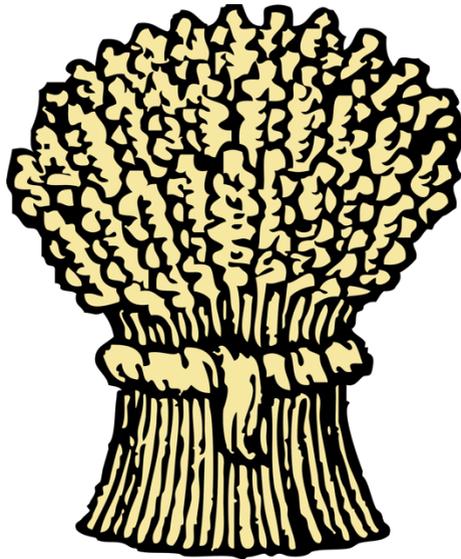


ASHBURY
COMPTON LONGCOT
FERNHAM
NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2017



Lammas: first harvest

Thought for the month

Stop. Breathe. Take a break.

I don't mean a coffee break, a lunch break, something that you feel you've earned by working or studying and therefore deserve...

I mean, take a break for your spirit - or your mind, your inner self, whatever you want to call it. Personally, I believe that we are all spiritual beings, whether we follow a religion or not - so for the purpose of this article, I will use the word spirit.

To me, your spirit is the part of you that is connected to everything: to other people, to plants and animals, to every living thing. It is the part of you that responds to the song of a bird, the whisper of the wind, the feel of a light rain on your face, the sight of the stars on a dark night. We are all connected to each other in an invisible way, and through that connection we are part of something greater than our individual selves.

And right now, a lot of us, worldwide, are experiencing stress, despair or a feeling of futility. We are drowning in news that is, more often than not, negative or doom-filled. Even our entertainment media often glorifies the worst aspects of humanity. And we can't help but react to that; it's virtually impossible not to. So, we become cynical or pessimistic, or simply weary. We need a break.

Even for a day, try walking away from it all, metaphorically if not actually. Turn off the television or the radio, leave the newspaper aside. Take a walk somewhere you feel at peace, or read a book, sing a song. Sit, close your eyes, and let your mind go quiet. Concentrate, not on thoughts, or what you're going to do next, or whether you have time for this - but rather on the feel of the breeze if you're outside, or the feel of a page in your hand, the touch of piano keys, or even the whoosh of passing traffic. Notice the sensation of the breath you draw in, feel its progress as you fill your lungs, and then exhale.

And even when you must resume the day's necessary tasks, try ignoring the news, or social media or reality TV, or anything else that makes you feel that global sense of futility or frustration or anger. Look around your immediate world and feel the connection to your family, your friends, your neighbours, your village.

I believe we are all in this world together, we are all connected at a fundamental level, and the more we let ourselves experience that, the more

that anxiety or despair will dissipate. Our spirit will relax, become gentler, begin to thrive. And the more that happens individually, the more it will spread - to our immediate surrounds and eventually beyond into the world at large.

Even if you can't see the greater effects of what might be a slow and subtle change, you are bound to feel it within and around yourself.

Stop. Breathe. Take a break.

Try it. It can't hurt.

Gail Loose

Views expressed in the "Thought for the Month" are those of the individual contributors.

Shrivenham and Ashbury Benefice Services in August

Sunday 6th August

| | | |
|---------|----------------------|----------------|
| 9.00am | Holy Communion (BCP) | Compton |
| 9.00am | Matins | Watchfield |
| 9.00am | Holy Communion (BCP) | Fernham |
| 10.15am | Morning Worship | Shrivenham |
| 11.00am | Morning Worship | Ashbury |
| 3.00pm | Joint Service | Longcot Chapel |

Sunday 13th August

| | | |
|---------|----------------------|------------|
| 9.00am | Morning Worship | Fernham |
| 9.00am | Holy Communion (BCP) | Watchfield |
| 9.30am | Holy Communion | Longcot |
| 10.15am | Parish Communion | Shrivenham |
| 11.00am | Holy Communion | Ashbury |

Sunday 20th August

| | | |
|---------|----------------------|------------|
| 9.00am | Matins | Watchfield |
| 9.00am | Morning Prayer (BCP) | Compton |
| 9.00am | Holy Communion | Fernham |
| 10.15am | Parish Communion | Shrivenham |
| 11.00am | Family Service | Ashbury |
| 6.00pm | Evening Worship | Fernham |

Sunday 27th August

| | | |
|---------|----------------------|------------|
| 9.00am | Holy Communion (BCP) | Watchfield |
| 9.30am | Holy Communion | Longcot |
| 10.15am | Parish Communion | Shrivenham |
| 11.00am | Holy Communion | Ashbury |
| 6.00pm | Evening Service | Fernham |

The Ashbury prayer cycle for August will be: 6th College Farm Lane, 13th Ashdown Estate, 20th High Street, 27th Idstone Road.

