

The Gossip

H O R N T O N

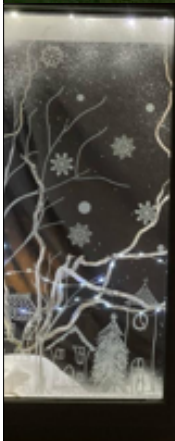
ISSUE 132

FEBRUARY 2024

Thank you, Hornton...

The Gossip says 'Thank You' to all the folk who make Christmas in Hornton so special.

The Christmas Tree on the Green, the Windmill on the Hill, the Walking Nativity complete with perfectly behaved Donkeys, the School and the Chapel and Church events, the welcoming Dun Cow, carol singers in the dark, laughter in the Pavilion and the sparkling, decorated homes and windows. In this troubled world and uncertain times we are so very, very thankful for our precious community. Happy New Year to you all.



Save the Dates...

Hornton May Day

Monday 6 May

see page 9 for details

Late May Bank Holiday

Sunday 26 May

'Meet the Neighbours'

Bar BQ on the Green, from 1pm

There will be a Barbie - roast pork and crackling, sausages and onions - Hooky, wine and music.

It's Hornton - so probably a raffle too!

Come and meet your neighbours!

- Councillors -

There have been a few changes to your Parish Council.

The Clerk, Fiona Donaldson has resigned and the job has been taken over by Al Mills. The email remains the same - clerk@hornton.org.uk

Councillors Martin Jones and Holly Busby have resigned.

Mr Chris White has been co-opted as a Councillor. The Parish Council invite residents who may be interested in serving on the PC to notify the Clerk. They have also expressed concerns about the lack of gender balance on the PC and are hoping that future volunteers may counteract this.

Residents are welcome to attend all of the Parish Council meetings as observers, but are only allowed to address a meeting at the AGM. The minutes of all of the Parish Council meetings can be read in full on the village website - <https://hornton-pc.org.uk>

The Gossip

The copy deadline for the next issue of The Gossip is Friday 5 April 2024. Please send your ideas or submissions to Anne Joyner at thehorntongossip@aol.com. To advertise in the next issue, please contact Ni Marot.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information printed in this newsletter, the editorial team cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of any errors that might occur, particularly in respect of advertisers not meeting customer expectations. The opinions published in this paper are not necessarily those of the team.

Hornton Bus Service

The bus will run a timetable between Hornton and Banbury.
Villages connected by the service will be: Horley, Balscote, Shutford, North Newington, Claydon, Cropredy, Mollington, Hanwell, Great Bourton and Little Bourton.

Oxfordshire County Council has announced the north Banbury service along with new community buses for Watlington, Bicester, Faringdon and Witney. A spokesman for the County Council said: "The service is envisaged to operate once a week as a minimum. The initial contract is anticipated to be from February 2024 until March 2025." The bus services are being restored to a number of communities which have been without regular public transport since 2016. The announcement follows Oxfordshire County Council's cabinet's decision to allocate £1.2 million to improve rural public and community transport to connect more villages back to the bus network, market towns and Oxford.

Councillor Andrew Gant, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Transport Management, said: "This is more good news for bus users on top of improved services announced last month - a £1 single fare cap for Sundays in December, a new fleet of electric buses for Oxford, and the extension of our park and ride parking and ticketing deal. "Many people rely on buses to get around the county and we're committed to working with providers to make it easy and reliable for them to do so." The new services are in addition to those funded by government through the council's Bus Service Improvement Plan, including new express peak buses from Banbury to Oxford.

Roseanne Edwards

Although the bus stop was installed at the top of the hill above Perkins Close (and the bus cancelled almost immediately afterwards) it is anticipated that the new bus service will run from the Green - hopefully residents who live at the top of the hill will be able to persuade the driver to let them off there on the return journey!

If you have reached state pension age and are resident in Oxfordshire you qualify for free bus travel. You can apply online (it's free) - go to <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk> go to the searchbox and put in 'bus pass', then click on 'bus passes in Oxfordshire'. You will need to upload proof of identity and age. This can be a photograph of your driving licence, passport or birth certificate. The pass comes in 'credit card' form. You may use your bus pass anywhere in England and also in London on buses displaying the red roundel, you may need to show the driver the pass if that particular bus can't read the card. The bus pass cannot be used on all trains.

- Gossip Joke -

Q: What do you call a factory that makes OK products?

A: A Satis Factory!



