

Issue 513

March 2022

The *Crowmarsh News* is a self-funded publication, and we regret that we are unable to accept unpaid advertising, even from local businesses and societies.

We welcome material for inclusion but do not necessarily endorse the views of contributors. We reserve the right to refuse material or to shorten contributions as may be appropriate: editorial decisions are final.

ADVERTISING RATES

The *Crowmarsh News* is distributed to over 800 households in Crowmarsh Gifford, North Stoke and Mongewell.

Our rates for a one-eighth-page display advertisement (nominal 9cm wide x 7cm tall) are:

- 1 month — £8.50
- 3 months — £25.00
- 6 months — £45.00

Leaflet distribution

For a single sheet loose insert in the *Crowmarsh News* (size up to A4), our current rate is £30 for one month. Advertisers must supply their own inserts (815 copies please).

The Crowmarsh News team

The *Crowmarsh News* is run by the Crowmarsh News Association, a group of local volunteers — more help welcome!

Editorial and Layout: Toni Taylor and Jane Thrift

Editorial support: John Griffin, James Taylor, Caroline Campbell, Revd Kevin Beer, Julian Park

Advertising: Pat Shields

Distribution: Frank Sadler and the team

Next month's issue

All new advertisements and all copy for the April 2022 issue of *Crowmarsh News* must reach us by our **20th March deadline**.

For all items of news, articles or correspondence, please e-mail

crowmarsh.editor@gmail.com

or deliver to the Editors at 57 The Street.

For all advertising, please contact

crowmarshadvertisers@gmail.com

or deliver to The Old School, Benson Lane.

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Can you help with the Crowmarsh News?

If you would like to get involved to help edit, produce or deliver the *Crowmarsh News*, please email crowmarsh.editor@gmail.com or pop a note through the door at 57 The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford (Old Gardener's Arms), or speak to any of the team (see front cover).

We are always looking for additional help so that we can spread the monthly tasks of production (editorial and layout) and door-to-door distribution as evenly as possible.

If you would just like to help with the monthly distribution of the Crowmarsh News in your local street or neighbourhood, please contact Frank Sadler or the editorial team.

You don't need years of experience to help, just enthusiasm and the ability to devote a few hours every few months to what we hope will become your favourite village newsletter!

The Big Jubilee Lunch Competitions

5th June 2022

The Lunch will be held in the Village Hall grounds and to help make it a really special event we have included Flower Competitions and Cake Baking Competitions. So those of you who would like to demonstrate your skills, now is the time to shine.

Flower Arrangements

In three classes.

For the two Children's classes - Under 10s and 11 to 16s - the title of the Flower arrangement will be '**A Posy fit for a Queen**'

For the third, Over 17s, class, a small table arrangement for '**Afternoon Tea**'.

Celebration Jubilee Cake

Three Classes: Under 10s, 11 to 16s and, 17 and over.

More details will be published nearer the day, so you now have time to plan your entry!

Margaret Foster

Henley and District Stamp Club

Auction Month, our ever increasingly popular Auction will take place on Wednesday 9th March commencing at 7.45 (viewing from 6.45pm). Non-Members are welcome. The Catalogue is on our website. Do have a look, you may find just what you have been searching for to fill that gap.

9th March Open Auction 7.45pm

23rd March Guest Speaker TBA

Meetings are held the 2nd and 4th week of the month at Bix Village Hall at 7.30pm. Visitors and new members are welcome. Further details can be obtained by phoning 681739 or on our website: www.henleyphilatelic.org.uk

Concerts@Cholsey

Concerts@Cholsey return to The Cholsey Pavilion on Saturday 12th March with favourite Oxford folk band, Magpie Lane, specialists in traditional tunes and songs, plus their background stories. With an instrumental line-up of unaccompanied voices, concertina, fiddle, cello, guitar and percussion, the variety is endless. This is not just a musical entertainment - it's an education. Ticket numbers will be limited and please note that anyone testing positive for you-know-what just before the day will be able to receive a full refund if they get in touch straight away.

As usual, we will be running a moderately priced real-ale bar featuring excellent beers from Cholsey's own Amwell Springs Brewery, as well as catering for other tastes. Doors open at 7pm for 7.45 start. Tickets at just £10 can be booked by telephoning 652295 or emailing concerts@cholsey.com for personal service

Benson Garden Club

For Benson Garden Club's February talk, we were treated to Ben Pope sharing with us how to grow and display our own cut flowers. As Head Gardener for a private garden, with a walled garden containing 36 raised cut flower beds, we may have been daunted by the prospect of replicating Ben's beautiful all-year-round home-grown flower arrangements. His gorgeous flower arrangements ranged from spectacular displays to simple posies or just a few stems in a vase, all stunningly beautiful. However, Ben's enthusiasm for why we should attempt it was engaging – cut flowers bring a room to life and growing them yourself is a source of pride; picking your own means you can break the mould and create unique flower arrangements; bought cut flowers are expensive and costly in terms of carbon footprint; and personality goes a long way to creating a beautiful display, which is difficult to create with commercially-grown identical blooms.

He then gave plenty of advice on how to use the area you have, whether you have large containers or flower beds, by staggering and layering to achieve three cuts from one space. Ben also gave advice on displays. For example:

Cut your flowers as early as you can in the morning and then leave them before using for 12 to 24 hours in a cool place outside, soaking up water.

