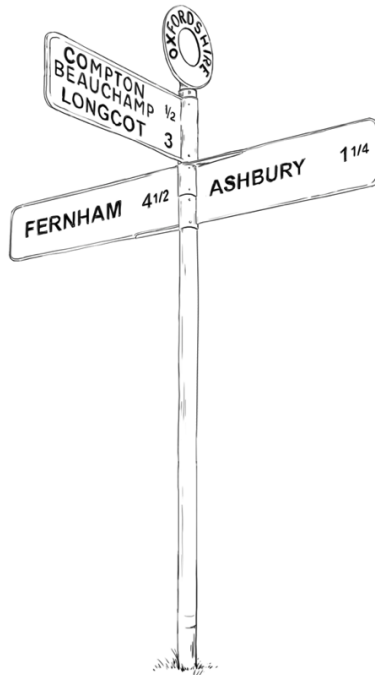


ASHBURY COMPTON LONGCOT FERNHAM NEWS

MARCH 2019



Major Events this month

Churchyard tidying 16th

Community Club 28th

Thought for the month

It's been clear to me for years that there is an ever-increasing number of people who are embarrassed to admit, especially in a social gathering, that they go to church or practice religion. In my experience, it's not unusual to mention something about church and get a slightly surprised look and the comment "You go to church?" in the same tone as you might hear "You run marathons?" It's not said derisively, just with the kind of surprise reserved for something unexpected but not especially negative.

I've been in the US for a few months, and interestingly that is less likely to happen here. Religion in all its denominations is a far more usual part of daily life, it seems. I'm in New England, the Northeast, where a wide diversity of religion is practiced and accepted as a normal part of everyday life.

And yet, the newspapers tend to focus on the sensational when religion is mentioned: the hypocritical, or the judgemental or the mean-spirited who are photographed going to church, and then make laws that marginalise thousands of human beings.

Thanks to the news, I was a bit worried that spending long periods of time over here meant I would come across those ugly attitudes I'd read about so much, and I wondered how I'd deal with it if I did.

But, in fact, all I've seen in everyday life is kindness and generosity. It is as though the news media is reporting from a different planet.

I've had occasion to meet people from all walks of life because I fell, was rescued, hospitalised and had lots of rehab. All of those who helped – the rescuers, the nurses, doctors, nurse assistants, physios, etc. were wonderful – but there were so many others who just gave freely of themselves. And what I saw a lot of, in helpers and fellow patients, was positivity and hope. There's a belief that a smile and a few kind words are the best cure for any ill.

And I can't help but feel that a lot of the best of human behaviour that I've had the privilege to witness is a direct result of the teachings passed down from long ago – such as "Do unto others...", the commandments we all know.

I will leave here feeling a lot more comfortable about the state of the US than I did before. The media should share that good news.

Gail Loose

Views expressed in "Thought for the month" are those of the contributors

Ashbury News

Community Club

Thursday 28th March 2.30pm at **Berrycroft Farm**

Sally-Ann Spence will explain "why sheep are so important to the Downs"

Note change of venue but there'll still be refreshments and time to chat plus a chance to see the ewes and maybe the first lamb.

Any questions? **Phone Jackie on 710358.**

Ashbury Village Green Update

We are pleased that the community — including the school and many neighbours — has responded so positively to our ideas and submitted many more. This work is ongoing, and we plan to visit the site with the School Council (students drawn from all year groups) at the beginning of March to get their direct input. Of course, jobs often take longer than you think they will, and the Village Green Group has had to recognise that its original timetable — to get a playing field ready for use this summer — was over-optimistic. It has taken longer than we hoped to get quotations and this has delayed our applications for funds. We're now aiming to have the playing field ready by spring 2020. The good thing is that this gives us more time to talk to the community about the whole Village Green project — including tree planting, exercise equipment and provision for dogs — so as to make sure that our plans reflect what people want. It will also mean that when the project reaches completion it will be well-thought-through and sustainable. Anyone else who has ideas or questions is welcome to make contact at any time (**Liz Derrington 01793 710813** or elizabethderrington45@gmail.com).

SATURDAY 16th MARCH- 10am-Noon

Every March we arrange for the Ashbury Churchyards to have an annual "Spring clean" where we tidy up all the areas that do not get dealt with by the mowing contractor.

We welcome everyone from the village, of all ages, to give us a hand. Should you be able to come please bring with you secateurs and if you have them loppers, strimmer and/or a broom.

It is a very social occasion and newcomers to the village and those who have relatives buried in the Churchyard are especially welcome. Hot drinks and refreshments will be available.