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- Health checks

Progressive Dinner

It feels like a long time ago now - but last October's Progressive Dinner was a resounding success. Organiser Ni Marot reports "A total of 40 people progressed around the village, enjoying three different courses in three different houses. We raised £1,260 which was split between the Church, Chapel and Pavilion and all the feedback I've received says that everyone had a great evening and enjoyed meeting new people. A belated huge thank you to all ten of the hosts - at least three of the new couples to the village suggested that they might host next year, which will be great. A huge thank you to everyone who joined in."

Planning Ahead...

Looking forward to Spring - Ni and Alice's Fashion On The Green

Organisers Alice and Ni say - " We're looking forward to getting your generous donations for the super-successful second hand fashion stall on May Day. As well as ladies and gentlemen's nearly new and designer clothes we welcome shoes, handbags and accessories.

Please drop your items off to either of us, or we can collect. Ni's address is [justina.marot@gmail.com](mailto:julina.marot@gmail.com) / Priscilla House, Bell Street and Alice's - alice.protheroe@outlook.com / The Glen, Millers Lane. If you could save any bags or hangers to give us closer to the date that would be great.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to seeing you on May Day"

Church 100 Club

Since the Club's inauguration in 2017 it has allowed us to contribute to keeping our 800 year old Church building in good order as well as being able to distribute £5,510 in prize money to our members.

Members sign up to pay £5 per month. Every three months a public prize draw is held and one third of each quarter's total is returned as first, second and third cash prizes. At the moment this stands at £110, £70 and £40 respectively. One share costs £15 a quarter, but you can buy as many shares as you wish and of course the more shares bought the higher the prize money.

If you think that this is a nice way to support our wonderful church - not to mention the chance of a cash prize then please contact me for an application form and join our club!

Andrew Overton

aoverton64@gmail.com ;

Andrew Overton, PCC Treasurer,
Trinity Cottage Church Lane
Telephone: 678920



Photo courtesy of Catherine Vint

Dear Hornton

Happy New Year!!!

It's lovely to have the opportunity to write to you via The Gossip. I have been Rector in the Ironstone Benefice getting on for three years now. Hornton has made me feel very welcome right from the start. I have enjoyed lovely meals at the Dun Cow, events in the Pavilion, lunches in the Methodist Church and many services in the ancient Church of St John the Evangelist, including concerts put on by the very talented school children. I have especially enjoyed taking part in the May Day festivities!

The covenant between the Methodists and Anglicans means there is always a church service in the village which is unique in the benefice. Both buildings have had major redevelopment works in the recent past which also means you have good facilities for many uses. We are always trying to improve the work of the church in meeting the needs of the community. We always have plans in place to develop the work of the church. One of which you will have noticed, and that is increasing our work with the school. There have now been two services led by the school and they have proved extremely popular. It is wonderful to see such creativity and thoughtfulness by the children.

Another of our plans is to become more eco-friendly – consider the fuel use in the church as well making sure we recycle as much as possible. The churchyard is an important part of this and we are encouraging people to use only real flowers on the graves where possible so the use of plastic is eventually non-existent.

Another plan is to be more outward-looking to those who need our help. Hornton already is very, very generous in filling up the boxes for the foodbank and Sunshine Centre that are placed within the village. But there is more we could do I'm sure.

I am writing this in November. But I think you are receiving this in the early part of 2024 and there are signs of Spring already around us. Easter is early this year – March 31st and Mother's Day is March 10th so it will be upon us very soon! We will be sure to let you know in good time what will be happening around those festivals.

Worship within the village can be very varied. We even had a lovely Breakfast Church in the Methodist Church back in October with bacon rolls, croissants and as much tea and coffee as you could drink. On that occasion we raised £70 for Katherine House.

We would love to know if you have any ideas for services or events you would like to see. And just to finish off, we are always praying for people near and far. If you have a prayer request, please speak to someone at either church or leave a slip of paper on the altar and be assured we will be praying.

Alicia (rector)

01295 738593 rectorofironstone@gmail.com



Halloween Hooley

The evening of Saturday 4th November found Hornton Pavilion crawling with creepy characters. Fancy dress may have been optional, but it was the small handful of 'normal' folk who looked the scariest - they were obviously all being psychopaths hiding in plain sight! It was a great night, as ever the chameleon of a Pavilion was completely transformed, this time into a spooky night club.