Clean your vases as it's the bacteria in the water that makes flowers "go over" – for the same reason, make sure no foliage is in the water.

Be creative - for example, using racemes of Mahonia rather than the whole flowerhead will still provide its heady scent but give a delicate effect; use herbs to think outside the box, such as Moroccan mint; Nigella can be used in all its stages, so pre-flowering, when in flower, as well as the seed heads.

We were left with the reflection that bringing the seasons into your home with cut flowers from the garden was a precious thing to aim for.

We are fortunate to have Nick Hamilton in March, the writer, author and radio broadcaster from Barnsdale Gardens, speaking about "Growing vegetables all year round". This talk will be held on 3rd March in Benson parish hall 7.30 for 7.45pm start (£2 for members, £5 for visitors – no need to book). We will also have our "Flower of the Month" competition (members only). Nick Hamilton developed his passion for gardening, aged 9, when his father, Geoff, purchased a derelict garden centre in Kettering. Geoff would later go on to purchase a piece of land adjacent to Barnsdale. This land formed the nursery and ultimately part of Barnsdale Gardens and Nick worked closely with his father in the family business.



Nick took over the running when Geoff died and has developed it into the inspirational garden that it is today, which is not only a credit to a great man but also to Nick's passion, foresight and hard work. These inspirational gardens are still run using organic and peat-free principles and are visited annually by about 30,000 people.

Further information about this thriving club, which has been running for over 25 years, and how to join can be found on our website <https://bensongardeningclub.weebly.com> or please email bensongardeningclub@gmail.com Membership runs from October to September.

Liz Harrison

The Big Jubilee Lunch 2022

A Crowmarsh community celebration Sunday 5th June



Here are the proposals for the Big Jubilee Lunch at the Village Hall. This will be at the end of an extended bank holiday from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June.

- The lunch event is from 12.30. The main entertainment will continue up to 4.30.
- There will be a jazz band.
- There will be various items for sale, for the benefit the local organisations that sell them:
 - A BBQ - Cubs and Beavers
 - A bar - local church
 - Cakes and hot/cold drinks - local church
 - Ice cream and lollies - School PTA
 - A bouncy castle - School PTA
- There are to be jubilee cake and flower competitions for children and adults.
- Attendees can bring a picnic. **Please bring along a picnic and blanket/chairs.** Some Marquees, tables and chairs will be provided for inclement weather.
- The car park will be closed and used for entertainment, including bouncy castles, swing boats and large patio type games.
- As we have no idea of how many will attend, it would be helpful if you could email Sue Rance on crowmarshparishclerk@gmail.com if you currently hope to, to give us an idea of numbers. Please let her know if this changes. This would also allow Sue to update you with any updates on the event.
- Please also let Sue know if you would be

available to help put up and take down marquees or setting up tables, chairs etc on the 4th and/or 5th

- If you have any large-scale games such as Jenga, or 4 in a Row you would be willing to lend for the event please let Sue know.
- In the evening there will be a Barn Dance. A band with a caller has been booked. This will be a ticketed event on a first come first served basis, due to a limit on numbers in the hall. Please note all those that have e-mailed Sue Rance to say they will be attending the lunch will be sent details and prices first, in due course. Until then bookings cannot be made.

We really hope you will be able to come and take part in this local event to help make it a special occasion. Please note it in your diary and let Sue Rance know if you hope to attend.

The event is being organised on behalf of Crowmarsh Parish Council

Updates are on the Crowmarsh village website: <https://crowmarshgifford.org.uk/the-big-jubilee-lunch-2022/> and the Parish Council FaceBook page, go to FaceBook and search for Crowmarsh Parish Council.





Team Vicar: The Revd Kevin Beer
The Vicarage, 34 Thames Mead,
Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8EY
Tel: 01491 599873 (day off Monday)
Email: teamvicar@wallingfordcofe.org.uk
Blog: revkevbeer.blogspot.co.uk

St Mary Magdalene's Church, Crowmarsh Gifford

March Services

Livestreamed Services on www.facebook.com/wallingfordcofe

Wednesday 2nd 8pm, Ash Wednesday Team Communion with ashing (St Leonard's, Wallingford)

Sunday 6th 11am, Family Service

Saturday 12th 11am, Crowmarsh Community Café (at the Village Hall)

Sunday 13th 11am, Parish Communion

Sunday 20th 11am, Parish Communion

Sunday 27th 11am, Mothering Sunday Family Communion

Morning Prayer - every Friday at 9am

Evening Prayer – every Sunday at 4pm (moving to 6pm during BST)

Full details at www.wallingfordcofe.org.uk/calendar

Diary Dates:

Palm Sunday – 10th April

Good Friday – 15th April (Churches Together Service in the Market Place)

Easter Sunday – 17th April

The Vicar writes...

Sometimes it seems that we are tossed about in a storm with wave after wave of bad news hitting us. Having had the worst of Covid pass, we have an increase in the cost of living and spiralling energy bills which will hit the poorest most. Now the sad reality of war in Europe is incredibly depressing, as we feel so helpless to do much about it. It is natural to feel fragile and we must be kind to one another, recognising that this stress is taking a toll.

