that his ratings battle with the latest other big programme, *The Bachelor*, has been won by his campaign rally. If it was another TV reality show you would say this was very funny. But no, it's his daily 5pm virus update.

My rant must come to an end. I need to do the weekly shop. Ten years ago in the UK we were doing all our food shopping online but it isn't common here. Heather tried the supermarket car park pickup approach last week but, of the 18 items she'd ordered, 12 were on the un-deliverable list. Then she went instore and picked up 11 of them.

Being locked inside has made us all crazy but perhaps we are living in a TV show. Tomorrow we will wake up and it will find it's been a dream and we will have sensible believable politicians back in charge. My problem is (to repeat) 40% of Americans believe a moron who lies several times daily and offers no leadership or empathy. In his artificial world everything is 'great', but perhaps that's what people want, perhaps we have what we deserve. The US has turned a disaster for the population into a political sideshow.

**Mike Ward**

[Mikew@qsoftware.com](mailto:Mikew@qsoftware.com)



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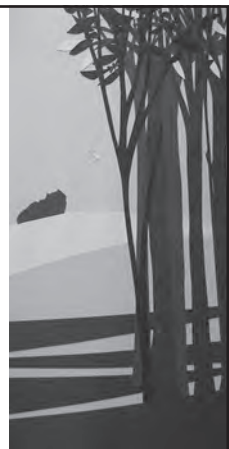
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## News from Clifton

It's a big Lower Larkrise welcome to Arric and Natalie who have moved here with a fine puppy hound. We welcome them and look forward to sharing an ale or wine in the Duck if and when it opens again – and how so many of us hope it can. This correspondent is aware of other neighbours who have moved in who I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting, so I'd ask when this madness has all reverted to a degree of normality if they could get I touch below so I can extend a similar greeting and buy you a drink.

In these difficult times many of us have really valued our part of the Deddington circular walk that takes us to our own parish frontline heroes running the shops in Candleford and keeping us fed as we hike with our rucksacks up each week for sustenance while walking through excellent countryside admiring the view, seeing the lambs and horses. In fact there are many walks that can be accessed from here from a few miles to well over twelve. However, remember to leave the gates as you find them and wait to be able to give anyone you meet a wide berth. In Lower Larkrise we also have our very own source of eggs, the freshest of lamb and honey, a selection of various live growing herbs plus other essentials courtesy of Naomi and Chris at Home Farm.

A couple of windfalls came our way during this crisis – every dark cloud does have a silver lining, and this was evidenced when a 72 pint barrel of beer

appeared in a neighbour's garage and made available to any neighbour with a big enough jug and a good sense of social distancing. As the garage was open during daylight hours it worked pretty well.

While Ron continues his convalescence another neighbour took up the challenge of organising a syndicate oil drop as heating oil prices slumped to only 32 pence per litre. Some of us remember £1 per litre at Christmas not that long ago. If any neighbour would like to take part in this next time please email me as below and we'll add you to the list for when we ask again. The big drop is always in spring but there is often a top up during the darker months and an email is sent out. If you were on the list but didn't get an email this time please also contact me – especially if you have changed your email address.

We must also recognise those still working making equipment for essential industries and our very own Iron Man Mayo who has been 'working around the clock' producing vital components for full face visor PPE for our local GPs and other NHS heroes. This is what you can do with knowledge and a proper 3D printer and so he is.

As usual, if you have more news then it will save me the bother of making this all up which I'm happy to do if it entertains anyone for five minutes of the loneliness of self isolation.

**Martin Bryce**

[Martindnbryce@gmail.com](mailto:Martindnbryce@gmail.com)

It was all going so well ... the brand new Pocket Park for toddlers was open; there was an increasing number and variety of regular activities on offer at the Windmill with many more in the pipeline; the ambitious plans to continue updating and improving the building were progressing apace; even the weather was sunnier than I can remember it ever being at this time of year, and then this happened ... Coronavirus, and the end of normal life as we know it.

There are lots of unexpected things that I have had to do in my role as chair of the Windmill Management Committee over the past couple of years but this one takes the biscuit: closing the whole place down. As I write, we're in week four of lockdown: everybody at home, nobody allowed out except for medicines and food shopping, and nothing open apart from the pharmacy, Foodies, the Co-op and Eagles.

But let's try to stay positive. On the plus side, my short stint as chair so far has opened my eyes



to the variety of groups and organisations at the Windmill, most of which are run on a shoestring by hard-working, dedicated volunteers who give freely of their time to make our village a better and richer place to live. These people

and others like them are what give me confidence that we'll be okay. Our local community is strong and up to the challenge.

Let's look forward to better times, let's look forward to normality: the Windmill playing fields covered with kids of different ages doing football training, cricket sessions in the nets, the tennis courts booked out and the Pocket Park and adventure playground full of families and young children picnicking and enjoying themselves. I hope to see you all back at the Windmill again soon.

