

Upton Times

A free monthly newspaper for Upton-upon-Severn and surrounding villages



Issue 44

June 2025

FREE



Boats on the River Sever

June already, half the year nearly gone! The weather has been glorious and nature has seemed to move faster than usual. We are continually playing catch up in the garden! We live in a lovely part of England; the countryside is outstanding and the scenery glorious. This idyllic situation clashes with lots of challenges in the world at the moment. We hear so many people complaining, but we still have so much to be thankful for! The UK is a fantastic place in which to live and leads the world in so many ways.

It's very easy to criticise but as a great man said, 'Any fool can see what's wrong, look at all the things that are right!'. We hear people talking about

the 'good old days', in my experience 'today's days' are the very best days ever! Everything is better! Health, education, hygiene, the variety

and quality of food, travel, communications, and so it goes on and on, the list is endless. We are a multi-national country with a Commonwealth of nearly two billion people. One of the greatest innovators and exporters, with the sixth largest economy in the world. We outstrip many much larger countries including Russia. We have led the way so many times and we are respected throughout the world. Let's take heart from this. Believe all will be well, think positive. The Brits always get it right, in the end!

The cricket season is well underway and we look forward to some great matches against the West Indies and in the County Championships at New Road. Village cricket is very popular and Sunday afternoon at the Village Green is a traditional British summer pastime.



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County & District Report



So, here we are, the longest day of the year is but a heartbeat away. For me, this year has flown by, just a blink of an eye. How can it be June already? The bats have returned, with their twisting dance of joy as they diligently hunt for moths and other winged delicacies. With this year's County Council election, much of April and May were lost to electioneering. However, I was not idle, as you can see below a few things have been happening.

Veterans Charity Starts New Venture



From left to right veterans Andy Gittens, Deb Grant, Dawn Turner who is the CEO of Stepway, Councillor Martin Allen who is also a veteran, with veterans Andrew Paggett, Ian Roberts and Ken Griffin.

Dawn Turner is the wonderful CEO of the veteran's charity Stepway. Its aim is to support all veterans in civilian life, no matter their background or circumstances. Stepway offers three main supporting services to improve mental wellbeing. The ethos focuses on helping veterans find a sense of belonging and purpose. By breaking down the barriers between veterans and civilians, they aim to address adjustment disorder and bring together diverse sectors of the community.

Recently Stepway made a move to Powick and took over the Link Nursery Community Hub, Hospital Lane, Powick WR2 4NH. To the public they offer a lovely Farm Shop and Community Café. Also, on offer to the public are a well beaning Club, an Art Club and a Craft Club.

Now, Stepway have just started a Veterans Coffee Morning every Thursday from 10.00 a.m. This is a chance for veterans to have a banter and brew, to recall old times and discuss problems they are currently experiencing.

As I am a Falklands Veteran, I attend the coffee morning so I could see and hear for myself how fellow veterans are doing. Over the last six years I have acted to support our much-forgotten veterans, following my never-ending demands, the Worcestershire On Demand Buses are now free for all veterans to use on production of a Veterans I.D. Card. Now with this fantastic move by Stepway into Powick, I hope that our veterans will use the free buses to come to the centre to meet and support each other. The coffee mornings are a vital way for veterans to not feel lonely and isolated. When someone leaves the forces, the world can quickly become a lonely place. It's vital we continue to give Stepway the support and assistance it needs. We owe so much to our veterans; they step forward when others step back.

More information about Stepway can be found on their website www.stepway.org or they can be contacted by emailing: info@stepway.org or by phoning 01905 831881

Councillor Martin Allen

Kempsey are pavements finally done!



There are many special areas in my County Council Division of Croome. One that I believe many overlook, are the Cats in St Mary's Close, Kempsey. For the last few years, I have been badgering the County Council to refurbish the pavement there.

Finally, in April there was movement and the pavements were sorted. Swiftly followed by Rooker Road, which was also in a sorry state. Anyway,

and finally . . .

Sorry, it's been a shorter report than normal, things are stirring behind the scenes, and no

if you care to venture into St Mary's Close, you will see a line of cats, not something you see every day. Also, don't miss the next showing of Christmas lights in December, they are something special. Elsewhere in my division, I am happy to report that I have been finally assured by Highways that The Grove, which is the area behind the Blue Bell Pub on the A38 will also be attended too this summer.

doubt I will have more to tell next month. As ever, I'm here if you need me.

Martin Allen

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Cafe for those living with dementia in Upton



The Hill Community Centre hosts a social event every month. Which can make all the difference to the lives of those living with dementia and their loved ones. Age UK Wyvern runs a dementia café in the centre offering support, activities, a chance to socialise and an all-important cup of tea or coffee to those affected by the disease. Upton-Upon-Severn Dementia Café is free to anyone with a diagnosis of dementia and their carers. It runs from 10.30am to 12:30pm on the third Wednesday of every month at The Hill Community Centre on Milestone Road, Upton. Activities range from music to quizzes or arts and crafts, but people are also welcome simply to sit and chat. It can be a fantastic opportunity to meet people in the same situation. Dementia cafes can only run thanks to the goodwill of volunteers helping create a warm and welcoming atmosphere. The café is run by a co-ordinator, but helpers are essential to make attendees feel welcome and to

ensure everything runs smoothly. Volunteers might find themselves greeting new members, bringing round drinks, chatting to attendees or helping with activities. Unfortunately, Upton's Dementia Café urgently needs more volunteers to maintain its essential service to the community. Kelly Reeves, Age UK's Dementia Service Manager, made this request, "Volunteers really are at the heart of the service that we provide. Upton-Upon-Severn Dementia Café can only thrive with the support of volunteers willing to lend a hand for a couple of hours a month. If anyone in the local area would like to help out, we would love to hear from them. We offer all training needed and you can become part of our wider volunteer network."

If anyone would like to find out more about volunteering with Age UK Wyvern please contact Kelly Reeves on 01905 724294 or email: dementia-wellbeing-service@ageukwyvern.org

Flush Fund Report



What a busy but exciting last few weeks it has been! Following on from the successful fundraising from the Gloucester Police Male Voice Choir concert, our next fundraising event was opening the Divine café for the Folk Festival's final concert at the church. Teamwork and determination enabled us to overcome some initial challenges due to a change of the weather and the initial reluctance of the organisers to let us come inside the church, but a bit of sweet-talking and offers of free drinks and cakes did the trick and we had a very successful day, raising over £900! Even the festival organisers decided having us inside the church was so good, they want us to do it again next year!! Well done everyone who came and supported either by baking, helping on the day or coming along and buying some coffee and cake. On 26th May, Bank Holiday Monday, Bell Day at the church brought in lots of visitors to climb the tower and try their hand at bellringing. There was a miniature set of bells in the church too and the pop-up café with home-made cakes raised £240.

Our recent efforts mean that the current total of money raised to date is £4,547!! In the meantime, the Building

Group team have been busy interviewing architects and have now appointed Communion Architects, based near Hereford; they plan to hold a public consultation in the church in June to which all interested parties, supporters, local businesses and organisations, members of the public etc, will be invited to give their views. This will be the official public launch of the project.

More fund-raising events are planned:

- 14th June
Arrow Valley Brass Band Concert
- 28th June
Jazz Festival pop up
Divine Café
- 12th July
Music for Summer Concert,
church choir with drinks and nibbles
- 26th September
Ceilidh with The Whole
Caboodle Electric Ceilidh Band

Well done and thank you all so much for your hard work and support. What a team !!

*Richard Duckett
Church Building Team*

Have your say on the future of your local council

Residents, businesses, and community groups across Worcestershire are being urged to help shape the future of their local council in a public engagement exercise. Under government proposals for local government reorganisation, all seven councils in Worcestershire will disappear by 1st April 2028. A four-week public engagement exercise is now live and will run until 29th June 2025 to gain feedback to help councillors decide what should replace them.

Currently services in Worcestershire are split, these are between Worcestershire County Council which provides county-wide services like highways and adult social care. Borough, city and district councils provide localised services like bin collections, planning, leisure, and housing related services. The Government wants to replace this system with a single council – known as a unitary council – which provides all services. The aim is to make local government

simpler for residents, while improving services and saving money. There are currently two options proposed for Worcestershire:

- Replace all councils with one unitary council: This would replace the county council and six district/city/borough councils with just one single council for the whole of Worcestershire. It would provide all services from collecting bins to school admissions.
- Replace all councils with two

unitary councils: This means the county would be split into two new councils, with one for the north of the county and one for the south of the county. Each one would be responsible for all services in their part of the county. Town and parish councils will remain but may have a greater role in the future in providing some services and representing local communities.

*To find out more, visit:
www.shapeworcestershire.org*

James Bennett Lancelot

James Bennett Lancelot (born 2 December 1952) was master of the Choristers, and cathedral organist at Durham Cathedral from 1985. He retired in 2017 and was appointed canon organist emeritus by the bishop of Durham. Lancelot was educated at St Paul's Cathedral School and Ardingly College. At 16 he was the youngest of his generation to attain the Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists (FRCO). He went up to King's College, Cambridge, where he was organ scholar from 1971 to 1974. Lancelot spent the next ten years as sub-organist of Winchester Cathedral prior to his move to Durham. Lancelot's time at Durham Cathedral was a period of expansion: in 1997 he founded

Durham Cathedral Consort of Singers, a cathedral voluntary choir made up of singers from the town and the university. The consort quickly gained a reputation as one of the leading chamber choirs in the region. The cathedral choir itself was expanded with the introduction of girl choristers, in addition to the boys. The girl and boy choristers usually sing separately but have an equal workload and parity of status.

The commissioning of new music was a feature of James Lancelot's tenure. Notable works include John Tavener's *Ikon* of St Cuthbert, James MacMillan's *Missa Dunelmi* and several important pieces by John Casken.

He has been a member of the Royal College of Organists



Council since 1988, and most recently of its Executive and Library Committees. He also conducted for the Durham University Choral Society during his tenure at Durham Cathedral. In 2008 he was appointed a Fellow of the Royal School of Church Music.

In 2013 he was appointed president of the Incorporated Association of Organists. He has released several acclaimed recordings, including a DVD of Elgar's *Organ Sonata* and a CD of J.S. Bach's *Orgelbüchlein*. In his spare time, James Lancelot is a steam railway enthusiast.

Free breakfast event for the farming community



Linda Price, Rural Communities Officer at Malvern Hills District Council, Mike Harper, Owner at Top Barn, Emma Hamer, NFU County Advisor.

A free event for members of the farming community will soon be coming to Holt Heath. The Farming Community Breakfast will take place at Top Barn, Holt Heath, Worcester, from 9.15am to 12.15pm on Wednesday 18 June, following the success of the first event near Upton on Severn in January.

As well as a free breakfast, there will be an introduction to the diversification story of Harper Farming, Top Barn Farm Shop and Farm Park, and the Top Barn Trust.

The event will also include a tractor trailer tour of the farm and care farm projects such as Wildgoose Rural Training, Bonterre CIC and Good Soil. There will also be the opportunity to chat about the development of future social activities within the farming community and how the

council might support them going forwards.

Cllr Jennie Watkins, Portfolio holder for Communities and Housing, at Malvern Hills District Council said: "This is a great free event for members of the farming community to come together and socialise over breakfast. It also gives the opportunity to discuss any activities they may need support with".

The event has been organised by Linda Price, Rural Communities Officer at Malvern Hills District Council, in partnership with Emma Hamer, County Advisor at The National Farmers Union.

Please note, places are limited, and booking is essential.

Contact Linda Price on: 01684 862165 or email Linda.Price@malvernhillsgov.uk for more information and to book.

New businesses open their doors

The Malvern Hills District is thriving as new businesses open their doors to residents and visitors.

Popular towns and villages within the district, including Malvern, Upton upon Severn, and Witley, are bursting with new ventures and independent businesses for all to enjoy and explore.

New businesses include:

Rock on Son Records - Record shop in Upton

Secret Garden Tearoom - Great Witley

Strawberry Tree - Boutique gift shop, Great Malvern

Little Olive's Play Cafe - Soft play, role play village and sensory nest, Great Malvern

Stitch Hollow - Handmade items, fabrics, cotton thread, craft supplies and more, Malvern Link

Lonsdale Fruit, Veg & Coffee Shop - Great Malvern

Jasper & Pip - Home, fragrance and clothing shop - Great Malvern

The Watson Kitchen, Artisan Cheesecake and Coffee Shop, Great Malvern - opening soon

Tech Tony in Upton - Computer support, training and musical instruments for sale - opening soon

Malvern Ink and Curtain Festival -

A summer programme of performing arts events, 5 July - 31 August at the Coach House Theatre, Great Malvern.

Cllr Beverley Nielsen, said: "It is great news to see new businesses opening in our district. We always encourage residents to shop locally, support our innovative independent stores, events and festivals, and help the area thrive".



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A few words from... Dame Harriett Baldwin MP

Calls for Reversal of Asylum Seeker Housing Plan

Dame Harriett Baldwin MP has called on the Home Secretary to remove Malvern Hills and Wychavon from a list of potential destinations as the Government moves asylum seekers from hotels to private rented accommodation. Media reports over the weekend revealed that Serco is looking for private landlords to house asylum seekers as they are moved out of hotels. The MP has written to Home Secretary Yvette Cooper warning of the serious impact the policy may have on the local housing rental market and the difficulty local people already have finding rental accommodation. Under the deal, private landlords will be offered a five-year fixed term deal to allocate space to move asylum seekers new homes across Worcestershire. Dame Harriett said: "Over the weekend I have had lots of messages from people

objecting to this Labour Government policy who fear this will damage the housing market, and people looking for social housing who are already on a long waiting list. Families across West Worcestershire took amazing steps to offer homes to people fleeing the war in Ukraine, and I am aware of families who have safely moved to West Worcestershire through legal immigration schemes from Afghanistan and Hong Kong. Our social housing provision is already operating beyond capacity and landlords have shared their concerns about what this could do to local rental rates. I backed the Rwanda scheme as it made sense to have a deterrent to those who used criminal gangs to get into our country illegally and dangerously. Now we are giving potential future asylum seekers a wide-open door to a comfortable life in rural England. That will not deter the gangs, Labour have failed to smash the gangs, and it won't halt the arrival small boats, which have already surged this year."

