

Powick Times

A free monthly newspaper for Powick, Callow End and surrounding villages



Issue 22

April 2025

FREE



Senetti

Suddenly Spring has Sprung! We have flowers, Shedges, trees and bushes in blossom! A wonderful change from the seemingly endless dull cloudy days. It has seemed a long winter. We are now having glorious sunny days, still with a slight nip in the air, but all so enjoyable. The gardens suddenly need urgent attention! Most of us can't wait to get going, and start planting, trimming and mowing. The countryside is especially lovely at this time of the year, and we are still waiting for some plants and trees to wake up and join in the fun!

The birds are great to see, all busy with their new nests and partners; they sound very happy!

The summer is certainly on its way, and we have lots to look forward to. Village Fetes, local

and national sporting events, summer holidays, Pershore Carnival and many more. We will shortly be commemorating VE Day, the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe and VJ Day, Victory in Japan. Five long years of horror and hardship for so many finally came to an end. The rejoicing went on for weeks and I think every street in the country had a party! Slowly but surely the Army, Navy and Airforce came home, and the rebuilding of lives, families and cities began. We

owe so much to all who took part and grieve forever for those who did not come home.

Happy Easter



Easter Sunday
20th April

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Easter Message from Rev Gary

Hallelujah! He is risen indeed!
Hallelujah!

Dear Friends

Easter is nearly with us. I want you to see yourself as an Easter person. I want to share with you the powerful message of hope that this season brings.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a message that transcends time and place. It speaks directly to the struggles, the fears, and the pain we all experience in a troubled world, and it calls us to a life of renewed hope and purpose. In the midst of our busy lives, our challenges, and the headlines that often seem full of despair and angst, Easter reminds us that there is always light breaking through the darkness. The story of Christ's resurrection, as told in the Gospel of Luke, invites us to look beyond the immediate, to trust in God's presence, and to remember that even in the darkest moments, God's love is still at work.

In Luke's Gospel, we hear of the women who go to the tomb early in the morning (Luke 24:1-12). Their hearts are heavy with grief, expecting to find Jesus' lifeless body, but instead,

they find an empty tomb and are met by two angels who proclaim, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!" These words are not just for the women at the tomb—they are for us today. In a world so often marked by suffering and uncertainty, the message of Easter is clear: death does not have the final word. Jesus' victory over the grave is the victory we share as Christians.

What does the real Easter message mean for you?

I am sure you are like me - anxious whilst reading the news headlines or watching the nightly news bulletins. What else can go wrong for us? Maybe you are struggling with a personal, work or family concern. Where does Chocolate Eggs and the Easter Bunny resonate with you? In a world still wrestling with the effects of war, poverty, inequality, and fear, the Easter message is one of resilience and Easter reminds us that no matter how broken or hurting our world may seem, there is always the possibility of resurrection—new life and hope.

The world often tells us that things will never change, that the pain we feel today will always be with us, but Easter tells us otherwise. The resurrection of Jesus proves that transformation is possible, that redemption is real. Where there is despair, there can be hope. Where there is hatred, there can be love. Where there is death, there can be life. This is a message we need to hold on to, especially as we face the challenges of our own lives and the struggles within our communities.

As your vicar, I see the ways in which God's love and resurrection power are at work in our communities. Perhaps it's in the kindness of neighbours helping one another, the tireless work of our elected representatives and public servants, the listening ear of a friend or the quiet prayers spoken in our homes. These are signs of new life, signs of resurrection happening right here, right now.

This Easter, let us reflect on what God is calling us to in our own village communities. How can we be people of resurrection in a world that desperately needs hope? How can we, as the church, be a beacon of light in the darkness? The church, after all, is not just a building; it is the people of God. Remember - we are called



to be agents of God's love and grace wherever we are—whether that's in our homes, our workplaces, or on our streets.

As we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, let's remember that this new life is something we are invited into, not just for ourselves but for others. It's an invitation to share the good news with those who are struggling, to show mercy to those who are hurting, and to extend love to those who feel forgotten.

This Easter, I pray that we will all encounter the risen Christ in new and life-giving ways. May we experience the power of His resurrection and be transformed by it. May we strive to bring that message of hope and new life to a world in need.

Let us be people who live with joy, who live with love, who live with hope, because Christ is risen! Hallelujah!

A Happy and blessed Easter to you all -

Rev Gary



Church Services and Online Worshipping
Opportunities for Your Church in the
Old Hills Malvern Churches

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Sunday 13th April

Palm Sunday

10.30am Benefice Palm Sunday Service at GUARLFORD

Monday 14th April

7.00pm Compline for Holy Week at CALLOW END

Tuesday 15th April

7.00pm Compline for Holy Week at GUARLFORD

Wednesday 16th April

7.00pm Compline for Holy Week at MADRESFIELD

Thursday 17th April

Maundy Thursday

7.00pm Maundy Thursday Liturgy at POWICK

Friday 18th April

Good Friday

11.00am An Hour by the Cross at POWICK

12noon Good Friday Service at POWICK

There will be An Hour by the Cross at

GUARLFORD, CALLOW END and MADRESFIELD

between 12noon and 3pm. Please see local notices for details.

Sunday 20th April

Easter Sunday

9.30am Easter Communion at CALLOW END

9.30am Easter Communion at GUARLFORD

11.00am Easter Communion at POWICK

11.00am Easter Communion at MADRESFIELD

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News from Powick Parish Hall

The Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday 11th March. It was disappointing that only committee members and trustees were present. At the AGM it was reported that the high level of use continued throughout the year. Whilst some user groups decided not to continue there have been some new users and still there are some 25 regular user groups/organisations. The high standard of the facilities in the Hall and its grounds for parking continue to attract new enquiries. The introduction of the on-line booking system on the website is progressing, but there are some minor matters to be resolved. It has resulted in an increase in the number of enquiries.

Ongoing and annual maintenance of the building

and its facilities, and the grounds, continued during the year. Thanks are due to Charlotte McLean for her work in keeping the premises in good condition and to Sarah Whyman for maintaining the grounds. No major works were undertaken in 2024, but all the windows in the Community Room were replaced. It was decided not to hold a Harvest Supper in 2024, but it is hoped that this will be held again in the autumn.

The increase in hall charges, which came into place in April, enabled the finances to remain steady, in spite of the increased cost of services and utilities. Finally, thanks were given to all the helpers, supporters and users of the Hall during 2024 and the Committee hope this will continue in 2025.



Church Services and Online Worshipping Opportunities for Your Church in the Old Hills Malvern Churches

APRIL 2025

Sunday 6th April

The Fifth Sunday of Lent/Passiontide Begins
9.30am Lent Communion at GUARLFORD
11.00am Lent Communion at POWICK

Sunday 13th April

Palm Sunday
10.30am Benefice Palm Sunday Service at GUARLFORD

Thursday 17th April

7.00pm Maundy Thursday Liturgy at POWICK

Friday 18th April

12noon Good Friday Service at POWICK

Sunday 20th April

Easter Sunday
9.30am Easter Communion at CALLOW END
9.30am Easter Communion at GUARLFORD
11.00am Easter Communion at POWICK
11.00am Easter Communion at MADRESFIELD

Sunday 27th April

The Second Sunday of Easter
9.30am Easter Communion at CALLOW END
11.00am Easter Communion at MADRESFIELD
Midweek Communion at The Orchard Room in Colletts Green
Thursdays 10th & 24th April from 10.30-11.30am



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A few words from...

Dame Harriett Baldwin MP



L-R George Burton, Dame Harriett Baldwin MP and Doug Claringbold

Return of popular bus service

Dame Harriett Baldwin MP has welcomed the return of a bus service which was withdrawn during the pandemic leaving many local people struggling to access public transport in the north of Malvern.

The X43 service running from Malvern Vale into Worcester was quietly withdrawn from service while bus usage was difficult in the pandemic. The MP has been running a long-standing campaign to bring about the return of the service and she met with senior managers at First Bus to identify ways to return the service to the schedules. Currently the S43 school service takes pupils to Dyson Perrins school but returns back to its base in Worcester without any passengers.

Dame Harriett suggested to the bus company that the S43 service could convert to the old X43 on its return journey, allowing passengers to use the service at the start and end of the day.

The bus company has now confirmed that the service will return to the timetable on April 28 and has added an additional middle of the day trip as well. The service now known as the 43 route will now run between Link Top in Malvern looping through the town and into Malvern Vale at Dyson Perrins

school before following the 44 route into Worcester. It adds Malvern Vale customers to a main bus route and the MP urged people to use the service to show support for the returning route as quickly as possible.

Dame Harriett said: "I was delighted to be able to sit down with the senior First Bus management and together come up with a solution that allows customers to use what was an empty bus returning to its base. This was a common-sense solution which means that we can now celebrate the return of the X43 service which local people have asked me to campaign for. It is now vital that local people show their support for this service. With extra demand, I am confident that the bus company will add additional services in due course. Along with the extra services along the 44 route with later services and buses running on Sundays, I am grateful that First Bus is looking to improve bus service coverage and allow more people to choose public transport. As ever, this is a case of 'use it or lose it' and I hope local people will show their support for these bus service improvements by hopping on a bus."



Church Services and Online Worshipping Opportunities for Your Church in the Old Hills Malvern Churches

MAY 2025

Sunday 4th May

The Third Sunday of Easter
9.30am Easter Communion at GUARLFORD
11.00am Easter Communion at POWICK

Sunday 11th May

The Fourth Sunday of Easter
9.30am Easter Communion at CALLOW END
11.00am Easter Communion at MADRESFIELD

Sunday 18th May

The Fifth Sunday of Easter
8.00am BCP Holy Communion at POWICK
9.30am BCP Holy Communion at GUARLFORD
11.00am Morning Praise at POWICK

Sunday 25th May

The Sixth Sunday of Easter
9.30am Easter Communion at CALLOW END
11.00am Easter Communion at MADRESFIELD

Thursday 29th May

Ascension Day
7.00pm Deanery Ascension Day Service at UPTON PARISH CHURCH
A Celebration of Licensed Lay Ministry

Midweek Communion at The Orchard Room in Colletts Green
Thursdays 8th & 22nd May from 10.30-11.30am



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Let's hear it for heat pumps!

William Jenkin



Did you know that the UK government is going to ban new oil-fired boiler installations in homes from 2035?

So, if your boiler is showing signs of age, maybe now is the time to consider a heat pump? Get valuable space back in your kitchen, as heat pumps go outside! Not only that, heat pumps are much more efficient than a boiler, being around 300% efficient, compared to a condensing boiler which is around 85% efficient. This means that for every 1kW of energy put into a heat pump you get 3 to 4 kW of heat, while with a boiler you only get 0.85 kW of heat.

If you add solar PV panels and a home battery to a heat pump installation, then the cost of heating your home with a heat pump drops significantly. This is what I call the 'holy trinity': where in conjunction with a suitable heat pump electricity tariff, you can really get your heating and electric bills right down. Don't forget that the average payback time in the UK for a 3-6kW system with battery is 8-10 years. After that all the electricity you generate is free! The government now obliges the major power supply companies to offer tariffs with a 'Smart Energy Guarantee'. This means you can get paid for exporting electricity which you don't use. I use the 'Agile Outgoing Octopus' tariff and I think of the reduction on my bills from April - October as off-setting the cost of running the heat pump during colder months.

Have you got 300mm of loft insulation?

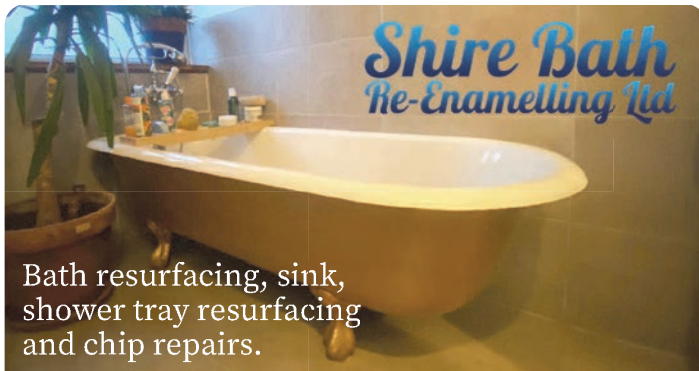
Now, let's look at home insulation. This is a great step to take to get your bills down, no matter what energy source you have for your home. Improving your loft insulation

is by far the most cost effective (and easiest) measure you can do. As we all know, hot air rises, so if you stop it leaving your home you stay warmer. It's as simple as that. The government has a couple of schemes for encouraging home owners and tenants to improve their insulation and so reduce energy bills. The ECO (energy company obligation) is aimed at tackling fuel poverty. To be eligible you need to be receiving at least one of a list of benefits, such as child benefit or income support. The ECO scheme cannot be used on conjunction with the Boiler Upgrade Scheme (more on that at the end.) Then there's the Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS) which is aimed at occupants of houses with an EPC rating D-G (ie. houses with poor levels of insulation and therefore high heating bills.) Importantly this scheme covers the cost of loft insulation as well as cavity wall and either external or internal wall insulation.

Get on the BUS

Finally, the most important grant available from the Government at the moment is the £7,500 boiler upgrade scheme (BUS) grant which is available to owners of homes and businesses replacing any fossil fuel based boiler with a heat pump. This means that if you're taking out a oil-fired boiler you'll get £7,500 off the price of your new heat pump installation. It's a serious incentive to reduce your CO2 emissions. And don't forget to think of the 'holy trinity'!