As our Archbishops have said, we face real evil in this world. Until now, many of the psalms that rage against the writer's enemies have seemed quite alien to me, but yesterday at morning prayer we had Psalm 55 which speaks perfectly for the Ukrainian people as their neighbours trample over their freedom – these words seem to echo down the centuries and remind us that such things are not new, although thankfully scarce in our own generations. Please look it up if you don't believe me.

So, what can we do? Firstly, we can pray a Prayer for Peace in Ukraine:

God of compassion,

Have mercy this day on the people of Ukraine.

Restore to them the gift of peace.

Grant wisdom to the governments of the world.

Bring good in the midst of evil and suffering,

For the sake of Jesus Christ your Son,

Who gave his life to bring peace to your world. Amen.

Then, we can support and encourage our government to act, not just in gestures like lighting up public buildings in blue and yellow, but with practical support for the families fleeing for their lives

to safety. We also want leaders to actively reject all forms of corrupt influence, where previously these may have been regarded as relatively harmless. There will be hardships for us all as the economic realities of sanctions hit home, with central European nations suffering the most as we find alternatives to the Russian gas supplies. But this is the cost for standing against Putin's oppression and injustice. This is a small price to pay compared to the Ukrainians who give their lives for freedom, and we must do what we can to help them whilst avoiding escalation of the war, hence great wisdom is required.

Through Lent, we journey with Christ to the cross. The paradox is that it is there that we find our hope. We worship the Servant King who gave up everything, even his life, for us so that we may know his resurrection. The things that we may be asked to give up this year will be far more important than chocolate or alcohol, but in so doing we seek his Kingdom of peace and justice for our whole world.

Blessings, Rev Kev

Crowmarsh Consortium for the Queen's Trees

Dear Fellow Crowmarsh Residents,

A group of regulars at the village's Queen's Head pub wants to form a consortium to plant trees in the village in support of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

As well as trees at prominent locations, some rather like the idea of planting an avenue down the whole length of The Street from Benson Lane to Wallingford Bridge, if it was possible.

Much research has to be done and at this stage, all ideas are sought, along with offers of financial support and/or involvement.

Interested? Please let me know

John Grosse
the group's spokesman
07711 938 697 johnfrosse@gmail.com

Walking in Oxfordshire

Time to get walking again!

At this time of year we start to think about the mud drying up and getting out to walk in the beautiful English Countryside again, but where to find new and interesting walks?

Walking in Oxfordshire <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/oxfordshire> has hundreds of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

There is so much walking information on the web but it is often difficult to find what you want. Walking in Oxfordshire (part of the Walking in England website) has brought it together in one place so whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you. With walks from half a mile to twelve miles-plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

So home or away, check out the websites and get walking!

John Harris john@walkinginengland.co.uk

***Please see the parish website for the latest on many local matters:
www.crowmarshgifford.org.uk***

Useful telephone numbers

Emergency only 999
Crime Stoppers 0800 555 111
Police non-emergency number 101
NHS non-emergency number 111

GreenArt Tree Pledge: 2,022 Trees in 2022

With the Queen's Platinum Jubilee tree planting initiative well underway, GreenArt Director, George Smith, is joining in by pledging to plant 2,022 trees in 2022. George is an ex-resident of Crowmarsh and still runs his business from Wallingford, living close by.

To keep track of our mission we've put up a large tree graphic in the office and every time we plant a tree we put a yellow sticker on the tree as a visual tally of all our efforts!



All the trees have so far been planted in private gardens across South Oxfordshire, by our Landscapers and Gardeners as part of the finishing touches to our new garden designs.

Tree number one was planted at a new build in Benson. The Himalayan Birch is a rather vigorous tree, growing up to 18m tall offering privacy from any unwanted guests! Its luminescent white bark makes it stand out from the crowd, with beautiful yellow leaves in the Autumn. Its Spring-time catkins are great food for insects and birds too.

We chose the award-winning Prunus Accolade, regarded as one of the most attractive of the early flowering ornamental cherries, to complement a dramatic water feature in Henley. The shell-pink flowers in Spring, fall to reveal a fresh canopy of dark green leaves in the Summer providing shade, perfect for providing a cooler area in your garden on a hot Summer's day!

To enhance an existing boundary hedgerow and provide instant impact for one of our

regular gardening clients in Dorchester, we planted five large Lilac trees. At 2.5 metres tall this screen will be full of colour by late Spring/early Summer.

We also planted an Apple espalier against the wall of their vegetable garden. Both a decorative and functional way of training a fruit tree for easy pickings, as long as you have enough linear space in your garden. The variety chosen was the 'Pitmaston Pineapple', so called after Mr Williams of Pitmaston near Worcester in the 1780s. It is best known for its distinctive pineapple-like flavour!

With Spring just around the corner and a bounce in our step, will we continue to steam ahead with our pledge, and will keep you updated of our progress. So watch this space or you can follow our tree planting adventures via the Blog page on our website: www.greenart.co.uk

John Howell MP writes...