Environment Agency repeats support for Severn Stoke Flood Scheme

Dame Harriett Baldwin MP has welcomed confirmation that the Environment Agency continues to support the permanent flood scheme at Severn Stoke. Work was planned to begin this summer but the scheme was hit with further delays after the Worcestershire County Council contractor Alun Griffiths withdrew from the scheme. The Environment Agency has written to the MP to confirm that it remains committed to the scheme and is working with the county council to find contractors to construct the bund and raise a minor road at the flood hit village. Dame Harriett said: "It has been extremely frustrating to see that contractors on the Environment Agency and



Worcestershire County Council rosters have either been unable or unwilling to carry out the work. We were all expecting to see spades in the ground next month and I feel for the villagers and business owners in Severn Stoke who keep getting their hopes raised and then dashed. I was pleased to receive confirmation from the Environment Agency that it remains committed to delivering the scheme and I hope that someone is found who is willing to do the work very soon."



Tariff Hit Morgan Motors

Dame Harriett Baldwin MP issued a cry for help to the Government after meeting with Morgan Motors to hear the impact of the new US trade agreement. The MP was briefed that trade tariffs on cars exported from Malvern to America will quadruple as a result of the new trade agreement from 2.5 per cent up to ten per cent. The new ten per cent tariff rate – negotiated down from 25 per cent in a deal announced last week – will only apply to the first 100,000 cars exported across the Atlantic, after which the rate will be 25 per cent. Last year, 106,000 cars were shipped to US ports from British manufacturers. Seventy per cent of Morgan Motors cars are exported with many customers living in the United States. Dame Harriett met with managing director Matthew Hole to understand the pressure the company is facing following the announcement of the US trade deal. The MP agreed to share the company's concerns with Government Ministers as the

car industry seeks to ensure that manufacturers of all sizes are able to access the lower tariff rate. Dame Harriett said: "Morgan Motors exports most of its cars off the production line and it is looking to increase output. The news following the trade deal announcement was mixed with the company clearly concerned that higher tariffs are a serious barrier to trade. Any reduction of tariffs is welcomed but the overall car market is much worse off than it was at the start of the year. On top of this, the company is facing serious issues in its local supply chain with suppliers suffering as a result of the National Insurance jobs tax hike. I'll be passing the message back to Westminster that the Government needs to do much more to support smaller car manufacturers and guarantee that companies like Morgan are able to access the lower tariff rate. I hope that Ministers who are supposed to be championing growth hear the clear messages that I am getting from local businesses that tax changes are harming, not helping their business prospects."

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Rotary News

Richard Lees

Pershore Rotary proudly recognises the contributions made by one of its members with the awarding of a Paul Harris Fellowship. The award recognises an individual's continuing effort and commitment in supporting the community whether locally, nationally or internationally. For her many years leading the Pershore Foodbank, children's activities at the Abbey and service to Wick Parish Council, President Peter Gardner presented Lynne Raymer with the award saying, "Lynne has been an invaluable support to the club in recent years and volunteered to help with many key roles." Replying, Lynne said, "I have always believed that Rotarians should not only volunteer through Rotary, but where possible in their local community." Lynne led Pershore Foodbank for eight years and served on Wick Parish Council for twelve years. Lynne was presented with her award at the club's President's Night on Wednesday 30th April at Feli's Bar and Restaurant. *Congratulations Lynne.*

May is Rotary's Youth Service month, so we are spotlighting on Facebook five amazing opportunities available to students of various ages;

- RotaKids clubs in primary schools empower children to have fun, make friends and help their communities by running activities and supporting global causes - all while building confidence, teamwork and a sense of purpose.
- Interact clubs at High School are for young people who want to lead, volunteer and connect. From local projects to global awareness, Interact helps young people grow their leadership skills while having fun and meeting new friends. An example of an excellent Interact club can be found at Prince Henry's High School in Evesham, who are doing fantastic work in their community.
- Rotaract is for young adults who are passionate about change. Whether in university or their local community, Rotaractors lead service projects, connect globally and develop as professionals.

- Rotary Youth Exchange – if you dream of studying abroad, this opportunity immerses young people in a new culture, where they can learn a new language and represent their country as a youth ambassador. Each year, 300 students travel to and from the UK with the help of Rotary.
- RYLA unlocks leadership potential through its immersive camps which help young people grow their leadership and communication skills, tackle real-world challenges and meet like-minded future leaders.

Further information on all these and other Rotary projects can be obtained from the club Secretary at secretary@pershorerotary.club

Another project is the Rotary Youth World Affairs Seminar to be held at Carroll University, Waukesha, Wisconsin, USA from 21st to 27th June 2025. We are delighted to announce that Jorja Woolston, a student at Pershore High School, has won a place on this prestigious program where students from around the globe will debate "Peacebuilding: Creating



Lasting Change". Since 1976 the Rotary Youth World Affairs Seminar has provided a unique forum where 40,000 future leaders from 30 different countries have debated some of the most complex global problems in the stimulating environment of Carroll University, Wisconsin.

If you would like to work with us, we would love to hear from you. Follow us on Facebook, check out our website www.pershorerotary.club or email at secretary@pershorerotary.club

Tewkesbury and Bredon Hill Probus Club

The club for retired and semi-retired professionals and businessmen

Tewkesbury and Bredon Hill Probus Club has just celebrated our 50th anniversary. The first ever Probus Club meeting was held in April 1975 at the Tudor House Hotel in Tewkesbury with 39 founder members who got together to form a club for retired Professional and Businessmen (hence the name Probus). Since then the Club has developed continuously and is now one of the most successful Probus Clubs in our region,

now with 62 members. We all look forward to our meetings every Tuesday morning with stimulating conversation, coffee and interesting speakers who provide us with an eclectic range of topics. We learn new ideas, gain fresh knowledge and prove that even in retirement it is never too late to learn new things and keep the brain active. On 29th April we held our Annual General Meeting where our outgoing Chairman, Paul

Miller gave a wonderful valedictory speech about how in our youth we were all looking to the future with seemingly infinite possibilities, whereas in our retirement we need something to focus our attention, rather than reminiscing on the past, so that we can still learn, still contribute and still work together. The solution to this conundrum is of course membership of Probus Club. At the end of the meeting Paul handed over the Chairman's insignia to Brian Ley who will hold office as Chairman for the next twelve months.

We couldn't let such an auspicious occasion as our Golden anniversary go by without an appropriate celebration and after the AGM, we all assembled at the Guphill Manor restaurant for an excellent lunch for members and their wives and partners. We had produced several mementoes of the occasion for guests to take away and keep, including celebratory coasters in Probus colours and illustrated memory-jogging



cards featuring significant events that happened in 1975. This was a brilliant way of celebrating the last 50 years of our Club and we all look forward to many more successful years ahead.

Forthcoming Events in June:

3rd June -
A Portrait of John Moore: his life and books (with Kirstie Bingham)

10th June -
The life of Riley (with Martin Collisson)

17th June -
The Evesham Dogs Trust (with Abby Watson)

24th June -
Visit to the British Aerospace Museum

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'Eye-catchers'

Tim Hickson

This was the term used in the C18th for objects in the landscape - usually man-made - which catch our attention. In Croome Park, Lancelot (Capability) Brown arranged for several to be included in the views he designed, for the 6th Earl, in the second half of the 1700s.

However, some are natural. Whenever I come home from a trip abroad or from another part of the UK, I know I am nearly there when I catch sight of the Malverns. At Croome, before George William Coventry became the 6th Earl, a cedar tree had been planted to the west of the Court. When Brown came he deliberately included that tree as something to look at from the Long Gallery. Go to have a look. (As I sometimes say to visitors, the Malverns were also in the right place so he did not have to move them!)

Arriving at what is now the National Trust property of Croome, passing through Reception and then emerging from the Shrubbery Walk, we suddenly see that magnificent view across the Severn Valley to the Malverns. Our eyes are caught by the appearance of the Court below and, if on a sunlit morning, to the right, by the sight of Pirton Castle. This apparent piece of an old castle was built in the late 1700s simply as something to catch your attention. Sometimes referred to as 'follies', these were appearing all over the world at that time.

As you may have read in an earlier article from Nicola Hewitt, the 9th Earl bred several Grand National-

winning racehorses. If he had guests at Croome Court, he would take them to Pirton Castle so they could climb the staircase inside to gain a good view of these horses in training.

However, continuing down to the Court, and then looking back, you see the church you passed. The original church was down near the Court but Brown and the Earl must have wanted an unobstructed view of the splendid new building. So, the old church was dismantled and as much as possible of the structure re-used. (Go into the Basement and look at the Boys' School boot room.) The new church was clearly meant to have a striking appearance - to be an eye-catcher.

Often, by now, trees have grown to hide what would once have been clearly visible from the Court such as Dunstall Castle. Curiously, whilst marked on all the maps I have, only the 1930s one gives this building a name. Travelling on the A4104 from Pershore to Upton, once past Woodmancote there is a sharp bend to the left followed immediately by a road on the right to Kinnersley. Take that road and you will reach the Castle. Back at the Court, just to the east, up on the bank is the Rotunda, once visible from the main building. Further away to the west, off the road from Kinnersley towards High Green, on Cubs Moor, is the Panorama Tower, which can be seen from the M5. It was said that this was built so the 6th Earl and his guests could view his estate from its gallery. Every so often this is open to visitors.



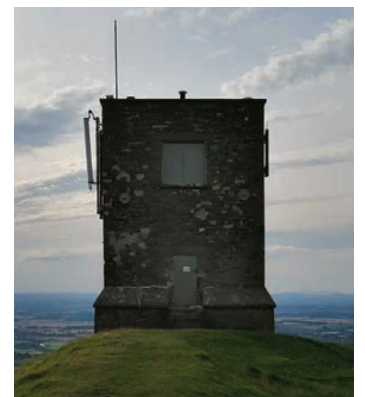
Croome Court

Towards the end of his life, the 6th Earl decided he needed a spectacular tower high up above Broadway. 'Capability' Brown and Robert Adam had both died so he invited an up-and-coming architect, James Wyatt, to design and build it. Completed just after the Earl died, this is now Broadway Tower, quite an eye-catcher!

For those of us in the Vale of Evesham, Parson's Folly or Bredon Tower, constructed on the top of Bredon Hill is interesting. It, too, was built in the C18th, for the owner of Kemerton House, John Parsons, M.P., as a summer house for picnics with a view. However, its height, 19ft, also makes the top 1 000ft above sea level, the height of a mountain. Some may remember the Hugh Grant film, *The Man who went up a Hill and came down a Mountain* in which a Welsh hill had a cairn of stones built on its summit to make the top 1 000ft above sea level. Finally, I have been told that if you go to the top of Pershore's Mount Pleasant, Abberley clock tower can be seen, though whether it would catch your eye I leave for the reader to discover.



Broadway Tower



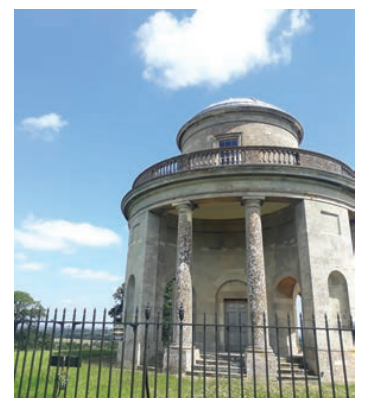
Parson's Folly



Pirton Castle



Rotunda



Panorama Tower

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Reg Moule

In addition to his award winning media work
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and other organisations
something that he has been doing
regularly since 1972.

*If you would like Reg to visit your group
please email reg.moule@gmail.com
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Farming

Mike Page

A BBC programme was broadcast on the radio recently outlining some of the differences the farming industry has with the policies being pursued by the present Government. One of the points put across was that it did seem to some senior negotiators representing the agricultural industry that many of those with high influence within the Government, even at ministerial level, had only a low understanding of how the farming industry operates. UK based agriculture is hugely important to this country, supplying the majority of the foodstuffs (as well as many other goods) consumed here. But it does have one important difference between itself and nearly all other major UK industries: when the end product is sold the price received is set more by the buyer than the seller, and that can fluctuate widely, depending on trade world-wide. Selling at a price below production cost cannot be sustained for long, and so for many decades – using grants and subsidies – the Government of the day has supported the farming industry in order to guarantee that supermarket and other outlet shelves remain well stocked with essential supplies at reasonable prices. The policy of supporting farm production continued when the UK was a member of the EU, where the need to give support guaranteeing supply was

recognised also, perhaps in part arising from very direct experience of the effect war would have on the reliability of supply. Things started falling apart after the UK decided to leave the EU and the UK Government of the day commenced developing its own support policies, based mostly on environmental support rather than simple production support. The new policies were radically different from what had gone before and over the few years since first introduced, and then found often to ‘not work quite as they should’, have been subject to many amendments. The plug was pulled finally on the so called Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) by the Labour Government this spring, with the promise of a reintroduction after suitable scrutiny and necessary changes have been made: Afraid to say ‘suitable scrutiny’ sounds very much like ‘budgetary cutbacks’ to me, but we will have to wait and see: I might be wrong, and hope I am. In the meantime, it is good to see sheep and cattle out on grassland and other grazings across the countryside as we move from Spring into Summer and this year round under much drier and more favourable conditions; this time it is more a pleasure to access the fields knowing most jobs can be done in near ideal conditions rather than the rain-soaked battlefields of last year, many not



permitting access for any purpose whatsoever. But even the cattle themselves pose a problem: cattle particularly produce large amounts of Methane which they belch out; and this is not simply bad manners on their part, but arises from their rather complex digestive process of rumination! Methane (which eventually downgrades naturally to CO2) contributes to Global Warming. There is research going on at the moment into raising more cattle from breeds that have been measured as having a lower Methane output, and on supplying them with a diet based on varieties of grasses and other vegetation known, or bred, to produce less Methane during the digestive process. More and more farming seem to be moving towards what we are ‘allowed to do’ rather than what we might choose to do: a far cry from the world of agriculture I entered after leaving school. To add to our

difficulties even further there are yet to be finalised aspects of the trading agreement reached just recently with the USA. We have been told that further details are yet to be negotiated, but it is difficult to see the US having backed away from its threatened tariff of 25% down to 10% giving any more ground: the farming industry in the UK is heavily dependent on some imported commodities, and much of that (such as soya beans) – a very important source of protein in manufactured animal feeds – is imported from the USA, giving the US Trump Government an ace card to play when pressing for any amendments to trade they want to see. Plenty of troubles on the horizon and I am reminded of a saying I first heard many years ago: “If it wasn’t for bad luck, I wouldn’t have any luck at all.” but perhaps this year the weather will not be part of that and so far so good at least on that score. There is an optimist in me somewhere!

