

**ASHBURY
COMPTON LONGCOT
FERNHAM**

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2018

Votes! for (some) women; Votes! (for more) men



**A Celebration of the Representation of the People Act 1918 in sound.
6th February, Shrivenham; 11th February, Longcot.**

Thought for the month

This has been an unusual autumn for us; we bought a second home in the US in order to spend more time with my family and with old friends. We've been here for three months now so, naturally, my "Thought for the Month" is coming from a different perspective.

I confess that as I prepared to come here, I was a bit apprehensive. Not just about the obvious things - the 'normal' apprehension of getting to know a new house and navigating new terrain - I was nervous on a different level. I'd been following, both in the news and on social media, the state of affairs in the US and I was afraid it might have changed beyond recognition. I was afraid that people might have become more polarised or distrustful. It certainly seemed that way from the media. And maybe, somewhere, that has happened - but I'm not seeing it. People mingle, they're as friendly as ever, strangers strike up conversations without regard to politics, religion, race or gender, and in that behaviour there's a subtext that acknowledges that we are all, in the end, simply human beings.

I soon realised that, as far as everyday life goes, the majority of people have chosen to reject the bitterness in the media and the outrageous behaviour in some areas of government, and to continue doing whatever they can to make the world a better place.

Arriving at the start of the holiday season made this all the more clear, as even the media took time out to highlight some of the good things in society. You might be surprised to know that the most popular of the three main US autumn/winter holidays is Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving is a holiday about unity. It's a holiday without cultural divisions. It's a holiday that celebrates the cooperation of two vastly different cultures: the colonists and the local native Americans. Although the original Thanksgiving was an important American historical event, the holiday as it's celebrated today is pretty universal: we could do it in the UK. It's about taking a day off to give thanks for the people in your life: family, friends, co-workers, neighbours, anyone who's touched your life. It is, simply put, a day of thanks and appreciation.

It's a day of inclusion. People open their doors to anyone they are aware of who's alone or hungry. Often, new friendships are formed as a result, and

lives can be changed. Essentially, Thanksgiving is the most generous and uncomplicated holiday of the year.

And this year, I was reminded of all that. I was reminded that this is a holiday that celebrates our sameness, no matter where we originated, no matter what our religious or cultural differences might be. Across the country, at tables everywhere, people were sharing food, singing favourite songs, and appreciating their blessings. For my part, I raised a glass to our village and parish and all our dear friends back in the UK. I am thankful for you.

Gail Haslam Loose

Views expressed in “Thought for the month” are those of the contributors

Shrivenham and Ashbury Benefice Services in February

Sunday 4th February

Epiphany

7.45am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Shrivenham
9.00am	Matins	Watchfield
9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Compton
9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Fernham
10.15am	Family Service with Baptism	Shrivenham
11.00am	Morning Worship	Ashbury
3.00pm	Joint Service	Longcot Chapel
6.30	Compline and Benediction	Shrivenham

Sunday 11th February

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

Wednesday 14th February**Ash Wednesday**

6.30pm	Ash Wednesday Service with Communion and Imposition of Ashes	Shrivenham
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Sunday 18th February**Lent 1**

7.45am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Shrivenham
9.00am	Matins	Watchfield
9.00am	Matins	Compton
9.00am	Holy Communion	Fernham
10.15am	Parish Communion	Shrivenham
11.00am	Café Church	Ashbury
6.00pm	Evening Worship	Longcot

Sunday 25th February

9.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)	Watchfield
9.30am	Family Communion	Longcot
10.15am	Parish Communion	Shrivenham
11.00am	Holy Communion	Ashbury
4.00pm	Café Inspire Service	Shrivenham School
6.00pm	Evening Worship	Fernham

The Ashbury prayer cycle for February will be: 4th Pound Piece, 11th Station Road, 18th Malthouse, 25th Walnut Trees Hill.

Ashbury Evangelical Free Church

Sunday 11th at 10.15 a.m. Communion service

Wednesdays 7th & 21st at 2.15pm. tea & chat. Everyone is welcome!!



Ashbury News
(See Ashbury also under Benefice News)

Come and see - come and sew

I'm delighted to say that the kit for our World War One commemorative kneeler has arrived. If you'd like to see it (or, better still, help sew it) please contact **Norma on 710055**.

Ashbury Market –A new and resurrected Ashbury Market on **Sunday 25th February** between **11 and 1pm**. Please come along and support the market in aid of Friends of Ashbury School. We are expecting the Butchers dog sausage company with their fantastic meat, Pauline with allotment veg and lots of other stalls.

Other Ashbury Market dates for your diary so far: 22nd April, 24th June, 23rd September, 18th November.