Sally Spencer told *The Gossip*:

"Let's set the scene. Late afternoon on a balmy Sunday in August a suggestion was made that what we (Hornton) needed was a good old bop in the form of a traditional disco. Somewhere that we could let our hair down and have fun! Clare Fox was behind this idea and a group of us got together to help her get the ball rolling - myself, Ni, Sophie and Jane.

The rest is history and the outcome was a fabulous Halloween fancy dress disco in the Pavilion on 4th November.






Special thanks must go to the following people - Al Mills for being DJ extraordinaire; Steve Woodcock for the loan of his many decorations (fancy having that many skeletons, quite literally, in your cupboard!!); our wonderful team of ladies for decorating the hall; Rebecca and her girls for running the bar, and Pete and Ted for their behind the scenes help, and of course to YOU for coming along and creating such an amazing evening. The effort that so many of you put into your costumes was superb - first prize went to Chloe Mcdonagh for her crocheted spiders web dress, so clever and talented.

We made approximately £500 (not bad considering this wasn't a fundraiser) which will be split between the village and the Banbury Sunshine Centre".



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Pumpkins!

3H's Gardening Club



The 3H's Gardening Club's October meeting was another good evening, thanks to Howard Drury who gave us a professionally prepared presentation of his life and times as a Horticulturist. For good measure he added some useful advice on secondhand greenhouses.

The main event was what has now become the annual Pumpkin Competition, which this year attracted an increase in entries of almost 300%. The top three were all raised from seeds donated by Catherine Vint from last year's winning Plumpest Pumpkin. It seems Catherine is using her extensive knowledge of breeding prize winning cattle to breed heavyweight veg! This year, however, Catherine's specimen was a mere 7oz less than Ann Hemming's winning entry. Caroline Pearce was the winner of the Small But Perfectly Formed Class. The winners:

1. Anne Hemmings - 16.4 kilo / 36lb 2oz
2. Bill Jeffs - 16.2 kilos / 35lb 11oz
3. Catherine Vint - 15.8 kilos / 34lb 13oz
10. Caroline Pearce - 2.1 kilos / 4lb 10oz

Mike Patching

Editor's note:

A few years ago I visited a tiny village in Tuscany which was holding its annual Pumpkin Festival. Almost every house was decorated and displayed the owner's heavyweight entry outside the front door. The local cafe was featuring spiced pumpkin soup and 'American Pumpkin Pie', and judging by the Pumpkin Chariot I think there must have been a parade at some point - and no doubt a village feast. Who knows - perhaps the 3H's Club could initiate yet another Hornton 'tradition'!

If you feel inspired to grow a glowing golden giant next year just go along to the Pavilion on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.15pm and join the Club - you'll be made very welcome.



It was a joy to see the Pavilion filled to capacity once again on 22nd December when The Badapple Theatre Company returned to perform their take on the classic Christmas tale of Scrooge.

This time the miserly Yorkshire "Farmer Scrooge" was spooked by his long departed dog, Elvis Presley and Mr Black a funeral director, before seeing the error of his ways.

The two actors and production director put on a fantastic performance combining their acting, singing and puppetry skills along with great sound, lighting and simple but very effective staging.

Everyone seemed to have a great time and it put us all in the Christmas spirit.

Thank you to Kevin and Jane Wain for running the bar and all those who helped stack chairs afterwards. Proceeds from the evening have been given to the Pavilion (£300) and Hornton Allsorts Drama Group (£150).

Pete Lemon

- Carol Singing -

The total collected round the village this year was a record £485 which is on its way to Cancer Research. Thanks are due to many people - the singers, collectors, the people who provided food and drink during the event on December 20 and, of course, the residents who generously donated.

Ian Harris

Pets you might meet on a walk...

Derek and Dave live in the field at the end of Hart's View. They are happy to have their heads rubbed when you stop to chat with them - but please don't feed them.



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Join our Club...

As all you readers know, Hornton enjoys a large and varied range of clubs.