A sun bed for slow worms

Karen Rose

This month I’ve been scattering squares of old roofing felt around Stoulton Community Woodlands; it may look like I’m littering but I’m making sun beds for slow worms. These lovely woodlands have open glades and meadow edges which are perfect for these sun loving reptiles. Late Spring is the time when slow worms get ready to breed and when you’re most likely to see them. Despite their name, slowworms are neither worms, nor particularly slow. The slowworm is a leg-less lizard (*Anguis fragilis*), not a worm or a snake, and like all cold blooded reptiles they rely on the warmth of the sun and of surrounding surfaces to keep warm. That means they are

often to be found underneath old tin sheets or thick vegetation, where they warm themselves before disappearing underground. Old roofing felt provides a perfect sun bed for them to bask on and lie under. You may find them too in your garden since a warm compost heap is a favourite place for them to hide. If you do see them don’t worry, they are harmless and unlikely to be a nuisance, preferring to eat your slugs and snails and to hide from trouble. If disturbed they will most likely disappear underground, but they do have an amazing trick if caught. First they will defecate foul smelling poo, hoping to put off the predator, and, if that doesn’t work, they simply shed their



tail, which continues to wriggle around to distract the attacker, while the rest of the slow worm quickly makes it’s escape!

Photo by Charlie Bennet

Karen Rose
A biodiversity officer for
Wychavon District Council

The Walled Gardens at Croome Court – A living legacy in full bloom!



As The Walled Gardens at Croome Court proudly mark twenty-five years of restoration, the celebrations continue with renewed energy and reflection. Following the unveiling of the new water garden by Harriett Baldwin MP in May, the team behind this extraordinary project has been heartened by the surge of public interest and support. Visitors from across the region have flocked to see the transformation first-hand, walking in the footsteps of history brought vividly back to life. Chris and Karen Cronin's ongoing commitment to the restoration of one of Britain's largest Georgian walled gardens has not only revived a lost landscape but also created a space where heritage and horticulture intertwine. Their journey, which began with little more than overgrown wilderness and derelict buildings, has become a nationally recognised example of visionary conservation, executed entirely through private means and unrelenting personal dedication.

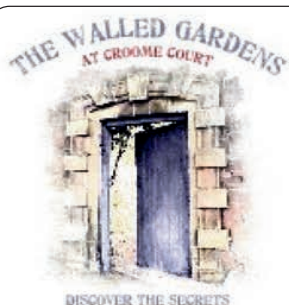
The gardens are more than just a beautiful place to visit; they tell a story of perseverance and discovery. Every path, wall, and planting bed carry echoes of the past. Once home to exotic fruits, intricate glasshouses, and Capability Brown's sweeping design. Today, thanks to the Cronins' sensitive restoration and the invaluable support of National Trust volunteers, these elements are once again flourishing, offering a unique insight into Georgian horticultural heritage.

New additions, including the water garden and the striking Mosaic Garden, reflect the evolution of the project. They represent not just restored beauty, but new creative interpretations that honour the past while embracing the future. As the garden matures, it continues to reveal hidden features and inspire future possibilities, ensuring that the work is never truly finished, but always growing. With regular weekend openings from April to September, the Walled Gardens welcome

visitors to explore, reflect, and enjoy this living legacy. Whether returning after many years or discovering the site for the first time, guests are invited to witness the results of a quarter-century of devotion. Group tours by arrangement offer a more in-depth look at the site's history and horticultural techniques. In a world where so much heritage has been lost, The Walled Gardens at Croome Court stand proudly as a symbol of what passion and perseverance can achieve.



Harriett Baldwin MP at The Walled Gardens at Croome Court



**Visit The Walled Gardens
at Croome Court,
where history and
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**Once forgotten and overgrown, these remarkable
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Chris and Karen Cronin since 2000.**



Nestled within the Croome Court estate, near Pershore, the gardens are open every Saturday and Sunday from April to September, including Bank Holidays. Opening hours are 11 am to 5 pm, with the last entry at 4 pm.

Admission is £7 per adult, and children under 14 go free
(regular National Trust admission applies).

All proceeds support the ongoing restoration of this historic landscape. Exclusive group tours outside regular hours are available for parties of 15 or more. For enquiries, email info@croomewalledgardens.com.

Discover a hidden gem and explore centuries of history in bloom.

Website: www.croomewalledgardens.com

Facebook: The Walled Gardens at Croome Court

Instagram: @croome_walled_gardens

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Inspiration from the RHS Malvern Spring Show

The RHS Malvern Spring Festival is a treasure trove of inspiration for gardeners. With its stunning show gardens, expert advice, and innovative planting ideas, it offers countless ways to transform your own outdoor space. Whether you have a sprawling country garden or a compact urban retreat, the principles showcased at Malvern can be adapted to suit your needs. *Bringing Show Garden Ideas Home*

One of the most exciting aspects of the festival is the Show Gardens, where designers push the boundaries of creativity and sustainability. While these gardens are often grand in scale, their core ideas can be translated into smaller, more personal spaces. Here's how you can incorporate some of the standout themes from Malvern into your own garden: *Layered Planting for Year-Round Interest*

Many of the gardens at Malvern feature tiered planting, combining trees, shrubs, perennials and ground cover to create depth and texture.

To achieve this in your own garden, start with structural plants like small trees or shrubs for seasonal colour. Incorporate perennials and ground cover to fill gaps and provide continuous interest. Plants such as Geums and Heuchera make a lovely combination.

Sustainable Gardening Practices Sustainability is a key theme at Malvern and all RHS shows, with many gardens showcasing eco-friendly techniques. You can adopt these practices by:

- Using reclaimed materials for pathways and seating.
- Installing a rain garden to manage water runoff.
- Choosing native plants that support local wildlife and require less maintenance.

Red Campion is a wildflower and was used extensively throughout the show.

Creating a Tranquil Retreat

Several gardens at Malvern focus on well-being and relaxation, incorporating elements that encourage mindfulness and connection with nature.

To bring this into your own space: Introduce seating areas surrounded by calming plants like Lavender for sunny gardens and ferns for shady spaces. Use water features to add soothing sounds and



designate a quiet corner for reading, meditation, or simply enjoying the outdoors.

Adapting Malvern's Themes to Different Garden Sizes

Not everyone has the luxury of a large garden, but the ideas from Malvern can be scaled to fit any space.

Small Gardens & Courtyards

- If you have a compact garden, focus on vertical planting and multi-functional spaces.

- Use climbing plants like clematis and wisteria to add flowers and greenery without taking up ground space.

- Opt for raised beds to maximize planting areas.

- Incorporate foldable furniture to create flexible seating options.

Urban Gardens & Balconies

Even the smallest outdoor spaces can benefit from Malvern-inspired ideas:

- Grow herbs and vegetables in containers for a practical and beautiful display.



Nikki Hollier

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- Use mirrors to create the illusion of depth. However, be careful where they are placed as they can confuse birds who may fly into the mirror and damage it and hurt themselves too.
- Choose pollinator-friendly plants to support biodiversity in city environments. Create 'green roofs' and use them on pergolas and sheds.



June gardening tips

Reg Moule BBC Hereford & Worcester

Early June

Mulches help to conserve water but the soil must be moist before they are applied. Sow quick growing hardy annuals e.g. clarkia, Virginia stocks for late colour in dull spots. When watering concentrate on climbers on walls, container and basket plants, newly planted items, dahlias, sweet peas, leafy veg. crops, celery and fruit bushes. Dig up bare centred alpine plants and divide them, re-planting the young pieces from around the edge. If you use nematodes to control vine weevil grubs buy them online or mail order. They are also available at some garden centres through the Agralan company. June is one of the worst months for pest and disease attacks, so check plants regularly. If using a trigger spray product remember to shake it first and there are lots of safer "organic" treatments available now.

Mid June

Make sure plants in tubs and baskets are fed regularly, as well

as watered. Many climbing plants can be increased by layering at this time of year.

Mow the lawn to leave the grass 2.5cm (1in) tall. Makes grass more drought resistant. Treat established lawns with a lawn weed killer but not if there is a drought.

Dead head rhododendrons after flowering to encourage new growth. If you need more fish in your pond this is an ideal time to introduce them but goldfish can be detrimental in a wildlife pond.

When picking strawberries always remove any rotting fruit, otherwise problems increase.

Watch out for cabbage white butterflies around your brassica plants. If you do not like to use chemical sprays, try Grazers G3 organic caterpillar repellent. They also make good repellents for slugs and lily beetles too.

Sow radicchio now for winter salads. Choose a good coloured variety like pallo rossa.

Sow salad crops regularly, in small amounts, sowing the second

row as the first emerges. Tomatoes can be planted outdoors. Select a sheltered site and support the plants. Take cuttings from dianthus (pinks). They root easily now in a shady spot.

Lettuce will not germinate in hot weather. Sowing in moist drills in late evening helps.

Shade the greenhouse, ventilate it well and spray water over the floor to raise humidity.

Take softwood cuttings from shrubs. Remove 7.5 cm (3in) of shoot tips. Root in pots of gritty compost, placed in polythene bags, in a shady spot.

Late June

Lift and divide flag iris after flowering. Re-plant young growths, keeping rhizomes above soil level.

Prune back side shoots on cyttissus (broom) after flowering to keep plants neat.

Deadhead roses regularly to prolong flowering.

Remove any "suckers" as soon as they appear.



Watch out for algae / blanketweed in pools. The introduction of a product based on barley straw can provide an organic control measure. Feed tomato plants regularly from when first fruits begin to form, using tomato food.

Take out one third of the older branches on deciduous shrubs, like Philadelphus, Weigela and Deutzia after flowering.

Put cymbidium orchids outside in a sheltered, shady spot until late autumn. Keep them well watered and fed over this period.

If pollen beetles infest your cut sweet peas, put them in water in a shed for a while. The beetles will fly into the window attracted by the light.

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Are Solar panels still a worthwhile investment?



Maybe that was a pertinent question fourteen years ago, when 2020SolarPV started supplying and fitting systems to local businesses and homes throughout the midlands, but time and experience has proved that if you are looking for a way of saving on your bills, generating your own electricity and reducing your carbon footprint, solar is still a worthwhile investment.

Despite the initial costs, a typical three-bedroom house with a 4kW solar panel system can save you between £400 to £800 annually on electricity bills. Solar panels help reduce your impact on the environment, and under the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG) scheme, households in Great Britain get paid for excess solar energy they export back to the grid, while it's not as generous as the previous feed-in tariff scheme, it can still work out well for most homeowners. Of course other developments in recent years has increased

demand for solar, for example, heat pumps, electric vehicle charging, batteries to time-shift excess energy, as well as smarter technology have all helped improve the pay-back on investment by harvesting more energy and increase independence from the grid. This coupled with spiralling energy costs and more recent price drops for owning solar has created a 'perfect storm' for consumers and business owners.

Technology has come a long way in the last 14 years of course, and whilst there are many cheap and cheerful options available, we pride ourselves on using the safest and most up to date products and systems available, you can never take too much care when you are dealing with peoples homes, hopefully the care and attention we deliver to our customers is backed up by the highly favourable reviews we receive via Which Trusted Trader.

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Can plants be over pollinated?

Martyn Cracknell

Pollination is the transfer of pollen grains from the anther of a flower to the moist surface of the stigma of the same flower or a different flower of the same species. Honey bees are of particular importance for pollination of fruit trees and Spring flowering plants, because there are few other adult insects around at that time. However they are fair weather creatures and only work if the temperature is above about 10 °C, and it is neither windy nor rainy. This year the extended period of dry warm days and frost-free nights has resulted in extremely good conditions for pollination. Each pollen grain deposited on a receptive stigma, grows a slender tube which delivers a male nucleus to a female egg cell and if they fuse, they will form a seed. Meanwhile a plant hormone called Auxin is secreted by the pollen and this causes many changes in the flower. Scent and nectar production cease, the petals may change colour and then wither and the wall of the ovary in which the seeds are growing will start to swell to form a fruit.

The supply of auxin is soon exhausted and if there are no seeds developing, the small fruitlets will drop off. In apples this generally occurs about mid June and is colloquially known as the 'June drop.' However if embryonic seeds are developing they will produce additional auxin and the fruitlet will remain and grow. An apple has five chambers in its ovary each with two seeds and to produce a uniform round fruit there must be one or two seeds in each chamber. If a chamber has no seed in it, the ovary wall adjacent to it will not grow, resulting in a lop-sided fruit. Good pollination therefore affects both the quantity and the quality of fruit, but can you have too much of a good thing? If a tree has an excessive fruit set it is likely that none of the fruit will grow to full size, resulting in a very large crop of very small fruit. The problem extends into the following year as the auxin from all the developing fruitlets will suppress flower bud formation for the next year, so the tree will only have modest blossom and a few fruits.



Excess fruitlets should be rubbed out, leaving just one or two fruitlets per cluster

This is biennial bearing. To achieve a good crop of quality fruit every year, good pollination is required, followed by a June drop, and then manual fruit thinning to reduce the number of fruitlets.. It may be rather tedious and impossible for large trees, but in a garden context it is well worthwhile. Annual pruning also helps to ensure a consistent harvest, year on year. People sometimes wonder if the flavour of fruit is influenced by the source of the pollen brought

to the tree by bees. Would crab apple pollen make fruit sour? The part eaten, i.e. the flesh of the apple, is entirely derived from the ovary wall which is exclusively from the tree which bears the fruit, so it will always be true to type. However each seed in the fruit has genes from both pollen and the parent tree. Every apple pip is therefore a new variety, but it would take about six years to grow it to fruiting size to see if it is any good.

Village Life

John Driscoll

It's May in our village with great weather unless you're a gardener or farmer and hankering after a spell of rain. There's of course every chance that by the time this is printed we'll be regretting those rain dances and wishing for a bit more sunshine – especially as we all know that Wimbledon weeks normally bring plenty of the wet stuff! The main May event in our village has been a get together to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day. Commemorating the heroism of the generation who paved the way for our current way of life. In common with most communities we no longer have residents who have direct experience of serving during the war years. However, many of us have memories, either of the impact of the war on our early lives or passed-on from our parents or other family. In many cases very poignant, and in our case, these were shared with a book of memories and loaned artefacts giving an insight into the suffering and experiences, made available for all to see and absorb. Our event started with a replay

of Winston Churchill's radio broadcast announcing the end of the war in Europe. It was a surprisingly long speech (by today's 'sound-bite' standard) and the assembled crowd listened in silence while reflecting on the impact it must have had 80 years ago on the 8th May. Not a pin was heard to drop! We continued the 1945 theme with sing-along versions of Vera Lynn's 'We'll Meet Again' (or 'Whale Meat Again' as my parents would have insisted) followed by a spirited 'Pack Up Your Troubles'. Not sure we did either full justice, but more than a mere nod to 1945, especially as many of us had donned period dress for the occasion. The Land Girls and flight crew made a spectacular appearance! Party bags of period sweets (rationing was lifted for the day!) and fish and chips served from cones made from 1940's newspaper (well, almost – this is the 2020's after all!) provided welcome refreshment. The day continued with period games and dance lessons, before fast-forwarding to the 1980's and beyond for a touch of Karaoke. Not surprisingly

it's very difficult to source suitable tracks for 1940's classics without words so instead we skipped forward. Probably just as well as the standard of singing would likely have horrified any veterans who were listening! Best of all, the beer was the equivalent of sixpence a pint – oh no, that was an illusion brought on by too much sun – but still fantastic value as always and among the best bitters in the land! I know for sure my Mum and Dad would have approved and would have wanted to help us mark the occasion in style.