In my newsletter last month I wrote about the need to learn to live with the Covid virus as we move from pandemic to endemic. I know that many people have welcomed the Prime Minister's Statement which was first made on 19th January which set the path for further removal of regulations. We will hear more of this later this month, probably by the time this letter is published in some magazines! In January many parents and young people welcomed removing the requirement for secondary school students to wear face masks in classrooms. However, some people were concerned that more widely face masks become advisory rather than mandatory. I understand some of the concerns but do support the view that we need to allow people to make their own judgements. I appreciate that as more regulations are set to be removed some people remain anxious, but we have come a long way in the last couple of years. When all of this started, we did not know what we were dealing with. We did not know how to treat the virus and had no medicines at our disposal. Thanks to research we now have effective ways to treat the virus and a range of drugs at our disposal to relieve symptoms. We do, of course, also have the vaccines and it is good news that at last the Novavax vaccine has been approved in the UK too. I am aware of a number of constituents who volunteered to take part in this trial and of the difficulties that some have faced as a result of the delays

to the approval. I am grateful to those who have taken part in trials without whom we would not have effective vaccines and trust that all are relieved that it is now among the approved vaccines. Moving forward with Covid we need to learn to manage it in the same way as we have always managed seasonal viruses and I trust that we will see some measures coming forward to respond to this.

In our move to live more normal lives we are seeing the economy open up again and people returning to some of the activities that have been prohibited or curtailed for many months. Alongside this inevitably there has to be an end to special funding that has been made available to try to mitigate for the negative impact of Covid. Among these is a support grant for bus companies to help bridge the gap in fare income with reduced passenger numbers. Although I fully support the gradual withdrawal of the specific Covid funding I am concerned that use of public transport has not yet reached pre-Covid levels and that the removal of this grant may adversely affect our bus services. To this end I have written to the Secretary of State for Transport to raise my concerns on this and to seek continued funding to ensure that we can keep our bus services running. I appreciate that it is especially difficult in rural areas where the volume of passengers on individual routes is just not at the level of urban areas and thus the journey cost per head is prohibitive. In such cases where there is a key route for a community it has long been within the remit of County Councils to budget for appropriate subsidies. It is, of course, a political decision where any administration allocates its funds. In response to both the Covid impact and in support of climate initiatives I would like to see our local Council make this a budget priority especially in light of the generous Local Government Settlement this year which has given substantial increases to our local Councils.

On the world stage there is great concern at what is going on to stop war between Russia and the Ukraine. This is not just a distant issue but could have a significant impact on the UK. It is a particular concern to me as a senior Vice-Chairman of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Both Russia and Ukraine are members of this Assembly - although how serious Russia is may be doubted when one senior Russian fell asleep publicly when moving an objection to an amendment

in a debate I was chairing! The Council is doing all it can to help bring about peace between the two countries and I have personally worked closely with my opposite number in the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The role of the Council of Europe is often overlooked in Britain but all members of the Delegation that I lead share my concerns. It is often derided as just a human rights organisation. But while human rights are crucially important, it is much more than this and has had a key role to play in maintaining the peace in Europe since the late 1940s.

I am always interested to know the views of constituents even if we agree to differ. If there is an issue that concerns you please do share your thoughts. Email is the easiest way in you have access to that. My email address is john.howell.mp@parliament.uk. Alternatively, you can write to me at the House of Commons (House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA) or my constituency office (PO Box 84, Watlington, OX49 5XD).

If you would like to know more about my work on behalf of the Government and the Constituency please do look at my website which is regularly updated. The address is www.johnhowellmp.com. Further details of the work of Parliament is available on the parliament website at www.parliament.uk.

Cholsey repair café

The next repair café will be held at the Cholsey Pavilion on Saturday 19th March, from 11.00 to 13.45. All manner of repairs can be considered, including electrical testing and sharpening garden tools: if we cannot fix it we will advise on alternative options.

The service is free but donations towards running costs are appreciated. Sessions are on the third Saturday of odd-numbered months. Latest information is posted at www.cholseyrepaircafe.com, or call 01491 652295 or email repaircafe@cholsey.com.

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Wallingford Museum News

We are delighted that the museum will be open from 1st March with the exception of the Wallingford story, which is under development. Please check the web site for opening times.

This year's exhibition, "Caring for the Sick - A history of Wallingford's Hospitals" which was devised well before the current crisis, traces the fascinating history of Wallingford's hospitals, caring for the sick in the town from medieval times to the present day. Its portrayal of the challenges of dealing with plague, leprosy, smallpox, scarlet fever and other such outbreaks, as well as more common illness and disabilities, brings the past vividly to light. Ironically, it puts our present troubles in their historic context.

Wallingford Museum has proudly received a painting by GD Leslie on behalf of the nation. <https://www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk/news>

GD Leslie's painting 'A Thames-side Conversation' has been acquired for the nation through the Acceptance in Lieu Scheme, which is administered by the Arts Council, and allocated to Wallingford Museum.

GD Leslie (1835-1921) was a well-known Victorian artist who lived in Wallingford at Riverside in Thames Street between 1884 and 1891. He was an ardent lover of nature, and particularly of the River Thames and this painting depicts a scene on the riverside, probably at Pangbourne. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1864.

Our amazing exhibit, the new Wallingford castle model is also on display, created in collaboration with Ben Taggart. Wallingford Museum's dedicated team of researchers have worked with architectural model maker, Ben, to create a 1:300 scale model (1.5m x1.6m) of Wallingford's royal castle as it may have been in the mid-14th century.