**Vaughan Jones**

[vaughan@englishlanguage matters.com](mailto:vaughan@englishlanguage matters.com)



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## More Notes from a Very Small Garden

Four weeks on from my last ramblings and day-to-day life is still OK. This is the new reality, social contact reduced to holding conversations with neighbours across the street and shopping left on the doorstep by cautious delivery people.

Meanwhile my garden is micromanaged and documented like never before – they don't call me Mrs Clipboard for nothing. I haven't been out for four weeks apart from a constitutional round the Castle Grounds where I've watched trees go from bare stems to full leaf in a matter of days. Small things suddenly matter. And I did the Clifton Road–Leadenporch Farm–Chapmans Lane loop the other day after a gap of many years. I was convinced I was lost and was going to end up in North Aston until Google Maps put me right.

There are inspirational stories such as 99 year old Captain Tom Moore raising £21m (at the time of writing and still rising) for NHS charities by walking round his garden. Such a small act which generated an astonishing outburst of generosity. And the weekly Thursday thanks to our frontline workers – Featherston House we want you outside so we can say thank you, please. There are desperately sad stories as well – don't get me started on PP equipment and testing, the reckoning will come later.

Our community is truly astonishing in the way it has

come together to look after its own. What's particularly gratifying for us oldies is that it's the younger generation who have stepped up. I know that our corner of paradise is in good hands – thank you. We're starting an archive on Deddington OnLine to document this extraordinary episode for future generations.

I have bad days when I can't see the outcome of all this and, when we go back to normal, what will normal be? Wearing a mask and keeping 2m away from my family? Are we an endangered species to be confined to barracks until a vaccine is found – which could be a year away? Right now I've told myself 12 weeks lockdown – if it's less so much the better, and we're already a third of the way through.

In the meantime I put on my silly earrings and a bit of lippy (I'm not a child of the 60s for nothing) and do shared-screen readings of *Matilda* via Zoom with my granddaughter. And Parish-Council-meetings-by-Skype are the highlight of my social calendar – bit sad, that.

I'd like to record here the passing of a dear friend and former Parish Councillor, Norman Drake. Tributes will come later and we'll raise a glass to him when this is all over. And when the lockdown is lifted, I'm heading the line-up at the bottle bank on the Milton Road.

**Mary Robinson**

[robimary@gmail.com](mailto:robimary@gmail.com)

## Generation Games

Generation Games, Age UK Oxfordshire's physical activity service, usually runs close to 80 classes across the county. More than 1,000 people usually join these sessions which contribute to their weekly physical activity quota. With the outbreak of the Corona virus everything changed.

Generation Games quickly decided to suspend all classes until further notice. Class participants on average are in their 70s and many have a long-term health conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, or COPD which affects the lungs – putting them in the at risk group for this virus.

We all know the physical and mental benefits of being active and for many, not being able to attend their weekly class, will have a negative impact. Therefore exercise needs to continue, even in these unprecedented and stressful times; not only to maintain physical fitness, to benefit mental wellbeing, but also to give focus to a now entirely disrupted routine.

Whilst many online exercises exist already, they are not geared towards older age groups. Generation



Games are launching specialised online home exercise films led by three of their highly trained postural stability Instructors. The sessions were recorded just before the lockdown at their office and will be a variety of strength and balance exercises, including some floorwork and Tai Chi.

Generation Games are publishing one a week on their website [www.generationgames.org.uk](http://www.generationgames.org.uk).

Click on Exercise videos on the left side of the screen.

Another innovative idea came about when one of their instructors was self-isolating but wanted to be involved in helping older people remain active. She recorded, on her phone at home, a short piece of audio exercise instructions and a talented illustrator is creating a character to go with it. The result is an animated character who will be doing exercise from her home.

**Sophie Dyer**

**Marketing and Fundraising Officer**



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### RC Parish of Hethe

St John's Church in Banbury will be streaming Mass daily at at 9.30am, Mondays to Fridays; 10.00am on Saturdays and 11.15am on Sundays on <https://www.mcnmedia.tv/camera/st-john-the-evangelist-banbury>. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be streamed for 30 minutes at the end of each weekday Mass.

## Our Co-op During Lockdown

I recently spoke to some of the 21 members of staff at our local Co-op to find out their personal views of dealing with the current situation. As you would expect they were unanimously good-humoured, saying that they look forward to coming to work because they see their customers and colleagues and have a few laughs.

Now that everyone who is shopping there has an understanding of the need for social distancing they are finding it reasonably easy to deal with, although they still feel nervous at the prospect of going to work because they are more at risk than if they stayed at home. There are now an additional three temporary employees who are on zero hours contracts and they will cover for any absentees. In the next few days there will be one additional person, otherwise everyone is doing their usual hours, some full-time and some part-time.

One of the most important messages they wanted to communicate is that they are happy to do deliveries and there's a small number of people who are doing some deliveries to other local villages outside Deddington parish. The Covid-19 Response Group

came in for special mention. As we all know they are doing a great job, shopping and collecting prescriptions for people who are unable to leave their homes.