A wonderful day and a great way for our community to commemorate the end of World War Two. A day with many conversations and shared memories that hit upon a good mix of celebration and reflection, honouring our heroic and stoic ancestors without who we would not be enjoying the many freedoms we now take for granted. What a generation! Now, we hopefully have a great summer ahead of us and is too much to ask for a few good overnight showers leaving us to enjoy sunny days? Fingers crossed, chin-chin as my Mum would have said!



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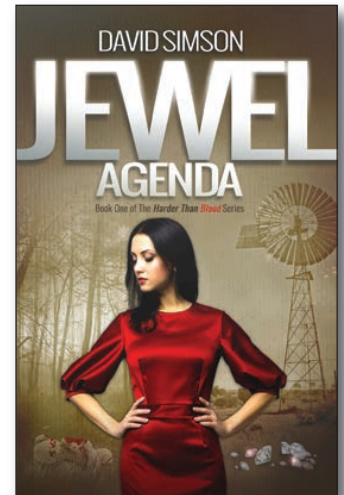


Book Review

Richard Catford

Jewel Agenda
by David Simson

Reviewed by Richard Catford
Local author David Simson (Drakes Broughton) has written and published a 400-page fiction of a double murder in a remote, forested part of Northern France. The murder scene, with one survivor is discovered by a lone British motor cyclist. The victims and survivor are also British, the perpetrators Australian and the interplay between French, British and Australian investigators (including embassy officials) is well researched and convincing. Indeed, the whole plot, and it is a complex one, is meticulously and methodically detailed. Back-stories of the main characters, their personal journey to the heinous crime are a strong feature of this novel. Victims, survivors, criminals and investigating officers are all included in these explanations, including descriptions of the locations involved in the plot. If you like authenticity and detail this is the book for you. David Simson's style, the descriptions and back-stories, often resonates with Fredrick Forsyth and Dan Brown's work. The real strength of this novel is not only in the detailed descriptions of the locations but in the relationships between the characters involved. There



is rivalry and suspicion within both criminal and investigation teams. This story has the potential to make a very good basis for a serial TV Drama. However, if you can't wait for such a TV drama to emerge but you relish the detail of a complex chase, David's book would provide solace whilst on your sunbed this summer, or perhaps a distraction whilst travelling to distant places. The conclusion of this tale is not for this review to deliver but is enough to say further publications in the future will extend the suspense.

David Simson's website:
www.jewelbooks.co.uk and
Jewel Agenda on Facebook
will provide more details.
Email:
davidsimson@rocketmail.com

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but you can be
immature for a lifetime"

John P. Grier

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Ailsa's Kitchen *Ailsa Craddock*

June heralds the Summer Solstice on the 21st and is often referred to as the first day of summer, and yet celebrations across the Northern Hemisphere at this time of year carry the name Midsummer, which is pretty confusing. Midsummer and the summer solstice are used interchangeably, but they refer to different things.

The solstice is the beginning of the astronomical summer that has been celebrated since ancient times as the longest day of the year, whereas Midsummer now refers to numerous celebrations that are held over the solstice period, between June 19th and June 24th, with both pagan and Christian origins. Midsummer, as in the religious observances traditional in many countries, occurs close to the June or Summer Solstice. With celebrations originating in ancient times as a festival for the summer solstice, this could be where the name comes from. Bonfires were lit up to ward off evil spirits as the Sun turned southward. If you only had the Sun to measure time and dictate your hours of light, the longest day would feel like a mid-point before you make the descent back into winter. Follow the next few recipes and you will have the perfect Summer Solstice Dinner. Fingers crossed for the sunshine and moonshine!

Salmon Rolls with Asparagus and Butter Sauce

Asparagus spears

4 thin salmon fillets

Juice of a lemon

2 small shallots, finely chopped

6 peppercorns

120 ml white wine

4 tablespoons double cream

200g butter, cut into small cubes

fresh parsley

Steam the asparagus for 6 - 8 minutes till tender, refresh under cold running water. Lay on top of the salmon fillet and roll up. Place on a rack over a pan of boiling water, sprinkle with lemon juice, cover and steam for 3 - 4 minutes till tender.

Sauce:

Put the shallot, peppercorns and wine into a small saucepan and heat gently until the wine is reduced to a tablespoonful. Strain and return to the pan. Add the cream and bring to the boil then lower the heat. Add the butter to the sauce in small pieces, whisking all the time.

DO NOT ALLOW THE SAUCE

TO BOIL AS IT WILL SEPARATE!

Season to taste, add a little parsley and serve with the salmon roll, some new potatoes, Tenderstem broccoli and/or spinach.

Anything with basil immediately transports me to summer and the Mediterranean - if I could bottle its' smell, I would - sun, warmth and taste in one little green plant!

Chicken, Pepper & Basil Traybake

2 tbsp olive oil

4 chicken thigh cutlets, bone in

Salt and pepper, to season

2 red onions,

peeled and cut into wedges

3 - 4 cloves garlic,

peeled and lightly crushed

Red pepper, cut into thick slices

Yellow pepper, cut into thick slices

3 - 6 anchovies, chopped (optional)

200ml cup chicken stock

A pinch of sugar

Loosely packed basil leaves, torn

A splash of balsamic vinegar

Heat your oven to 200C.

Take a large baking dish or frying pan that can be placed on a stovetop as well as into the



oven and heat over a high heat. Add the olive oil, season the chicken thigh with salt and pepper and fry, skin side down, until golden brown. Turn the chicken and add the onions, garlic and peppers around the chicken. Scatter with the anchovies (if using) and pour over the stock. Season very well with salt, pepper and a good pinch of sugar and transfer to the oven for 30 to 35 minutes, until the chicken is just cooked though. Scatter with the torn basil leaves and serve immediately, with a splash of balsamic vinegar. A side salad and some little Jersey potatoes would be perfect alongside.

And now for the first strawberries – what else stands for summer?

Strawberry & Mascarpone Gelato
Strawberry and mascarpone is a classic mix and this is also one of the easiest ice cream recipes you could possibly make.

300g strawberries,

hulled and chopped

2 tbsp elderflower cordial

150g golden caster sugar

500g mascarpone

100g white chocolate,

roughly chopped

200g strawberries,

hulled and quartered

1 tbsp elderflower cordial

2 tbsp golden caster sugar

Put the chopped strawberries in a bowl. Add the cordial and sprinkle over the sugar. Set aside to macerate for up to 1 hour.

Beat the mascarpone and white chocolate together, then fold through the strawberry mixture. Put in a cling film-lined, straight-sided freezer-proof box (about 1 litre) and freeze overnight.

For the soft strawberries, put the berries and cordial in a bowl, then sprinkle with sugar. Set aside for 15 minutes. Slice the ice cream and spoon over the strawberries to serve.

Meteorologically, we're nearly a month into summer.

Astronomically, the summer has only just begun.

But, of course, it won't really feel like summer in Britain until we start complaining it's too hot!

Philharmonic Orchestra

On Saturday 14th June at 2.30, the Worcester Philharmonic Orchestra will present a feast of popular Summer Music by British composers, in Pershore Abbey. Dan Watson conducts the WPO in a programme including Vaughan Williams' Folk Song Suite, Coates' Three Elizabeths Suite and is joined by Chris Goodman for a performance of Finzi's Five Bagatelles for clarinet and strings.

The programme also includes Ethel Smyth's Overture the Wreckers and Coleridge-Taylor's Petit Suite de Concert. Both these lesser known works

are delightful and deserve more frequent performance.

Chris Goodman studied at the Royal College of Music, London where he won several prizes and was selected to perform as part of the Rising Stars series at Cadogan Hall and at Castleton Festival USA under the baton of late conductor Lorin Maazel. He has performed all the major clarinet concerto repertoire with orchestras in the UK, China and USA. Chris maintains a busy freelance orchestral career and has played with many British orchestras including London Symphony Orchestra,

Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic & Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestras, Royal Northern Sinfonia, English National Opera, Birmingham Royal Ballet and Manchester Camerata.

Come and join at Pershore Abbey!

Tickets £15 (Under 16s free) available from Tourist Offices Worcester/Pershore/Malvern (*cash only) or worcesterphilharmonicorchestra.ticketsource.co.uk*



Romy's Uni Life

Romy Kemp *Liverpool University*

Summer is Coming

My second year at university has come to an end and my word was it eventful! My exams have finally finished, and I now have about a month to stay here in Liverpool before returning home for the summer holiday. I was extremely exhausted after my exams because they were back to back 24-hour exams, meaning that I didn't have a lot of time in-between to catch up on energy. I'm grateful that my literature module exam was before my language module exam because

I needed more brain power to analyse Shakespeare. Even writing this article may not make total sense because my brain is still recovering. With my exams, I really enjoyed making the notes and mind mapping my ideas however when it comes to writing the exam, my brain seems to struggle with coming up with the right wording. There is a lot that I need to do in the next couple of weeks. I am trying to organise my life more and get in better shape both physically and mentally. As much as I have looked into

possible career paths for me, I haven't found anything yet that I am set on. This means that I need to keep looking and just try out different things. Work experience is a great way to try out potential professions and that is what I intend to do. Taking a break from studies will be great to clear my mind and reduce my stress levels. Despite this, I do not want to take too big of a break from work because I will most likely forget how to do certain things and then this will inevitably lead to a more complicated start to third year. I am excited to

have a relax and have fun over summer because it is probably the last time I can do so before I enter the adult world. There will be no more student summer holidays, but only finding a job to explore and live on. I have a university trip coming up that I am extremely excited for. We are going to the Lake District for a few days to explore the history of literature. I have told quite a few people and they have all said to try the gingerbread there because it is one of the best places to get it. This I intend to do and will rate it in my next article.



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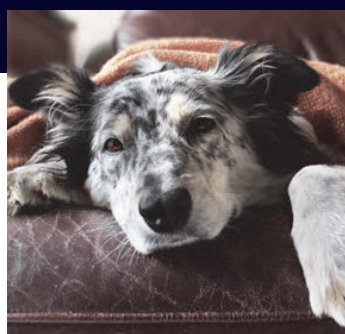
The book contains every article, poem and painting, that Susan produced for the Pershore Times. The articles are of a very high quality, each one is different and a joy to read. Produced in a limited edition of 250 copies

All proceeds donated to Cancer Research UK Ltd

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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

Gregory's World!

Gregory Sidaway Exeter College, Oxford

Beat It

Trainers: on. Headphones: on. Let's go! There's only so much time I can spend revising in my room. Too many notes and quotes! My brain has turned to mushy peas. Time for a reboot, time for a run! Golden hour glows over Oxford. My route takes me along Walton Road, past the bakeries and coffee shops of Little Clarendon Street, and up Woodstock Road, where a huge queue of bow ties and high heels eagerly anticipates the Somerville College ball. Late spring has transformed Banbury Road into a great green tunnel of birdsong and bright flowers. Late spring also heralds exam season. The change of mood around town is palpable. The subject of exams creeps and pokes its way into almost every conversation. Students in black gowns billow on bicycles through the streets. Chalkboards outside the King's Arms now read: 'Good luck to students writing exams!' In my case, I'll be typing them. Mine is the second year of English students to sit a typed exam. Gone are the days of my teachers whipping out their red

pens, circling entire paragraphs of my inky, illegible handwriting and putting a '?' next to them. The examiners will be able to read everything perfectly now. With any luck, they'll like what they see. As I run, my heart hammers. My legs throb. I gasp and try not to inhale a falling catkin. But a breeze is streaming over my face and my brain doesn't feel quite so mushy anymore. The bold, zinging synthesiser of Michael Jackson's 'Beat It' rings through my headphones and spurs me onwards. In this very funny period of term time, a period of information-overload, of headaches and stomach-jitters, it's important to get outside and keep moving. This is it, the final countdown, the big push. Three years, nine terms, two thousand coffees, and one grey hair later, I've reached the end of my course. There's just one more hurdle – well, technically, there are four – left to leap over. We can beat them, fellow reader. Haven't we been through thick and thin together? Besides, it'll all be over in a blink of an – I open my eyes. I'm sitting on the floor of the Exam Schools marquee. An ocean of English students stirs and rises around

me. Some are pacing, reciting quotes to themselves as though they're practicing incantations. Others stand in circles and talk with their arms crossed. Nor are we allowed to sit these exams in our shorts and t-shirts. Nothing says feeling cool and comfortable on a baking May afternoon like wearing a suit and a commoner's gown. The gown's extra floppy bits (not their official name) do add extra flourish to my walk, though. Leaning forward, I catch the pungent whiff of the carnation in my breast pocket. It's traditional for students to wear a carnation on their lapel when they sit exams. Today's is white. I'll wear a pink one for the next two exams, then a red one for the last hurrah. Apparently, the colour change is supposed to symbolise the blood being drained out of us as we battle on, but I'm not sure if that's true. The conversations lull as we are summoned into the Exam Schools. I step beneath the sandstone archway and venture down a pillared corridor with a vaulted ceiling, black and white tiles, and busts of stern-faced men wearing frilly wigs. My insides jitter. The days of sitting mock exams in the school sports hall feel like a



lifetime ago. I find my seat – no. 95 – at the end of a right-angled hall called the North School. Although it's a typed exam, we can't use our own laptops; the uni has provided everyone with a mac book ('jammy' doesn't even begin to describe it), so I log in and wait with my mouse hovering over the 'Start Test' button. 14:27, 14:28, 14:29 ... I de-robe out of my gown and jacket to free up my arms, preparing to thunder away at the keys. We can do this. I know we can. ... 14:30. "You may begin." C'mon, fellow reader. Let's beat it.