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The M5 Motorway *Tim Hickson*



Worcester High Street

Before this motorway was built, motorists would use the A38 which passed through the middle of Gloucester and the centre of Worcester. There were, of course, far fewer cars on the roads then. I have been told that pre-War plans for the motorways sited the M5 nearer to Croome Court. However, local racehorse trainers pointed out that it would pass through their training courses. Hence its route today. The site old RAF buildings, now used by The National Trust at Croome, was used as a place to keep and to repair some of the large vehicles being used. The first stages of the motorway's construction not only carved through existing fields and roads but its builders sometimes caused unintended damage. For example, a lorry so damaged the Croome footbridge crossing the road to High Green that it had to be removed. The lorry had a crane in the back which had not been lowered. This bridge was similar in design to

the one crossing the road by Spetchley Park. On either side the bridge had the Earls of Coventry's coat of arms. These discs were rescued and later built into a new wall at the Estate Yard at High Green. Copies were made and were placed either side of the entrance to Earls Croome Court, off the A38 near The Yorkshire Grey. The first 26 miles of the M5 motorway were constructed as a dual two-lane motorway. This section – from junction 4 in the north to the junction with the M50 in the south – opened in July 1962. Worcestershire County Council, the Police and particularly the County Surveyor of Worcestershire had made repeated representations that a dual three-lane standard motorway was more appropriate. However, The Ministry of Transport insisted that a dual two-lane motorway would be built - at a cost of around £8 million. The carriageways were also built to a lower overall



Remains of the Croome bridge



width of 88 feet rather than 100 feet to reduce the loss of agricultural land. When, in the 1990s, the decision to widen the Worcestershire section of M5 was made, the work cost £123 million.

On the bridge near Hatfield you can see the plaque unveiled by the then Minister for Roads and Traffic in 1993. During this work, the northbound Strensham Services were rebuilt further away from the modified M50 junction.

Now, of course, the M5 runs from the edge of Birmingham to Exeter with the possibility of it being extended to Plymouth. So if we want to go to the Southwest it is hard to avoid the M5.



Junction 8 Bridge Plaque

Once, when I was on duty as a volunteer guide in Croome Court, a foreign visitor I had taken around its peaceful interior, walked out on to the south portico. With the wind in its usual direction from the west, the noise from the motorway was immediately apparent. I was taken aback by being asked, "Why did they build the Court so close to the motorway?"



Earls Croome Court, off the A38 near The Yorkshire Grey

Farming

Mike Page



Lambs in the field alongside their mothers

This photograph taken very recently and picks up on the theme in the article below of 'Spring is arriving', taken during a spell of very pleasant early March weather. But to show that Winter has not gone away entirely,

The confrontation over Inheritance Tax (IHT) Rules between those representing farmers and related rural industries with the present Government continues; both sides standing firm in their resolve not to give ground. It would be easy for me to say; the farming fraternity are right in their stance; that is what you might expect a farmer to say. In the February Issue of Pershore Times Carol Draper (FCCA) in her article did spell out the accountant's understanding of the new regime; she ends with the remark, '... farms are typically asset rich and cash poor and planning is essential to mitigate the potential impact of IHT.' Born into a farming family (of several generations past) and raised on a farm, and surrounded by farming in all its aspects – everything from rushing out at 2.00am to round-up cattle reported on the phone by a neighbour as having escaped because a gate had been left open, to having small lambs suffering from hypothermia brought into the kitchen and being resuscitated in the bottom plate warming oven of a Rayburn cooker –

farming was very much at the top of my list of professions to choose when leaving school. Also in Carol's section of the February Edition is a version of the quote: "Find a job you enjoy doing and you will never work another day in your life." That has been very much my experience of farming, and even if chasing after cattle in the middle of the night is not the most pleasurable of experiences as it is happening, the sense of satisfaction, when all over and normality restored, is truly gratifying. I have taken measures, hopefully as best I can, to ensure the impact of IHT is minimised when my time comes. Whether or not my child (an only daughter) or grandchildren choose to carry on with involvement in farming will I hope it will be, all their own choice and not one forced upon them by a need to abandon that lifestyle and sell up in order to pay HMRC a lot of money. After the catastrophic continuing high rainfall of winter 23-24 we are emerging from this winter with land conditions being very much drier and better; as you read this, ewes with lambs at foot



*Taken only 2 days later -Snow on the ground.
At least not enough to worry the young lambs and their mothers too much!*

will be out grazing along with milking cows and other cattle released from their over-winter quarters. As farmers we are being encouraged to go in for Mob Grazing as being a system that is kinder to the soil. In Mob Grazing fields being grazed are of mixed species of grasses and sometimes other herbs (particularly clover) and the animals are moved regularly after grazing the most nutritious (and to them tasty!) upper parts of the growth trampling in lower parts to benefit soil organic matter and general soil health. Grazing animals will certainly eat first what tastes best to them, and that was proven to me some years ago when I planted a field that was regularly mown annually for hay but rarely grazed. I decided to plant it with varieties of grasses such as Cocksfoot and Timothy well known for producing excellent hay, well-liked by nearly all livestock when presented to them in that way during the winter months. But because of seasonal conditions that year grass growth in other fields was much less than expected and I was obliged to turn the sheep into the field of newly growing grass for them to graze. When turned into the field, their first reaction was – very much as expected in such a situation – nose to the ground and start

grazing; I left them to it, returning a couple of hours later to check everything was OK. I found the whole flock (without exception) was spread out around the perimeter of the field grazing at the base of the hedge and obviously consuming the last remnants of the previous grass ley (ryegrasses and clover) which had not been disturbed and was still growing there. They remained as such until all that growth had been consumed (along with a few sprigs of new, soft hedge growth!) and only then did they return to the main area of the field and start grazing that again. Given a chance to choose what they can eat, livestock will always go for what they like best (presumably based on taste, but perhaps they are being guided by instinct and their choice is based on nutritional value?). Once denied the chance to graze the forage of their choice they were happy to graze whatever was available, seemingly without complaint because I did not find them gathering at the gate screaming, "let us out of here!". Like young children perhaps: given a choice between a bowlful of beef stew and a bowlful of ice cream, you can be pretty sure which they will go for, but present them with the beef stew only, or first, and they will eat it quite contentedly.

Thoughts from the Snug ... Redefining political ideology

Politics is a frequent topic of conversation here, and in every Snug in every pub. With the recent turmoil in international and domestic events the very question of democracy and political philosophy had been frequently aired. A regular in the Snug arrived one evening with

some new definitions of political thought. It had a pleasing agricultural theme which we found amusing. Socialism is where you have two cows and give one to your neighbour. Communism is where you have two cows and the state takes

both and gives you the milk. Fascism is when you have two cows and the state takes them and sells you the milk. Nazism is where you have two cows and the state takes them and shoots you. Capitalism is where you have two cows, sell one and buy a bull. Bureaucracy is when you have two cows, the state takes both shoots one, milks the other and then pours the milk down the drain.

Cynical, but more than a germ of truth. It prompted the question which definition fitted which political leader best. Try it. Start with Trump, Thatcher, Starmer and Putin. The source of this wisdom is ascribed to John J Quinn. If any reader knows more about this witty sage we would like to hear it.

Cheers,

Buddy Bach

Ailsa's Kitchen

Ailsa Craddock

Wild About Garlic

Everything is starting to bloom and hazes of green cover the trees and hedges. Amidst April showers and sunshine, we are out walking more and enjoying the Spring. Daffodils, tulips and bluebells; new rhubarb and spinach and strawberry flowers with the promises to come. The Husband has been fishing and the added bonus to this is the first of the year's green treasures - wild garlic by the riverbank. It looks like in the picture.

Please note - wild garlic does look similar to lily of the valley, which is poisonous. The key difference between the two plants is that wild garlic always smells – yes, you guessed it – of garlic. If you're in any doubt about which plant you've found, do not eat it.

Take yourself out for a walk in the woods and you won't fail to notice the fragrant smell of wild garlic as you stroll through. If you're walking through a patch of countryside where wild garlic grows your nose will alert you. The garlicky scent is hard to miss. The leaves can be eaten raw or cooked and taste milder than shop-bought garlic. A fairly low growing plant, smelling slightly of garlic/onion and the most beautiful vibrant green. Pick it when you find it and you can make wonderful soup, dips and oil.

Wild Garlic Soup

This recipe is enough for 4 but freezes beautifully. Not only is it delicious but also helps lower cholesterol and high blood pressure!

1 onion sliced

2 - 3 potatoes

(these are for thickening the soup so depends on size)

500 ml water

stock cube (I use a vegetable one)

milk/creme fraiche/cream

Saute the onion in a little butter in a large saucepan. Add chopped potato, stock cube, and

water and bring to the boil.

Cook until the potato is soft.

Lay 3 - 4 handfuls of the garlic

leaves on the top and allow to

wilt and cook for 2 - 3 minutes.

Cool slightly and, using a hand

blender, puree. Put back into the

saucepan and add milk or cream

or creme fraiche to taste along

with plenty of pepper. It never

lasts long in our house but will

keep in the fridge for 2 - 3 days -

or ladle into bags to freeze.

Serve with crusty bread and a

dollop of creme fraiche.

I served my soup with Leek Pate



on the side. Simply saute a chopped leek and chopped garlic in some butter and olive oil until soft. Put half a carton of cream cheese into a bowl and top with the hot leek mixture. Whizz all up together to a nice creamy paste. Spread on hot buttered toast.

Wild Garlic Oil - blanch several handfuls of leaves in boiling water for 5 - 10 seconds then immediately drain and toss into iced water (this keeps the colour). Drain again and wrap in an old tea towel and squeeze all the liquid out. Chop up into small pieces and put in a jam jar or bottle and top up with 150 ml of olive oil.

Wild Garlic Butter -I make lots of this and usually manage to eke it out all year. Chop the garlic leaves up as you would any other

herb. Soften a block of butter, add salt and pepper and the chopped leaves. Roll into cigar shaped moulds, wrap in cling film and freeze. I usually keep one on the go in the fridge, replacing with a frozen one when needed. Just cut off slices and use to cook with as you would any other flavoured butters. Garlicky green Goddess dressing Put about 30 washed and dried garlic leaves into a food processor or blender with 300ml sour cream (if you haven't got this creme fraiche will do or make your own by adding some lemon juice to fresh cream - leave aside for a minute or two whilst it goes thick), the juice of half a lemon and salt and pepper. Blitz till smooth and serve over a green s salad or use a dipping sauce for bread or crisps.



Dental disease in cats and dogs



Dental disease is one of the most common problems encountered in our pets. Latest studies show 1 in 8 dogs are affected and 1 in 7 cats with older pets being much more at risk. Sadly, dental disease often goes undiagnosed or untreated as our pets are very adept at masking the signs. Many will continue to eat despite advanced dental problems. We do know that having diseased teeth and gums is painful but animals can just become more withdrawn or sleep more, signs often put down to 'aging'. Dental disease is also associated with other health conditions such as kidney and heart disease.

Periodontal disease (periodontitis) is the most common dental problem encountered. It is a build-up of calculus on the teeth leading to inflammation of the gum and surrounding tissues, ultimately it will lead to loss of the attachments holding the tooth in place.

So what can we do?

There are many dental products for use at home. The most effective method to keep your pets' teeth clean is to brush daily with a specific pet toothpaste and brush. Brushing is something you need to build up to slowly as many animals will not be accepting of this straight away. Chewing on dental treats or other products is also beneficial, watch out for the added calories they get from these though!

If the dental disease is progressing a Complete Oral Assessment, sometimes referred to as a 'dental', is needed. This is performed under anaesthesia and involves a full investigation of the mouth assessing each tooth for problems, x-rays are often taken, and professional cleaning of the teeth is done. Diseased areas may be dealt with then or in a separate procedure depending on the extent of the problem.

If you think your pet's teeth are in need of a check-up contact the surgery to make an appointment today.

Best wishes *Eliza*

info@martinandcarrvets.co.uk
martinandcarrvets.co.uk

Spring flowers

At last there is a little warmth in the sun, and spring flowers are putting on a show. The number and variety of adult insects is low at this time of year and their activity is reduced in cool conditions, so many plants have adaptations to increase the chance of attracting pollinators to their flowers. Snowdrops are strongly scented and are eagerly visited by honey bees, and similarly, grape hyacinth and spring squill always seem busy with bees. Crocuses open wide in mild temperatures and are a favourite of bumble bee queens which can reach the nectar with their long tongues. Dandelions also open and close daily and are so attractive that bees may ignore apple blossom in an orchard, preferring the golden carpet below, but not all yellow flowers are popular. Buttercups, celandine and daisies attract a few small flies, and small black pollen beetles visit daffodils, but bees do not seem to show any interest in them.

Sloe or blackthorn, the first of the tree fruits to flower, forms patches of white in farm hedgerows but it does not lure many insects as its nectar is fairly low in sugar content. Plum blossom is a little better

and cherry blossom better still, although the showy double flowers of ornamental 'flowering cherries' are of no use at all. The goat willow bearing the fluffy grey 'pussy willow' catkins is a particularly good source of protein rich pollen. Trees positively hum on warm days with the multitude of insects feasting on it, and finches and other small birds also eat the pollen. The spring floral bounty continues with pears, and apples, horse chestnuts and sycamore, hawthorn and cotoneaster and these fuels a rapid expansion of bee colonies. Despite this abundance of flowers, there is never a surplus of nectar from these sources that can be taken as a honey harvest. As fast as it is gathered, it is used to make new wax, to feed the young bee grubs and to generate the heat needed to incubate them. The brood area of the hive has to be kept at a temperature of 37C by metabolising sugars in the bee's muscles, and this is quite a task when the night temperatures fall to freezing or below.

Managing this spring growth is a challenge for the beekeeper. On the one hand you need to provide extra space for the increasing population of bees and brood, but you have to

avoid giving too much empty space that the bees cannot keep warm which could chill the brood.