Important Notice from Ashbury Shop

***Monday 12th February 7pm in Ashbury's Village Shop
I would like to invite anyone who is interested, to come along for a discussion about the future of the shop.
If you have any suggestions or observations about any area of the shop that you would like to bring up, please do come along. If you are unable to come along, then please still give me your views either by way of the suggestion box in the shop or email me at info@ashburyshop.co.uk. Please include your contact details so that I can reply. Many thanks to those of you that currently support the shop and I hope to see you on the 12th. Lorna***

**Reminder: Red Cross First Aid Session Village Hall Saturday
24th February 10 – 12am**

This workshop is aimed at over 65s or those living with or caring for older people who are at more risk of slips, trips and falls but they will be applicable to multiple first aid situations. Skills such as broken bones, choking, bleeding, head injuries, burns, strokes, heart attacks, harmful substances, unresponsive and breathing, unresponsive and not breathing, can be covered. Numbers are limited so please let Maggie Simons know if you would like to attend. There is no fee for this workshop.

mail to:maggiemsimons@outlook.com 01793 710801

The WI - Inspiring Women Our next monthly meeting is on Thursday 8th February when author Nicola Cornick will be our guest speaker featuring “The Craven family and Ashdown House”. Nicola has worked as a historical advisor for Radio and TV including “Landlines” and “The Restoration man” and will provide an insight into the history, legends and secret life of our local National Trust property, Ashdown House, the 17th century National Trust propertyis there truth behind the family curse that no heir to the Craven family would outlive their mother?! Please join us at Hinton Parva village hall starting at 7pm, visitors and friends will be most welcome.

GO ACTIVE GOLD - A FREE TASTER EVENT has been organised for people aged 60+ at Ashbury Village Hall by the Vale of the White Horse District council. The FREE Taster Event will host a fun activity as well as a Function Fitness MOT which is designed to compare with the UK national averages for your specific age group and gender. **Go Active Gold** Initiative is setting up physical activities in rural villages across South Oxfordshire. All the staff are friendly and experienced in working with a range of different health capabilities. We look forward to sharing a cup of tea with you on the day!

Activity : Fun Activity & Functional Fitness MOT

Starts: Tuesday 13th February 2018

Time: 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Price: FREE

Where: Ashbury Village Hall

You can register your interest

Email: Neeraj.Hargun@southandvale.gov.uk **Phone:** 07717346351

OR Maggie Simons for more information:

710801, maggiemsimons@outlook.com

Ashbury Community Club. Thursday 22nd February. 2.30pm

Come along to the Village Hall to see several local enthusiasts showing their Hobbies & Crafts ranging from vintage toys to corn dollies. You will also be able to find out details of the events planned for the coming year and maybe sign up for an outing or a pub lunch. As usual, there will be refreshments, a raffle and plenty of time to chat. All for £2.

Longcot and Fernham News

Longcot Churches working together -Chapel News

SUN 4th 3pm We shall be celebrating the 21st anniversary of the re-opening and re-dedication of the building and the service will be led by Mrs. Anna Miles, Methodist Local Preacher from Minety. Everyone is welcome to the service and to an anniversary tea which will be served after the service.

FRI. 23rd 3pm Do come and join us for crumpets, cake, tea/coffee and enjoy the chance to chat and meet old and new friends. Everyone is welcome. There is no charge but we welcome donations to our chosen charity for **this** month. If transport would help or you'd just like to know more please contact **Stella** on **01793 782584**.

Benefice News

Striking a blow for equal opportunities!

Tuesday 6th February is the centenary of the **Representation of the People Act 1918**, which granted voting rights to women over the age of 30 who met certain property qualifications. Although 8.5 million women met this criteria, it only represented 40 per cent of the total population of women in the UK.

The Act also removed the restrictions that had prevented about 40 per cent of men over 21 from voting, but it was not until 1928 that all women over

the age of 21 were able to vote on equal terms with men. Subsequently the universal voting age was lowered to 18 in 1969.

The **Shrivenham and Longcot ringers** have decided to mark this first step towards equal voting rights for men and women with **quarter peals at Shrivenham (6pm Tuesday 6th) and Longcot (3.30pm Sunday 11th) by all female bands**. This led me to look at the history of women's involvement with church bell ringing, as attitudes and opportunities changed over the years.

By the middle of the 17th century, church bell ringing had evolved from simply swing-chiming a bell hung on a spindle to the full-circle style that we use today, where the bell is attached to a wheel. However, it was very much a male preserve with swearing, smoking and a barrel of beer in the tower considered normal! Without the benefit of modern fittings, bell ringing was also more physically challenging, and women were not encouraged to pursue activities outside the home environment. Church reforms during the Victorian era led to improvements in behaviour in ringing rooms and by the late 19th century, alongside the campaign for women's right to vote, women began to ring. A full peal on church bells, which lasts approximately three hours, is the ringing equivalent of a marathon. The first one that there is a proper record of was rung by an all-male band on 2nd May 1715 at St Peter Mancroft, Norwich, but it was not until 1896 that the first woman achieved this goal, with the first all-women peal being rung sixteen years later in 1912. At that time, ringing was still a predominantly male pastime, but as the 20th century progressed, more women learnt to ring and today men and women are welcomed on equal terms into the tower. Indeed, at Shrivenham the women often outnumber the men!