The staff I spoke to asked that, where possible, people should try to do a week's shop rather than in little bits and pieces. Try to plan ahead for what you'll need. This will help them enormously. If you would like to place an order with the Co-op, please call 01869 336281 but you'll need to be patient as the members of staff are often dealing with other customers, making up orders and stacking shelves when deliveries arrive. If it's possible, it's better to contact your local captain on the Covid-19 Response Group – the list of contacts has been reproduced on p1 of this issue.

They wanted to thank everyone for their patience, particularly when they have to close or partially close the shop when there's a delivery. There has been an improvement in the supplies arriving at the shop and next week (so by the time you read this) this should improve again with supplies coming from a different warehouse.

**JC**

## Deddington History Corner

### deddingtonhistory.uk

The eleventh of November was the declared end of WWI hostilities but Deddington soldiers continued to die.

Pte Harry Gardiner married his girlfriend Ellen Hawtin on 30 October. Deddington Deanery Magazine's January entry records that he had died on 2 December. The entry for February records three final deaths: 'George Davis in Salonica, Edwin Bliss in India, Bernard Hawkins has died. He was not a prisoner as was earlier reported'. It also notes the return of

Leonard Long POW in Germany, James Cowley POW in Mesopotamia and QMS HJ Harmsworth from Italy who had been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.

The 1918–19 outbreak of Spanish Flu reportedly killed more people than the war so I investigated deaths in the parish during the epidemic years using the recent Oxford Family History Society graveyard survey. It is not a complete record of course because not everyone was buried in our churchyard; however there is no apparent spike in deaths for those years compared with several years either side so the chances are that the village, in its rural isolation at that time, got off lightly.

**Rob Forsyth**  
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### Lockdown

Nobody knows when the next Farmers Market will be held – but we think it is unlikely to reopen as soon as May.

You should not despair. A lot of the stallholders are taking weekly orders and making deliveries. This keeps them in business and us with food on the table. Simply go to the website for details: <http://www.deddingtonfarmersmarket.co.uk/stallholders-on-line-ordering.html>.

In the meantime, here's something simple and comforting to make. It's from Nigel Slater's *Eat*. It's his take on the Spanish standard of *Patatas a lo Pobre* – Poor Man's Potatoes. This recipe is for two people.

500g new potatoes

Olive oil

2 large peppers

1 large onion

1 large knob of butter

400ml vegetable stock



Clean then halve the potatoes. Heat a little olive oil in a shallow pan, place the potatoes cut-side down and leave them to cook. Halve and deseed the peppers, cut them into long strips and add to the pan. Peel and finely slice the onion and add it to the potatoes and peppers along with a large knob of butter. Leave to cook, with the occasional stir, until the potatoes are nicely golden and the onion is start-

ing to soften. Pour in the vegetable stock, bring to the boil, season, then cover with a lid and let it simmer enthusiastically for 20 minutes. Once the stock has almost disappeared, crush a few of the potatoes with a fork, allowing them to absorb the last drops of liquid.

If you like you can add some chopped garlic with the onions or a pinch of ground paprika.

It might go well with a Corona beer ...

**Ian Willox**

**01869 337940**

[ian.willox@btconnect.com](mailto:ian.willox@btconnect.com)

## TO GRADUATE OR NOT TO GRADUATE

Little did I envisage my final year as a geography student at Queen Mary University, London, turning out the way it has.

I was due to travel to Boston, USA, at the end of March on a field trip to enrich my studies but this was cancelled in February – a taste of the changes that were about to be unleashed in our corner of the world. The first part of the work of the cancelled trip was converted into online research which culminated in a 2,000 word essay instead of enjoying life in Boston and actually exploring this new area for myself.

Final year exams have ultimately morphed into more coursework and assignments. It has been particularly frustrating over the last few weeks not knowing what was happening with assignments and even now I don't know how these difficult circumstances will be accounted for in the marking criteria – a stressful situation for any student in their last year of studies. The effects of this pandemic, combined with the university lecturers' industrial strike during February and March, has caused significant disruption to my final year at university.

My graduation, which has been postponed from July to an unknown date in the future, means there is great uncertainty regarding when I might finish the year and when I find out my degree classification. If someone had told me in September 2017, when I was

embarking on my studies at university, that my graduation would be cancelled because of a virus causing everyone to stay inside, I would not have believed them. With a new job hopefully starting in September, this poses another challenge as this requires a 2:1 degree but, in the circumstances, it is impossible to know whether I will have achieved this by then.

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the social life of a young person like me. As a keen netball player, our league was left abandoned in the middle of March, with league winners yet to be finalised. Being someone who enjoys going to the pub with my friends, we have had to find new ways to socialise virtually. For example, we've been having virtual group quizzes and have been creating group videos on TikTok. However, these cannot replace normal face-to-face contact and I, along with everyone else, am very much looking forward to this pandemic being over. In the meantime, I will be maintaining social distancing and staying at home.