At The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society zoom talk on 9th March Ben shares this fascinating journey with its membership. <https://www.twhas.org.uk>

The Museum will be running Easter holiday workshops for families. Please look at the web site for details. <https://www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk>

Museum Bookshop

We have an excellent selection of good second-hand books (both fiction and non-fiction) at sensible prices. We look forward to seeing you - it's free to browse!

The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society

Wednesday 9th by Zoom: Ben Taggart 'Modelling Houses, Modelling Castles'

Wednesday 13th April: Marie-Louise Kerr: 'Oxfordshire on Canvas'
Marie-Louise's presentation 'Oxfordshire on Canvas' is a visual tour of Oxfordshire which looks at how artists, both national and local, have captured our beautiful area and been influenced by it. Some of the artists included are:

- George Dunlop Leslie (who lived and painted in Wallingford)
- Paul Nash (who created many works featuring The Wittenham Clumps)
- John Piper (whose works are celebrated at the River & Rowing Museum)

Wallingford Photographic Club

Are you interested in learning more about photography or getting creative with your smartphone or camera? Come along to Wallingford Photographic Club in 2022: we are an informal and inclusive group of photographers with a weekly programme of talks, presentations, competitions and practical sessions. We are meeting online still, but we are offering a full programme and coming up in March we have talks on a range of interesting subjects: on 17th we welcome James Kerwin to show us his adventures with "Abandoned Architecture". Then on 24th we wrap up warm as Eddy and Pam Lane take us on a voyage "In the footsteps of Shackleton". From the technical side, we'll learn all about photo editing on 31st March, with Joe Houghton's "I didn't know Lightroom could do that!"; an entertaining and comprehensive session showing hidden tools in Lightroom from an Adobe certified expert.

The club meets via Zoom every Thursday from 7.30pm until around 9.30pm. Please visit www.wallingfordphoto.club to find out more, or find us on Facebook and Instagram.

Cost of living crisis on the way Citizens Advice warning



Citizens Advice has issued press releases warning that inflationary factors leading to higher food prices and energy bills will cause hardship for many this year. Unavoidably we will be paying much more for essentials (rent or mortgage, food, telephone and broadband, household bills, Council Tax) by the middle of 2022.

However, much can be done to manage the expected debacle, and setting your own personal budget is a key step. Start preparing now, making a budget and seeing if you can maximise your income. Look closely and objectively at your financial figures – how much comes in every month, how much goes out, so that you have a clear picture of your situation. Take an average over a period of, say, six months, so that quarterly bills are taken into account. Decide what the priorities are and reduce your costs even on essentials if possible. Do remember that inflation will increase your outgoings.

There are various helpful resources which you can take advantage of. Citizens Advice can tell you about fuel vouchers, benefits or government grants and Covid support that might be available, as well as the Household Support Fund, administered by the local district councils of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse at <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk> and <https://whitehorsedc.gov.uk> The Citizens Advice website at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk> has tips on how to reduce your living costs. You can also contact your energy suppliers and ask about affordable options to pay.

If you need more specific support or don't feel able to manage your situation alone, call Citizens Advice for general advice on 0808 278 7907 or the debt helpline on 0800 240 4420.

Past Times with David Beasley

Death of Colonel Charles Roberts

When we visit Crowmarsh Church or as we just walk past, we give little thought to the headstones in the churchyard and who are remembered on them, or what they achieved in their lives.

To the east of the churchyard is a weathered granite Celtic cross and carved into it is one name, that of Colonel Charles Roberts, unknown today but very well known in his day.

Charles Roberts was born in East Retford, Nottinghamshire, in 1843 as the only son of John and Harriet Roberts. He had three sisters, Maria, Annie and Sarah and was the first cousin of Earl Roberts V.C, one of the most successful generals of the British Army in the 19th century. He joined the 93rd Foot (Black Watch) in 1861, later transferring to the 73rd Foot when it became the 2nd Black Watch. He saw service in India and Canada and fought the campaigns in Burma and Assam. He also fought in the Afghan War of 1878-80, where he was under the command of his cousin, General Roberts, and took part in the famous march from Kabul to Kandahar.

On leaving the Army in 1905 he purchased Bridge House in Wallingford, he was a member of the Town Council, and in 1909 became a Justice of the Peace for Berkshire. Although a bachelor he was fond of children and was known to rarely pass a child in the street without stopping to talk to them. He helped form the Boy Scouts movement in Wallingford. When war broke out in 1914, he was the main force in raising the Wallingford Volunteer Training Corps and was its Commanding Officer until his death in 1916. In 1915 he was asked by the War Office to train young officers in a camp in the north of Scotland. He drove himself to the camp, a distance of over 600 miles, and spent three months there, often going out training with the much younger officers. He was 72 by this time and found the training very arduous and so was forced to return home to Wallingford. But his health was broken and after a trip to Abingdon in an open car in bitter cold he was taken ill on his return to Wallingford and died of bronchitis on the 11th April 1916.