In this area, the first plant to yield so much nectar that a surplus of honey can be harvested is oilseed rape. The fields of gold are absolutely irresistible to bees, and they will fly past other crops to reach it. In some localities, hawthorn will yield a honey with an almond aroma, but in the UK, I have never seen dandelion honey such as Swiss beekeepers obtain from the alpine pastures, with its egg yolk colour and firm texture.



Martyn Cracknell



Village Life

Are we safe saying that spring has finally arrived? We've already had a first burst of sunshine and warmth, bringing the contented buzz of lawnmowers at the end of February. It seems we need to mow later and later every year with only a brief respite before that dreaded first cut, after which the lawn looks like it's been attacked rather than neatly trimmed. Still great for the spirits though and guaranteed to raise a smile.

The blossom trees are also putting on a great early show, with the promise of much more as each variety takes its bow. As a summer baby I regard this as the start of the best season and am happy to bid farewell to winter with its short days and bleak outlooks. Apologies to any chionophiles out there but light mornings and evenings are here and I for one am celebrating!

I mentioned this last month and

am glad to report that our village bird houses have arrived and have been deployed in a variety of gardens, in trees, on walls and garden features. Never, before have so many desirable detached houses been welcomed to our small village. All are single room and genuinely affordable, with vacant possession and all necessary mod cons – well an access hole and cleaning hatch! We're collectively anticipating an influx of new residents who will hopefully swell our population further by producing offspring. I've taken the precaution of locating mine as far away from our cars as possible as other less welcome feathered neighbours seem to regard them as fair game and easy target practice – not a good look and dreadful for the paintwork!

Easter is beckoning, with no excuses for not displaying a few decorative eggs, bunnies

John Driscoll

etc outside our houses. One of our village arts groups is hosting a couple of workshops to create Easter delights, so there's every potential for artistic flair – or just a sociable gathering and pre-Easter wellbeing session.

We'll next be turning our attention as a village to commemorating VE Day, 80 years on. Many in the village will have parents or grandparents who have vivid memories of the end of those particular hostilities. Hopefully this will resonate with a wide range of our village community and give us a chance to get together and empathise with our 1940's forefathers. How much in life has changed in those 80 years, and don't we take so much for granted that we risk forgetting the sacrifices of previous generations upon which our lives are built. Wouldn't it be just amazing if we could wake up to a world



without so much on-going conflict – we can but pray. So, roll on spring and summer and let's collectively hope for pay-back for the non-summer of 2024. Those little feathered families deserve long hot days with an abundance of worms, bugs, pollen or whatever they favour. Welcome to our village, and let's hope you'll be encouraged you to return year after year! What a tweet way to sign off!

How to create a border with year-round interest

When I talk planting plans with clients, the topic of colour is always a focal point—it's such a defining element in any garden. Yet, the colour yellow often receives a dismissive, "Not in my garden, thank you!" I get it. Too much yellow, just like wearing a single bright colour from head to toe, can feel overwhelming. But it's all about balance. Just as accessories elevate an outfit, strategic accents can transform yellow from overpowering to delightful in your planting scheme. Take *Euonymus 'Aureopictus'* as an example. On its own, it might seem a little bold, but in the right context, it radiates cheerfulness and is evergreen too. It's a versatile and low-maintenance shrub that thrives in any soil or position. It forms neat clumps and reaches about 1m tall—perfect for a subtle yet striking backdrop. Pair it with complementary



plants that bring year-round colour and suddenly, that "too much yellow" is a stunning focal point within a well-coordinated planting scheme.

Spring

Consider *Erysimum 'Bowles's Mauve'*, a perennial wallflower with vibrant mauve blooms and blue-green foliage. Flowering from February to July, it thrives in sunny spots and reaches up to 60cm. For an alternative, plant *Viola tricolour* (wild pansy) for splashes of delicate purples, yellows, and whites, adding additional colour.

Summer

After the *Erysimum* fades, plant perennials such as *Echinacea Pallida*. These coneflowers are pollinator-friendly and bloom from June until September. Also try *Cosmos atrosanguineus* commonly known as the Chocolate Cosmos, with its deep maroon blooms which make striking contrast to yellow accents.



Autumn

As summer fades, *Nerine bowdenii* start to blossom with its bright pink flowers. These bulbs are best planted outside with their neck just above the surface of the soil at 10-15cm intervals from April onwards. Alternatively, *Aster x frikartii 'Mönch'* are another autumnal star and will flower from August to October with bold blue/mauve flowers and yellow centres which will look great with the *Euonymus*.

Winter

Winter flowers must be *Helleborus* with rich dark-purple petals and golden stamens such as 'Double Ellen Red' or 'Ice N Roses Red'. Which are one of my favourite winter flowers and they're happy in full or part sun and are loved by bees too. With the right companion planting, your garden will always feel colourful and harmonious throughout the seasons.



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April gardening tips

Reg Moule *BBC Hereford & Worcester*

Early in the Month

Sow annual climbers e.g. *Asarina*, *Eccremocarpus*, *Cobaea*, *Ipomoea*, *Tropaeolum* and *Rhodochiton*. Dead head daffodils and narcissi—feed them but DO NOT cut off the foliage. Keep an eye out for slugs and take steps to control them. Prune any frost damaged shoots on less hardy shrubs such as *Pittosporum*. Plant summer flowering bulbs outdoors e.g. *Gladioli* and *Nerine bowdenii*, if you already have overcrowded clumps of *Nerines* in your garden lift and divide them now. For trouble free roses, spray with one of the safer rose combined pest and disease treatments, like *Roseclear 3 in 1*, or *Uncle Tom's Plant Tonic* for an organic solution to rose diseases. Prune *Forsythias* and winter *Jasmine* after flowering. Finish dividing overcrowded herbaceous perennial plants. Plant summer flowering bulbs e.g. *Gladioli*, *Dahlias* etc. Straggly silver foliage plants can be cut back now e.g. *Saintolina*. (but not down into old wood - that is risky). Lift

and divide pond plants. This is also a good time to introduce new plants too. Plant *Asparagus* crowns and *Jerusalem artichokes*. Divide overcrowded clumps of *Nerines* and *Siberian Iris*. Vine weevils will be laying eggs now they can be curbed organically by laying a half inch layer of horticultural grit on top of the compost to prevent successful egg laying. Otherwise known infected areas can be treated by watering on *Nemasys* Vine Weevil Killer nematodes. Cover some established strawberry plants with cloches to get an early crop. Plant new conifer hedges and trim established ones.

Mid April

Tackle pernicious weeds, like bindweed, with a systemic weed killer containing glyphosate or *Vitax SBK*. A similar organic based product would be *Neudorff Weedfree Plus*. Hardy annuals can still be sown in situ outdoors. Plant dormant dahlia tubers 10cm (4in) deep outdoors at the foot of support stakes. Undertake lawn renovations by

repairing damaged edges and removing bumps and hollows. Watch out for whitefly appearing in your greenhouse, hang up some yellow sticky traps to monitor them. Plant some French marigolds or *Coleus cannina* near your tomatoes to deter the pests. Take conifer cuttings. Pull off 7.5 – 10 cm (3-4in) side shoots. Trim up the base. Dip in hormone and insert in free draining compost. Watch out for attacks of gooseberry mildew and gooseberry sawfly, these devastate bushes. Plant out cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprout and celery plants. Finish planting sprouted maincrop potatoes. Sow tomato seeds now for outdoor planting in June. Begin planting up hanging baskets, keep them inside until frost risk is minimal. Check your greenhouse regularly, as watering, shading and ventilation are important. Sow Basil indoors, but do not plant outside until there is no risk of frost. Start successional sowings of salad crops e.g. Lettuce, carrots and radishes.



Late April

Sow tender veg. indoors for planting out next month e.g. courgettes, French and Runner beans. Sow marrow, courgette and squash seed on its side and soak Sweet Corn seed in water for four hours before sowing. Prune early flowered *Clematis* after blooming e.g. *C. alpina* and *C. macropetala*. This is only necessary where space is limited. This is a good time to re-pot any houseplants that are pot bound. Store unused seeds left in open packets in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Treat your lawn to an application of lawn food. *Miracle Gro Thick and Green* is my favourite as its food is released according to the weather conditions.

Becoming a foster family

Becoming a foster family is a big decision, we are here to help you to decide if fostering is right for you.

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Evie's Teenage Focus

Evie Aubin Oxford Brookes University

Last I wrote to you I promised the first thing I would do is tell you about my concerts, so I guess that's where I'll start. It was a very busy week, to recap I had two concerts one on March 6th and another on the 8th. The first concert was Sabrina Carpenter, and it was absolutely amazing. I'll be the first to admit that I haven't always been her biggest fan. I always liked her, I thought she was cool and I liked a good few of her songs; but she was never one of the artists who I would just go onto Spotify, to listen too. However I fell in love with her music when her new album "Short n' Sweet" was released. It was when this album came out that I knew I had to see her, and looking back it was a very good decision. I usually end up preparing the outfit I will wear months in advance of the concert, however it wasn't until about a week before the concert when I stumbled into urban outfitters and found the perfect dress. I was struggling at first because I had found a few things that had the concert aesthetic but it just wasn't the vibe that I was going for; but I found the right one just in time. The concert was at the Birmingham Utilita arena. We got a train into Birmingham and then had about a 20 minute walk to the arena. In the end we got in the queue at about 2:00 in the afternoon and the doors opened at 5:30. As my parents lovingly pointed out, and I'm sure a few others are thinking, I am aware this is a long time to queue; however it was definitely worth it. Me and the friends that I went with



all had General admission standing tickets, meaning that before we went in, all the people with VIP tickets would go in and in theory they would all get the best view. However, due to the fact we got there early and were pretty close to the front of the queue, we still got very close to the front, only one row of people were in front of me and we had an amazing view. The concert itself was amazing and I made so many great memories that night. The second concert I went to was Gracie Abrams. I've liked Gracie for a very long time now, but this was the first time I had an opportunity to see her, due to this it was a very emotional experience for me. I went with my best friend Daisy which just made it even more emotional. Whilst Sabrina is meant to be a very upbeat artist Gracie manages to capture an overall melancholic vibe whilst still somehow being someone you can dance to. What I'm trying to say is she is absolutely incredible, and I don't think words can describe how amazing the experience was. I can only hope to be able to see these artists again, but until then I'll keep you up to date with everything else. So for now, Toodles!

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Gregory's World!

Gregory Sidaway Exeter College, Oxford

Brief Encounters

Oxford is a city of notable names. You can encounter them without even realising it. Visit the Bodleian Library and you tread in the footsteps of Sir Thomas Bodley. The Ashmolean: Elias Ashmole. Even when I hop over to college for Saturday brunch, I am munching hash browns in the spiritual company of Roger Bannister, J.R.R. Tolkien and Richard Burton. But the Oxford I've experienced has also been a city of notable faces, some of whom I've been lucky enough to encounter.

Most of my encounters were arranged through the Oxford Union, a debating society with their own headquarters, mulled wine at Christmas, and heated blankets. (Sounds rough, I know.) During Freshers' week, I picked up a lifetime membership. I often swing by to listen to their visiting speakers – from Charles Dance to Sir Lindsay Hoyle – and, of course, to enjoy their library, comfy chairs and blankets. In Year One, I'd ensconced myself in a comfy chair to revise, only to glance up from my notes and spot Sir Derek Jacobi being given a tour of the library. My insides jittered. Here was a giant of theatre, a titan of TV, responsible for introducing audiences to a

pantheon of era-defining characters, from Roman Emperor Claudius to Igglepiggle. He seemed particularly entranced by the murals hanging on the walls. They depict Arthurian scenes of shields, crowns and frolicking goats; apparently, they were painted by William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti – no wonder Sir Derek was so interested. When he was asked if he wanted to tour the mezzanine, he raised a hand to his mouth in a very Thespian way and exclaimed in a stunned whisper: 'I daren't!'

In Year Two, came Tom Hanks. On special occasions, the Union entices a Hollywood star over to the debating chamber on St Michael's Street. They'd interviewed Edward Norton earlier that year, but Tom Hanks' visit promised an even bigger turnout. Hours before he arrived, a queue was already winding around the front yard and backing up onto the street. Every seat in the chamber was filled. Not one square inch of leather upholstery was spared. I managed to squeeze into the gallery and we all murmured together in a stew of expectation and bubbling energy until Mr Hanks arrived. When he entered and the hubbub lulled, I still didn't trust my eyes. He leapt straight in with some acting exercises. We all had to repeat: 'Is there

something I can do for you?' in the context of various scenarios: helping an elderly person with a package, enduring a long shift at a city hall information booth, or confronting an unsavoury customer in a shop. Later in his speech, I vaguely noticed a woman on the front row rising to leave. I wouldn't have thought much more of this, had Mr Hanks not called out: 'So long, Em, I love you so much!'

The woman swivelled around. It was Emma Watson. The chamber pulsed. We'd prepared for one megastar, but two? I blinked. Woody and Hermione were literally having a conversation right in front of us! Emma Watson had been studying a master's degree in creative writing at the time. Some claimed to have spotted her before – one of my mates had apparently seen her outside Leon – but this was a first for me and it was a crazy experience.