We are very fortunate living in a beautiful part of the country surrounded by many footpaths for daily walks. I'd like to end with a huge shout out to all frontline workers everywhere who are putting their lives on the line every day. It puts everything else into perspective.

**Jo Watts**



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## LETTERS

FROM REVD ANNIE GOLDTHORP

By the time you read this, our Easter celebrations will have been and gone – although the season of Easter actually carries on until Ascension Day on 21 May. On that day we usually have a service on the top of the church tower at 7.00am – I don't imagine that will be happening this year, but I will find a way to mark the event if I possibly can. Of course it may also be that as I write this in the middle of April, by the time you read it at the beginning of May, things will have changed again – these are very uncertain times.

It feels very strange to lead worship from my dining-room at the vicarage – it is just one of the new ways in which we are having to be 'church', which in some ways I find quite exciting. It would be true to say that Christian love (whether people think of it in that way or not), is literally all around us. The acts of kindness have been many and varied and in the years that follow there will be many wonderful stories of how these villages pulled together to make what is a horrible situation, as good as it could be for everyone here – and for that, I want to thank you.

Despite all the horror stories and sadness that we hear about, as well as the fear that goes alongside this virus, there are things to be thankful for. The near absence of traffic brings a peace which is to be enjoyed. The sunny weather makes people smile – and it's lovely to see families spending time together enjoying the warmth. More people than ever seem to be running or cycling around the villages, and so perhaps we are getting healthier and fitter, and nature itself seems to be making a bold statement of resurgence. I hope and



pray that these are the things we will remember, along with the kindness of friends and strangers.

I would of course re-iterate what you have already been told (many times, I know). Stay inside other than for getting food and some exercise, and wash your hands – often. Please stay safe and look out for one another where you can, and please don't be afraid to contact me if there is anything

I can help you with.

With every blessing

FROM CHRISTOPHER HALL & DIANA MARSHALL  
*CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2020*

Last year nationally Christian Aid Week raised over seven and a half million pounds. Deddington has been congratulated for keeping up our £2,000 level of giving each year, thanks to the dedication of collectors and the generosity of donors. This year there can be no house-to-house collection.

Christian Aid partners in poorer nations will be deprived of that help which they sorely need as the pandemic spreads among their people. They will be victims of the virus without the health service we applaud, many without even clean water to wash their hands. As worldwide travel resumes across the global village, Covid-19 could make a come back here. Please respond to this by clicking on <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/deddingtoncaw>, then we will know how open-handed the people of Deddington, Clifton and Hempton are. Please add GiftAid if you can.

## From the Fire Station

We are living in strange times. Cars are a rare sight on the main road, hand-shakes are forbidden and toilet paper is suspected of being worth more than gold. At the fire station, training courses have been cancelled, drill nights are done on your home computer and crews can only ride with five – our sixth rider being held in reserve.

Calls have been few and far between with just a count of four: one station standby at Banbury, one false fire alarm call, one standby on the M40 for a lorry fire, and finally, helping with a tree fire at Banbury golf course. A stray spark from a brush fire seemingly the culprit, leading to three hours of traffic direction to avoid any chance of a possible collision during the clear up.

Prior to the moratorium on all training courses, James Greenwood passed his Breathing Apparatus

(BA) practical at Moreton-in-Marsh Fire College and is now qualified to ride number 2 BA wearer. Adrian Spillsbury and Emma Flint's BA Team Leader course and Andy Hayward's OIC (Officer In Charge) course are temporarily suspended until conditions improve.

At the Fire Station, we continue to provide the maximum cover we can and will be there if needed. As the weather warms, please make sure that you barbecue safely and only with those you live with. Also, please do not consider lighting naked flame sky lanterns in support of our emergency services and the NHS. There are more sensible ways to show your support in these troubled times (pots, pans and hands spring to mind).

Please 'stay home, stay safe and save lives'.

**James Greenwood**

[james@cyclogicalshop.co.uk](mailto:james@cyclogicalshop.co.uk)



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## Tales from the Pump



Although the closure of our pubs and loss of livelihoods for hospitality workers is top of the mind for us pub landlords, it does not compare with the stress, illness and loss of life caused by this terrible epidemic. Usually when disaster strikes in this country the pub is the place to go and keep up our spirits and often forms the hub from which support is given. But when social interaction is hastening the spread of the coronavirus then pubs, football and rugby matches, theatres, and festivals all go by the board in the effort to slow down the spread of the disease so that hopefully the NHS can cope.

At the time of writing the government is trying to help hospitality businesses with the availability of loans as well as the removal of business rates. Whilst the latter is welcome it is unlikely that pub landlords will want

to borrow to cover the lack of cash coming in. Loans have to be repaid and the future is very uncertain. The biggest cost in the hospitality business is labour and the government must guarantee workers significantly more than Statutory Sick Pay or basic redundancy pay. I hope that by the time you read this something will have been done.