His funeral took place on a very wet Sunday on the 16th April, at St Mary's Church where he worshipped each week, a Sunday afternoon was chosen to allow as many members of the Wallingford Volunteer Corps to attend as possible. The 200 members of the Volunteer Corps paraded behind the coffin, the roads were lined by hundreds of people from Bridge House to Crowmarsh Church. The coffin was followed by his servants from Bridge House, the Wallingford Volunteer Training Corps, and Wallingford Police Force led by Inspector Webb. The procession stretched from Thames Street to the Crowmarsh side of Wallingford Bridge. So many people attended the funeral that they filled the church and churchyard, even spilling into the road outside the church. A volley was fired over the grave followed by the Last Post, then the whole of the Wallingford Volunteers filed past the grave to pay their last respects.

You may wonder why a man of 72 was given such a strenuous command, but his cousin Field Marshall Roberts was Commander in Chief of the Army at the age of 82! He died on the 14th November 1914 at St Omar, while inspecting Indian troops.

Parish Council notes

Crowmarsh Parish Council met at Crowmarsh Gifford village hall on Thursday 3rd February.

Present were Councillors John Griffin (Chair), Stephen Sherbourne, Andrew Johnson, Julia Streete, Stuart Soames, Julian Park, David Topliss, Liz Ryall and David Rowley, with Yvonne Peet (Finance Officer) and Sue Rance (Clerk). District Councillors Sue Cooper and Andrea Powell attended part of the meeting.

We are pleased to have a new co-opted parish councillor, Julia Streete from Park View. There is still one vacancy on the council: if you are interested please contact the parish clerk or speak to any councillor.

Finance

The council agreed a donation of £500 to Sue Ryder Palliative Care Hub. Payments for January and February include £105.07 for allotment insurance, £365 for printing, £1,722.24 for dog bin emptying, £498 for speed surveys in The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford and at North Stoke, £850 for a second-hand sit-on mower for the recreation ground and £1200 to Glanville Consultants for professional services

preparing for a pedestrian crossing at The Bell. The dog bin emptying service is no longer subsidised by SODC and the Finance Officer will look for an alternative contractor. We are also retendering for our main grass cutting contract and we have taken the cutting of the recreation ground back in house, to be carried out by our groundsman Chris Strange.

Planning

Decisions by SODC

P21/S3778/HH Summerlea Cottage Pocock Lane North Stoke OX10 6ET Erection of a bespoke traditional (aluminium frame) 3/4 span greenhouse against the side of dwelling. Planning permission.

P21/S4814/LB 47 The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8EA, Replacement of attic bedroom window with double-glazed unit. Listed building consent.

P21/S3465/HH Old School House, Constitution Hill, Mongewell OX10 8BS Enlargement to existing dwellinghouse and annexe; creation of outdoor swimming pool and erection of new garden store. Planning permission.

Withdrawn

P21/S4665/FUL Sheringham House, Crowmarsh Hill, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8BG. Removal of existing dwelling and garage. Erection of three detached four bedroomed two storey dwellings.

P21/S3534/HH 5 Carmel Terrace, Mongewell OX10 8BX. Two storey side extension to dwelling. Window alterations to the Eastern elevation.

Consultations

P22/S0318/FUL Maclean Building, UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8BB Installation of car port structure (dimensions approximately 11 metres width by 44 metres length by 7.5 metres height) fitted with 258 photovoltaic panels with accompanying installation of 19 dual 7.4kW floor standing electric vehicle chargers and a 50kW floor standing electric vehicle charger. Recommend approval (Cllrs Griffin and Johnson declared an interest and took no part in the discussion). Councillors are keen for electric vehicle charging to be available to the public in the parish.

P22/S0111/N8A Maclean Building, UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8BB Installation of 220 photovoltaic panels to flat roof. Recommend approval (Cllrs Griffin and Johnson declared an interest and took no part in the discussion)

P21/S5196/FUL New Barn Constitution Hill Mongewell OX10 8BS. Variation of conditions (see Schedule of Conditions) on planning application P20/S1342/FUL. Demolition of building. New dwelling with garden and laid out parking area and improved entrance. Amendments to approved scheme. No objection, given that planning permission has been granted here already.

County Council report

The process is under way to get double yellow lines marked around Stephens Field and including the frontages of Nos 3 and 24 Bellamy Way and residents have been consulted on the proposals.

Community groups and organisations in the parish are invited to get in touch with Councillor Bloomfield if they might benefit from some grant funding.

District Council report

The government's provisional local government finance settlement announced on 16th December is the fourth consecutive one-year settlement and amounts to a real-term cut in council funding for SODC and for many other councils around the country.

SODC is now able to start taking on new customers for the garden waste service at www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/garden-waste.

The council has a new Climate Action Plan, which will need to be taken up by every part of the council plus the wider population, including parish councils, if we are to achieve our targets of becoming carbon neutral by 2025 (the council) and by 2030 for the whole district. Details will be on the SODC website.

Through Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 agreements, SODC has secured £20,665,018 from developers, which will go towards local infrastructure to support the growth in our district: see www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-

district-council/community-support/infrastructure-to-support-communities. Projects include improving the Riverside pool and campsite, tree planting projects and the purchase of housing for social rent.

We are still awaiting news from SODC about the future of their former office site in Benson Lane.

Environment and recreation

Grass cutting: Chris Strange is now mowing the recreation ground himself using three types of mower purchased second hand from a local supplier. A new specification will be needed for the remaining grass cutting contract and quotes will be sought.

