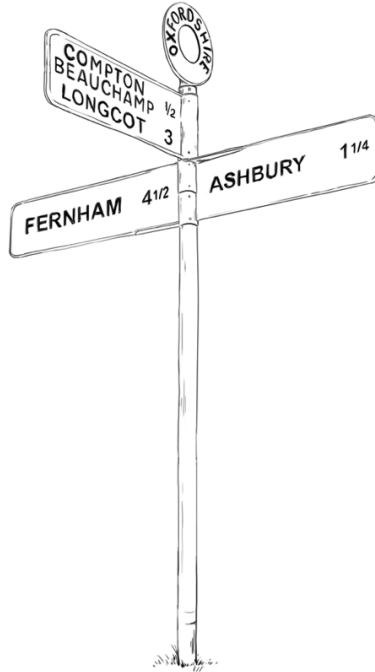


ASHBURY COMPTON LONGCOT FERNHAM NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2020



Thought for the month

Our thousand-year heritage-how do we pay for it?

In addition to the version available at www.ashbury.org.uk, a few individual copies will be left in the Ashbury bus shelter (in a cardboard box) for anyone "offline" to collect. We are hoping normal service will be resumed for the October issue.

Thought for the month

I don't know about you, but recent months have given me time to do plenty of thinking about all sorts of subjects. One of the topics has been the number of things in everyday life that we take for granted. Just take a few minutes to compile a list of all that you expect to be part of your life. The first one may well be freedom – freedom to come and go as you please, to meet up with friends and family whenever and wherever you choose (and give them a hug!), see the doctor/dentist – the list is probably endless and that's not to mention our wonderful NHS, school for the kids or going on holiday.

There will be older people who remember a time when at least one holiday a year wasn't the norm but trips abroad have become part of life and many people found the ban on overseas travel really hard – witness the recent mad rush to airports despite the possible risks to health and of subsequent quarantine. Then there are things like the freedom to attend church services, to take part in celebrations of all sorts and enjoy visits to the cinema, live theatre and concerts.

I could go on but I'm sure you get the point. If nothing else, the pandemic has, hopefully, taught us to appreciate everything that adds variety, comfort and convenience to life – so much that we have missed over the last few months but also things like clean water at the turn of a tap, power at the flick of a switch - essentials not available to too many people throughout the world so many of whom lack food and access to medical care and who daily have to live with conflict.

We need to give thanks for so many blessings and remember that there is one thing that we can take for granted - no matter who we are, what we have or haven't done or how we look we can be sure of God's love. As St Paul wrote in his letter to the Christians in Rome 'I am absolutely convinced that nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable – absolutely nothing can get between us and God's love through Christ Jesus our Lord'. (Romans 8:38)

Stella Tidmarsh

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

Ashbury News

Ride and Stride 12th September 10am -4pm approx.

The annual fundraising event for our historic churches is going ahead this year with some changes (no offer of refreshments, alas) and providing the rules about churches don't change adversely before 12th September. Ashbury will offer a socially-distanced sign-in desk. Volunteers to spend a half hour manning the desk would be very welcome. Please contact **Gail Loose** on (01793) **710883**

About Ride and Stride

Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust (OHCT)

StRiders are sponsored for the number of churches they can visit in the day. Half of the annual sponsorship is held centrally by the OHCT and used as grants for repairs and renovations of Oxfordshire churches -for example St Mary's Longcot. The other half of the annual sponsorship money for the StRide goes straight back to the churches nominated by the participants.

Our Church, Ashbury's Heritage

Ashbury has an historic church which is a listed building and is expected to be available whenever it is needed for school events, funerals, baptisms and weddings, as well as for regular services, but all this costs money.

We believe most people in Ashbury wish to see the church continue to be open for all of us when we need it, but do you know how much this costs? Where does the money come from? We do have some regular generous donors who contribute to this amount but with several of those having died or moved away over the past five years we are still short of adequate funds.

With Covid restrictions we don't yet know if we will be able to run the Christmas Bazaar but think it is unlikely; this is usually our main fund raiser, bringing in about £1500 but even this amount does not anywhere near cover our annual expenses which in 2019 were about £18,000 (£50 a day).

The costs of maintaining St Mary's in 2019 included a payment to the Oxford Diocese of £10,300 which pays clergy salaries and pensions, and a further £1,200 for other everyday clergy expenses; £3,000 for church insurance; £3,500 for heating, lighting and maintenance of the church clock, cutting the grass in the new cemetery and printing this newsletter -before we do any maintenance on the church.

During 2020 we have made significant improvements to St Mary's, installing a new kitchenette and toilet for the disabled as well as additional heating under all the central pews. These costs have all to be funded from grants by various trusts which want to support our old churches and improve their facilities. Unfortunately there are no grants for everyday running costs.

If you want the church to be there in the future when you need it, if you visit your loved ones' graves in the new churchyard and expect the grass to be cut and strimmed around the gravestones and the grounds kept neat and tidy, and if you like to hear the church clock chiming, would you be prepared to give a donation to maintain this heritage?

If so, please contact **James Reade our PCC Treasurer confidentially at Westlands, Ashbury SN6 8LP 710208 or james.reade@btinternet.com. Any contribution, however large or small, would be gratefully received.**

Maggie Simons Church Warden

Stan Mellor

Neighbours and friends of the late **Stan Mellor** came out of their homes to pay their respects and to wish him well on his last journey through Ashbury on Friday 21st August. He will be missed.