Evie's Teenage Focus

Evie Aubin Oxford Brookes University

I am both filled with sorrow and overjoyed to tell you all that I have officially finished my first year at university. After I handed in my final assignment of the year, I had three weeks at university before I went home. And I spent that time surrounded by my friends doing everything we hadn't had a chance to do yet. As well as this, one of my friends had been able to bring her car up for the few final weeks which allowed us to find some amazing spaces which we wouldn't have been able to do otherwise. I think my favourite would be the lake. It's a lovely little space called Hinksey lake, and whilst it does have an outdoor swimming pool right next to it, we found it much more enjoyable to sit in the pontoon on the lake. The space itself is absolutely beautiful, it sits in the middle of a park and as mentioned before it does

have an outdoor swimming pool close by as well. The park has a few other smaller lakes but none of them you are able to swim in. Once we got to the lake, we found a few groups of people already on the pontoon; it was quite full, but nonetheless we found some space, put down our blanket and enjoyed a day in the sun. In addition to the other people there, there was also the cutest family of ducks that kept on swimming around us, and one of the baby ducklings even tried to nibble at my foot whilst it was in the water! I think some of my favourite memories though will come from the last two days that I was at university. Two days before I left, we spent the day shopping, and once we got back, we all made some funny PowerPoints that we showed each other that night. I did mine on what I thought everyone be if they

were a Taylor Swift album (surprising to nobody I'm sure), Gen made a PowerPoint on what dinosaur we would all be, Grace made one on all the male celebrities that she hates and why, and Liv made one on what type of star wars character we would be. All in all it was very good and absolutely hilarious, especially once we had a couple of drinks. On my last day we finally got around to punting, and I will tell you now, it's a lot harder than it looks. In the morning we went to the botanical gardens and finished by getting a coffee by the river and watching other people punting. Some made it look so easy, and others were struggling; at one point we even watched someone get stuck in a tree! We laughed at the time, and then a couple of hours later we were stuck in the exact same tree. Karma I suppose. But by some miracle



we managed to get the boat back to the people we hired it from, all of us somewhat dry and unscathed. After that we went out for dinner at the Alchemist, it was amazing and I would definitely recommend going if you are ever in Oxford. We spent the rest of the night hanging out in the kitchen, we had a few tears before we went to bed; and even more when I left the next day. But in the end, I got home, officially surviving my first year at university and cannot wait for the next; and so, until next time, toodles!

Recoup, Regroup, Recover Out of Alignment?

Angela Johns

I'm sitting in the garden on a beautiful sunny Sunday afternoon. My hands and forearms are covered in scratches and my nails are grubby and ruined. Yes, I've been gardening. It's a hazardous job. I have had a wonderful weekend of reading books with the rising sun, bike rides, socialising and a beer at the allotment with the setting sun - that perfect mixture of relaxing and activity, solitude and mingling. As far as I know, all my loved ones are safe and I can just sit in the moment. And I am remembering a touching moment from yesterday. On moving a plant pot in my conservatory I found a bumblebee that seemed barely alive, all tucked in on itself and covered in spiderweb. From my phone case I pulled a loyalty card from Coffee Culture (in Malvern, thoroughly recommend) and scooped her up. I deposited her in an outside plant pot and fetched a teaspoon of sugared water and held it next to her. She immediately lifted herself forward and her tiny tongue dipped into the mixture as she drank and drank and drank. After a pause she used her two front legs to scrape away at the web but it was a struggle. I used a dried blade of grass to help and, after we both rested a moment, she drank some more. We scraped some more, rested some more and finally she was revived and free enough to fly off. Not far mind. She soon touched down on the clover in the lawn near me then a few seconds later took off again, did a turn and flew right at me. In and out she darted around my face then all of a sudden, she was away up high and disappeared. It was like she had said, 'Thank



you so much!' before fully reclaiming her freedom. It was a heart-warming moment. Like the bee, we all have times when we just need a serendipitous break, a helping hand, even just a moment that stands between us and what's happening all around us. A space when we can coast for a bit, recoup, regroup, recover. If we don't listen to our minds or our spirit then our bodies will tell us when we need it. We might have an ache or our skin flares up, and if we still don't listen, we may even get knocked sideways with the lurgy. I have had cause just lately to be reminded to look out for those messages, in fact I wrote a list of all possible messages my spirit and body might give me just so I can be mindful. And, of course, a list of all my day to day remedies which was wonderfully much longer. If I can't rest completely then I need something to pull out of the metaphorical bag to give me a helping hand until I can. I would love to hear what is in your bag.

Angela is a qualified Emotional Therapeutic Counsellor registered with the FETC/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

Emily Papirnik

Let nature bring you back!

There are days I wake up and just feel... off. Maybe you know the feeling too - unsettled, slightly disconnected, as if your rhythm has slipped just half a beat behind the world. You're not quite sure what's wrong, but you know something's out of alignment. When I feel that way, I know it's time to walk. To step outside and let nature take over. I know and understand that we're not designed to operate in constant productivity, noise, and stimulation. Our nervous systems, our emotions and our energy are deeply attuned to the natural world. When we lose that connection, everything can start to feel misaligned.

Nature Is My Healer

Whenever I feel out of sorts, I return to nature. I walk through the trees, breathe in the quiet wisdom of the earth, and let myself be reminded of something deeper—something steadier. The natural world doesn't force anything. It trusts its timing, its seasons, its cycles.

I am learning to do the same. In nature, I don't have to fix anything. I just have to 'be', and somehow, through the birdsong, the wind, the scent of the blossom, my energy begins to soften. I don't rush. I don't push. I walk, I pause, I feel. And in that space, my rhythm returns.

The App: Me helping me

Part of my work—and something I've poured my heart into—is developing an



app that supports this reconnection. In the app, I use energy practices that are inspired by and woven into the rhythms of nature. These aren't just meditations; they're invitations to realign with the natural world's intelligence. Practices you can do sitting by a window, under a tree, or even just visualising the earth beneath your feet.

These simple but powerful techniques are designed to calm your nervous system, ground your energy, and bring you back into harmony—with yourself, and with life.

Perfect Timing

Nature reminds me every day: there is no rush. There is only now. Leaves fall when they're ready. Flowers bloom in their own time. You are no different. If you're feeling out of rhythm, know this—there's nothing wrong with you. You're simply being invited back to your own natural state of balance.

So take a breath. Step outside. Feel your feet on the ground. Let the wind clear your thoughts. Let the sky open you up. You don't need to do it all. You just need to return. And nature will meet you there.



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Healthy Heart Tip: How to eat a healthy balanced diet



Is there a secret formula for maintaining a balanced diet?

With the constant influx of conflicting advice and diets, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by all the information.

What is a balanced diet?

We often hear the terms "balance" and "moderation", yet many of us struggle to find that sweet spot. A healthy balanced diet is one that includes a variety of nutrient-rich foods in the right proportions, providing the body with essential macronutrients such as carbohydrates, proteins, fats and micronutrients like vitamins and minerals to support overall health, energy, and wellbeing. It emphasises moderation, variety and portion control to maintain long-term

health and prevent disease.

What are macro and micronutrients?

When it comes to eating healthy, understanding the role of nutrients in our diet can help us make informed choices about what we put on our plates.

There are different categories of macronutrients. Macronutrients include carbohydrates, proteins, and fats and are the building blocks of our diet. They provide us with the energy to fuel our daily activities, support growth, and keep our bodies functioning properly.

Carbohydrates are the main source of energy for your body and are most associated with foods like pasta, rice, potatoes, bread, and cereal. But they are

also found in other foods such as fruits and vegetables, sugar-sweetened foods and drinks such as cookies and fizzy drinks. There are two types of carbohydrates – simple and complex. Simple carbohydrates generally include refined, 'white' food like white bread, pasta and rice; these break down quickly into energy. Complex carbohydrates should make up the bulk of your intake as they release energy more slowly and these include wholegrains like brown rice and wholewheat bread, beans, lentils and vegetables.

Fats are the body's second source of energy, and these are used up when we have depleted our carbohydrate stores or when we are consuming a very low-carbohydrate diet.

Consuming fat is essential, without fats you wouldn't be able to absorb vitamins A, D, E and K, which are fat soluble and can only be digested when there is fat present. Fats also provide essential fatty acids that the body can't make itself; these help your body to regulate the immune and central nervous systems as well as help with skin health, brain function and heart health. Choose heart-healthy fat sources such as those coming from nuts, seeds, oily

fish, avocados and olive oil. Protein is the body's last resort for energy, used when carbohydrate and fat stores are depleted. It helps to repair and rebuild muscle after exercise, it also supports overall health. Protein is essential for the growth and maintenance of tissues, keeping bones, muscles, tendons, ligaments, and skin strong and healthy. It supports the immune system by forming antibodies to fight infections and helps keep you feeling fuller for longer. Healthy, high-protein foods include lean meats, fish, eggs and reduced-fat dairy. We can also obtain protein from plant-based sources like chickpeas, lentils, beans, nuts, seeds and tofu. It's a good idea to include both animal and plant-based options." Micronutrients include vitamins and minerals and are needed in smaller amounts than macronutrients, but they are just as important for maintaining overall health, supporting immune function, bone health, energy production, cognitive health and much more. The key to ensuring we consume enough micronutrients is to eat a variety of foods.

Heart Research UK

What are your children doing online?

The School holidays just around the corner and children will have more spare time on their hands.

What's almost certain is that during the school holidays, they'll be going online much more than in term time ... for entertainment, keeping in contact and chatting with their mates, gaming, and the multitude of other things kids use the Internet for.

With all the additional time spent doing more online, how can you be sure that the young people in your family are safe from the issues they can encounter every day?

The Internet lets children connect with friends and learn new things. But there are also dangers to going online, and children can be particularly vulnerable.

Talking to your children is one of the best ways to keep them safe online. By understanding the risks and keeping yourself

up to date on the latest technology, websites and social networks you can help your child enjoy the Internet safely and securely.

To help protect your children online:

- Keep computers, phones and games consoles in family rooms where you can monitor activity
- Install parental control software or activate parental controls through your Internet Service Provider (ISP) to prevent access to inappropriate content
- 'friend' or 'follow' your child on social networks, so you can see how they're using them
- Check age restrictions for websites or social networks to make sure your children are allowed to join
- Advise your child not to post personal information, or any images they wouldn't want everyone to see.

- Check their social media accounts' privacy settings, so their posts are only seen by friends and their location isn't tracked

- Avoid using webcams, unless talking to close friends or family, and consider covering it when not in use

- Monitor how your children use the Internet and watch for any secretive behaviour

- Encourage your child to be open about what they do online, and who they're talking to

- Insist you go with them if they wish to meet online friends face to face

- Ensure the games your children play online are age appropriate

Source:
Metropolitan Police

Please feel free to share these messages with any vulnerable friends, relatives or neighbours.



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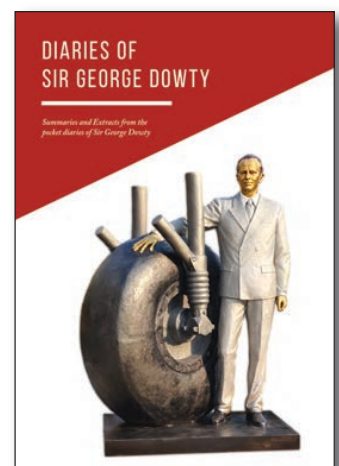
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Sir George Dowty book release invitation

The initial response to the release of the Sir George Dowty Diary book has been most enthusiastic- both here and overseas. It is a most fitting accompaniment to his statue erected a year ago. Few 20th century industrialists have received such international recognition - it reflects the magnitude of his achievements. The formal release of the book is to take place on the 9th June at the Graeme Hick Pavilion at the Worcestershire County Cricket Club. Rhodesian born Graeme played his entire domestic career of over twenty years exclusively for Worcestershire.

The event commences at 10am in the presence of many distinguished guests and is to be followed by refreshments. The diaries from 1919 to 1975 will be on display including the fully restored 1953 edition. The setting is most appropriate given that Sir George Dowty was Worcestershire born, educated and apprenticed in



Worcester and President of the Worcestershire County Cricket Club during their championship winning sides of 1964 and 1965. The Dowty Group acquired Worcester based mining engineers Meco in the late 1960s.

To reserve a place at this iconic occasion email:
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What is happening to P11D's

Carol Draper FCCA



A P11D is the document given to employees at the end of the tax year that details the taxable value of employment benefits they have received from their employers during the year. Common benefits are company vehicles, health insurance, gym membership and low interest loans but there is a vast array of other things which HMRC class as taxable benefits.

It is probably fair to say that many employees who receive P11Ds are confused by the forms themselves, the figures that are included on those forms and the implications they can have for tax. At the same time employers can also find the job of preparing P11Ds onerous.

Benefits reported on P11Ds will always generate a tax liability that HMRC will collect by amending an individual's tax code. This means tax is collected in arrears as a benefit for the 24-25 tax year, will not be reported on a P11D until July 2025 and the tax code may only be amended for the 26-27 tax year.

In an attempt to simplify the system and to collect tax in real time, it has been mandated that all benefits in kind will be reported through payroll rather than P11Ds. Payrolling means the annual value of benefits

provided is calculated and an adjustment made to the employee's salary to reflect the value of benefit received. This means there is no alteration to tax codes as a result of the benefits, but tax is paid on the benefit at the time it is received.

In January 2024 it was announced this would happen from April 2026, although this has now been delayed until April 2027 meaning that July 2027 will be the last time that all benefits in kind can be reported on a P11D. There is however no need to wait as all benefits, other than employer provided accommodation and interest free or low interest loans can be payrolled now. If you are an employer and would like to find out more about payrolling benefits and the changes to P11Ds speak to your accountant.

Carol Draper FCCA
Clifton-Crick Sharp & Co Ltd

"In victory, you deserve champagne;
in defeat, you need it!"

Napoleon Bonaparte



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Protect your State Retirement Pension



Under the new state pension system, when you retire you will need at least 35 years of National Insurance contributions or credits to qualify for the State Pension of £230.25 a week in the 2025-26 tax year. You can claim the new State Pension if you're: a man born on or after 6 April 1951, or a woman born on or after 6 April 1953. But if there are gaps in your NI record, perhaps from being out of work, only working part-time and not paying NI you may not get the full amount. If you don't have the full 35 years of NI contributions or credits, you will get a pro rata smaller amount of state pension.

If you are in this situation what can you do?