Crazier still was the opportunity to actually talk to a notable face. In January, we attended a lecture delivered by the English Faculty's Visiting Professor of Creative Media: Sir Stephen Fry. Sir Stephen explained that being a 'visiting' professor meant he was expected to deliver a talk to students without the added benefits of a free welcome dinner or – that most coveted of



Oxford privileges – a parking permit! To our surprise, after his talk on 'The Lure of Language', he wasn't ushered away by security, but left to face a tsunami of fans. He rode this wave with friendliness and charm, giving everyone a few moments of his time – including me. I shook his hand and thanked him for everything he'd done. Then I asked if he could channel General Melchett from *Blackadder* and give us a "Baayyyy!!!" He chuckled, threw back his head and bellowed "Baayyyy!!!" Somehow, I only have one term left at uni. (Insert *shiver* here.) I'll miss opportunities like these, ones that left me fizzing with excitement, bouncing with disbelief and joy on the journey home. More than anything, though, I'll miss the notable faces of the friends I've made over my three years. A far greater opportunity, one that is far from over! I'll see them again – as I'll see you again, fellow reader, very soon.

Romy's Uni Life

Romy Kemp Liverpool University

Warmer Weather

Waking up to bright light through my uni blinds is a wonderful change from the pitter patter of rain which I am used to in Liverpool. With blue sky and a cool breeze, rather than the bitter wind of the winter months, I haven't had to wrap up as much for my days in university. It is turning into cardigan weather instead of thick coats and umbrellas. The Easter break is approaching quickly, and I cannot wait! I have quite a busy April and I am looking forward to enjoying being at home and seeing friends. I am going on holiday with my parents to Cornwall for my dad's birthday and am looking forward to the beach and sunshine (hopefully). I have always been more of a

winter person however I think living in Liverpool has made me yearn for sunshine and warmth - I have had enough of the bitter wind, rain and frost in Liverpool to last a lifetime. My mum's birthday was a couple of weeks ago and thankfully it aligned with my Reading Week (where I have no lectures in the week, just helpful talks) so I went home from Wednesday to Sunday. My mum and I went out to lunch together with my aunty and did a bit of shopping. My family went out for dinner for my mum's birthday too, we went to The Jockey and had a lovely meal (I had chickpea curry which was divine)! I also made a cake which was pretty good too. Overall, I think she had a lovely day! A couple of weeks ago it was my nana's funeral which we

attended in Slough. The service was done wonderfully and although it was incredibly sad, it was the nicest sendoff we could've given her and I am forever happy about that. I wrote a poem for her which helped me come to terms with her passing, but it also allowed me to commemorate the woman she was and the memories I have of her that will never be forgotten.

It is coming up to that time in the semester where essays are due in, and consultations are necessary to improve the work that students are submitting. It is overwhelming at times to keep up with not only the meaning of the books you have to read but also the context and resources about the topics you choose to write about. I have also been looking into potential jobs after



university but so far, I haven't landed on anything specific - there are so many jobs out there, but it all depends on what stands out to you. I also have no idea where and if I want to move after university is finished. There is so much to think about and not a lot of time to come up with all the answers you need.

Closing the gender pain gap:

Louise Anderson MSci, MSc, BSc, BA, BSc Hons

A New Approach That's Working for Women

For too long, women experiencing chronic pain have been left in the dark—facing delays in diagnosis, misattributed symptoms, and a healthcare system that hasn't always listened. But change is happening, and a clinic in Pershore is leading the way. Louise Anderson, a consultant pain psychologist and occupational therapist, runs Cognisance Pain Management in Pershore. She sees women every week who've spent years looking for answers. But instead of simply focusing on the frustration, her clinic focuses on what can be done—and the results are encouraging. "I've seen huge improvements in quality of life, emotional wellbeing, and day-to-day functioning," Anderson says. "When women feel heard, supported, and are given the right tools, they start to take back control from their pain." Anderson's work reflects a growing body of evidence that supports the use of psychological approaches—like pain reprocessing therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), mindfulness, and pain education—as part of chronic pain treatment, especially for

women. These strategies don't suggest the pain is "all in the mind," but rather help manage the way pain is processed by the nervous system, reducing its intensity and impact. Research shows that women often experience chronic pain differently to men, both physically and emotionally. Tailored psychological support acknowledges this and helps women navigate not just the pain itself, but the emotional toll that can come with it—such as anxiety, low mood, and isolation.

Importantly, Anderson's approach is about partnership. "I work with each person to understand their story, their needs, and their goals," she explains. "It's not about fixing someone. It's about helping them live well with their condition."

While challenges like the gender pain gap still exist, the success of clinics like Cognisance shows that progress is possible—and happening now. With more awareness, better training, and evidence-based treatments, women are finally getting the recognition and support they've long deserved.

"I am not just managing pain," Anderson says. "I am helping people reclaim their lives."

"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow"

Audrey Hepburn

LOUISE ANDERSON

(MBPSs, MSci, MSc, BSc, BA, BSc Hons)
Consultant Pain Psychologist and HCPC Registered Occupational Therapist



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Sympathetic to Parasympathetic

Emily Papirnik

How I help people make the change . . .

The autonomic nervous system (ANS) consists of two primary branches: The sympathetic nervous system (SNS), responsible for the 'fight or flight' response, and the parasympathetic nervous system (PNS), which governs 'rest and digest' activities. Chronic activation of the SNS can lead to stress-related disorders, making the transition to PNS dominance essential for relaxation and healing. At Intention Therapy, various therapies and skills are employed to facilitate this shift, promoting overall well-being. *Emotional Freedom Technique* (EFT), often referred to as 'tapping', involves stimulating specific meridian points on the body while voicing particular concerns. This method aims to release emotional blockages, thereby reducing stress and anxiety. By addressing these emotional barriers, EFT encourages the activation of the PNS, fostering a state of calm and balance.

Massage Therapies
Intention Therapy offers a range of massage treatments, including pregnancy, holistic, sports, and remedial massages. Massage therapy is known to alleviate muscle tension and enhance circulation, which can lead to reduced SNS activity. The tactile stimulation during massage sessions promotes relaxation, aiding the body's transition to parasympathetic dominance.

Energy Healing
Energy healing practices, such as 5th Dimension Earth Certified Healing and Reiki, focus on balancing the body's energy fields. These therapies aim to harmonise the body's vibrational frequencies, facilitating relaxation and stress reduction. By restoring energetic equilibrium, energy healing supports the activation of the PNS, contributing to

mental and physical tranquillity.

Talking Therapy

Engaging in talking therapies provides clients with a platform to explore their thoughts and emotions. This process can lead to new perspectives and emotional release, reducing stress levels. As stress diminishes, the PNS becomes more active, promoting a state of relaxation and improved mental clarity.

Weighted Blankets and Lap pads for both children and adults

The gentle pressure from the blanket mimics deep pressure touch, which has been shown to reduce anxiety and improve sleep quality. This sensory input signals the body to shift from a state of heightened alertness to one of calm, enhancing parasympathetic activity.

'Me Helping Me' App

The 'Me Helping Me' app offers a series of energy practices designed to empower users in their journey toward self-discovery and well-being. By encouraging a change in perspective and helping individuals manage their reactions, emotions, and thoughts, the app supports the activation of the PNS. Regular use of its features can lead to reduced stress and a balanced state of mind.

mehelpingme.com

By integrating these therapies and techniques, Intention Therapy provides a comprehensive approach to facilitate the shift from sympathetic to parasympathetic dominance. This holistic strategy not only addresses physical symptoms but also supports emotional and energetic well-being, fostering a balanced and harmonious state of health.

If you'd like some more tools to help your nervous system

and want to try any of the above contact me at

www.intentiontherapy.co.uk

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Victory in Europe Day

Germany officially surrendered on 7th May 1945 and the conflict was finally over!

Issue 80

May 2025

VE DAY



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NATION'S GREAT OUTBURST OF JOY ON VE-DAY

ROYAL FAMILY FOUR TIMES OUT ON PALACE BALCONY

Mr. CHURCHILL: 'NO GREATER DAY IN OUR HISTORY'

A GREAT NATIONAL OUTBURST OF RELIEF AT THE END OF NEARLY SIX YEARS OF WAR IN EUROPE WAS EPI TOMISED YESTERDAY, VE-DAY, BY TREMENDOUS SCENES OF REJOICING IN LONDON, WHICH BEGAN IN THE AFTERNOON WITH THE PRIME MINISTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE END OF HOSTILITIES AND CONTINUED FAR INTO THE NIGHT.

Four times in four hours, in response to the enthusiasm of huge crowds, the King and Queen, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret stepped out on to the balcony of Buckingham Palace. On one occasion they were accompanied by Mr. Churchill, who later declared: "In all our long history we have never seen a greater day."

Of the vast numbers of people who set out from home in the morning, tens of thousands made their way toward Buckingham Palace.

EYE-WITNESS DESCRIBES SURRENDER SCENE

GERMAN FLEET TO GO TO ALLIED PORTS

ADMIRALTY ORDER

The Admiralty announced yesterday that the following orders have been issued for the surrender of the German Fleet: All German and German-controlled warships, auxiliaries, merchant ships and other craft at sea are being ordered to report their position in plain language to the nearest Allied wireless telegraphy station, and are being given orders to proceed to such Allied ports as directed. They will remain in the last moment against the Red Army.

GERMANS FIGHT RUSSIANS TO LAST MOMENT

DRESDEN FALLS

The Germans, whose surrender was due to come into effect this morning at one minute past midnight, were fighting to the last moment against the Red Army.

GATES CLOSED

"We Want the King"

The changing of the Guard, the arrival of war horses for an inspection, Mr. Churchill's arrival, for crowd, were early episodes that stirred the emotions of the happy crowd.

People stood packed tightly on the pavements and in the roadway outside the Palace, and the roadway was

8th May 1945 – Victory in Europe Day (VE DAY) – is a day etched in the memory of everyone who witnessed it. After nearly six years of war Germany officially surrendered on 7 May 1945 and the conflict was finally over. The unconditional surrender came after Adolf Hitler took his own life on 30 April as the Allies surrounded Berlin and was authorised by his successor Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz. News that the war in Europe had ended did not come as a surprise and had been anticipated back in Britain for some time as the Allies

advanced on Germany. Across the western world, millions rejoiced, relieved that years of conflict and incredible hardship were finally coming to an end. Up and down the country millions of people took to the streets as communities came together to celebrate the end of the European conflict with street parties, dancing and singing. Mass crowds gathered in Trafalgar Square and up the Mall to Buckingham Palace, where King George the VI, Queen Elizabeth, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret were joined by Prime Minister

Winston Churchill on the balcony of the palace before the jubilant crowds. Princess Elizabeth and her sister also later secretly joined the celebrations in the crowds outside the palace, with Princess Elizabeth, the future Queen, describing it as "one of the most memorable nights of my life". Despite the joy and celebration, it was a day of mixed emotions for some who mourned loved ones lost during the war, and for those who worried about friends and relatives still serving overseas. The conflict was over in Europe, but the war continued to wage in the Far East and

Pacific, with many troops redeployed to fight in the east instead of coming home. The end of the war in Japan came a few months later in August after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The impact of the Second World War endured long after VE Day. Millions of lives had been lost, homes and cities were destroyed and needed to be rebuilt, and people all over Europe had been displaced by the conflict. But after years of uncertainty and living in fear, it was one day that everyone came together to celebrate the start of new beginnings.

Flying Nightingales

John Driscoll

September 1944 and the Arnhem landings in Holland are not going well. Allied forces suffer heavy casualties and field medics are struggling to keep pace. The Womens Auxilliary Air Force (WAAF) are tasked with assisting with the repatriation of wounded servicemen from the front. 200 young nursing auxiliaries volunteer to serve on medical assistance flights, among them Leading Aircraft Woman (LACW) Gibbins – better known to me as Mum. The Flying Nightingales were born and until late 1945 they helped around 100,000 seriously injured men return to England where they could receive specialist treatment. The wounded included horrendous cases with severed limbs, major head injuries, burns and severe trauma. Daily duties for the Nightingales started with loading the medical and support hamper onto the plane. Converted Dakota freight planes were used and carried supplies, including ammunition, on the outbound flight so could not bear the Red Cross. They were therefore vulnerable to enemy attack. One nursing auxiliary accompanied the flight crew of four men to tend to the wounded on the return trip. They could administer morphine and oxygen, but evidently the most frequent request was for a cup of tea! In my Mum's words, they were mostly so relieved to be going back home they could put up with the lack of comfortable surroundings.

Each flight carried eighteen stretcher cases plus six sitting wounded. Some days involved two flights. Often the auxiliaries accompanied the wounded by road ambulance to their specialist hospital in England before returning to base and repeating the whole process.

Parachutes were provided for the outbound flight, though I'm not sure my Mum was ever trained to use one! For the return trip the Nursing Auxiliaries' chutes were locked away as they were expected to remain with their patients. As my Mum cheekily suggested, 'they could hardly wave cheerio to their charges and jump to safety leaving them to their fate!'. More than once the return flights were delayed overnight, necessitating an unscheduled stop-over in the combat zone. LACW Gibbins had a few stories to tell, but of course most of them remained unspoken.

The Flying Nightingales weren't totally unrewarded though. Admittedly their pay was only two thirds of what their male equivalents were paid, but they received a daily allowance in recognition of their unusual duties. They received eight old pence a day, which would buy a half pint of beer in 1944. Not very scientific, but that equates that to about £2.50 a day in current terms. Not a lot is it? Two of the volunteers were sadly lost in action. You can be forgiven for not having heard of the Flying Nightingales because they were

not officially recognised at the time. British government policy did not allow females to serve in combat zones, so their existence would have been a bit of an embarrassment. As a family we only knew very sketchy details as our mother rarely spoke of this episode in her life. To her, 'there was a war on so you just had to do your bit'. Anyway, she later confided that these were happy years for her, she thoroughly enjoyed what she was doing and felt a great sense of achievement.



Inside a converted Dakota converted to carry patients on stretchers or seated.