By the end of February Brits had paid as much beer duty as the Germans will in the whole of 2020 – despite the Germans drinking about double the amount. Beer duty is 11 times higher in the UK than in Spain. The take in taxes from pubs has been massive over the years – now is the time to show that the country values our workers in the hospitality business – it's payback time.

**Grumpy Landlord**  
[Grumpylandlord1@gmail.com](mailto:Grumpylandlord1@gmail.com)



Our plans for VE Day on 8 May have had to be postponed until at least VJ Day on 10 August. The Royal British Legion has suggested that



instead the nation does some window dressing, takes photographs and posts them on social media. To that end they have provided suggestions and instructions on an information sheet (PDF) which can be downloaded from the following link. <https://tinyurl.com/y9kjpjyul>. It also contains details of how to enter a children's poster competition, WWII recipes and games to play on the day.

We should also remember our four surviving WWII ex-service people, all in their mid to late nineties, who are having to live with the lockdown – Daphne Canning, Margery Hawes, Stephanie Higham and Edna Sewell.

**Rob Forsyth**  
 Branch Chairman

## Friends of Deddington Library

It's difficult to think of much else right now other than the dreaded virus and the unprecedented challenges we're all facing. The good people of our parish and surrounding villages have done us proud and the community spirit and generosity is humbling. From shopping and collecting medicine for the vulnerable, dog walking, grass cutting, keeping in touch with elderly and vulnerable parishioners, to a whole host of support we all took for granted just a few months ago, this global crisis has brought us together and I hope it will continue once we're through it.

One of the positive things that's evident is how many of you have taken to social media to share your wonderful pictures when out walking around the parish. It's an uplifting way to share the beauty that we see all around us when out in the countryside, especially at springtime when nature reminds us why life is so precious. If you'd like to share your images with a wider audience and enter them into our photo competition, then please send your creations for consideration for next year's Deddington Library Calendar to me and keep on doing us proud, thank you.

**Bryn Williams**  
[abw@brynwilliams.com](mailto:abw@brynwilliams.com)

## Temporary Changes to Stagecoach S4 service

**Banbury – Adderbury – Deddington – Steeple Aston – Tackley – Kidlington – Oxford**

Our local bus service is now operating a revised timetable. I understand that information has been posted at the local bus stops, thanks to one of our parish councillors, but there appear to be frequent changes so if you are using the service for your essential travel,

please check the Stagecoach website <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables> before travelling.

At the time of writing the buses in both directions are approximately every 1.5 hours.

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## The Unexploded Bombs of Deddington

Shortly after my family moved to Deddington in the early 1980s I met Fred Deeley, a Deddington worthy of long standing but now no longer with us. He frequently walked his dog up Green Hedges Lane past my house and would often stop for a chat as I worked in my garden.

On one occasion we got talking about World War Two and Fred told me that one night during a raid on Coventry (there were three heavy raids on that city) an enemy aircraft flew over Deddington and jettisoned five bombs. Fortunately they all fell north of the village and remarkably none exploded, burying themselves deep in what were then Charlie Fuller's fields. They apparently fell more or less parallel between Green Hedges Lane and the main Oxford — Banbury road but nearer the latter and well short of Earls Lane.

Some time later an Army bomb disposal team inspected the holes that the bombs had made and decided there was no immediate threat as they were quite deeply embedded; the team had their hands full with Coventry after the raids.

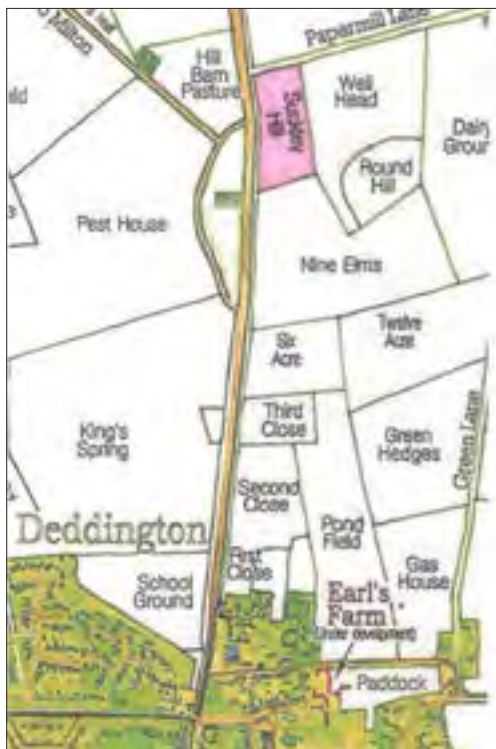
As far as Fred knew the bombs were forgotten and still lay where they fell in 1940-41. Their exact location is unknown.