If you have not yet reached state pension age, the most important thing to do first is to check your individual state pension forecast online:

www.gov.uk/check-state-pension
This should tell you what you are expected to receive on reaching pension age, and if there are gaps in your record. It should also tell you how much more you could get if you are able to make up the shortfall. You may be able to do this by paying Class 3 voluntary contributions which can be backdated for six years. The cost of doing this varies

depending upon the tax year they were originally due. For example, the cost to fill in a gap in your NI record for the full 2022-23 tax year is £824.20, while the cost for 2023-24 is £907.40

This one-off payment can add up to 1/35th of the full rate to your eventual state pension based on current rules which can build up over time and be financially beneficial when you retire depending on your own particular situation and whether you have other taxable income. It is also worth remembering that there are many situations where you could get NI credits or might have been eligible for them such as when you're claiming benefits because you're ill or unemployed. For example, if you receive Universal Credit, you get Class 3 credits automatically.

**citizens
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The Fossils Cricket Team 1995 - 2025

John L Reynolds (J.R.)



On tour in Bude

It all started in the winter of 1994/5 when I attended the Malvern Wells Cricket Club dinner at the County Ground. I overheard a distant relative of mine, who was then in his 60s, talking about how league cricket had stopped older players from playing because the general feeling was 'win at all cost'. I casually asked him why he didn't start an over 50s team, then he could still play friendly matches? I didn't give it another thought until just before I left for home, two chaps came up to me and said that when I started an over 50s side, they would play. I said that I just thought it would be a good idea - not that I'd start it myself. The very next day, Les White, who had also been at the dinner, rang and said that he also would play. A few days later whilst walking up the Shambles in Worcester, another chap asked when I was going to start an over 50s team and I gave him the same answer. But by this time the seed was sown. So one morning, I told Margaret that I was going to form an older blokes' team, but I couldn't think what to call it. Margaret's response was that because we were a lot of old fossils, why not call it 'The Fossils'? And The Fossils was born. My initial objective was to play one or two games a year, but this soon became six in the first year and subsequently rose to fifty. We also had some excellent tours. For almost 20 years, I did all the admin work, from finding grounds and players, selecting teams, arranging tours and helping Margaret organise teas. All this as well as being captain of the team, finding

teams to play against, buying kit and score books. One year I made over a thousand telephone calls with no mobile or text messages in those days. Plus I was running my own business, Willow Print, full time. In time, we became a very good side, often scoring over 200 runs and one of our stars, John Shepherd, scored 1,000 runs three years running. He also scored seven centuries for the Fossils. I did so much for the team that one player called me a dictator which I probably was at the time. At the same time I was also running my own business but it was always Fossils before business in my mind. However, in 2019 I had a quadruple heart bypass so I decided to garner some help just in case I had to give up altogether. Brian Norfolk, Paul Thompson, Derek Ebbage and Martin Woodward took a lot of the load off my shoulders, arranging mid-week fixtures, selecting teams and taking on all the other administration work. The first game the Fossils played was at my old club, Rushwick on June 15th, 1995. Roy Booth, the ex-Worcestershire wicket keeper was President and he put a side out to play us. We batted first and made 160 for 8. Geoff White scored 47, I made 39 and Len Walker 31. Dave Adams took 5 for 26 for the President's XI. When they batted, the President's XI recovered from 99 for 5 to 172 for 5 winning by 5 wickets, mainly thanks to an amazing century from their opener, Neil Homer. It was a great game and after that everyone wanted more games to be arranged so I

arranged them!

Other notable players for the Fossils included Colin Groves, Bob Rogers and Geoff White who scored the first century in 1996. Dick Champion was the first bowler to take five wickets for us in 1995 and Martin Mudway's 8 for 41 in 1999 is the most wickets taken in a match so far. I've been honoured to receive two awards - one from the MCCC

for Services to Cricket and an 'OSCA' from the Worcester Cricket Board again for services to cricket since 1957.

In 2012, Peter Jewell invited me to play for his Old England Invitation XI against an Australian seniors XI. The game took place on the Worcestershire County Cricket Ground. Our side was a mixture of old county cricketers, including Wayne Larkins, Roger Tolchard and Neil Radford, and local amateurs. I was invited to open the bowling for the England XI and it was an excellent day. What's more, we beat the Australians! Peter Tudge was our Vice Captain for 20 years and many fine local cricketers have played and enjoyed the Fossils since 1995. During the 2015 season, a record 59 different players turned out.

I never thought that at the age of 83 I would still be playing cricket and I'm very proud that I started the Fossil cricket team as without them I doubt I'd have been playing in 2024. Finally, I must thank my wife, Margaret for supporting me over 60 years at whatever team I have played for. Without her, none of it would have been possible.



Celebrating 10yrs of The Fossils at Rushwick v Ray Julian's XI

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From the Boundary



At last Worcestershire have had a win against Essex however, it still leaves them firmly at the bottom of division 1, it will need luck and bad weather to go in their favour to avoid the drop. The members are still on the war path with the board who are in many ways very limited in cricket knowledge. However Test Cricket is upon us and we need a big win against Zimbabwe before the might of India and Australia.

Verstappen is back on the war path in the formula One and is clearly the best driver with the McLaren drivers still very much in the hunt and it is turning into a three-horse race. The Rugby Lions side are roaring and ready and I think that they will do well. I watched a bit of the FA

Cup final whilst working in the office. What always strikes me is these pansies fall over and hold their head, arm, leg and cry. But when the referee does nothing, they carry on.

The County Council elections are over and what a surprise, I did not see that result coming. Reform will have to watch out because the press will look for any mistake. I am concerned that this does not attract heavy weight businesspeople. The council has money problems and to maintain services it needs people with ability and knowledge to undertake a forensic audit on all procurement and contracts. I am convinced that there are brown envelopes going around and if not that, pure incompetence.

Our country is in trouble, Starmer who was seen handing little white packets to Macron its contents nobody knows !!!! has surrendered to Europe. Instead of getting out of the ECHR we are now firmly entrenched, I have not had the opportunity to research the numbers but will do so. This country has a 2.5 TRILLION debt, yet we can have an annual debt of 89 million a year, net Zero is 10 billion, Migrant hotels 6 billion, Foreign aid 6 billion and HS2 6 billion. What could education and health do with that. An interesting film by Richard Jeffs is worth a look:

<http://tinyurl.com/5fa7yk2y>

By the way, give me 3% of the Hotel cost for migrants and I will stop the boats within a month and that is not a Trumpism! THE SILENT WAR is upon us

these hidden attacks include War on food, war on heath, war on travel war on speech war on nature, war on Children and the family. It is warning signs of tyranny being put in place. For example there can be a demonstration suggesting the death of all sorts of people and the authorities say they are monitoring the situation, yet a man can be reading the bible at the same time and is charged with inciting violence?? Since I last spoke, terrorists in jail have thrown boiling water on prison officers. What on earth are they doing with their own kitchens. They should be all in prison overalls and locked up. It makes you wonder, whether the lighthearted comment on Chikurubi in Zimbabwe is a more inviting idea. Where are the letters to the editor. Let's have some ideas, agreement or decent.

A view from the Middle

After documenting my excitement at the start the cricket season last month, I am pleased to repeat I played and won my first game of season this week. The weather was unseasonably warm and it was a chastening reminder that the years are catching up with me. Although I take great pride and pleasure in the fact that cricket is a sport which can be played by people of a great range of age and ability (or disability), I may have to accept that I'm not as sprightly as I was as a teenager and that my body may not turn or bend or slide in the same way as before.

Outside of the sporting arena, I

have been enjoying the weather with cultural visits to Bristol and Birmingham and the recent Art Week exhibition in Oxford. It is remarkable how artists are able to express themselves in one particular way and then leave it up to the audience to react to it in an entirely different one.

I spoke to one abstract artist who had composed a painting based on a vase of flowers but, in my mind's eye, I saw a woman in a bright headdress looking to the right. It's always an interesting experience to consider things from other people's perspective.

In addition to the arty trips, I also took a journey to the seaside!

It is a little annoying that Pershore is so far from the coast although dogs and their walkers seem to enjoy the tiny 'beach' down at the wetlands. My hope, now that the weather has improved and people are spending more time outdoors, is that everyone will treat that environment, and others, as well as each other with care and respect.

Unfortunately, I have great trepidation about walking at Tiddesley Woods now, following a couple of incidents of walkers who refused to keep their dogs on a lead and were unable to stop them chasing me. And I heard recently about a sheep farmer who lost some ewes due to a dog chasing them in their own home field. It doesn't take



much to clip a dog onto a lead in those circumstances and, if someone is not prepared to do that, maybe they should reconsider dog ownership altogether. Having said that, there are so many responsible dog owners around - and I often greet them before their humans when walking. It's always a pleasure to amble around the countryside locally and I'm looking forward to doing more of it in the evenings this summer. Let's count our lucky stars.

Thoughts from the Snug... It's common sense!

"You are not allowed to use common sense anymore" or "Common sense is uncommon". These two refrains frequently erupt as cries of frustration, usually about politicians or their political policies; decisions that seem to fly in the face of tradition, normality and basic common sense. The 'Nanny State' and 'woke thinking' is the curse of most governments. Politicians seemed surprised when their economic policies too often lose the good will of the electorate. Winston Churchill once said, "For a government to try and tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle."

That is common sense. So why has this government recently raised National Insurance? Hardly helpful to encouraging business growth. Why give away the UK's coastal fishing rights to Europe; it's yet another nail in the coffin of British fishing industry. It is obvious our waters will be plundered over the next decade. Why not allow British fishermen larger quotas and sell our fish to Europe? Common sense. Cutting the winter fuel allowance for OAPs is another vote looser that seemed to surprise politicians at the recent May elections. A big mistake. The inheritance tax on family-owned farms is bound to change

the whole nature of farm management and very likely food production. Farming is a lifelong commitment for families. Why risk tampering with the traditions that kept the farming society and food productivity stable? The dramatic increase in 20 MPH speed limits in several inappropriate locations, but especially in Wales, is hugely unpopular. Perhaps some adaptations were needed but not on the scale we now suffer. The exodus from private schools caused by imposing Vat will put additional strain on the inadequately funded state system. Will our existing schools cope with the influx of children

expecting a place? Common sense tells us, NO! Overcrowding is inevitable, it will take years to build extra classrooms and facilities, All school children will be affected adversely by this policy. It is not just politicians that leave us irritated and annoyed. The rise in bureaucracy and the woke thinking that is invading so many aspects of life. The editor would love to hear of any other examples of the defiance of common sense. Think of: Health and Safety, labelling, parking, TV programming and so on. They need to be shared. Cheers!

Buddy Bach

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Fun Dog Show

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Passports, Macbeth & lots of animals

Brian Johnson-Thomas

So here we are in Flaming June with lots of us looking forward to a few all to brief days holiday somewhere sunny. For that to happen we need, above all else, a passport. These days a Passport is a little booklet issued by a government which states your nationality, birthday and other personal information. But that's not how it started. Originally a Passport was issued by the country you were GOING to and was an authorisation to enter. Pass-the-port if you like.

Indeed many famous people fell foul of that little detail, like Lady Hamilton, Nelson's notorious bit -on -the -side who was so unpopular after his death that she had to flee Britain for France. However she only got as far as Calais and was refused entry to the rest of France, so she died there in 1815. Oscar Wilde also fell foul of the civil servants in Calais but he did eventually make it to Paris where he died in 1900. This goes to show that it doesn't do to get on the wrong side of the jobsworths in Border Controls anywhere as a lot of Britons have found out recently. We used to issue British passports which, when renewed, were valid for ten years from the original expiry date - so that the passport would last more than ten years. This is arguably not on in terms of internationally agreed practice and many folk have found themselves being refused entry to Europe as a result. Not only that but if you do as I used to do, for example,



and fly from Birmingham via Air France, LKM or Lufthansa via their hub airports to the rest of the world then you can also fall foul of this interpretation of the rule. This is because when you're in transit some countries regard you as being in their land and others regard you being Airside as being in limbo. So if you're flying via Schiphol then you're entering the Netherlands but if you're transiting Munich then, no, you're not in Germany. Daft, isn't it?

The solution, alas, if you have one of the affected passports is just to bite the bullet and get a new one. Don't try and wing it because it probably won't work and, more to the point, if your passport's not in order then you won't qualify for compensation from the airline and your travel

insurance won't pay out either. Now to nicer topics, in a few days' time the annual Royal Three Counties Show opens on Friday 13th at the Malvern Showground. As well as thousands of animals in almost infinite variety it's also a good venue for some retail therapy - especially so this year with the creation of the Royal Parade, a shopping area made up of luxury country wear retailers as well as what the organisers describe as "the finest independent makers of accessories".

Booking in advance means that you can save some money to splurge elsewhere, ring: 0344 338 5400 between 9am and 530 pm to buy them. I was interested to hear from the Royal Shakespeare Company about their collaborative venture

into the world of video games. A game called Lili, inspired by Shakespear's play Macbeth, has just been premiered at the Cannes Film Festival. Look out for it, hopefully in time for Christmas. Also in Stratford the Swan Theatre will be presenting a play called "The Constant Wife" by Laura Wade which is based on the play by W. Somerset Maugham and runs from Friday the 20th until the 2nd of August.

Ring the Box Office on: 01789 331111 to book tickets. Don't forget that the Opera season is now under way at Longborough, near Moreton in Marsh and runs until August. See www.lfo.com for details. Now it's back to the garden... Don't those hedges grow fast at this time of year?

Wahnfried: The Birth of the Wagner Cult



This new opera with music by Avner Dorman has just seen its' UK premiere as the opening offering of this year's Longborough Festival. It's a challenging work which examines the way in which

Wagner's family sought to favourably massage the composers reputation in the years following his death and thus deals candidly with such issues as the then prevailing mood of anti-Semitism plus a

deep cultural abhorrence of homosexuality. The sparkling libretto by Lutz Hubner and Sarah Nemitz perfectly complements the music thus providing a challenging evening's entertainment. "Challenging" because the cast includes not just Kaiser Wilhelm but also a young Adolf Hitler and even the notorious Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin as well as assorted members of the Wagner clan. As the plot develops, we see just how Wagner's reputation is being massaged with incidents less favourable to the family's narrative being skilfully excised from the record to arrive at a more acceptable legacy.

The production epitomises the

high production values we have come to expect from Longborough but it was especially thrilling to see even more effective use being made of the Longborough Community Chorus whilst I felt that Meeta Raval, playing Anna Chamberlain, showed a nice understanding of the distinction between bathos and pathos. The plot is quite convoluted, as one might expect, and I don't want to give too much away as I hope this note will encourage you to see for yourself.

There are still three performances this month, on the 10th, 12th and 14th

See www.lfo.com or ring the Box Office on 01451 830292 Try and go!