Ashbury Evangelical Free Church

There will be no meetings or tea and chat in August due to building work.

Ashbury News

(See Ashbury also under Benefice News)

Parish Council

We have a new Parish Clerk, **Claire Arnold**. Some of you may have met her at the Parish Council meeting on Monday 10th July. If you need to contact her please use the following email

addressashburyparishcouncilclerk@outlook.com

[If you do not have access to email, please leave a message for Claire at the village shop for her to reply to you.]

Parking on Pavements

A number of our residents have complained about cars being parked on pavements within the Parish. Please be considerate when parking your vehicles as they can cause an obstruction and create dangerous situations for pedestrians trying to pass them. We have a number of older residents and children who are put at risk when forced into the road to pass these vehicles. Thank you.

Pre-School

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the Ashbury Market on Sunday 9th July. It was a relatively quiet day but we still raised a respectable £128 for our village Pre-School.

Village Wide Garage and Table Top Sales – Saturday 15th June

Thank you to everyone who took part, in any way, by having a Garage Sale or a table outside their house or in the Village Hall or by buying. People started arriving soon after 8 am (from Chippenham), although the sales did not start until 9.00am. There were quite a few dealers calling in on their way to other sales attracted by the range of items on sale from a car trailer and bicycles to fresh vegetables, toys, books and bric-a-brac.

This event was organised by Ashbury Village Hall Management Committee who hope that you all had a successful and enjoyable morning. **Maggie Simons.**

Ashbury Fete - Sunday 10th September 2017 midday-4pm

Family fun day with stall sellers, games, activities and entertainment
In aid of village projects (for example benches for the green space) and causes.

The fete will be held on the new village green with access on foot through Wixes Piece, Malthouse Close and Millers Lane.

If you would like to get involved with the organising or helping on the day, please get in touch with **Diane 710309**; alternatively give Lorna at the shop your contact details and she will pass those on.

If you would like a pitch for the car boot sale or you are a stall seller and would like a pitch, then please contact **Diane Lovegrove on 710309.**

We are looking for donations of old plates or crockery; these will be getting destroyed, so anything with chips or cracks is ideal. Thank you.

Also do you have any cuddly toys that need rehoming? the preschool are running a teddy tombola on the day, so would be grateful for any donations. Thanks again.

Ashbury community club are running a bottle tombola, so if you have anything lurking in the back of a cupboard that needs a new home, again we would be grateful.

Any donations for the above can be left at the village shop for convenience.....roll up, roll up!

Request for working party input

The Ashbury planters group now has, from the Parish Council, an expanded remit to include another village open space clearing responsibility. Our next focus of work is the area 'external to the railings surrounding the play area' which is now overgrown with weeds and long grass.

We are requesting your help again for a 2 stage plan to make this area more welcoming and to look good at all times.

The DATES for your diary – Just turn up for either or both, you will be most welcome.

STAGE 1: Sunday September 3rd from 2- 4

To cut down the weeds/grasses for tidying purposes for the village fete which takes place on the Wixes Piece Open Space the following Sunday.

If you join us at this time Please bring some cutting shears and wear gloves!

STAGE 2: Sunday October 29th 10 – 1

To weed and dig up some shrubs and plants (can't see them at present for the weeds!) on the side of the railings facing the open space and relocate them to plant on the side facing the houses, having weeded there too.

If you join us for this time Please bring a spade, fork and wear gloves!

In the longer term we will then grass the area facing the open space to be mown as the rest of the space and keep the other sides weeded.

Just for all of you to note, we expect there will be excess plants and shrubs as we do the dig and relocation on the 29th October. We plan to make these available to any of you to buy on the day and after if needed and use the funds raised to support costs at Wixes Piece open space area, such as the purchase of any benches for example.