We have a ladies' and a gents' Book Club, however numbers are limited for both because they meet in members homes. If you would like to share your literary life with other like-minded people why not start another Book Club? There once was a Hornton Supper Club, but Covid, plus the chief organiser moving house, put paid to that. Two or three times a year, a fairly large contingent of diners would go by mini-bus to a researched local restaurant for an evening meal. This led to quite a few new local venues being discovered, and its revival would be welcomed - it just needs a new organiser to bring it back to life. Perhaps you enjoy knitting, sewing or craft? During the run up to the Millennium a group used to meet weekly to make cross stitch squares illustrating life in Hornton - the resulting tapestry can be seen in the Church. This morphed into a sewing circle for a while, and perhaps that too could be revived. Given the convivial nature of a large number of residents it's a surprise that we don't have a Hornton Wine Club; perhaps you have some expertise in that direction that you could share? There are two dart boards and a score board available in the Dun Cow just waiting for the 'Hornton 180' ladies' and gents' dart clubs to be born.

There's always room for more, especially during the long, dark winter evenings, so if you have an interest that you'd like to share with others why not start a new club? But how, you may ask?

Start by contacting one of the following: Isabelle Harris on 670304 or isabelle_harris@btinternet.com for the Pavilion; Julie Stanley on 670507 or julieharrystan@aol.com for the Chapel; or Rebecca at the Dun Cow on 01295 670524 or theduncowhornton@btinternet.com to find out which times and evenings they have free.

You may then spread the word via the Hornton Facebook page; the Hornton website on hornton-pc.org.uk; Roger Corke's village e-mail list on roger.corke@aol.com or, indeed, in the pages of *The Gossip* just e-mail thehorntongossip@aol.com.

Once you have established whether there's any interest in your proposal the next step would be to arrange an informal meeting and hey presto - you have a new Club!

Meanwhile, already up and running, and new members are always made very welcome.....

3 H's Gardening Club

7.15pm every second Tuesday of the month in the Pavilion. £3 for visitors.

Contact Mike Patching on mike.patching@btinternet.com for further information.

Keep Fit with Alex Birch

6.30pm Tuesdays in the Pavilion. £60 for 12 weeks (£5 pw) or £8 pay as you go.

For further information contact Alex on 678504 or acw.birch@btinternet.com

Crib

7.30pm Wednesdays in the Dun Cow - just turn up! Friendly group, tuition available.

W.I.

7.30pm First Thursday of the month in the Chapel. Visitors of all ages very welcome.

For further information, contact Sally Spencer via sallyspencer@gmail.com.

History Group

7.00pm 2nd Thursday of every month in the Pavilion - £15 per year. Contact Laurie Furneaux on lauriefurneaux@gmail.com

Coffee and Chat

10.30am - 12.00 every Friday in the Chapel. Just turn-up. There is a baby/toddler corner, so Carers and Babes are very welcome. Cakes, Bring and Buy and friendly company available.

Hornton Football Club

Keep up to date with fixtures via their Facebook Page: Hornton FC

Library and Puzzles

Free, exchange, borrow and donate. Any time in the Chapel, side door is open and turn left.

Hornton Allsorts Drama Club

The Allsorts aim to produce a theme night and a play every year, and welcome anyone who enjoys making music, fun and laughter, or prefers to help out beyond the footlights.

If you are interested in joining the Drama Group, in any capacity at all, please contact Sarah Walther via e-mail at sarah.walther@hotmail.co.uk or phone 07506 416715 for details.

Crib in the Dun Cow

Terry and Doreen Bell were Landlords of the Dun Cow in 1983. They moved here from Harbury and both played for a team in the Warwickshire Harbury Crib League. They applied for a dispensation to allow an Oxfordshire Pub to join the league and as the Dun Cow was on the county border we were allowed to join later that year.

We had mixed fortunes to start with and came bottom of the table for the first two years. Over the many years that followed we managed to put the Dun Cow name on the many cups and shields that are played for each season. In late 2005 we introduced a Ladies Cup in memory of my late father, Harold, and for the many ladies who played for the teams it became a much sought after trophy.

Over those forty years we gained many friends from the Pubs and Clubs in South Warwickshire. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the team members, past and present, who have contributed to many enjoyable Tuesday evenings. Although we did not enter a team this current season we can still join

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the league at their three fun nights in the beginning, middle and end of the season.

The Future...

Unlike the other Pubs and Clubs in the league we have our very own Crib Night here at the Dun Cow every Wednesday evening, all year round. All are welcome, and if you can't play we will teach you in a friendly and informal atmosphere. There is even a Dun Cow Crib WhatsApp group. We can still enjoy our Crib Nights, join in the local gossip, and help to keep our precious village pub open.

Paul Burden

P.S. - I had never played Crib before joining the players one Wednesday evening, and after a couple of weeks found that I could play a reasonable game - and if I can do it anyone certainly can!