**Brian Fuller** (son of Charlie and now farming the land) takes up the story:

'The bombs all fell in Suckley Hill Field which is right next to the Banbury road and immediately south of Paper Mill Lane. The field

was very soft because it was ploughed and the bombs had buried themselves deep into the ground. My Dad wondered if they had been trying to bomb the road but it was just as likely that they had been jettisoned. The Bomb Disposal chaps had long sticks which they prodded into the ground and decided they were so deep as not to be a danger and left. They never came back. There was a map of bombs dropped on Oxfordshire but for some reason they got left off. Perhaps they just got forgotten; so they are still there but, after all this time of farming activity over them since, I think we can say they are safe.'

It should be pointed out that the field is not open to the public and there is no public right of way near by.



The Coventry Air—raids	Enemy planes involved
14 November 1940	400
8 April 1941	300 estimates
10 April 1941	200

Total civilians killed in the raids during 1940-41 – 1,236

**David Hood and Brian Fuller**

## FRIENDS OF DAEDA'S WOOD

It is particularly important at the moment to care for oneself as well as others and what could be better than to go 'forest bathing' in our local Wood. It is safe to go alone, especially at this time of the year when buds are just bursting open. It's possible to see right through the planting ... hard to believe how, in a few more weeks, it will become dense, giving a feeling of being in a much larger wood. The sunlight filtering through the trees and the birdsong are really uplifting.

Sharp eyed children might find a spring time sticker sheet and paper to make your own Spring Watch booklet. Clue: not up high and linked to a board.

I like to do a circular walk from the path extending from The Daedings down to the Wood taking in the glorious view over Barford, returning along the slightly steep Milton Road to the Council layby then along the A4260 to Deddington. It's excellent for raising one's heart rate and takes about one hour. If you feel vulnerable walking alone its worth knowing that the phone

signal is good for the whole of the route. If you walk it the other way, you could drop off all those empty bottles in the Council lay by – there's plenty of room in the bottle banks.

It's a bit sad that horses have been led through the Wood creating deep ruts and churning up some of the path near the flower meadow. Similarly, some thoughtless car drivers have been parking on the grass verges even when there is ample free parking in the designated area.

Please let me know if you see any of this happening as, especially with photographic evidence, it should be possible to get the local police to have a friendly word.

The AGM of the Friends of Daeda's Wood has had to be cancelled so I'm proposing that existing subscriptions remain in force until the date of the next AGM likely to be 2021.

**Annette Murphy**  
[murphyannette74@gmail.com](mailto:murphyannette74@gmail.com)

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## CALLING ALL CLUBS

### Photographic Society

We live in very strange times and it was with regret that the AGM on 1 April was cancelled. However, the committee has been working away and are currently in the process of holding a virtual AGM presenting all the necessary reports to members and then requesting votes to fill the relevant vacant officer positions. Once collated I will confirm the results. Normally at the AGM the topic is 'What is it?' where members try to bamboozle each other with photographs of odd every day items taken at odd angles or close up. So, if you want a frustrating half-hour guessing, have a look at our website and click on the Lockdown Challenges 2020 for the 'What is it?' challenge. The answers will be available in a separate folder. You might also like to scroll through the individual members' galleries section where you will find stunning images in a range of genres.

The club will continue to have monthly photography topics so keep checking the website for the latest contributions and see how resourceful our photographers can be in lockdown. Wishing everyone well until we can meet again.

**Anne Hunsley**

[www.addphoto.co.uk](http://www.addphoto.co.uk)

### Royal British Legion

During this period of lockdown it is perhaps worth repeating that anyone who would like help from the RBL should contact our Branch Community Support committee member, Barrie Clifford, on 01869 337575.

**Rob Forsyth Chairman**

**01869 338384**

### Women's Institute

The committee, with the agreement of the members, have decided to cancel meetings at the Holly Tree until the crisis has resolved. We do, however, have electronic versions of our News and Views from Oxfordshire Federation of Women's Institutes and the newsletter from our very efficient committee.

**Moirá Byast**

### Local Vocals Community Choir

We usually meet on Mondays at 7.00pm but this is suspended until further notice.

We are looking forward to being back together as soon as it's safe to do so but, in the mean time, some of us have joined our choir leader Cat McGill for her virtual choir where we can see each other via Zoom or just join in anonymously at [www.facebook.com/groups/560884704783731/?ref=share](https://www.facebook.com/groups/560884704783731/?ref=share). This is a great stress buster and good to keep those vocal cords flexed. To find out more about our choir and to contact us please visit our website [www.localvocalscc.co.uk](http://www.localvocalscc.co.uk).

**Alison Grieve**

### Deddington Bookworms

Our latest book, *Midwinter Break*, by Bernard MacLavery, paints a clear portrait of a retired, middle-aged couple, Stella and Gerry, who are connected through years of habit and familiarity. The story is set in Amsterdam; Stella's idea was to visit for a purpose which she doesn't share with Gerry. Gerry is addicted to alcohol that he works hard at hiding from his wife, whilst Stella is rooted in her Catholic faith.