Fast-forward and in 2008 seven surviving Flying Nightingales were presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Military and Civilian Health Partnership. No medals were awarded at the end of the war because, well, they hadn't officially existed. Unfortunately LACW Gibbins was

overlooked for this award, but thanks to her daughter's eagle eyes her continued existence was highlighted and she received a Nightingale Award in 2009 at the age of 91. A moment of recognition which included a BBC News interview during which she recounted that the main reason she volunteered was because they were allowed to wear trousers while on duty – which she far preferred to the uniform skirts otherwise expected! Far too modest and no way was she prepared to accept that she and her chums had displayed amazing heroism for such minimal recognition. After all – 'there was a war on!'



Injured serviceman being loaded onto a Dakota somewhere close to enemy action.



LACW Gibbins with other members of air crew alongside a Dakota

Freedom of the City awarded to The Worcestershire Regiment, 15th April 1950

Alec Mackie, ex Worcestershire Regiment

I watched the parade in which my father, Sgt Ted Mackie, took part as a member of the 7th Bn Colour Party. I became the 4th generation of my family to serve in the Regiment between 1957-60 both at Norton Barracks and in the West Indies. On a sunlit Saturday in April seventy - five years ago, military and civic history was made when the Freedom of the City of Worcester was granted to The Worcestershire Regiment on 15th April 1950. This was the biggest military parade held in Worcester since the Second World War when both the first battalion of the Regiment together with the 7th Battalion (TA) and a gathering of old soldiers from both World wars and the South African war (1898-1901) paraded at the County Cricket ground, New Road. "Led by the Regiments' Corps of drums and Band playing 'Hearts of Oak' the Regiments' traditional 'March on' the parade marched from Bromwich Road and New Road into the ground and formed up around the Diglis end of the ground.

The Civic party included the Mayor of Worcester, Alderman Stanley Bennett with Sword Bearer standing behind him; the bewigged Town Clerk, Bertram Webster and the Chief Constable, Ernest Tinkler. They were accompanied by the retiring Colonel of the Regiment, Brigadier Bowcher Clarke DSO, and General Sir Richard Gale, KBE, CB, DSO, MC, who became Colonel of the Regiment the following week. Also present was a former Colonel, Brigadier General William St George Grogan, VC.

The centrepiece of the parade were four silver drums which were the gift of the City and presented to the Regiment by the Mayor to mark the occasion of the granting of the Freedom of the City to the Regiment. After the presentation the drums were trooped through the ranks.

There followed the march of both battalions exercising their right of entry into the City with "Drums beating, Colours flying and bayonets fixed" They were

followed by 1,600 old comrades along New Road, Bridge St and High St, cheered on by the large crowds gathered along the route to The Cathedral. Outside the Guildhall, the Mayor, accompanied by the Aldermen and Councillors, took the salute.

The Service of Thanksgiving at The Cathedral was conducted by the Dean, William Beck. The Colours of both 1st, 2nd and 7th Battalions were slow marched down the Nave from the West door as the Band played the Regimental slow March, "The Duchess of Kent" The Silver Drums were placed on the Alter steps and the Colours were placed upon them. During the Service, Brigadier Clarke, the Colonel of the Regiment, unveiled the Memorial in St George's Chapel in memory of the 579 officers and 10,308 other ranks who were killed or died of wounds in both World wars. The Memorial was presented to the Dean who promised to care for it among the other memorials in the Chapel. This was followed by the organist

playing Elgar's "Land of Hope and Glory" followed by the Blessing of the Memorial by the Bishop of Worcester William Cash, DSO., himself a First World War veteran. The Service concluded with the Blessing by the Bishop, followed by the singing of the National Anthem as the Colours were dipped in salute. So the congregation filed out feeling that those who had not come back had shared in the glories of the day and the honour that the City had paid to the Regiment they served so well."

Brigadier Bowcher Campbell Stenhouse Clarke as Captain Clarke was the Adjutant of the 2nd Battalion which fought at the Battle of Gheluvelt on October 31st, 1914.

Together with Captain A F Thorne, Grenadier Guards, he reconnoitred the route across mostly open ground that the 380 men of The Worcesters were to charge over in the face of enemy gunfire to prevent the advance of the German forces, as the remainder of the British withdrew to Ypres. The Battalion lost 187 killed in the

action that saved the British Army from defeat.

General Sir Richard Gale succeeded Brigadier Clarke as Colonel of the Regiment. He commanded the British 6th Airborne Division that landed in Normandy on D-Day, June 6th, 1944. After the war, he became Deputy Supreme Commander Allied Powers in Europe.

The Silver Drums will be on public display at The Guildhall, Worcester on Saturday 12th April when it is hoped that one of the members of the Corps of Drums, Mr Fred Orme, who took part in the Parade, be present along with other members of the Worcester Branch of the Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regimental Association. A special Service will follow Evensong at The Cathedral, conducted by the Dean of Worcester, the Very Revd Stephen Edwards and attended by the Mayor Councillor Mel Allbutt. The Silver Drums will be placed on the Alter steps and the Branch Standard will be marched down the Nave, during the Service.

The Newspaper for the Allied Troops

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TUESDAY, MAY 9, 1945

WORLDWIDE MAILING SERVICE

PEACE IN EUROPE

Official victory statement will be made to-day

Jodl signs the surrender at Rheims, Eisenhower's HQ

THE KING'S VICTORY BROADCAST TO-DAY

THE Ministry of Information in London, last night, announced:

"It is understood that, in accordance with arrangements between the three Great Powers, an official announcement will be broadcast by the Prime Minister at 3 p.m., on May 8."

"In view of this fact, to-morrow (Tuesday) will be treated as Victory in Europe Day and will be regarded as a holiday."

"The day following (Wednesday) will also be a holiday."

"His Majesty the King will broadcast to the people of the British Empire and Commonwealth (Tuesday) at 3 p.m. Parliament will meet at the usual time to-morrow."

There will be simultaneous broadcasts from London, Washington, Moscow and Paris.

Mr Churchill had promised Parliament the earliest possible news of victory, and it is likely he will make an announcement in the House.

GERMANS YIELD 10,000,000 PRISONERS IN ALL

At London, it was believed that one of the reasons why delay in the signing of the armistice was due to the fact that the German High Command could not agree to the surrender on all German battle groups before the end of the war was over.

With the greatest surrender ever to take place in history, 10,000,000 Germans now become prisoners. Sir Kinship, British military correspondent writes: "The Western Allies will hold some of them than they have troops in the field."

They may remain prisoners for a long time. It is believed, however, that POW camps should be created for suitable men for work on the land and other tasks to ease economic difficulties, but there should be no general concentration of German labor."

Despite Admiral Doenitz's unconditional surrender, it is probable that, at the last minute, Goebbels would have

Paris joy was tempered with memories

By F. H. BODGALD

"I might not have been official, but Paris celebrated VE-Day last night."

As the city of Paris celebrated the end of the war, the joy was tempered with memories of the suffering and loss of the past years.

Doenitz on 'why we surrendered'

THE German Fuehrer's radio broadcast yesterday reported that he had accepted the terms of the unconditional surrender of Germany to the Allies.

Doenitz said that the German people had no choice but to surrender, and that the German people would be treated as victors.

British warships off Oslo

A British fleet of 10 warships was sighted, last night, at the entrance to Oslo Fjord, the Swedish radio announced. Although reports had not yet been handed, it was expected that a landing would be made at any moment.

FROM RALPH HEWINS.

With the first time since the first great occupation of Norway, German soldiers just across the border were suddenly under the A.R.C. flag, and they were told to surrender, and there was something about what was happening.

Doenitz on 'why we surrendered'

THE German Fuehrer's radio broadcast yesterday reported that he had accepted the terms of the unconditional surrender of Germany to the Allies.

Naval guns beat do-or-diers

From GRAHAM STANFORD

On board a British warship off the Norwegian coast, the guns were fired in salute to the British flag as it flew from the ship's mast.

U-boat choice - scuttle or abandon

Great Admiral Doenitz, in an order to his fleet to abandon their U-boats, has given them the choice of scuttling or abandoning them.

THE KING thanks the Armies

By F. H. BODGALD

The King has thanked the Armies for their service during the war.



Elgar in the Recording Studio *by Andrew Keener*



'Please play this tune as if you've never heard it before!' Thus, Elgar to the London Symphony Orchestra at the opening of London's Abbey Road Studios in November 1931, filmed by Pathé News. The tune in question is 'Land of Hope and Glory' from his first Pomp and Circumstance March, the film the only visual evidence we have of Elgar conducting. Yet he was no stranger to the recording studio, having first set foot there in 1914 to record 'not less than four of my own compositions' for the Gramophone Company's His Master's Voice label. For the next eleven years sessions would take place in cramped surroundings in London's City Road or at the company's studio in Hayes, the musicians clustered around the acoustical horn, double basses reinforced by tuba to add ballast to the faded sound. For Elgar, the gramophone was a resource to enlighten as well as entertain, a vital educational tool: 'The days when the Gramophone was held to be

nothing more than a scientific toy have gone by' he wrote. 'Now it takes its rightful position... in the world of music'. Little matter to him that his compositions on those early acoustical recordings he conducted were usually abridged in order to fit a long work on a limited number of four-minute 78 rpm sides. Then from 1926 when microphones entered the recording studio to the year before his death in 1934, Elgar was to commit to wax the vast majority of his orchestral works, recorded without cuts in vivid sound ahead of its time. London orchestral players, who held him in great admiration and affection, reported a conducting technique more inspirational than exact ('relish this tune, second violins, I wrote it especially for you'). But listen to the fire of his recording of the Prelude from The Kingdom or the 1927 account of his Second Symphony. On LP, CD or via streaming, the incandescence jumps from the original grooves.



The Gramophone Company in the person of his recording manager Fred Gaisberg returned the favour, keeping him supplied with the latest models on which to play his, and others' recordings. A favourite among the latter was Brahms' Third Symphony, which Elgar conducted when briefly principal conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra; what would one give to have a recording of this performance! One of Elgar's gramophones, still in working order, is to be seen in Elgar's birthplace cottage (The Firs in Lower Broadheath); a contemporaneous model which visitors can hear in action, is also on the premises. To hear these old discs played on a machine which Elgar would have known is to step back into a bygone, pioneering age.

Andrew Keener

Born in Barry, South Wales, Andrew Keener's musical awakening was encouraged by supportive parents and an inspirational music teacher at Barry Boys' Comprehensive

School. He gained a B. Mus from Edinburgh University before a brief spell as a music critic and journalist for The Gramophone, Hi-fi News & Record Review, The Guardian and Musical Times. He has been an independent recording producer since 1980, lucky enough to have worked in the studio on Elgar's music with such eminent Elgarians as Daniel Barenboim, Martyn Brabbins, Natalie Clein, Sir Andrew Davis, Sir Mark Elder, Vernon Handley, Steven Isserlis, Nigel Kennedy, Andrew Litton, Sir Charles Mackerras, Heinrich Schiff and Leonard Slatkin. His latest production is of Elgar part-songs by the Proteus Ensemble conducted by Stephen Shellard, recorded for the Avie label in Pershore Abbey with a CD booklet note written by his partner Peter Avis who contributed an article on Elgar and Bredon Hill in the November issue of Powick Times.



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National minimum wage and national living wage

The National Minimum Wage was introduced over 25 years ago and in 2016 the government introduced an initiative for the over 25s called National Living Wage. In 2021 the age limit for the National Living Wage reduced to 23 and from April 2024 the age limit reduced again to 21.

Whether reference is to the minimum or living wage is just a case of semantics as the effect is the same. You must be at least school leaving age to get the National Minimum Wage. Hourly rates of pay are then calculated according to your age and whether you are an apprentice.

There are increases to the set rates of pay every year in April, but April 2025 will see some of the biggest increases yet especially for those workers who are aged 20 and below. The absolute minimum rate for apprentices and workers aged up to 18 will be £7.55 per hour, for 18–20-year-olds £10 per hour and for those aged 21 and over £12.41 per hour.

While this is good news for employees, the impact on employers of the increases combined with the changes to employer's national insurance will be stark.

There are certain types of workers who are not entitled to the National Minimum or



National Living Wage so if you are not sure check HMRC for a definition of who is included. It is not a choice whether to pay the rates set, it is a legal obligation. If you are an employee and believe you are not being paid at the correct rate you have the right to raise this with your employer. If, after that you believe you are still being underpaid you can refer the matter to ACAS or to HMRC.

Issues reported to HMRC can lead to an enquiry for the employer. As any underpayments will be calculated at the minimum rates currently in place and penalties may also be applied, it is far better to ensure the right rates are being paid now. If you need help speak to your accountant or refer to the HMRC website.

*Carol Draper FCCA
Clifton-Crick Sharp & Co Ltd*

"Spring adds new life and new joy to all that is"

Jessica Harrelson



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Spread the joy instead!

Angela Johns

My birthday month is here, along with several other family members. It's funny how family birthdays often group together. I can't explain why. If you have a theory, please do share! On another note, I have been thinking about customer service jobs and that they are not paid enough. At the sharp end of the vagaries of the general public's mood and temperament, customer service workers are required to carry on with equanimity. Regardless of being neither responsible for the decision makers' decisions, nor the customers' bad day, week, month or even year, it seems they have to take it on the chin. A prerequisite for the role for sure but also, at times, unfair. And counter-productive too – I wonder how long the passive aggressive telephony assistant keeps the finger on the hold button in quiet retaliation, increasing the frustration of the disrespectful caller. The trend in our society is that this bad behaviour on the part of the customer has gotten worse, noticeably in the last five years. Now there are notices as a reminder that abusive behaviour is unacceptable, and bodycams to record it as proof (or as deterrent). Do angry people know it refers to them, I wonder?