Anne Joyner

Juniper Art Club

I would like to introduce myself to those who don't yet know me. My name is Fiona Bridgland. I've lived in Hornton for almost twenty years, have been a designer and tutor over the years, am a mother of 2 and am married to Roy Bridgland.

For the last 10 years I have been running an Art Club here in Hornton, in my studio at Proffitt's House. It's a very relaxed place where you are encouraged to come and try out different techniques.

Recently, rather than fully tutored classes, I have started running themed sessions for people to come and experiment with different materials, with guidance but emphasis on experimentation. The materials will be provided for you to use, as well as of course me on hand to assist and guide as and when needed. The end result after 4-6 weeks will be to create a final piece for you to do with as you wish.

I am currently open to new members for my sessions starting February 2024. The class size ranges between 6-8 and currently runs on a Tuesday and Thursday evening 6:30 - 8:30pm.

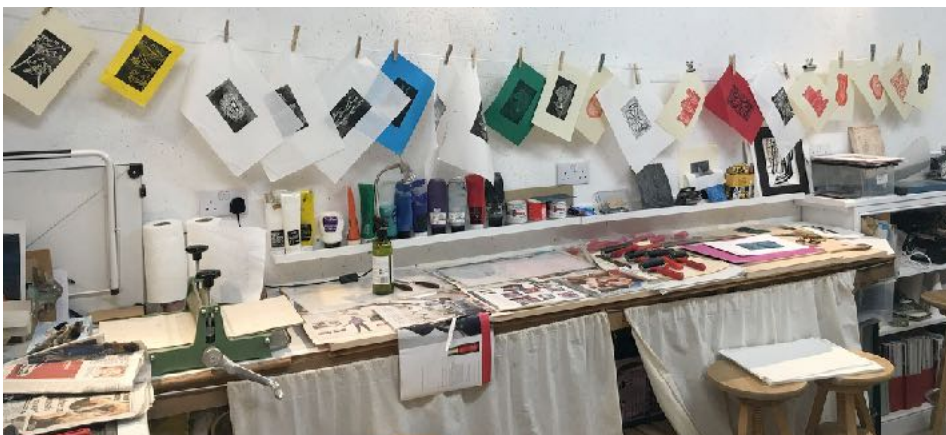
If you are interested in learning how to use lino prints, charcoal, pastels, collagraphs, mixed media, painting and anything else that you fancy - then get in touch! The current members have also had success selling their art work at the May Day celebrations and I have enjoyed seeing everyone's ideas and skills develop over the years.

Please email me for further details on fiona@visionfields.plus.com and if you are on instagram please search for @Juniperart12 to see some examples of our work.

I look forward to hearing from you - Keep being creative!

Fiona

Juniper Art Club



Hornton Football Club

Following promotion to the top flight the previous season we made major progress and went into the 23/24 season on the back of a midtable finish and a heart stopping Cup Final defeat. An exciting blend of youth and experience is proving a recipe for success and we have comfortably beaten most teams we've played. Manager Ollie Wright has had his work cut out keeping everyone happy with game time but the results have been excellent.

The Club are fantastically positioned to resume a league campaign in the New Year that promises so much. If availability remains positive and players remain fit there is every likelihood of a serious title challenge. We are also into another semi-final in the Lord Jersey Cup, which gives the team another shot at a potential Cup Final which would be a great achievement.

Over the last few years the core group has been added to and the squad encouraged to socialise together off of the field, which makes training and match days all the more enjoyable. A great level of chemistry has been building around the Club and there is a distinct feeling that something exciting is just around the corner.

Behind the scenes we are working to make the HFC more accessible. You can find news and fixtures on Facebook and Instagram - just search for Hornton Football Club. We are also planning match day programmes and reaching out for new sponsorship in order to progress the Club forward and attract new players. Collectively we hope this will bring even more success on and off the field. This work behind the scenes does not go unnoticed and we have to thank: Chairman - John Naysmith; Treasurer/Secretary - Mark Wright; Manager - Ollie Wright; Groundsman - Glen Walther, and Captain - Pete Thorpe.

If you would like to get involved in any way in or around the club or have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch via myself, Mark Wright, Club Secretary - mark.wright99@hotmail.co.uk

Mark Wright

Comings & Goings



Hornton sadly lost our great friends David and Lesley Kings in the autumn. David died peacefully at their home, The Kradyl on the Green, on the 28th October, age 94. His wife Lesley followed him just five weeks later in November.