Amsterdam in January is an unusual choice for a getaway, but MacLavery portrays the city not as dim and cold in the winter light, but as a place of discovery and hidden corners. As the story unfolds, the reader learns what drove Stella and Gerry out of Belfast when they were younger. It was a single horrific event that continues to haunt each of them in different ways. As Gerry retreats into alcoholism, Stella considers a life without him. But this is a couple who deeply love each other. It is a short trip that leads both to face their fears, their secrets, and the meaning of the lives they have lived.

Sensitively written, with an insight into what it means to be human and saturated with an almost nostalgic and poetic flair, this book was a joy to read. We agreed during a Zoom meeting that we would read more of MacLavery's work and would definitely recommend this book.

Our next meeting will be on Zoom in May to discuss *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* by Heather Morris.

**Deddington Library**

**01869 338391**

### Book Group

Since we are not able to have our usual meetings, we are sharing our opinions on the books by email.

Our latest book was the debut novel *Such a Fun Age* by American author Kiley Reid. It opens with a disturbing situation. Because of a late night emergency, a rich white couple ask their young black babysitter to look after one of their small children. She takes the child to a supermarket where a security guard accuses her of kidnapping. Although the matter is resolved quickly, the repercussions are significant and involve issues of race, class and privilege.

The book received very positive reviews both in the US and over here. However, the reactions from our group were mixed. We all struggled with the unfamiliar Americanisms and slang used in dialogue between the young black characters – perhaps the book was aimed at a younger generation. There was a general feeling that the plot was rather contrived and the characters were two-dimensional. In spite of these criticisms, most thought the book was an interesting choice and some had found it an enjoyable read.

**Sian Waterman**



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## YOUTH

### 1st Deddington Scout Group

#### *Cubs and Scouts*

We're all still quite busy even though we can't meet face to face (it means I can run a meeting in my pyjamas – result). The Cubs have been given the task of finishing their Skills Challenge by completing a garden survey and listing the people who help their community – very relevant at the moment. The Scouts, who are also completing a badge, will be continuing with their fitness challenge and re-purposing an item of clothing.

Both sections have a 'Thursday brain teaser'. So far we've had a tricky puzzle and a photo challenge where they had to make an evil shadow picture of themselves – very revealing, we'll be telling you who to avoid in future.

St George's day on 23 April was special to us as he is also the patron saint of scouting and we asked the Cubs and Scouts to fly a flag for the day and perhaps whistle for George too.

**Jo Churchyard**

[deddingtoncubs@gmail.com](mailto:deddingtoncubs@gmail.com)

**Peter Churchyard**

[deddingtonscouts@gmail.com](mailto:deddingtonscouts@gmail.com)

#### *Explorers*

As everyone else, scouting is facing enormous challenges with the lockdown at the moment.

## SPORT

### Deddington Town FC Youth Teams

After football ended in mid-March due to coronavirus, we are unlikely to have our 2020 presentation day in June due to social distancing. However, we will still award prizes and get these to winning players over the summer. We are starting to plan for the 2020-21 season, which we hope, will start in September 2020.

#### *Shirt Sponsor for Under 8s for 2020-21 Season*

If you are interested in being the shirt sponsor for the 2020-21 season for Under 8 team (currently U7s) Please contact me.

#### *25 Years of Deddington Town FC Youth Football*

The 2020-21 season will see us celebrate 25 years of youth football at Deddington Town Football Club. We are starting to plan for an event in the summer 2021. If you are a past player or coach and want to get involved, please contact me.

#### *Get involved*

If you want to get involved with the club as player, volunteer, sponsor or fundraiser, please do not hesitate to get in touch. Further information about the club is on our website – [www.deddingtontownfc/](http://www.deddingtontownfc/) or visit us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/DeddingtonTownFc](https://www.facebook.com/DeddingtonTownFc).

**Roger Sykes**

**Development Officer and U7/U6 Coach**

**01869 337034**

[carsykes@btinternet.com](mailto:carsykes@btinternet.com)

We stopped face to face meetings before the government put the ban in place on people meeting. Instead we have been having fun with online meetings.

The first week we tried a scavenger hunt to find items to spell SPARTANS from anything in your house. These ranged from Russian dolls to a red plastic cup.

As we are unable to go anywhere, we had online meetings through the holidays and had an Easter Egg hunt. Parents hid eggs in either the house or garden. The most inventive? Hanging one in a bag in a tree.

Now we're all the right way up on phones or laptops, the meetings are a great way to keep in touch. As parents enjoyed hiding the eggs, this week we're having a family quiz night.

**Janet Duxbury**

[spartansexplorers@gmail.com](mailto:spartansexplorers@gmail.com)

### 1st Deddington Brownies

The Brownies had their first Zoom meeting last week, where the girls all drew their NHS superheroes. We are having a week off this week but will be having weekly meetings on Zoom after that until the end of lockdown. Next week will be Online Origami.