We can change society with education, campaigns, sacrifice, even rebellion. Well, my voice is not loud enough to teach, I'm too comfy in my zone to campaign, a bit too selfish to sacrifice and too much of a goody two shoes to rebel. But what I can do is look to myself and make changes there instead. I can look at my own frustration and anger, try to understand it

and direct it where it belongs. How many times have I been wronged at work and gone home to snap at a loved one? How often have I been taken for granted at home then been short with someone who is serving me? When have I felt the pinch of financial insecurity and been less than courteous when out and about shopping? Misplaced direction of anger is unfair. It damages society, community, family and relationships. Directing anger and frustration in the wrong place, at the wrong person just spreads the pain, multiplying the injustice. Instead of solving a problem, it creates new ones. Ultimately it brings no satisfaction or resolution, no personal growth. It would feel so much better to resolve it at the source and not pay it forward; to put it down, not carry it around; to explain myself and not draw the wrong attention to myself. There would be so much more room for joyous and enjoyable interactions. I might even find a source of connection and comfort I didn't realise was possible. Along with all the other feelings, there is joy inside us all. We can choose to spread that around whenever we can.

Angela is a qualified Emotional Therapeutic Counsellor registered with the FETC and NCPS. Also a Reflexologist and Reiki Practitioner, she is passionate about her therapies and spends quality time with her clients to facilitate their wellbeing. You can find her at angelajohns.co.uk

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Thomas Coventry & Edward Winslow

Nicola Hewitt

In a previous article Tim Hickson wrote about Edward Winslow and his links to the Mayflower and thanksgiving. There is another local with links to the Mayflower and Edward Winslow. Thomas Coventry, who became the 1st Baron of Allesborough, was born in 1578 and was educated at Baliol College, graduating from there in 1592 the same year that his father bought Croome Court in Worcestershire. He became a lawyer and rose up the ranks. In 1617 he became Solicitor General, then in 1621 Attorney General and then finally Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England in 1725. A position he would hold until his death. He was married twice, the first time to Sarah Sebright with whom he had a son and a daughter. After Sarah's death he married again in 1610 to Elizabeth Pitchford (née Aldersley), the lovely young, rich widow of William Pitchford of London a grocer/apothecary and member of the Grocer's Guild. They had four sons and four daughters. It's probably through Elizabeth that he worked with the Guilds acting as lawyers for them in various cases. He was the first lawyer to be invited to attend a Guild banquet and the first Lawyer in 1627 to be admitted to the Grocers Guild as one of its freemen. He also became part of the

Merchant Adventurers who through their subscriptions pay for the voyage of the Mayflower. Throughout his career he was involved with the production of charters, patents and administration of the various colonies and companies including the New England Company, Virginia Company and Massachusetts Company. In 1620, he prepared a patent of incorporation of the "adventurers of the Northern Colony". This patent became the Great Charter of New England, and the foundation of all grants made within its territory. In 1635, Edward Winslow was imprisoned in Fleet Prison, in London, for performing marriage ceremonies in New England without being an ordained minister. The pilgrims saw marriage as a civil affair rather than a church matter and so they were performed by a civil magistrate or leader and not a minister. Thomas interceded on Edward's behalf and had him released. It is thought that the Coventry's were close friends with the Winslow's and that Lady Coventry on hearing the news of Edward's imprisonment wrote to her husband to ask him to act. Edward would return the favour after the end of the civil war by vouching for the Coventry family when they were threatened for supporting the King. Whilst on the Mayflower, the



A drawing of Kerswell Farmhouse, Kempsey

pilgrims drew up the Mayflower Compact and signed it, Edward's is the 3rd signature. He also became the 3rd Governor of the colony and was Governor a further two times. Edward named his home in New England, Careswell. This was after his family's home in Kerswell Green. His grandfather and previous generations had been yeoman farmers there. In 1536, Richard Winslow had started to buy land in the Croome Manor, including what is now Kerswell Green Farmhouse, and farmland at Clerkenleap. Edward's father, also called Edward was part of the Droitwich Salt business and was held on suspicion of being involved in the gunpowder plot because he was renting salt vats from Robert Wintour but after interrogation he was released as it was proved to be just a business relationship. During his lifetime Edward wrote several books and pamphlets on

life in the colony and many of his letters survive. It is in one of these that we have a description of the colonists and natives coming together for a feast, which formed the basis of Thanksgiving. A letter dated 1640, records the death of Thomas Coventry and suggests Thomas has been a good friend to the colony and his death will hit them hard. Edward died in 1655, whilst travelling to Jamaica on a mission for Oliver Cromwell and was buried at sea. Unfortunately, Thomas left us another legacy, the Inland Revenue, but that's another story.

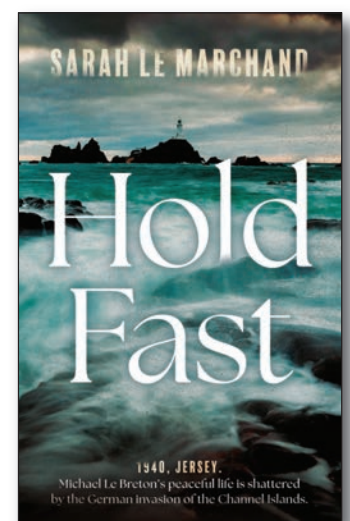


Channel Island history come alive in family-inspired historical novel



In 1940, Jersey teenager Michael Le Breton's peaceful life is shattered by the German invasion of the Channel Islands. His older brother, Jacques, draws him into the island's resistance efforts, but their family faces its greatest danger when they decide to hide Konstantin, an escaped Russian prisoner. Konstantin, one of many Eastern Europeans brought to Jersey as slave labour, is deeply scarred by his brutal experiences, making his relationship with the family tense and volatile. As Michael navigates these dangers, the situation becomes even more precarious when his twin sister, Amy, befriends a disillusioned German soldier. Michael is forced to confront the harsh realities of war. What unfolds changes his life forever.

After a long and fulfilling career teaching English, with a passion for a wide variety of literature, Sarah Le Marchand began her own writing journey by completing an MA in Creative Writing with the Open University. This is her first novel. Sarah explains: "I have a long-standing interest in the German Occupation of the Channel Islands. My mother was a teenager living with her large family in Jersey during the occupation. Some of my characters are based on members of the family and I was inspired by their stories of life during that time. I know the island well, though I was brought up in Yorkshire; my mother moved to Bristol after the war and trained as a nurse before marrying my father. All my mother's siblings



remained in Jersey and I spent much time there as a child, teenager and student. I met my Jersey husband there, so we have plenty of incentive to return as frequently as we can!" Find out more at <https://bookguild.co.uk/bookshop/historical/hold-fast> Price: £9.99

Way Out West



"just popping down to the Bank dear"

We've just had lunch in a pub where the French forces surrendered after their last attempt to invade us – not, as you might think, back in 1066 but as recently at 1797. Back then the French Revolution was in full swing and the zealots in Paris thought that the oppressed British peasants were ripe for revolt. So they sent an invasion force of some 1400 men to attack Bristol, but they missed and ended up in west Wales instead. They got ashore all right and took over a nearby farmhouse as a base – unfortunately there had recently been a shipwreck of a Portuguese vessel which had a cargo of wine, salvaged by the farmer and his mates, so the invaders proceeded to get royally drunk. The campaign degenerated into something more akin to Dad's Army than Napoleon's Grand Armée and the invaders surrendered in the nearby pub – the Royal Oak at Fishguard – where I've just eaten a Welsh Rarebit washed down with a pint of local bitter. Basing ourselves in a rather nice cottage in the tiny resort of

Aberporth we have enjoyed a few days exploring the coastal region from south of Aberystwyth to St. David's. The latter is, as you probably know, the smallest "city" in the UK. It's a city in the old sense because it has a cathedral but, although the population is less than 2,000, it was formally designated a city by our late Queen some thirty years ago. It's worth seeing the ruins of the Bishop's Palace, next to the Cathedral, which we're told is one of the best preserved examples of a mediaeval Bishop's Palace – but I'm not sure that the competition is that intense! Whatever, it's certainly worth the walk around. To be fair I was more impressed by a site on the way there – Castell Henllys, a recreated Iron Age village reconstructed on the exact site where our remote ancestors lived some 2,000 years ago. They also 'celebrate' the ancient Celtic feasts – so that if you want to mark Beltane, for example, you need to be there on May 4th to join in the pagan festivities. *For details see: www.castellhenllys.com*

Certainly the whole area is rich in history, as is reflected in the place names. For example, we had a nice lunch at the Ship Inn in the tiny bay of Tresaith. Now, in Welsh, Tre Saith means "Town of Seven" and this apparently is a reference to seven daughters of an Irish King who came ashore there back in the olden days. Why they chose to do so I don't know, but it makes a good story..... Nearer our own time we also enjoyed a visit to Llanerchaeron, a remarkably unaltered eighteenth century villa at the heart of a self sufficient estate with walled gardens, parkland and woodlands also there to be explored. The house is an early example of the work of the architect John Nash. Built in the 1790's the estate was designed to be self sufficient and the service courtyard still has a dairy, laundry and salting house to look around.

For more details see:

llanerchaeron@nationaltrust.org.uk

Talking of the National Trust, not far from here are the Roman era gold mines at Dolaucothi which were in production until the 1930's and where you can still have a go at panning for gold

Brian Johnson-Thomas

– but the result is not guaranteed! You can also book several tours including an underground trip (for which you must be at least one metre tall). *Details and bookings via: dolaucothi@nationaltrust.org.uk* So there's a lot to see and do quite apart from the traditional seaside entertainments which you can find at resorts like New Quay (where the poet Dylan Thomas lived for a while) and smaller spots along the verdant coast as well as quaint locations such as the preserved Georgian gem of Aberaeron with its' brightly coloured houses clustered around the town's internal harbour. Quite simply, it's a nice place to wander around. As indeed is the town of Cardigan, once one of the foremost ports in Britain, and still with an impressive mediaeval bridge and Cardigan Castle, spruced up as recently as 2017, and well worth the visit. Quite an eclectic range of shops and some nice eating places, altogether worth the stop. Which is just what I'm going to do – the sun is shining and it's nearly lunchtime. Time to seek out yet another pub with a stunning sea view. It's a rough job, but someone's got to do it.



A view from the middle

Spring has well and truly sprung and the countryside around Pershore is truly a delight to behold. The dawn chorus is loud and vocal and the depths of winter seems finally to have been shaken off. I have been fooled by a False Spring before but I feel as if this time it's for real. This time of year always gives me an extra bounce - or

'spring' if you prefer - and I hope that the warmer weather and brighter skies will bring readers a certain amount of cheer. New life is bursting out all over the place and I've even seen that the patter of tiny claws is soon expected at Pershore Abbey with the laying of peregrine eggs. Among all this rebirth and growth, I've attended the

funerals of two family friends in the last couple of weeks and, among the sadness, have been reminded of how important it is to remember the good memories of those we have lost even when we are shaken by their passing. One of them had what I shall describe as 'interesting' dress sense and the bright colours of spring flowers can certainly bring him to mind

while another always used to look for her late loved one in rainbows and other forms of natural beauty. My earnest wish is that we can all appreciate this beautiful time of year and share it with the people we love, even if - or, rather, especially if - they no longer walk the mortal plane with us.

Jazz News

Peter Farrall



The Day of Reflection on March 9th, promoted by the Government to remember all those who were lost to the evil Covid-19 virus in 2020 and later years, prompted many tears and heartaches for family, friends and neighbours who are no longer with us. The world of jazz suffered its share of tragedy with the loss of, not only legendary icons of the music, but lesser-known musicians who had provided enjoyment in their local clubs over the years. Here in Britain, we mourned Lord Anthony Colwyn (he was a real hereditary peer), trumpeter, band leader and crusader for jazz appreciation in the House, who died in 2024.

Saddest for Pershore Jazz was the death of friend and mentor Keith Nichols whose appearances at the Festivals on the College campus were a huge attraction for fans from all over the UK and abroad. His orchestras, assembled from the cream of Classic Jazz musicians, traditionally opened the proceedings on Friday evening and continued to fill the venues over the weekend. Keith was a world-renowned performer and educator of classic jazz from the 1920s and 30s and his chosen musicians considered it a great privilege to perform under his leadership. The first of our annual Jazz on a Summer's Day series in 2022 was dedicated to his memory.

The government's lock down regulations prevented a Jazz Festival in 2020 but our chairman Graham arranged with Pershore College to present a virtual, three-day mini event in the college auditorium under strict distancing rules and so we could still enjoy his band Shades of Jazz on line albeit locked away from the outside world with players separated by plastic sheeting. There is nothing like a live performance but thanks to Graham and the band for providing some welcome sunshine in the dark pandemic days. Recordings still available on the website pershorejazz.org.uk.

This same, very accomplished and entertaining band will be at Pershore Jazz Club this month, personnel including Rich Hughes on piano and Simon Smith bass, last seen at the Fugue and Groove club session in February.

Virtually (pun intended!) the same band as in 2020 but for Jim Douglas Guitar, now retired, and Martin Veasey on trombone instead of Dave Deakin. Gary Wood plays trumpet and sings, John Hallam on clarinet and saxes with the boss himself, Graham Smith, on drums.

Don't forget this year's Pershore Jazz on a Summer's Day on Saturday 9th August! Details on our website: pershorejazz.org.uk

Graham Smith's Shades of Jazz

Wednesday 30th March

Doors open at 7pm, music at 8

Function Room, Pershore Football Club

Admission £12.50 to include a raffle ticket

Book in advance and pay on arrival

club@pershorejazz.org.uk Tel: 01527 66692 find us on Facebook

Meet the owner of Worcester Podiatry



Committed to Excellence and Patient Care

Worcester Podiatry has entered an exciting new chapter under the leadership of its owner and Clinical Director, Patty Cairns. With a passion for podiatric excellence and a deep commitment to patient well-being, she is dedicated to providing outstanding care in a nurturing and supportive environment.