Any queries please call **Roger Simons 710801**

A plea from Bishopstone : Action on litter!

There hasn't been a national anti-littering campaign in Britain for a generation and it shows.

There is now 500% more rubbish being thrown on our roads and surrounding countryside than in the 1960s. Most of it food and drink containers chucked from passing cars and a good proportion of that plastic debris will take several hundred years to degrade.

Even though litter is the most complained about issue among taxpayers, and over £1 billion is spent nationally clearing it up, local councils are struggling to keep on top of the problem. Meanwhile the roadside litter mounts up and the sight of it attracts yet more litter as people see evidence it is evidence that littering is acceptable.

I want to do something about this – **starting with local litter picks along the roads beyond our villages as part of the Great British Spring Clean** that runs for five from March 22 to April 23 this year. I am provisionally looking at the following dates and locations but will go wherever there is interest and support:

March 24 - Foxhill

March 30 - Wanborough

April 6 - Baydon

April 13 - Ashbury

April 20 - Kingston Lisle

But I would also like to think far beyond this. Perhaps commission an arts prize among local schools to come up with the Ridgeway's answer to Gobby, this brilliant fish sculpture meets litter bin? Make a more sustained effort to get the relevant councils and the fast-food outlets who cause most of the problems to do more? Perhaps funds for regular litter local picking and a roadside campaign to change behaviour?

If there are any like-minded people as depressed about litter as I am please contact me at molly@mollywatson.com



Church Matters

Ashbury: Services are at 11am on Mar 3rd, 10th, (Benefice communion) 17th, 24th and 31st at St Mary's.

Compton: 9am on Mar 3rd and 17th.

Longcot: 3 pm on Mar 3rd, (joint service in the Chapel), 9.30am on 10th and 24th. 6pm on 17th.

Fernham: 3pm. on Feb 3rd (join with Longcot) 9am on 24th and 31st, 6pm on 24th. The Ashbury prayer cycle for March will be: 3rd, Wixes Piece, 10th, Ashbury Hill, 17th, Berrycroft, 24th, Berrycroft Lane, 31st Chapel Lane.

Ashbury Evangelical Free Church

March 10th at 11.00 a.m. Communion.

Tea and chat Wednesday 6th and 20th at 2.15pm. Everyone is welcome!!

Longcot Churches working together -Chapel News

SUN. 3rd 3pm -Rev'd Norma Fergusson will be leading our monthly United Service to which everyone will be most welcome. Tea and biscuits will be served afterwards.

FRI. 29th 3pm T Time Fellowship. Why not come and join us for a friendly chat over afternoon tea in the chapel? You are assured of a warm welcome. There is no charge but donations to charity are always welcome. If transport would help or you need to know more please ring **Stella Tidmarsh on 01793 782584.**

Around the Benefice

Lent begins on 6 March

Lent is the period of 40 days (plus Sundays) when the church remembers and prepares for the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Many people will prepare by giving something up – others by doing something special like a daily act of kindness.

Ash Wednesday will be marked by a benefice service of Holy Communion with ashing in St Andrew's at 11am on 6 March, followed by refreshments in the parish room

There will also be a benefice service for the first Sunday of Lent in St Mary's Ashbury on 10 March, again at 11am and followed by refreshments

As usual, the **Lent course in Ashbury** is being held jointly with the Free Church and this year is based on St Paul's letter to the Colossians. All are welcome to come along;

the first session will be held on Tuesday 12 March t 7.30 pm in St Mary's House, Ashbury. More details from **Richard & Norma (710055)**

New midweek Communion service

There will be a short service of Holy Communion in St Mary's Ashbury at 11am on Thursday 14 March. It is planned to hold this monthly.

World Day of Prayer

This year's service is on Friday 1 March in the Shrivenham Methodist Church at 2pm. The theme is "Come – everything is ready!" and the service has been prepared by the Christian women of Slovenia. Come along and hear what they have to say to us – everything will be ready to welcome us on the day

Breakfast Groups in March

Men's breakfast will be held in Ashbury Village Hall as usual on Saturday 30 March at 8am; Breakfast Bible Study will be in Westlands, Idstone Road, Ashbury on 2 March. All welcome. Please let Norma and Richard know if you would like to come – 710055

Prayer space 25 – 29 March in Ashbury Free Church

Prayer space provides children from our three church schools with an opportunity to learn more about Christian prayer in a creative, imaginative way. But it works for adults too. if you would like to come along and see what we are doing, please contact Norma on 710055