**Fern Stringer**

[deddingtonbrownies@gmail.com](mailto:deddingtonbrownies@gmail.com)

## SWIFT WATCHING THIS SUMMER

I am writing this in the second half of April. We will be in lockdown until well into May. The guidelines from the government about what you may and may not do, are clear. Please abide by those.

I have a suggestion for a pleasurable birding activity which you can incorporate into your local exercise walk, and stay safe and within the law as well. It's simply this. Look out for your local swifts. They arrive in early May and quite possibly there will be some near you. If you see any flying low over rooftops, possibly making screaming calls as they pass, please note where they are. No other British bird behaves like this. It's an indication there are nest sites nearby. You might even be lucky enough to spot one returning to its nest hole under the eaves of a building.

Why are we interested? Well, the population of swifts is more than 50% lower than it was 25 years ago. They need our help. Having these records can help swift conservation by increasing our knowledge of local populations, enabling us to protect a nest site or lobbying for new ones.

Please send me any records of – birds at nests; screaming parties and low-flying swifts; or large numbers of birds feeding over wetlands.

**Chris Mason**

[mason@cando.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:mason@cando.eclipse.co.uk)

**Cherwell Swifts**



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## UNIQUE APPLAUSE FOR NHS



*Geoff Todd accompanied people aged from 2 months to 92 years old when he played his street organ on Thursday evening 16 April outside his house in Hopcraft Lane*

## HOW TO SURVIVE LONG PERIODS OF ISOLATION – A Submariner's View

It's the fifth Sunday morning in a row for a Polaris missile submarine on patrol; I stroll down the main passageway pulling a scrubbing brush on a string behind me casually acknowledging various social greetings but creating no surprise. Have I gone mad? No, the Executive Officer is just taking his 'dog' for a walk as a way of deliberately disrupting the tedious routine of what could be an eight week patrol but no one will know just how long until the recall signal sets a wave of channel fever sweeping through the boat.

I am frequently asked if we submariners were volunteers and underwent psychological testing to establish if we could live for months at a time, totally isolated under water, in the company of a very disparate group of people. The answer is No to both. In fact the Canadian Navy once sent a 'head shrink' to interview a submarine crew because it was contemplating obtaining its own submarines. 'They are all half mad' was the conclusion but this missed the point. Yes, we were strong-minded, opinionated and idiosyncratic – our partners' description when being polite – but even the most diverse personalities, forced to co-exist, will modify their behaviour to avoid annoying their fellow beings and cope with the mental strain of being 'locked up' for an uncertain period of time.

So what were our coping mechanisms? It was important to have a structure to the week. Every day needed its own characteristic by way of a scheduled activity – church every Sunday for instance. Few came

but all complained if they did not hear the sound of a hymn being sung by the few that did. Social events such as quizzes and film nights or a fiercely competitive naval version of Ludo called 'uckers' on set nights were regulars. Saturday night F1 races round a Scalextric track weaving its way between the missile tubes was the highlight. Card games had unique rules revolving round fierce cheating. This allowed the letting off of steam facing up to someone who had perhaps been getting on your nerves – even the Captain. Towards the end of every patrol there would always be a variety show – aka a 'Sod's Opera' – in which dressing-up using the engine room rag bags as a source of surprisingly 'exotic' costumes was essential. Talent was mixed but, like all amateur productions, the anticipation, taking part and audience involvement was what it was all about.

Through it all ran a strong thread of humour, poking fun whenever possible at our isolated existence. This was well expressed in our Sunday newspaper which reported gossip and goings on in the boat in a thoroughly scurrilous manner from which no-one was exempt. It also provided a platform for some talented cartoonists.

Finally, it was best not to count the days because that merely emphasised how long it had been since you sailed. If all else fails, you could take your scrubbing brush for a walk – but on no account let it lift its leg on someone's newly washed deck.

**Rob Forsyth**

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HEALTH CENTRE DEDDINGTON	01869 338611
Repeat prescriptions (Mon-Fri 10am-3pm)	338847
HOSPITALS:	
Churchill	0300 304 7777
Foscote (Private)	01295 252281
Horton General	0300 304 7777
John Radcliffe	0300 304 7777
Manor (Nuffield Health, Private)	01865 988158
Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre	0300 304 7777
Katharine House Hospice	01295 811866
NHS Non emergency	111
PARISH CLERK	01869 337447
(Monday 9.00am–12.30pm, Wednesday 9.00–5.00pm, Thursday 9.00–12.30pm)	
POLICE (non-emergency, 24 hrs)	101
Deddington & Thames Valley	
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DEDDINGTON LIBRARY	01869 338391
Monday	2.00–7.00pm
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DEDDINGTON CLUBS & SOCIETIES: The full list of contacts is available from the Library and Deddington OnLine website at <http://www.deddington.org.uk/directory>.

DEDDINGTON CHURCHES See section inside

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