"Our ethos is simple," she explains. "We believe in delivering excellent care that not only treats foot and lower limb issues but also helps people live their best lives. Whether it's reducing pain, improving mobility, or offering preventative care, we want every patient to feel supported throughout their journey with us." Since taking over, exactly a year ago, Patty and her team have worked tirelessly to enhance the patient experience. This patient-first approach is reflected in the glowing feedback from patients, who highlight the importance of a welcoming atmosphere, professionalism, and clear communication. As one review describes, "From the moment I

walked in, I was greeted by a lovely and welcoming environment that felt clean and inviting. I was treated by Patricia, who was exceptionally professional and immediately put me at ease."

What truly sets Worcester Podiatry apart is its attention to detail and follow-up care. As the same review continues, "What impressed me further was the follow-up email I received shortly after my visit, summarising everything we had discussed during the appointment. This attention to detail and prompt communication truly underscored their commitment to patient care."

"We want every patient to feel reassured, listened to, and confident in their care," Patty adds. With this renewed vision, Worcester Podiatry continues to be a trusted clinic, offering expert care in a caring and supportive setting.

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online



Music Matters

Steve Ide

In February, 1,000 artists came together to release a 12-track album called "Is this what we want?" as a protest about the use of copywritten material being used to train artificial intelligence without licencing. Much doom and gloom has been written about AI killing music and many people are understandably nervous about the implications. However, there can be little doubt that AI is coming and that it will change music and arts in ways it is hard to predict. But will it kill the music industry? The death of music has been predicted many times, from the start of recorded music to home

taping, pirate music sites and most recently streaming sites, but it has survived them all. And it seems unlikely that AI will spell the demise of music. Sure, it will probably change how music is made and consumed, but a song made and performed by a person has a value that one by a computer will never have. The industry and artists will find ways to work alongside it, they will adapt and survive. So, while we wait for the next great leap forward, it seems likely that talented artists will be entertaining us with interesting and exciting music for a long time to come.

Notable new albums

Pinball wanderer by Andy Bell. The third solo album from the ex-Ride guitarist is a psychedelic journey worth taking. So, when the evening sun goes down, dive into this album and enjoy echoes of The Stone Roses alongside hypnotic grooves. *Cowards* by Squid. A slightly freaky and dark album from the Brighton rockers. One to spend some time with, allow yourself to listen and absorb. *Mayhem* by Lady Gaga. The pop princess is on top form with this record, she's got a new spell, and you should let yourself fall under it

Add to playlist

Squares
by The Beta Band
Love is an ocean
by The Midnight
To live and die in Levenland
by Jackie Leven
The clap hands song
by T Bird and the breaks
Makeba
by Jain



View from the Boundary

I had expected to wax lyrical on the successes of England in the Champions Trophy. However, what a disaster beaten by Afghanistan who, because of their troubles are not even resident in Afghanistan. The side is a rag tag and bob tail side this is put together to play cricket, there are more registered players in Worcestershire than Afghanistan. The Cricket season is upon us, and we will see if Worcestershire woes continue. The committee is no longer a committee of members. Not since John Elliott and Percy Price who, as chairman were members with a deep routed passion for Worcestershire. Now after the demise of one chairman for issues that have been kept under raps, we now have a chairman who lives in Berkshire!!! Enough said, the proof of the pudding will be in the eating. With the 100 being franchised it is strongly rumoured that the counties will be changed from 18 to either 14 or 12, either way with Worcestershire's performance both on the field and financially, they will be a casualty. On other sport it is a clear runaway for Liverpool in the Premier League. The FA cup is more open On to other matters and your letters to the editor from my last piece. The question arises again about capital punishment. My piece last month suggested that troublemakers in prison

could go to Zimbabwe. Tis was somewhat tongue in cheek, but it seems to have some traction. A prisoner costs between £75 to £100 pounds per day. Chikurubi would be about £5-00 per day. Not only would this be a cost saving, but a huge deterrent. I had to see a client in a Midlands prison. He needed to sign some documents. However, documents could not be taken in as some paper had been impregnated with drugs and that some inmates were off their head. This raises the question of why drugs come into prison. This is a business and as such could be dealt with by a deterrent of Ten years imprisonment and potential sending a Prisoner to an overseas Prison. Perpetrators could be external drones, visitors and prison officers. They should also be subject to this sentence. Further to the comment of the death penalty. Two very recent cases were the Southport Attacker Axel Rudakubana Stabbed and killed three people. He had also been involved with some attempt previously to produce Risin and had Al-Qaeda manuals. More recently there is the case of Kyle Clifford who killed three innocent women. This then begs two questions. The first being should both these people be subject to capital punishment. If this was to be considered, then of course one must look at the burden of proof. No one wants to go back to the cases of Ruth Ellis and

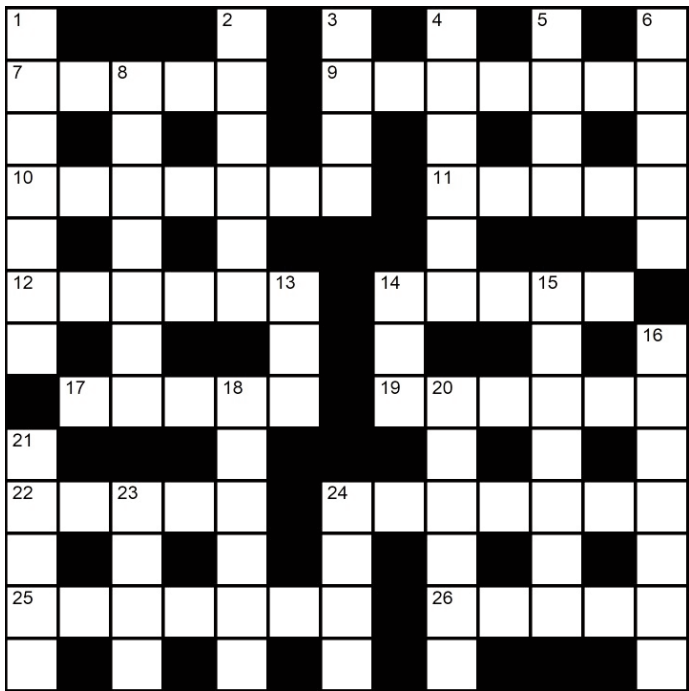
the Bentley Brothers. All would in today's legal view, there were grounds for significant law changes and mitigation. Leaving aside aggravation and mitigation. The burden of proof should be changed from beyond reasonable doubt to beyond doubt. Another issue with Clifford is that fact that he refused to come into court to face the family of the murdered people. I am of the view that this is their right and where a defendant has to be forced into court for the delivery of the sentence. The defendant should be put into a soundproof dock where they are likely to be disruptive so the families can see the defendant sentenced. All this will of course raise a question of the ECHR. Great Britain should remove themselves from this convention and the executive and Parliament should create a Human Rights and Responsibility Act. There is another issue that is growing in Great Britain. There are at present circa 81 Sharia Law Courts making derisory decisions. This is subjugating women; it is fundamentally wrong. Our own courts are perfectly capable of dealing with matters under British law, Scottish and England & Wales law does very slightly so each Jurisdiction can deal with matter under their legislation. I am presently researching the insurance market especially for cars. There is a cabal growing regarding the price and the

companies right to scrap a car. My research will also look at why people of 75 should have loaded premiums. Some people at 20, 40 and 60 should not drive at all or should their premiums be loaded. For example, a 75-year-old ex-professional pilot retained his private flying licence. He has stringent medicals; he has a licence to fly aircraft significant aircraft with 10 or 20 passengers. He has his car insurance loaded because of age? Very lastly, we are about to embark on elections for the County Council. I implore you to look at the CV of each candidate, whilst they may be affiliated to a political party the Councillors do not make political decisions. The council has financial issues, therefore at a minimum the candidate must be able to understand a balance sheet of £500,000 and have specific experience. A lot of councillors have, whilst they have good intentions, have never really run anything and therefore the council is run by the officials and "Yes Minister" comes to mind This article raises significant questions, please write to the editor with your views and I am assured that they will be printed!



Coffee Break

Crossword



Across

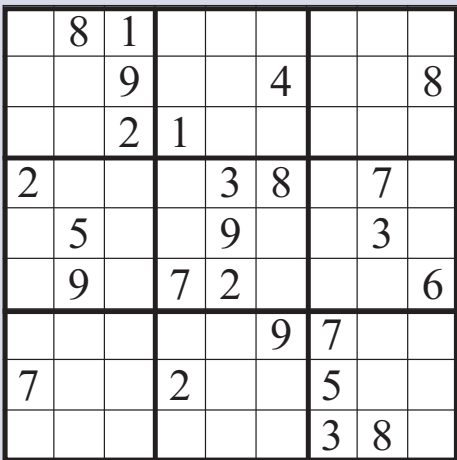
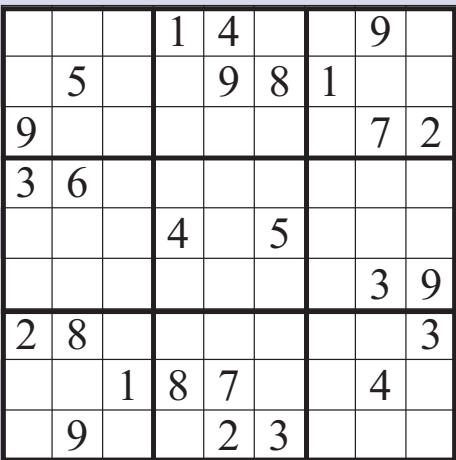
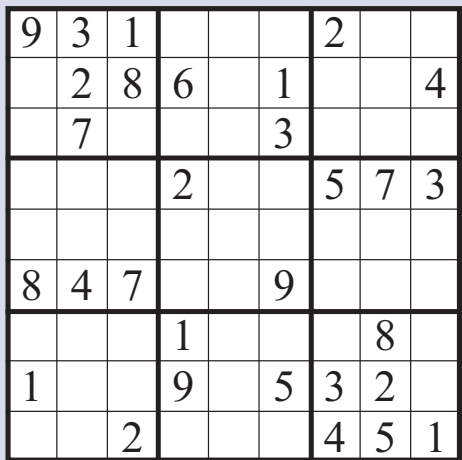
- 7 Indian class (5)
- 9 Simian (3-4)
- 10 At the apex (7)
- 11 Affliction is cruel cut (5)
- 12 Russian sleigh (6)
- 14 Energetic (5)
- 17 Tolerate (5)
- 19 Rarely encountered (6)
- 22 Get new guns (5)
- 24 Lunges (7)
- 25 No good (7)
- 26 Simultaneous firing of artillery (5)

Down

- 1 Transparent overlay (7)
- 2 Do over (6)
- 3 Engrossed (4)
- 4 Tie up rescue craft (6)
- 5 Spine separator (4)
- 6 Earth (5)
- 8 Champion (7)
- 13 Facilitate (3)
- 14 Ballet step (3)
- 15 Sun protector (7)
- 16 Income earned in the past (7)
- 18 Show song (6)
- 20 Pre-revival zombie (6)
- 21 Arrogant (5)
- 23 Blows away (4)
- 24 Cooking measure (4)

Sudoku

Each row and column must contain the numbers from one to nine, without repetitions.



Wordsearch



- ASEA
- BETSY
- CON
- CROSS-LEGGED
- DEBT
- DONE
- EELS
- EIGHTH
- EMERGENCIES
- ENRICH
- GALE
- GOOSE
- GUT
- HAIL
- HEGEL
- HICK
- HUBS

- ICE
- INMOST
- KIDDERS
- LAG
- LEO
- LON
- OMIT
- RIP
- ROD
- SASS
- SEQUEL
- SEWN
- SOW
- SPIKED
- STAY
- SUIT
- TEMPS
- UNMET

Brainteaser

What starts with a P, ends with an E and has a million letters in it?

What are the next three letters in this puzzle?
WAT
NTL
???

Poets' Corner

XLIII The Immortal Part

When I meet the morning
beam,
Or lay me down at night to
dream,
I hear my bones within me say,
"Another night, another day."
"When shall this slough of
sense be cast,
This dust of thoughts be laid
at last,
The man of flesh and soul be
slain
And the man of bone remain?"
"This tongue that talks, these
lungs that shout,
These thews that hustle us
about,
This brain that fills the skull
with schemes,
And its humming hive of
dreams, -"
"These to-day are proud in
power
And lord it in their little hour:
The immortal bones obey
control
Of dying flesh and dying soul."
" 'Tis long till eve and morn
are gone:
Slow the endless night comes on,
And late to fulness grows the
birth
That shall last as long as earth."
"Wanderers eastward,
wanderers west,

Know you why you cannot rest?
'Tis that every mother's son
Travails with a skeleton."
"Lie down in the bed of dust;
Bear the fruit that bear you
must;
Bring the eternal seed to light,
And morn is all the same as
night."
"Rest you so from trouble sore,
Fear the heat o' the sun no
more,
Nor the snowing winter wild,
Now you labour not with child."
"Empty vessel, garment cast,
We that wore you long shall
last.
Another night, another day."
So my bones within me say.
Therefore they shall do my will
To-day while I am master still,
And flesh and soul, now both
are strong,
Shall hale the sullen slaves along,
Before this fire of sense decay,
This smoke of thought blow
clean away,
And leave with ancient night
alone
The steadfast and enduring
bone.