Longcot News

Longcot Village Green Concerts 2020

On **Sunday 6th September The Clarinet Collective** will be giving a short concert twice on Longcot Village Green, at 2pm and again at 4pm. Bring your own rugs, chairs and refreshments and come and join them for an afternoon of music of all kinds, from Mozart and Handel to Gershwin and Scott Joplin!

This group of freelance professional clarinettists has already given two very successful concerts in St. Mary's Church in conjunction with the Longcot Flower Festival. They were to have given another in May this year which, sadly, had to be cancelled due to the Covid outbreak. They have devised the two concerts to bring some more live music to the village in a format that allows for social distancing to be observed. The performances will last about 50 minutes each and there will be no interval. Admission is free with a collection in aid of the Longcot Village Trust fund to build a new community space in St. Mary's Church.

In line with current government requirements places are limited and must be booked in advance. To make your reservation for either concert please email **victorialmedcalf@gmail.com**. Email contact details will be required on booking.

Church Matters

It looks at present as though the September services in Ashbury, Compton and Longcot will be as follows:

Sunday 6 September	9am 10am	Matins (BCP) Holy Communion	Compton Beauchamp Watchfield)
Sunday 13 September	9am 10am	Morning Prayer Holy Communion	Longcot Ashbury
Sunday 20 September	No services in our churches (10am Holy Communion-Bourton)		
Sunday 27 September	No services in our churches (9am Morning Prayer-Watchfield & 10am Holy Communion Shrivenham – re-opening after building works)		

For the time being, there will be no services at Fernham. Please check the website (www.shrivenhamandasbury.co.uk) or Facebook page for further details or contact:

Rev'd Norma Fergusson (after 1 September)	01793 784338
Maggie Simons Ashbury churchwarden	01793 710801
Dennis Blease Longcot churchwarden	01793 780708
Joanna Lambert Compton churchwarden	07990 898175

Online services will continue to be streamed as follows:

Sundays	11am	Holy Communion
Tuesdays & Thursdays	9am	Morning Prayer
3rd Sundays	5.30pm	Evensong
1st Wednesday	2pm	Holy Communion

Access to these services can be found by going onto Shrivenham & Ashbury Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/shrivenhamandashbury> (you do not need to be a Facebook member to go onto this page).

Ashbury Prayer cycle for September: 6th High Street, 13th Idstone Road, 20th, Idstone, 27th, Kingstone Winslow

LONGCOT CHURCHES WORKING TOGETHER – CHAPEL NEWS

It's sad to see the Chapel shut and looking deserted and it may still be a while before we are able to open again safely but we continue to look forward to the time when things are back to normal and all the usual activities can resume. Until then, everyone in Longcot and the surrounding villages continue to be held in prayer. Take care, everyone. The Stewards.

Ambassadors Bible Church (at AEFC) While the current situation is so fluid please look at our website www.ambiblechurch.co.uk

Country Matters

Phew! It's a scorcher and we are (August 13th) just finishing the wheat harvest. This is early for us and so far so good with very good quality, little to dry and considering the wet autumn which only allowed us to plant the high, easier ground which is usually less rewarding, our yields are satisfactory. Both wheat and the straw which we have baled behind the combine should be a good trade. Both are in short supply; the wheat because very little was sown on the heavy land and the straw is also short because the dry April and May limited growth. Now we will be cutting the spring barley which is expected to be a weak trade and premiums for malting hard to find if the weather stays kind. Later in August/early September our beans might be ready.

This is a new crop for us. In common with our neighbours we had to find another crop to plant this spring following the failure of the oil seed rape destroyed by flea beetles. Because beans are a legume they are a good entry for us to follow them with wheat this autumn. Beans are destined as an export to Egypt as a human protein feed or for animal rations here replacing imported soya. Some cereal stubbles will be left under an environmental scheme for birds to forage seeds over the winter and some planted as soon as we can with vetch and phacelia to give a cover over winter of "green manure" to help soil structure and lift organic matter.

Despite last year's wet winter with springs gushing water like a leaking colander in March we have noticed that the Lertwell brook running through our Zulu farm in the vale has dried up. Young elm trees are once again dying in our hedge rows and there are growing signs of ash die –back shown as small branches within the canopy minus their leaves. A conversation with a tree surgeon confirmed that affected trees in vulnerable situations will have to be taken down before the big branches become brittle and unsafe for climbing. It is disappointing to be losing part of our heritage but this all goes to show that nothing is static in the countryside. Some features die; however this year I planted more hedges this spring but have needed to water them twice to keep losses to a minimum.

A word over the ammonium nitrate explosion in Beirut. This is the same product that inorganic farmers use here stored in big bags and marketed as nitram 34.5% nitrogen to stimulate crop and grass growth. Regulations require us to keep this product safely and in a locked building. It will deteriorate over time, potentially becoming unstable and we would not dream of extending storage and in bulk over many years as the owner there has.

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

House-for-Duty – vacancy/TBA

Church warden: Maggie Simons 01793 710801

Secretary: Roger Simons 01793 710801 rogersimons1@outlook.com

Vicar (Shrivenham) Revd Norma Fergusson 01793 784338

rev.n.fergusson@btinternet.com (not Monday)

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: David Johnston david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk
0207 219 3000

Newsletter entries for October 2020. Submit your entries for October by **18thSeptember**

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.