Lucy Laird

Music in Country Churches, patron HRH Prince of Wales, will present two concerts in St Mary's Church, Bampton, on Friday 18 and Saturday 19 **May** 2018. On Friday 18th May, the Kings Consort and soprano, Julia Doyle, will perform work by Handel and several famous Italian composers. On Saturday 19th May the English Chamber Orchestra, with John Anderson on oboe, will perform works by Mozart and Hummel. We expect tickets to sell quickly once they are released on **26 March**, further details will be available soon. In the meanwhile, please hold the dates.

Neil Sutherland Fernham

Prayer

A prayer for winter mornings, taken from Prison Hope:

Lord Jesus,

In my days of seeming darkness, may your Light become my beacon of hope.

In my days when I grasp that glimmer of change, may your Presence be my comfort and assurance

In these moments of putting the past behind me, may your guiding hand lead me into 'new pastures'

In these moments of letting others help me, may I learn to know more of your grace as shown in others

In these moments of prayer, draw near to me, strengthen me and place your everlasting arms around all those I love.

Amen

Lent Group

Lent is early this year with Ash Wednesday falling on 14 February (so why not have your chocolate the night before?)

Our lent course is based around The Shack, the best-selling novel by William P Young. It starts with a murder and a mystery but moves on from there to – well, it's hard to explain. Come and see the DVD on 20 February and then, if you wish, join the weekly discussion groups. We can guarantee, there will be a lot to talk about!

Or, if you just have one evening free:

The last in the current series of Science & Faith talks – God and the Big Bang – will be held in Faringdon Corn Exchange at 7.30 on Thursday 8 February.

Breakfast Groups – why not make it your new year's resolution to join us?

Men's breakfast: will be held on Saturday 3 February in the Village Hall as usual. Everyone is welcome, the conversation is great and the breakfast is free – we just ask for a donation if you can.

Breakfast Bible Study: this will meet at 8am on Saturday 24 February; venue to be confirmed – ring Norma (710055) for details Again, all are welcome to chat over a cup of coffee and a simple breakfast.

Café Church

is back on Sunday 18 February – 11am at the Village Shop. Many thanks to Lorna for continuing to make this possible. Do come along and join us.

Café Church in Ashbury's Village Shop



Sunday, 18 February at 11am

Norma

Country Matters

It has always amused me that some men will be wearing a looped scarf in mild weather and sunglasses often on the back of their heads with no sign of sun. Such are the demands of fashion and against the odds I may be joining in having received a long scarf for Christmas, but probably only in cold weather!

In the sporting world it is I think rather reassuring that in this less formal era men and women still mostly observe a smart dress code. Shooting men usually dress with a tie, occasionally a cravat over shooting trousers termed plus twos or plus fours. Plus fours are less common and they are of a fuller, baggier cut. The next decision is whether long socks should be folded over the trouser buckle at the knee or tucked under with the former I believe being more correct. The top half requires a roomy jacket or a jersey to facilitate plenty of unrestricted movement.

Increasingly we welcome ladies who are to be seen out with a line of guns and many enjoy working their dogs. Great estates, particularly in the north have their own bespoke tweeds. Tweeds rustle less and are quieter than oilskins when the stalker has to crawl up close to shoot deer.

In the hunting world dress codes have not faltered. Jackets either blue, black or red (never pink) have to withstand rain and cold. A correctly tied stock gives further weather protection and support to the neck in a fall. Leather boots are so much smarter and warmer than rubber. On the head in former times, only hunt staff and farmers were permitted to wear black caps. Ladies wore bowlers. Today caps are now universally worn, usually with a chin strap to ensure they stay on in a fall. They are to all intents and purposes a skull cap; underneath, ladies usually net their hair. Top hats have mostly been consigned to elegant Royal Ascot and dressage events.

Not so in the 80's when I was visiting my wife, Penny in hospital. She had cracked her pelvis in a hunting accident, fortunately not too serious and in came a friend being pushed in on a trolley in full hunting fig with his top hat lying across his chest. He confided in me that his battered hat might have to be a casualty to health and safety in the future.

However, in contrast, fashion is not for everyone. Amongst an uncle's papers who had survived the First War serving in the Westminster dragoons I found a poem which expresses the exact opposite of sartorial correctness and he was a happy proponent of these lines doing his own thing.

“For he who loveliness within has found, all outward loathes.
For he who colour loves and skin, wears but his oldest clothes”

Richard Green

Benefice Clergy

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

Newsletter entries for March 2018. Submit your entries for March by **16th February** to: M. Turner Claremont, Ashbury SN6 8LN. marionturner@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.