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1200 Bring a picnic and enjoy being in the Park

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Jazz News

Peter Farrall

With this month's band, Dixiemix, the clue is in the name; expect a hearty serving of Dixieland jazz but with many flavourings of their own from this popular East Anglian band. Dixieland was a nickname, originating in the nineteenth century, for the Louisiana area and it is popularly suggested that the name derives from a ten dollar note issued by the Bank of Louisiana, and bearing a prominent "DIX." Louisiana was, at the time, home to a large French speaking population. Around the time of the American civil war the name was used in the northern USA as a derogatory term for the southern states in general but as an expression of patriotism by the population of those states. A more sinister explanation is that it derives from "Dixie's Land" after the estate of slaveowner and trader, Jonathan Dixie. Nowadays the word is used with some reservation because of the connotation with that unfortunate period in US history but the paradox is that without slavery we probably wouldn't have had jazz.

In the world of jazz, Dixieland is a development of that happy, toe tapping music that spread northwards from its origins in New Orleans in the early twentieth century and, although recognised as essentially a product of black culture, it seems a little ironical that the very first jazz record made was by "The Original Dixieland Jazz



Band", a group of white musicians. By the 1920s jazz was firmly established in Chicago by the likes of King Oliver and Louis Armstrong, and young white musicians seized on the music and developed their own style with guitar replacing the banjo and sometimes adding saxophone to the traditional line up. The music was rowdy, sometimes a little ragged, certainly alcohol fuelled but captured the very essence of the period when all aspects of life were infused with the spirit of jazz and in a "speakeasy" you could possibly be in the company of members of the Capone, Dillinger, or Moran mobs. Perhaps the most "Dixieland" of all jazz was this period when

Eddie Condon, Red McKenzie, Wild Bill Davison and all played the background music for flappers, gangsters, prohibition, and all that constituted the "jazz age". We probably won't have

flappers at the club this month, no gangsters (that we know of), and alcohol will be available, but the music will be an authentic blast from the past firmly established for the future.

Dixiemix

Wednesday 25th June

*Doors open at 7.00pm music at 8
In the Function Room, Pershore Football Club
Admission £12.50 to include a raffle ticket*

Book in advance and pay on arrival
email: club@pershorejazz.org.uk tel: 01527 66692
find us on Facebook

Music Matters

Steve Ide

"I know a girl who thinks of ghosts, she'll make you breakfast, she'll make you toast" wise words from Wayne Coyne in the song She Don't Use Jelly. But what do the lyrics mean, or what the song is about? It could be about someone Wayne met or global warming or is it about the Maoist doctrine of the state capturing power through armed insurgency? Maybe it's all these things, maybe none of them, or maybe it doesn't really matter. It's just a great song and sometimes it's easy to think too deeply about music and forget that it's supposed to be fun, meant to be entertainment. 'Happy' by Pharrell Williams, Lemon Jelly's record 'Nice Weather for Ducks', and Bill

Withers 'Lovely Day', when you listen to tunes like this, it's impossible not to smile, they make your day a little brighter. Music is amazing because it can be many things to different people, but we should all find time in our lives for the simple fun of a track that makes your step a little lighter and the sunshine a bit brighter. Even Bob Dylan had fun with 'Bob Dylan's 115th Dream'

Notable new albums

10 by Sault
Sault are an elusive musical group, and this latest release was dropped with little warning. A true summer vibe, this album keeps the enigma flowing

A Complicated Woman
by Self Esteem

Strong, warm, wild and free, full of joy but with strong messages underneath

A Study of Losses
by Beirut

Written for a Swedish circus, this is a transcendental journey with consistently good songs from start to finish.

Still Blooming
by Jeff Goldblum & the Mildred Snitzer Orchestra

As well as a fabulous character actor, Jeff Goldblum is also an accomplished Jazz pianist. This an album to put on a Sunday evening with a glass of something nice... smooth

Add to playlist

Here's the Thing
by Fontaines DC

Jetplane
by Sorry

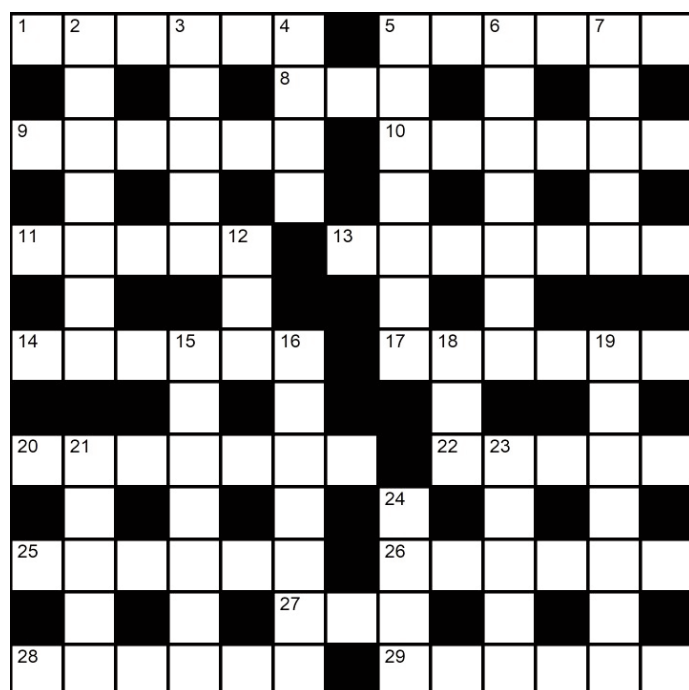
Woman
by Little Simz

Uptight (everything's alright)
by Stevie Wonder



Coffee Break

Crossword



Across

- 1 Source (6)
 5 An absolute riot (6)
 8 Whisky cask material (3)
 9 Dexterous (6)
 10 Like some jobs and information (6)
 11 Perfectly vertical (5)
 13 Did cats frolic? They can't stop (7)
 14 Breathe with difficulty (6)
 17 Be a benefactor (2,4)
 20 Less sorrowful (7)
 22 Infernal writer? (5)
 25 Militaristic city-state (6)
 26 Wood finish, in marquetry (6)
 27 Stage (3)
 28 Let out (6)
 29 Canadian pole-vault star --- Newman (6)

Down

- 2 Annual flyer with a famous nose (7)
 3 Cake figurine (5)
 4 Marginal inscription (4)
 5 Lost traction (7)
 6 Ruined rug isn't going to ruin (7)
 7 Examine the books (5)
 12 "Well, that's show --- !" (3)
 15 British and Roman, for example (7)
 16 May birthstone (7)
 18 Eccentric (3)
 19 It'll never get off the ground in Africa (7)
 21 More than enough (5)
 23 Soothe (5)
 24 Latvian capital (4)

Sudoku

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

1	3	8			5			
	7				9	2		
	2	9			3		8	
		3	6			7		9
7		6			8	4		
	8		5			1	7	
		7	1				6	
			2			8	9	5

		4			9	1		
	1	8			5			2
3								
8				6			3	
7	4						6	1
	9			2				8
								3
6			9			7	1	
		9	1			4		

		7	3			2		
	9		6	5				3
3					1			
	2							6
	3			1			5	
9							2	
			1					2
7				4	6		1	
		4			8	7		

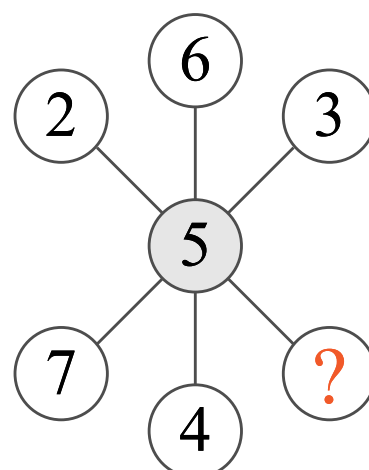
Wordsearch

B	Y	R	O	N	W	A	U	G	H	N
N	E	E	P	R	O	U	S	T	K	A
Y	T	N	I	S	L	E	S	X	A	Y
E	N	L	S	A	R	T	R	E	N	N
L	A	I	U	X	A	Q	S	A	R	U
L	D	M	R	E	M	O	H	K	E	B
E	H	A	K	I	P	C	X	F	T	C
H	N	A	I	C	U	L	T	A	S	A
S	S	O	R	B	N	N	A	K	A	M
R	S	D	I	D	E	R	O	T	P	U
G	R	I	M	M	Y	Q	Z	A	O	S

AA MILNE	HOMER
AESOP	KAFKA
ANN B. ROSS	KEATS
BUCHAN	LUCIAN
BUNYAN	MARLOW
BYRON	PASTERNAK
CAMUS	PLATO
DANTE	PROUST
DIDEROT	SARTRE
GRIMM	SHELLEY
HARDY	WAUGH

Brainteaser

What is the missing number?



Poets' Corner

XLV

If it chance your eye offend you,
Pluck it out, lad, and be sound:
'Twill hurt, but here are salves to friend you,
And many a balsam grows on ground.

And if your hand or foot offend you,
Cut it off, lad, and be whole;
But play the man, stand up and end you,
When your sickness is your soul.

XLVI

Bring, in this timeless grave to throw,
No cypress, sombre on the snow;
Snap not from the bitter yew
His leaves that live December through;
Break no rosemary, bright with rime
And sparkling to the cruel clime;
Nor plod the winter land to look
For willows in the icy brook
To cast them leafless round him: bring
No spray that ever buds in spring.

But if the Christmas field has kept
Awns the last gleaner overstept,
Or shrivelled flax, whose flower is blue
A single season, never two;
Or if one haulm whose year is o'er
Shivers on the upland frore,
Oh, bring from hill and stream and plain
Whatever will not flower again,
To give him comfort: he and those
Shall bide eternal bedfellows
Where low upon the couch he lies
Whence he never shall arise.

A. E. Housman 1859-1936

Quiz!

- 1) More than half of the United States entire coastline is situated in which state?
- 2) Which Brazilian rainforest produces over 20% of the world's oxygen supply?
- 3) Which city is the only city in the world to be located on two separate continents?
- 4) What is the world's smallest island with country status?
- 5) The Kola Superdeep Borehole, the deepest hole ever drilled by man, reached a depth of over 12km but in which country was it located?
- 6) Angel Falls is the world's highest waterfall. In which country is it located?
- 7) Superior is the largest lake in which continent?
- 8) The Great Bear lake pans over 12,000 square miles. In which country is it located?
- 9) Which continent is the world's second-smallest by size but also has the second-largest population?
- 10) What is the capital city of the Republic of Ireland?
- 11) The river Plate has which capital city on it's banks?
- 12) Which, as of 2015, is the largest city in the Americas?
- 13) In which country is the world's highest waterfall?
- 14) Which lake holds by far the largest volume of water in the UK?
- 15) The M1 motorway is how many miles long? a) 175 b) 186 c) 193
- 16) Which city in Bulgaria on the River Vladaiska, also has the River Perlovska and the River Iskar flowing along it's outskirts?
- 17) How many National Parks are there in Wales?
- 18) Oakham is the county town of which small county?
- 19) The UK towns of Bootle and Birkenhead sit on which river?
- 20) Baku is the capital city of which eastern European country? Which national park became Britain's first in 1951?

Answers: 1) Alaska 2) Amazon 3) Istanbul, Turkey 4) Pitcairn Island in Polynesia 5) Russia 6) Venezuela 7) North America 8) Canada 9) Europe 10) Dublin 11) Buenos Aires 12) Sao Paulo 13) Venezuela 14) Loch Ness 15) c) 193 16) Sophia 17) 3 18) Rutland 19) Mersey 20) Azerbaijan 21) Peak District

MayAnswers



June Brain teaser 8, The average of 8 and 2 is equal to the middle number 5.

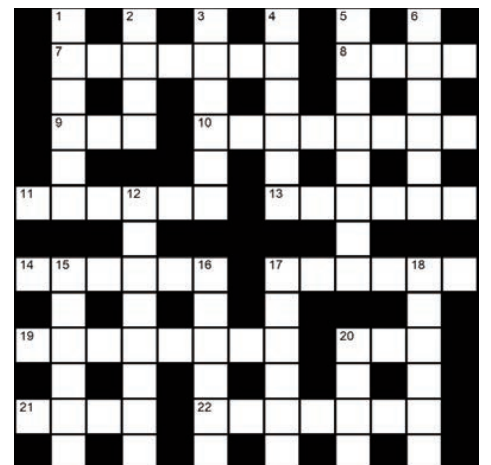
Anagram Crossword

Across

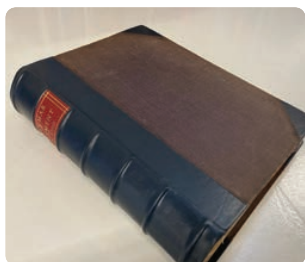
- 7 Mingled (7)
- 8 Alto (1,3)
- 9 Tow (3)
- 10 Reserved (8)
- 11 Wakers (6)
- 13 Phaser (6)
- 14 No rime (6)
- 17 Denies (2,4)
- 19 Backward (8)
- 20 Deb (3)
- 21 Emir (4)
- 22 Angered (7)

Down

- 1 Pro tem (6)
- 2 Laos (4)
- 3 Briefs (6)
- 4 Savage (6)
- 5 Admirers (8)
- 6 Poseur (4,2)
- 12 Sweater (2,2,4)
- 15 Nearer (6)
- 16 Go near (6)
- 17 Likely (6)
- 18 Denude (6)
- 20 Bars (4)



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**Copy Deadline for
July Issue - 23rd June 2025**



Queenhill

Queenhill WI meeting day on Thursday 8th May was special for several reasons. We wanted to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day with a celebratory afternoon tea; we were keen to invite friends and neighbours and not just members; we needed to fundraise to maintain WI Hall, a place the branch owns; and we wanted to hear an interesting speaker at our usual monthly meeting. And we achieved all these supremely well! The hall had been decorated with appropriate banners, flags, 1945 memorabilia, and

floral arrangements, with tables set out in long rows. It looked wonderful, thanks to the huge efforts of the group of members who organised it, and their helpers. Then came the members and visitors, the room filled up until every seat was occupied. For a while it was standing room only. Our speaker Lynne Hackles spoke about 'The £2 That Changed My Life'. She entertained us with so many tales of her life as a writer, from small beginnings to the highly successful author she is today. She is a superb

storyteller. One thing certainly led to another... and another... and her tales were entertaining and very amusing, often based on incidents in her life. And then the food arrived, beautifully presented on tiered cake stands. Delicious! The donated raffle prizes were excellent; a quiz about the 1940s took us down Memory Lane when we tried to recall details and information that (for some of us) needed prompting. What a great atmosphere there was! It was a happy afternoon to remember. Thanks to all who contributed so much to its success.