A Prayer for March

As I write this, we have had some lovely spring days which made me feel as though the year was beginning anew. And the snowdrops have been beautiful! So, as we reflect on the year behind us, let's remember the highs and lows, the joys and sorrows, those who are close to us and those we miss. And, if you feel able, thank God for his faithful love, now and in the past

Norma

Country Matters

"A meet of the Old Berkshire Hounds took place on Friday last at the Manor Farm Bishopstone, residence of J.W. Dore. In spite of the very unpropitious weather there was a large and distinguished company...." 16th November 1895

Searching the Bishopstone web site I came across this hunting report from 1895 which may be of interest if only from an historical perspective. The Old Berkshire Hunt dates from 1760 with the first Master the Revd John Loder of Hinton Waldrist serving 1760-1805. I have George Wilson's copy of the book covering the early history to 1904. He was the elder brother of Bob Wilson formerly of Prebendal Farm, Bishopstone who was Robbie Selbourne's grandfather. I have a few copies left of the more recent hunt history, my book covering the years 1904-2012.

Looking at the names mentioned at this 1895 meet Evelyn, Countess Craven and her second son from Ashdown Park were great supporters. Major Hippisley lived at Sparsholt Manor now the home and estate of the Swire family. Mr Eddie Dunn of Childrey Manor was an amateur steeplechaser. He became a popular master 1898-1901 and future chairman. He had a beautifully burnished plaque erected in his church at Childrey to all the hunt members who were later killed in the Great War.

The master in charge at the Bishopstone meet was Frederick Swindell who did four years. He was succeeded by Dunn and then Mr Wright and some wag was reported as saying that the hunt had first been Swindelled, then Dunn and was about to be put to Wright! Mr F Martin -Atkins, a former master lived at Kingston Lisle Park and his descendant, now deceased, used to be chairman of Morlands brewery, Abingdon before amalgamation with Greene King. Mr Baring lived at Ardington house. Captain and Miss Theobald were formerly of Sutton Courteney Abbey. The Butlers lived at Carswell, Faringdon now St Hugh's prep school and Mr Robson was a strong rider across country from Stockholm, Uffington.

The first draw, Hinton Copse which is still there today, usually held a fox and was controversially also claimed by the neighbouring VWH hunt, until with the expansion of Swindon, the VWH fully ceded that corner of country to the Old Berks in 1989.

Richard Green

Contacts

Ashbury Parish Council

Chairman Cliff Davies 01793 710712 chairman@ashbury.org.uk

Clerk to the council: Laura Evans email clerk@ashbury.org.uk

Defibrillator: On the wall by the School entrance

St Mary's Ashbury Parochial Church Council

Associate Vicar Revd Norma Fergusson 01793 710055 rev.n.fergusson@btinternet.com

(not Mondays or Fridays)

Church warden: Maggie Simons 01793 710801

Secretary: Roger Simons 01793 710801 rogersimons1@outlook.com

Vicar interregnum (Shrivenham)

Ashbury Village Hall

Maggie Simons 0193 710801 maggiemsimons@outlook.com

Secretary Margaret Smith 01793 710800 mbsmith5@hotmail.co.uk

Bookings: Lin and Kevin Clarke 01793 710326

Ashbury with Compton Beauchamp CE(A) Primary School and little Berries Preschool

Headteacher Rachael Smith 01793 710259 [www. http://www.ashburyprimary.org.uk](http://www.ashburyprimary.org.uk)

office.3851@ashbury.oxon.sch.uk

Ashbury Village Shop 01793 710068

G.P. Surgeries Shrivenham 01793 782207 Lambourn 01488 71715/72299

Post Office at the Rose & Crown Wednesdays and Fridays 9.30-11.30am

Vale of the White Horse District Council 01235 422422

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/>

Recycling/Rubbish collection queries admin.vale@biffa.co.uk

Food waste is collected weekly, green/black bins alternate each week. Garden waste brown bins fortnightly. Mondays except Bank holidays.

Your Local District Councillors are: Elaine Ware 01973 783026

elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk and Simon Howell 01793 784491

simon.howell@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

County Councillor: Yvonne Constance: 01235 751475/07976934884

yvonne.constance@oxfordshire.gov.uk

M.P. for the Wantage constituency: Ed Vaizey. Contact information. House of Commons

London SW1A 0AA. Bus. phone: 0207 219 6350. email: ed.vaizey.mp@parliament.uk.

Newsletter entries for **April** 2019. Submit your entries for April by **15th March** 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.