Many thanks. **Ashbury Planters Group**

Longcot and Fernham News

Longcot Church Wildlife Garden.

Have you visited the church meadow this summer? It really is a very special place in Longcot and well worth a walk through the mown paths to see how many different wild flowers grow there. The spectacular blue meadow cranesbill which is spreading each season is particularly good this year and on a sunny day there are dozens of butterflies feeding.

The volunteers have been hard at work as always keeping the churchyard looking good. The mowing team is back up to strength and getting to grips with their new mower. Thanks to two new volunteers we have found time to do some work on the paths this summer and you may have noticed the East path has been recovered back to its original width to improve access. There is always plenty to do so if you would like to join us regularly or occasionally we would be delighted to have more help. Work parties are from 10-1 on the first Sunday of each month, with coffee and chocolate biscuits mid-morning!

contact Jan 782265 or Shirley 782989. E-mail: hirsley-village@mybtinternet.com

Longcot Churches working together -Chapel News

SUN. 2nd 3pm -Everyone is welcome to our monthly joint service which this month will be led by Revd Richard Hancock. Tea and biscuits will be served after the service.

FRI. 30th 3pm -T-TIME FELLOWSHIP-Afternoon tea will be available from 3 – 4-30pm. Everyone is welcome and there will be no charge but if you'd like to make a donation the money will go to one of the charities that we have supported over the years at our Coffee Mornings. Everyone is welcome and if transport would help, or for more information, then please ring Stella on **782584**.

HUGE THANKS – to all who joined us at the last T-time Fellowship and contributed to the £45.75 which has been sent to the NSPCC.

Community News

If you have not yet entered for The Ridgeway Run 2017, this year's event takes place on Saturday 23 September at 9am.

Distances are 5 or 10 miles and there is also a short Children's race for children aged 7 -13 years inclusive.

Entries <https://theridgewayrun.com/registration/>

Runners last year ran for many reasons: whether it was for themselves and enjoying the glorious ridgeway or running to raise money for a charity (we have a number of charities "on board" who are looking for runners to run and raise much needed funds such as the local Lambourn RDA and Young Dementia based in Witney or you could run and raise money for a charity of your choice that is dear to you). Whatever the reason we would love to see you!!

Last year we had a great turnout of people running for various charities who once again would love to hear from you if you'd like to raise money for them, entry for charity places are at a much reduced rate. Please go to <https://theridgewayrun.com/run-for-a-charity/> to see the charities that are involved this year and contact them directly for information on running for them.

This year we also have a children's run, with proceeds going to Wiltshire Air Ambulance. Entry is via our website as above and open to children aged 7-13.

The event this year has a slightly different start and finish, hills still included!! Please see our website for route maps. All event registration and facilities will be located in the event car park. Sat nav SN6 8LS. There will be prizes, medals and cake!!

If you are not a runner but would like to get involved we will be looking for help on the day with car parking, route marshalling and such like – please contact either Patricia or myself, Emma.

Happy training,
The Ridgeway Run.

Patricia Cleverley and Emma McIntosh (Event Organisers)

Benefice News

Ashbury Children's Show – for children up to 12 years old

Saturday 9 September at the Village Hall: set-up would be from 12.30 to 1.30, when the Hall will be closed for judging. The Show will be open to visitors from 2-4.

Entry forms will be available from the Village Shop from 1 August; please return completed forms to the Shop by 2 September. Children can enter as many categories as they wish, but will need one form per category.

Categories include:

funny vegetable scarecrow

miniature garden

miniature flower arrangement

photo of a pet in the garden

a plant (or photo of a big plant) grown from seed

decorated cupcakes

homemade biscuits

There will be also a Lucky Dip (all entrants can have a free go)

Entry is open to any children with a connection to the villages of Ashbury, Kingstone Winslow and Ildstone. Children aged 13-15 are welcome to join in but must indicate their ages; if enough, there may be a separate category.

For further information, contact **Julia Blake on 710776.**

Update on the project to install a kitchenette and toilet in St Mary's, Longcot

We are pleased to report that the Diocese has now approved the construction of a toilet, kitchen and other modifications to St Mary's Church Longcot. Now the fundraising gets serious as what we do, and how quickly, depends upon the monies raised. The project has been phased to reflect this. After many years of effort on the part of Longcot residents as a whole, we are only about 15 months away from creating a village building that will act as place of worship and community hall for generations to come. The

Longcot 800 Committee would be grateful for any support you can give the project in the coming months – both practical help with the fundraising and support for events from concerts to coffee mornings and more.