Tree planting at the nature area: a quote has been received from Scofell for £957.19 + VAT to supply plant 15 trees of species suited to the conditions. A grant will be sought from the district councillors' fund. Some trees at the nature area had been damaged in storms and Cllr Park offered to inspect the trees and ask Scofell to take appropriate action.

Football pitches: Crowmarsh Youth football team has the opportunity to be funded to maintain the football pitches to a higher specification. The club and the parish council will sign an agreement to support this initiative for up to ten years' duration.

Pavilion improvement project: We have applied to the district council for grant funding of 50% of the total cost of improvements to the pavilion. As we may not be awarded this in full, it was agreed to apply for a further grant from FCC Community Action Fund (formerly Wren). Cllrs Johnson and Rowley are in discussion with the company who submitted the lowest tender for the pavilion improvements.

To book Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall for birthday parties and events

Call Chris Strange on 07711 904252
or email cvhbookings@gmail.com

To book the pavilion or hardcourt on the Recreation ground in Crowmarsh Gifford

Phone Chris Strange on 07711 904252, or
email chrisstrange47@gmail.com

Fees: Hourly charges for pavilion hire have been increased to £10 in line with the village hall charges.

Big Jubilee Lunch: Cllr Rowley presented a cost summary for the Big Jubilee Lunch on 5th June to celebrate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Four marquees are being made available at a total cost of £125. Volunteers will be needed to erect and dismantle the marquees and for many other roles. Arrangements are in place for temporary toilets, bouncy castle and swing boats, subject to adequate insurance. See the article on page 5.

North Stoke Village Green: The green is in a very poor state, overgrown and overrun with rabbits, making it unusable. A site inspection will be carried out when the parish council meets at North Stoke in May and the environment and recreation committee will discuss options at their next meeting.

Traffic and transport

The Clerk will ask for a speed survey at the A4074 (Portway) to be carried out and the survey at The Springs still needs to be done.

Public consultation on the Oxfordshire County Council local transport and connectivity plan runs until 16th April. Please let the county council know your views at letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ltcp – see the February Crowmarsh News for more details.

Bus services are vulnerable to cuts if government funding is not maintained until passenger numbers recover after the pandemic. This will be discussed in the committee and with our parish transport rep at the next parish council meeting.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held at Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall on Thursday 3rd March, starting at 7.30pm. Please contact the parish clerk if you would like to attend.

Parish Clerk: Mrs Sue Rance, 2 Home Farm, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8EL, email: crowmarshparishclerk@gmail.com

Chairman: John Griffin 29 Thames Mead, email: john.griffin@phonecoop.coop

Wallingford Country Market

Have you paid us a visit recently? Open each Friday morning in St Mary-le-More Church, (behind the Town Hall), between 9.30am and 12 noon.

Our Easter Market will be held on Maundy Thursday, 14th April, instead of Good Friday. Orders can be placed for most items we sell, including Easter Cakes, (please place orders for Simnel Cakes a little in advance), and other baked goods. Also on sale, hand crafted items, including a variety of unusual bags and small gifts. Colourful pots of spring bulbs, primroses and polyanthus can be found on the Gardening Table. These will give way to the ever popular plants for bedding, baskets and borders during May/June. A lot of what we sell changes with the seasons – you never know what you may find! Do come and see us soon. New producers for Baking and Plants in particular would be very welcome. For further information please contact: Alison Broadbridge (681596), Sandra Halstead (836527) or, come and visit us one Friday morning.

Benson Choral Society

Benson Choral Society is back with a bang!

If you walk past St Mary's Church, Wallingford on a Tuesday evening you'll hear some great singing as we rehearse! We're delighted to stage our first full-scale concert since lockdown! It's also the first outing of our new Musical Director David Wordsworth, who with a wealth of experience in conducting and music publishing, introduces Bob Chilcott's Requiem (2010) to the choir. Former King's Singer Chilcott is now one of Britain's leading choral composers and the choir are really getting to grips with this new challenge. The programme is completed with Haydn's sparkling Nelson Mass. Irish soprano Iúnó Connolly heads an international quartet of soloists, and the Elgar Orchestra complete the scene. The performance takes place on Saturday 19th March at 7.30pm at Dorchester Abbey. Altogether, you'll get something special! Tickets are £18 and £15 (reserved) or £12 (unreserved) and can be booked online at www.bensonchoralsociety.org.uk or call Stephanie evenings on 01865 407395.

The Corn Exchange in March

Cinema

All regular performances normally start at 7:30pm unless stated otherwise.

Tickets £8 for Adults and £5 for under 15s unless otherwise stated.

All events now have full seating. This is in line with the practices and guidelines elsewhere. We are asking patrons to still sanitise their hands, and also wear a face covering when inside the building. We'll continue to fog all public areas after each performance. We have recently installed new air filters as a safety precaution. We're grateful for patrons for their observation of all the Covid rules that we have implemented in the theatre. Please look out for new updates for the programme on the website www.cornexchange.org.uk.

Tuesday 1st: The Eyes of Tammy Faye (12A)

Wednesday 2nd to Saturday 5th: Moonfall (12A)

Sunday 13th to Thursday 17th: Death on the Nile (12A)

Friday 18th & Saturday 19th: The Duke (12A)

Live Screenings

Sunday 13th, 2pm: Rigoletto (filmed screening from the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden)

Sung in Italian with English surtitles.