A. E. Housman 1859-1936

Quiz!

- 1) In what US state is the city Nashville?
- 2) What is the currency of Denmark?
- 3) What is the capital city of New Zealand?
- 4) Which American poet wrote the famous poem "The Raven"?
- 5) What is the capital city of Australia?
- 6) Who painted the Mona Lisa?
- 7) Which country is commonly referred to as the Land of the Rising Sun?
- 8) What is the primary ingredient in hummus?
- 9) Who painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel?
- 10) Which gas do plants primarily absorb during photosynthesis?
- 11) What is the chemical symbol for silver?
- 12) What is the longest river in the world?
- 13) What is the capital city of Brazil?
- 14) Who was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize?
- 15) What is the main ingredient in guacamole?
- 16) Who was the first person to step on the moon?
- 17) Which Tennis Grand Slam is played on a clay surface?
- 18) In which year did the Titanic sink?
- 19) Who wrote "To Kill a Mockingbird"?
- 20) What is the largest organ of the human body?

Answers: 1) 1) Tennessee. 2) Danish Krone (DKK). 3) Wellington. 4) Edgar Allan Poe. 5) Canberra. 6) Leonardo da Vinci. 7) Japan. 8) Chickpeas (or garbanzo beans). 9) Michelangelo. 10) Carbon dioxide (CO₂). 11) Ag. 12) The Nile River. 13) Brasilia. 14) Marie Curie. 15) Avocado. 16) Neil Armstrong. 17) The French Open (Roland Garros). 18) 1912. 19) Harper Lee. 20) The skin.

March Answers



April Brainteaser solution: Post Office and ITP

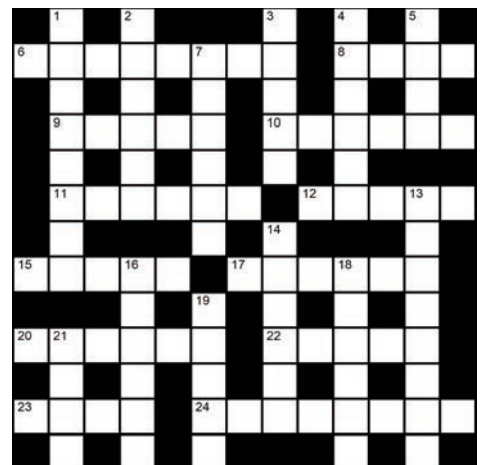
Anagram Crossword

Across

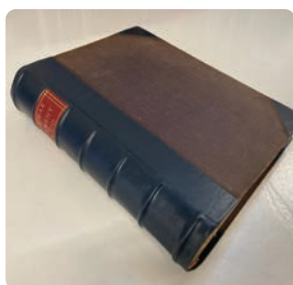
- 6 Well said (8)
- 8 Ents (4)
- 9 Arced (5)
- 10 Snoops (6)
- 11 Ousted (4,2)
- 12 Spark (5)
- 15 Those (5)
- 17 In that (4,2)
- 20 Decree (6)
- 22 Ghoul (5)
- 23 Eire (4)
- 24 Entailed (8)

Down

- 1 Pictures (8)
- 2 Melded (6)
- 3 Bales (5)
- 4 Aragon (6)
- 5 NATO (1,3)
- 7 Starve (6)
- 13 Thickens (8)
- 14 To live (6)
- 16 Reopen (6)
- 18 Solute (6)
- 19 Bayed (5)
- 21 Raze (4)



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May Issue -

22nd April 2025

Reach for the Skies!

Care home Opens New Community



Elgar Court Residents enjoy a sunny day this week on the Sky Balcony – part of the new Beacon Community) Malvern's newest Residential home Elgar Court, is holding an open day to showcase their latest community, The Beacon. Situated across the top floor, residents will be spoilt for choice from which suite to pick and the views on offer.

Elgar Court holds open days every few months for people looking for a new home with care for their loved ones.

Residents and their families enjoy a café to socialise in and freshly baked treats, and for a little bit of pampering there are spa bathrooms for a luxury bath time experience and an in-house hair salon. And of course, every resident has their own bedroom with en-suite bedrooms with smart TVs, a choice of luxurious lounges, cinema and activity centre.

Sarah Cadwallader said, "We are thrilled our stunning new community is now open to

welcome residents and guests. It's a wonderful way for people to come and find out about the exceptional care we provide, and meet the friendly team looking after our residents. Personalised care really is at the heart of everything we do, and we are looking forward to welcoming new residents."

If you are considering care for yourself or for a loved one, the friendly team of experts at Elgar Court are available to answer any questions you may have about what life will be like in the home, and the types of support offered, please come along to this Open Day or make an appointment to visit on another day that suits you.

Please call to book your visit with our reception team on: 01684 211720



Callow End WI

A lively, amusing talk from retires nurse, Meg Farmer. She's had 37 years working in NHS hospitals, storing up many amusing anecdotes. A good night enjoyed by everyone. Several of our members are busy knitting poppies to decorate the four churches in our area for Remembrance Day



*Our next meeting:
Thursday 3rd April
Callow End Village Hall
will be -
'Working as a playwright'
with Nick Wilkes*

Spot & Shop - March Winners

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1) Bob Armstrong | 5) Sylvia Pouncett |
| 2) Gordon Phelps | 6) Marilyn Butterfield |
| 3) Angela Cousins | 7) Kim Brown |
| 4) Pauline Charlton | |

Last month's answer: Clothing Alteration Service

SPOT & SHOP!

COMPETITION TIME!

Take a look at the anagram
The answer is the name of a business that is advertising in the Powick Times this month

Chance to WIN £50 CASH

This month's prizes!

1st - £50 cash

2nd - £25 cash

Donated by Hughes & Company

3rd £20 Food Voucher

at The Queen Elizabeth, Elmley

4th £10 Voucher

at Revills Farm Shop, Defford

5th £10 Voucher

at Craftypyro, Bakers Arcade, Pershore

6th Reg Moule Gardening Book

7th Pat's Pantry -

Jar of home-made marmalade/jam

This month's anagram
**ANNABELL
MEREDITH
SLIGHTER**

Complete and return this form or email:
news@hughes.company for your chance to win!

Powick Times closing date: 28th April 2025

Answer:

Name:

Telephone/email:

Return to: Hughes & Company/Powick Times

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Rural Reels Films

Callow End Village Hall
Doors open at 7.00pm -
Films starts at 7.30pm

Tickets £5 each

Tickets can be bought on-line and will also be available on the door subject to availability.

No bar. You are welcome to bring your own drinks and snacks.

Tea, coffee and squash will be served.

www.callowendvillagehall.co.uk

Malvern Folk Dance Club

**Wednesday afternoons
2pm - 4pm**

at St Andrew's Church Hall,
Churchdown Road, Malvern WR14 3JX

Gentle dancing, no partner necessary

Admission £4

*If you would like more information
please contact:*

Marion Couston

01684 310378



Community hedge for Callow End playing field

The roadside hedge at Callow End playing field is old and slowly dying from Dutch Elm disease. To act on this PACE has applied for 420 free hedging saplings from the Woodland Trust with the intention of creating a new hedge within the boundary fence. The plants will be delivered in the autumn and once established the new hedge will be of mixed species providing a varied, colourful and nutritional habitat for wildlife.

We will need help to prepare the ground, plant the saplings and to nurture the new hedge as it becomes established.

We would like the community to join us with this project, if you can help please contact:

Felicity Williams
Tel: 01905 830425
Email: fwilliams@powick-pc.org.uk

BPGC MEETING USUALLY THIRD SATURDAY EACH MONTH.



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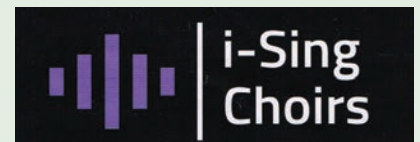
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communities.*

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www.scoutshw.org.uk



TUESDAYS

**Tewkesbury i-Sing Choir -
10.15am until 11.45am**

The Hall (Next to Tewkesbury Abbey),
50 Church Street, Tewkesbury GL20 5SN

WEDNESDAYS

**Malvern i-Sing Choir -
10.15am until 11.45am**

Eden Church, Grovewood Road,
Malvern WR14 1GD

Phone: 0845 838 2202

Email: helen@i-singchoirs.co.uk



PLANT & CAKE SALE

**Saturday 10 May
10am - 12noon**

Earls Croome Village Hall

Tea, coffee and homemade cakes
Bedding plants, tomato plants,
perennials, houseplants, etc



Raising funds for Earls Croome Church

Puccini Messa di Gloria and Faure Requiem

Saturday 10th May 2025

at 7:00 pm

Great Malvern Priory
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Tickets

£18 / 17-21s £12 / 16 & under Free with paying adult
www.trybooking.com/uk/EDCJ and
on the door

For more information visit:
malvernfestivalchorus.co.uk



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Powick Community Choir
The award winning
Powick Community Choir

is looking for new members from across the Worcestershire area. Open to all vocal parts, but tenors and basses are especially welcome! No auditions, but previous singing experience desirable.

Rehearsals at Powick Village Hall
Sundays from 16:15 to 17:45
Thursdays 19:00 to 20:15

Come along and give us a free trial

www.powickcommunitychoir.info/join-us
Tom Wells - 07702 996203

Magic Print Fair - Saturday 28th June 2025

This summer, The Fold at Bransford are excited to host the very first Magic Print Fair in collaboration with Michelle of Magic Letterpress. The fair will feature print artists of all types: letterpress, riso, lino, screen and wood carvings; and print suppliers, selling ink, paper, equipment and more. The fair will be held on Saturday the 28th June 2025, and will run from 10am to 4pm. Entry is free, there is plenty of free parking, and the whole venue is dog friendly. The studios and café at the Fold will also be open, so it promises to be a fun day out for all the family. Come along to purchase one of a kind art for your home, posters, prints, cards, and stationery, from local artists and printers from further afield. Or if you are a printer yourself, come and stock up on materials and supplies, or network with fellow printers. Michelle has been a Letterpress Printer and Artist for five years, and moved into her studio at

The Fold last summer. She creates letterpress prints and cards with her vintage presses and type, and hosts letterpress workshops of all kinds. She hopes to get more people interested in the craft of letterpress, as it is on the red list of endangered heritage crafts, which means there are not enough people engaged in the craft to ensure its survival. Never heard of letterpress? Then do visit the Magic Print Fair in June, or if you can't make that date, pop by Michelle's studio to learn more.

If you are a print artist or supplier, and you would like a pitch, you can apply on the Fold website - www.thefold.org.uk/markets or you can email the fold for more information. reception@thefold.org.uk If you would like to purchase Michelle's work, you can visit magicletterpress.co.uk or visit her studio. You can also follow her on Instagram - [@magic_letterpress](https://www.instagram.com/magic_letterpress).



New priorities for MHDC's plan

More support for domestic abuse survivors and reducing environmental crime are among the priorities added to Malvern Hills District Council's (MHDC) new plan. The Council Plan was approved at a Council meeting. It sets out the MHDC's actions for 2025/26 based around the themes of health and wellbeing, economy, and environment. New additions include to reduce environmental crime across the district with a scheme to promote responsible waste disposal and the launch of a two-year litter reduction initiative. As well as this, the plan includes the following new actions: Promote awareness of domestic abuse through targeted campaigns, training and protect and support victims/survivors with safe places and sanctuary schemes. Provide funding for defibrillators, trauma and bleed kits and training in resuscitation skills and suicide awareness. Ensure that support is available to residents to help them access

essential welfare support. Support young people to have their say and make a difference to the things that matter to them. Assist young people in getting support for housing needs, employment, and more. Implement a new five-year Visitor Economy Strategy supporting the growth of tourism businesses. Deliver a £250,000 rural grants programme building on the success of the Rural England Prosperity Fund initiative. Work with National Grid to ensure that the electricity infrastructure across the district can support the switch to Electric Vehicles. Work with Worcestershire County Council and the Environment Agency to examine all options to prevent Hanley Road in Upton upon Severn from closing in times of flood.

For more information about the Council Plan, visit: www.malvern hills.gov.uk/about-your-council



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Spring and volunteering!

When we think about new beginnings and a fresh start, we often think about a new year, we make promises to ourselves at the start of the year. In nature, it's March 1st, that marks the start of growth and renewal. This makes it a great time to also reflect on what we want for ourselves, to reflect on how to commit to improving our lives and those of others. In my role as Volunteering Manager, I see firsthand the difference the life of one person can have on another; the positive change they can make. We are talking about the transaction of converting time into positive energy; simply put, giving time to improve the life of someone else. Every volunteer will know it's that's never a one-way process. Giving one day a month to support one other person

doesn't just make a difference to their lives; it makes a difference to the volunteer too. People volunteer for different reasons, but fundamentally they want to give and in return, they receive.

I was at the local community fridge recently when an unexpected delivery of pizzas arrived. There was a buzz of excitement in the air and a flurry of people arrived to pick up a pizza. There were smiles and nods of appreciation. A volunteer had turned food that was going to waste into positive energy and enthusiasm. That might seem a little extreme, but if it wasn't for the volunteers involved in that process, there wouldn't have been pizza.

We turn unwanted clothing into hospice care, dementia support or funds for an animal shelter.



Every transaction can't happen without volunteers. It's easy to miss the essential part of that process - someone is giving up their time to make it happen; there's a transaction where time is converted into hope, renewal, support... So this Spring, as you watch new life emerge in the garden, ask yourself what

changes you could make to bring new life and energy to someone else in the community.

Find out more about volunteering in your community, give Malvern Hills Volunteering a call on: 01684 892381 or email: volunteering@communityaction.org.uk

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