For further information, please contact **Keith Reid on 01793 783324**.

Children's craft morning Wednesday 16 August

There will be another craft morning in **Ashbury** Village Hall on 16 August: once again it is free and all are welcome.

Breakfast Groups

Men's breakfast: continues as usual at 8am on Saturday 5 August in the village hall. Everyone is welcome, the conversation is great and the English breakfast is free – we just ask for a donation if you can. Please call Norma on 710055 for more information or (ideally!) to say you are coming so we can be sure to have enough food.

Breakfast Bible Study: this monthly discussion group will meet next at 8am on Saturday 26 August. Again, all are welcome to discuss some bible readings (and anything else for that matter) over a cup of coffee and a simple breakfast. Again, please call Norma on **710055** for more information.

The **Bereavement Journey** starts on 3 August

Working through grief takes a long time and everyone's journey is different, but sometimes we can all need support. The Bereavement Journey is a six week course, based on material from Holy Trinity, Brompton, which offers (and, we trust, provides) such support to people who have been bereaved, no matter how long ago. The first session will be held at Shrivenham Methodist Church on Thursday 3 August from 2-4pm and will run for five weeks, with an optional sixth week looking at issues around faith.

For further information contact Norma Fergusson

(rev.n.fergusson@btinternet.com or 710055) or Rose-Anne O'Hare
(roseanne.o@outlook.com)

Prayer for the month

Thinking especially of those leaving school, college or university this summer, but for everyone who feels as though they are in a place of transition:

God of the ages,

you are the beginning of our journey and our strength as we pause along the way.

Hold us by the hand as we grow, show us where to seek you, and guide our steps that we may find you.

Give us devoted hearts that we may love you, and your peace when we reach our journey's end. Amen

Norma

Country Matters

Writing in early July we are dry, Wimbledon has started and in this area harvest is still probably 2/3 weeks away, but predictions are never easy with our fickle climate. The combine and grain plant have been serviced and we are ready to go. Marauding rooks have started to eat and tread into the edge of one of our spring barley crops. They find the still sappy and soft undeveloped grain attractive and they like to pitch in from an adjacent grass field to inflict considerable crop damage. Moving them on can be a real challenge and I have heard them referred to at this time of the year as “the black death”.

A month ago at the beginning June, Ray Giggs, one of Ashbury's oldest residents, showed me some early bee orchids that can be seen in June along the gully to the ridgeway opposite Odstone Farm. It does take a moment to get your eye in and at first I could not see one growing within 6 inches of his foot! Whilst there I was surprised to spot a curlew flying over us emitting its characteristic haunting and plaintiff cry. Curlews with the long, upturned bill used to be more common here but I have not seen one here for near on twenty years. They like wet hay meadows as a site to breed and rear two chicks.

When I used to rent grass meadows from the Berners Allsopp estate down Wharf Road at Longcot we had several nests there which fledged

successfully and also at Zulu in the field we called Hallidays, formerly wet and undrained when farmed by Les Halliday, who in the eighties still milked cows in the centre of Ashbury, grazing what is now developed as Wickes Piece.

With friends this spring we were walking part of Offa's Dyke near Hay on Wye and a curlew went over there. Seeing us looking, a farmer pulled up and said rather tongue in cheek "that could be the last curlew in Wales!" It is timely that the Game and Wildlife Trust is raising funds to better understand and stem the decline. They say that there are only 300 breeding pairs left south of Birmingham.

The pyramidal orchid blossomed again as a fine single specimen in the lawn of No 4 Rectory farm cottage, Idstone; its site marked from last year by a metal stake to prevent that little area being mown. To me this seems something of a miracle. As I have remarked before this garden had been continuously cultivated until very recently.

Richard Green

Benefice Clergy

| | | |
|-------|--|--------------|
| Vicar | Rev Richard Hancock | 01793 780183 |
| NSM | Revd Norma Fergusson (Except Monday and Friday) | 01793 710055 |

Newsletter entries for September 2017. Submit your entries for September by **18th August** to: M. Turner Claremont, Ashbury SN6 8LN.

marionlturner@me.com 01793 710302

For more of "what's on" and local information see the Ashbury Village Website www.ashbury.org.uk and the [community page on Facebook](#).