A new production of Verdi's Rigoletto, directed by Oliver Mears – his first as Director of The Royal Opera. This production sees Verdi's masterpiece as a modern morality play that pits power against innocence, beauty against ugliness, in a pitiless world of luxurious decadence, corruption and social decay. The Duke of Mantua is a serial womaniser. At a palace party, not content with the married Countess Ceprano, the Duke reveals he is also infatuated with a mysterious woman he has seen in church. The hunchbacked jester Rigoletto jokes that the Duke should have the Countess's husband murdered. Count Ceprano vows to kidnap Rigoletto's lover as punishment. Chaos descends when the elderly Count Monterone arrives and confronts the Duke for seducing his daughter – a third woman! Rigoletto takes his jesting too far, and the old man curses him. Rigoletto's so-called

'lover' is in fact his daughter, Gilda, whom he keeps under lock and key at home. She has secretly fallen in love with the Duke of Mantua, who came to her church in disguise. Gilda is kidnapped by Count Ceprano and delivered into the Duke's clutches. Rigoletto engages an assassin to exact his revenge. But before the day is out, the old man's curse will exert its deadly power.

Tickets £15 (adults), £12.50 (seniors), £10 (under 18s)

Live on Stage

9th to 12th March: Showtime 2

The Showtime team are back!

Featuring the very best of what modern musical theatre has to offer, Showtime 2 (actually the fifth Showtime since 1991) includes music from shows like Mary Poppins, Miss Saigon, Cats, Les Misérables and more... This quality of production is second-to-none, as anyone who's been in previous Showtime audiences will testify! Don't miss this chance to see the best of local singing talent alongside musical direction and expertise from London's glittering West End.

Tickets £16, £14 (under 18s)

29th March to 2nd April: The Constant Wife by Somerset Maugham

This is a production by the Sinodun Players.

Coming Soon

Wednesday 13th April, 6:45pm: La Traviata (live from the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden)

Tickets £15 (adults), £12.50 (seniors), £10 (under 18s)

Saturday 23rd April, 7:45pm: The Bootleg Shadows

All tickets £15

Full details are on the Corn Exchange website: www.cornexchange.org.uk or call the Box Office on 825000.



LIVE JAZZ



Sat 12th March: Moscow Drug Club

Transcendent troubadours of Gypsy and Latin Swing

Sat 7th May: A tribute to the Gerry Mulligan/Chet Baker Quartet

Featuring Ben Cummings and Amy Roberts



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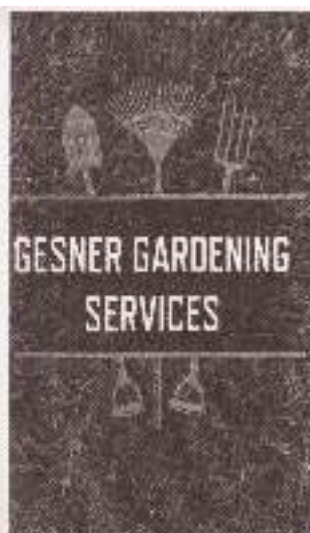
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WHAT'S ON — MARCH 2022

Regular events and meetings

Every Thursday	19.45 – 22.00	Wallingford Photographic Club	Online on Zoom
Every Friday	09.30 – 12.00	Wallingford Country Market	St Mary-le-More Church
Every Saturday	10.00 – 12.00	WAGS Store open	Centre 70, Wallingford
Most Saturdays	10.00 – 12.00	Local Producers' Market	Centre 70, Wallingford
Every Sunday	11.00	Parish Communion (Family service on the first Sunday of the month)	St Mary Magdalene Church, Crowmarsh
Most Thursdays	13.00 start	Cycling UK rides — see www.ctcwallingford.org.uk	Meet in Wallingford Market Place

This month

Tuesday 1st	14.00	Wallingford Museum opens www.wallingford.org.uk	See website for details
Tuesday 1st (onwards)	19.00	Saboteurs, Assassins and Subversives! An Everyday Tale of the SOE www.sofa.org.uk/whats-on/sas-soe/	Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum
Thursday 3rd	19.30	Crowmarsh Parish Council meeting	Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall
Thursday 3rd	19.30 for 19.45	Benson Garden Club - see p.4	Benson Parish Hall
Saturday 12th	19.00 for 19.45	Cholsey folk concert: Magpie Lane	Cholsey Pavilion see p.3
Saturday 12th	18.45 for 19.30	Live jazz: Moscow Drug Club, gypsy and Latin swing – see p.19	Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall
Saturday 12th	10.30 -12.30	Crowmarsh Community Café	Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall
Saturday 17th	19.30	Benson Choral Society - see p.17	Dorchester Abbey
Saturday 19th	11.00 – 13.35	Cholsey repair café - see p.9	Cholsey Pavilion

April

Thursday 7th	19.30	Crowmarsh Parish Council meeting	Crowmarsh Gifford Village Hall
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June

Sunday 5th	12.30 -16.30	The Big Jubilee Lunch - see p.5	Crowmarsh Village Hall
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For details of walks with Didcot & Wallingford Ramblers, please see
www.ramblers.org.uk/didcot-wallingford