The next meeting day in June is the day of our annual outing. This year we are visiting

Sudeley Castle and fully expect it to be yet another day to remember.

Perhaps in July you would like to join us and see what it is we enjoy so much?

We meet on Thursday 10th July at 2.30 in WI Hall (WR8 0QZ) when Mike Bottomley will talk about Nurse Edith Cavell. You would be very welcome.



Hot Peppers

So our April meeting was little different as we met at the Marina to be given a fascinating incite by Dave, Bill and Josie of SARA (Severn Area Rescue Association)

It was all very interesting to hear about safety in and around the water, and how to help someone in an emergency situation. Absolutely everybody that are involved in SARA are all volunteers and they rely purely on fundraising and generous donations to keep them going. Just one of their dry suits for one crew person is approx. £1200.

We were even given a lifesaving demonstration by Mike, Tim and Adam. Of course this was all followed by cakes from our lovely ladies.

Our next meeting will be Thursday 26th June 7.30pm at Upton Memorial Hall.



Spot & Shop - May Winners

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1) Kate Edgar | 5) Stella Willams |
| 2) Gill Wylde | 6) Sarah Kenwright |
| 3) Chris Tandy | 7) Dawn Perkins |
| 4) Jill Hopkins | |

Last month's answer:
The Art of Wellbeing Centre

**SPOT
&
SHOP!**

COMPETITION TIME!

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

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6th Reg Moule Gardening Book

7th Pat's Pantry -

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The Church of the Good Shepherd, Hook Common



We had a small congregation for our VE Day commemoration, which coincided with the Folk Festival in Upton, but everyone seemed to enjoy the service. It was a time to look back with thanks, and also to pray for our troubled world.

This month sees the return of our popular 'Hymns with Pimms' service, which will be held on Sunday June 22nd at 5.00 p.m. Pimms (and other drinks) will be available beforehand and then Mary Weatherill will lead a short, simple service with plenty of hymn singing! Last year we nearly raised the roof, and I'm

sure we can do it again this year. Everyone is welcome. The observant amongst you will have noticed that the Portaloo now has tasteful wooden screen around it, and we would like to thank Humphrey Bartleet and 'Handy Andy' for providing and erecting this. Now for some hanging baskets and plant pots to finish it off... I would also like to thank all those who rally round with refreshments for our special services and fund-raising events. We are blessed to have such loyal and generous supporters.

Kate Chester-Lamb

Church Services

Sunday 1st June

- 09:30 St Mary's, Hill Croome -
Holy Communion (said, no hymns)
- 11:00 Clive's Fruit Farm - Rogation Service

Sunday 8th June

- 09:30 St Peter and St Paul's, Upton - *Holy Communion*
- 11:00 St Mary's, Ripple - *Morning Worship*
- 11:00 St Nicholas, Earls Croome - *Holy Communion*

Sunday 15th June

- 09:30 Good Shepherd, Hook - *Morning Worship*
- 18:00 St Peter and St Paul's, Upton - *Choral Evensong*

Sunday 22nd June

- 09:30 St Peter and St Paul's, Upton - *Morning Worship*
- 11:00 St John's, Strensham - *Morning Worship*
- 11:00 St Mary's, Ripple - *Holy Communion*
- 17:00 Good Shepherd, Hook - *Hymns with Pimms*

Sunday 29th June

- 10:30 St Mary's, Hanley Castle - *Joint Holy Communion*

Sunday 6th July

- 09:30 St Peter and St Paul's, Upton - *Choral Matins*
- 11:00 St Mary's, Ripple - *Pet Service*
- 11:00 Good Shepherd, Hook - *Holy Communion*

Sunday 13th July

- 09:30 St Peter and St Paul's, Upton - *Holy Communion*
- 11:00 St Mary's, Ripple - *Matins*
- 11:00 St Nicholas, Earls Croome - *Holy Communion*



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JUNE 2025

Sunday 1st June

Seventh Sunday of Easter

- 9.30am Morning Praise at GUARLFORD
11.00am Living Communion at POWICK

Sunday 8th June

Pentecost

- 9.30am Pentecost Communion at CALLOW END
11.00am Pentecost Communion at MADRESFIELD

Sunday 15th June

Trinity Sunday

- 8.00am BCP Holy Communion at POWICK
9.30am BCP Holy Communion at GUARLFORD
11.00am Morning Praise at POWICK

Sunday 22nd June

Trinity 1

- 9.30am Living Communion at CALLOW END
11.00am Living Communion at MADRESFIELD

Sunday 29th June

St Peter's Patronal

- 10.30am Songs of Praise at POWICK

Midweek Communion at The Orchard Room in Colletts Green
Thursdays 5th & 19th June from 10.30-11.30am



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SCAN ME

Severn Stoke & Croome D'abitot News

Happenings in Severn Stoke and Environs

St. Denys' Church, Severn Stoke
Services are held on the first and third Sundays of each month at 10:30 a.m.

The Flood Bund –
Rather as we all feared, the Environment Agency have been unable to locate a Contractor and indeed the necessary spoil, to undertake construction of the proposed Bund to save the Church, Rose and Crown Pub and several houses in the Village from regular flooding. Even if the EA do find a Contractor, we understand that the whole cost/benefit procedure will have to be gone through again, no doubt with raised parameters. We wish to record with sadness the death of Joyce Westwood at the age of 97. She came to Severn Stoke in the early '70's, was for many years Secretary of the PCC and was part of village life. She will be missed by many, including her early County hockey players, tennis and later, Bridge players, as well as all her physio patients whom she helped over the years.

St Mary Magdalene, Croome d'Abitot – The annual Benefice service and picnic is to be held on Sunday, 20th July at 11.00 a.m. All are welcome to attend this informal service and a byo picnic after in beautiful surroundings, with kind permission of the National Trust to permit car parking in the Croome Car Park and free entry to non-members attending the Service.

Friends of St. Denys, Severn Stoke -
Raising funds to modernise the church!

The Malvern Ukulele Band performs at St Denys' Church on Friday 6th June at 7.00 p.m. – Tickets at the door £10.00, to include light refreshments in the Interval. All very welcome to share a light hearted evening with us.

Advance Notice –
Saturday, 20th September - Craft Fair in St Denys' Church, following last year's very successful events.



We still need a volunteer to take over the running of the 100 Club, not an onerous task, but it will finish if no one comes forward. It raises over £800 annually towards church funds and many have benefited from the monthly prize draws.

Please contact:
Sally Linsey –
01905 820 476

John Henderson

St Mary's Church, Ripple



In addition to the bells and misericord carvings described in previous months, St Mary's has some very interesting and attractive windows. Only one Norman window survives on the west side of north transept. However, there is on the west side of the south transept the outline, clearly visible, of a second one which at some stage has been blocked up. Perhaps of the most historical interest are some fragments in remarkable condition of yellow stained glass hanging in the large plain glass late-13th century window on the south side of the chancel.

These were found when a grave was dug under the altar in 1734 and are from a 15th century window. How and why only these fragments survive remains a mystery, but someone clearly appreciated their outstanding quality and considered them worth preserving. The stained glass in the present magnificent east window was designed by Ernest Heasman who was a pupil of Charles Kempe (1837-1907), the famous designer. In the bottom right-hand corner is a running greyhound, the trademark of Herbert Bryans. The window depicts the

Crucifixion and was erected in 1888, and to the left of the Cross is Mary with a gold cloak with St John behind her. The equally fine west window, also by Kempe, was erected in 1885, and the central figure is the Virgin bending over a crib with the head of an ass, The focus is on the Annunciation. In 1990 permission was granted for the two-light window at the east end of the south aisle to become a memorial to Brigadier Peter Young. He retired to Ripple

and he founded the Sealed Knot in 1968, and the windows contain the insignias of the Sealed Knot and the 1st Commando Brigade. At the APCM in mid-April, the most important decision was taken, on the advice of the Diocesan Advisory Committee, to change the National Lottery bid to the two-level £250,000 - £10m one owing to escalating costs and the scope of work required to be done in the church.

Roger Gillard

Sunday 15th June 6pm
Church of St Peter & St Paul, Upton upon Severn

CHORAL EVENSONG

Led by Revd. Charles Whitney
Organist John Wright

Musical Director John Holloway
and the choir of St Peter & St Paul, Upton

Music by Stanford, Wood and Tallis

Wine and nibbles to follow



Severn Stoke & Croome d'Abitot Parish Council

As I write we are preparing to co-opt a new parish councillor to represent the parish area of Severn Stoke. We would still like an additional councillor for the Croome d'Abitot area. Now is the best time to join the parish council if you want an easy and gradual introduction – all tasks for the coming year have been allocated and new councillors would be able to feel their way in gently!

Residents have been in touch again to tell us about the impact that M5 diversions have on their lives and property. When the M5 is closed, the A38 is used by motorway traffic including countless HGVs, all of which rumble past homes, preventing sleep and causing worries about vibration damage to homes. We have been in touch with Highways England and the Police Crime Commissioner about this and, although we can't change the diversion route or impact on timings, we can continue to push

for speed enforcement and better signage. The parish council can also remind Highways that poorly maintained roads and potholes contribute to the lorry noise. Empty lorries seem to be the worst offenders as they rattle past our sleeping communities. There are many seemingly informal schemes nationwide which enable the sharing and filling of empty lorries that are on a return journey. Residents have asked the parish council to write to our MP to raise this issue in parliament. Anything we can do to try to reduce the number of journeys needed and the number of vehicles on our road is a bonus and would help with air quality as well. Residents can assist the parish council by sending in details of their experiences and how the diversions impact their lives. Please take the time to contact us.

In other news:

- No progress with the flood bund, but residents, the

Environment Agency, the County Council and the parish council are far from giving up!
- The new bin on the A38 layby will be installed soon and the district council have agreed to empty it.

- New dog fouling signs will go up shortly at Knights Hill, Birch Lane and Westfield Lane.

- The parish council has asked for additional 30mph 'reminder' speed signs for Birch Lane and Kinnersley village. I don't know if we will be successful but we can try.

- The police have agreed to undertake more speed traps in the parish during the daytime.
- The listed phone box at High Green is due to be restored, commencing in July.

- The Parish council continues to ask for improved broadband services across the parish.

- Land owners at Kinnersley, Birch Lane and Croome are reminded to maintain ditches and ensure that ponds and



gullies do not overspill onto the roads and cause flooding to property please.

NEXT MEETING :

*Severn Stoke and Croome d'Abitot Parish Council:
Wednesday 16th July 2025
at 7.30pm –*

*Croome National Trust
Visitor Centre SOQ room.*

Parish Council Clerk,

Lisa Stevens

T: 07950 256363

Email:

parishclerk@severnstokeandcroome.dabitot-pc.gov.uk

Your councillors are:

*Richard Hill, Susan Faulkner,
Laurence Freeman, Ian Daly,
Royston Garrard, Pat Preston
and Raymond Williams.*

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West Worcestershire Conservative Skittles League

This skittles league, with the rather grand title, operates in and around Pershore. Today it has nothing to do with the Conservative party, but back in the sixties when it was formed, all players had to be a member of the Conservative Party. That does not apply today!!

Presentation Night was recently held at the Sports Club in Pershore where team trophies were handed out to Eckington, Allesborough and Wick.

Individual trophies were presented to players from several teams including Pinvin and Bredons Norton and a married couple from Eckington, Lesley and Mike Woods, won the Mixed Pairs King Pin Competition. A new trophy this year, in memory of

Allen Young, was won by Ken Smout during an evening when money was raised for St. Richard's Hospice.

At the moment the league consists of seven teams which play at Bar 57, the Sports Club in Defford Road, The Coach & Horses at Pinvin and the Railway Inn at Ripple. A match has eight players, playing eight legs and teams play home matches on the night of their choice.

The evening starts at 7.30pm and is usually over by 10pm.

New teams are always welcome so if you would like to join this league for the 2025/2026 season starting in September please contact the organiser, Sue Young, on 07856 791142



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'Hooray for Hollywood'



'Fitz & Giggles Cabaret Showcase' present their brand-new show 'Hooray for Hollywood' on Friday 27th June 2025, and you don't want to miss this!

Fitz & Giggles was established in 2022 by Tewkesbury's very own, Cleeco la Fizz, and now she is incredibly proud to be bringing this phenomenal extravaganza of a show to the Watson Hall, Tewkesbury – a first in the Hall's 114-year history!

With acts including the pocket burlesque rocket and creator of the wildly successful Cherries

on a Cloud show, Miss Kitty Ribbons; international renowned sideshow, variety and vaudeville comedy magic act, Mr Al Rudge; bump 'n grind glamour from 22nd annual New York Burlesque Festival headliner, Miss Velvet Jones; and sparkle, glamour, laughs and elegance from acclaimed Marilyn Monroe lookalike and showgirl, the fabulous Miss Isabella Bliss. And just when you think there couldn't possibly be anymore to come, there will also be special appearances from Tewkesbury's Town Crier & Sarjeant, a 'Red Carpet Ready' best dressed contest, audience participation games with your host Miss Cleeco La Fizz and a grand raffle in aid of Tewkesbury Foodbank (part of Trussell Trust).

This is too good to miss! For more information and to purchase your tickets for 'Fitz & Giggles Hooray for Hollywood', go to the Facebook event page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/662546839645902>

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Upton Town Council 01684 592273

MHDC Council

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- Planning Dept 01684 862221

- Pot Holes 01905 765765

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Upton upon Severn Memorial Hall
Doors open at 7.00pm Film starts at 7.30pm

Saturday 21 June

The Problem with People Cert 15

Colm Meaney and Paul Reiser star in this light hearted comedy as two estranged cousins, who having never met before, but must try and put to rest a generation's worth of family disputes – before they start another one!

For films at the Memorial Hall, Upton upon Severn, please enter post code WR8 0HA to see film screening information.

Tickets on the door £5.00

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Monthly classic car coffee morning



Sunday of the month until the last event in October while the weather is mild. We expect car models and numbers to vary at each event, but everyone with a classic car is very welcome. The flat and even carpark is perfect for classic car owners to come and meet the general public, and pass on any tips to the general public who may like to find out more about classic car care. There will be complimentary refreshments for this morning event.

Venue:
Elgar Court Care Home
35 St Andrews Road
Malvern
WR14 3PT
Time: 10am – 12.30pm

Malvern's newest Residential home Elgar Court, is holding a

monthly Classic Car Coffee Morning starting Sunday 18

May at 10am – 12.30pm. The event will run every third

For further information please call the team on: 01684 211720

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