Dave and Lesley moved to Hornton in 1993 and quickly became part of village life. They were active members of the history and the gardening clubs and were involved in and supported many of the events and socials. They were generous with their time and talents, opening their beautiful garden every year for Open Gardens, and hosting the tea and cakes on May Day. David loved to share cuttings and advice and many of us will have a plant in our gardens as a constant reminder of him. Lesley was a superb cook and would memorably bring an enormous joint of roast pork with crackling across the Green for the Neighbourhood Watch Bar B Q in the summer, not to mention all of her baking contributions to every event.

They were a sociable couple and loved to entertain, their hospitality was famous. As well as excellent food and drink David had a wealth of entertaining life experiences and wisdom to share.

Charity and giving back was an important part of their life; David was an active member of many associations including the Masons, the Lions, and the Round Table where he was instrumental in raising money for several local causes. In his retirement he became a volunteer for the National Trust at Upton House, becoming quite an authority on the history of the house. He relished the opportunity to meet new people and loved the performance aspect of being a tour guide. He often said he was there to help the old people...after all, at the time, he was only in his 80's himself!

They leave behind a lovely family who themselves have become well known to Hornton. They were loving parents, true friends, loved to party, had an impish sense of humour and a true zest for life. As David often commented they had had a life well lived. They have left their mark on many hearts, and we will all miss them.

Anne Joyner, with thanks to Kate Wright.

Goodbye from Martin...

After ten years here Martin Jones is returning to the Isle of Mann and told The Gossip:

"Goodbye Hornton, but not farewell. I have just loved throwing myself into the various groups that required physical efforts and largely go unnoticed by the majority that just assume that the grass gets cut by magic without them doing anything etc. Hopefully FART will keep going because it works. Chris White is taking over my various roles on the Parish Council, please give him the support he deserves. Love to you all...and thanks."

A few words from

Alison and Richard Jackson, Norland House

Hello Hornton, Many thanks for making us feel so welcome!

We've only been in Norland House for a couple of months, but we are already feeling as if we are part of the village community. We've met lots of our neighbours already, Rebecca and Steve at the Dun Cow know what beer we like, the Wednesday crib group always have the cards ready, and everyone at the Friday coffee mornings help the grandchildren settle into the play corner and ply us with coffee and cake. After Christmas we're looking forward to getting stuck into the Gardening group, the History group and the W.I. (for Alison of course) as well!

We didn't move far; we had been based in Kenilworth for almost 40 years and now our three children and four grandchildren are all in Oxfordshire, so a move to be a little closer to them - and to enjoy a new location and lifestyle - made a lot of sense. We also volunteer in the gardens at Upton House, now just round the corner of course.

We're both retired now, but in our previous lives Richard was a civil and structural engineer who worked almost his entire career for Ove Arup & Partners (consulting engineers) and Alison was a secondary school maths teacher who taught at Kenilworth School, mainly part time, for many years. We've also enjoyed living and working abroad, spending several years away in Zambia, Botswana, Poland and India in various chapters of our lives.

We have enjoyed getting to know our new home and are looking forward to the spring when we can really get to grips with the garden and the allotment. We look forward to welcoming you to Norland House and also seeing you up and down the hill!


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Hornton History Group

Hornton History Group's 'away day' of the year took us to Chedworth Roman Villa, the Corinium Museum in Cirencester and finally to Rodmarton Manor.



Corinium Museum

After a misty early start we arrived at Chedworth. Lying south of Stow on the Wold in a beautiful woodland valley fed by a natural spring, this is one of the finest Roman Villas in Britain. This high status Villa saw imperial fashions and local spirits living side by side. Nature took over and hid the magnificent mosaics, intricate hypocaust systems, bathhouses and a water shrine for more than 1,500 years, until they were discovered by Victorian gamekeepers. Olivia, our excellent guide, gave us a vivid description of what life had been like in Roman times.

Our convoy of five cars then set off for Cirencester, the second most important Roman town in Britain after Londinium. On arrival at the Corinium Museum we were given an excellent buffet lunch and a talk about the Roman and other contents of this wonderful museum which houses some of the finest mosaics in Britain. We learned about the importance of Cirencester as a Roman settlement and that nearby lay one of the largest known Roman amphitheatres in Britain.

We then ventured a few miles south and many years into the future with a stop at Rodmarton Manor on the edge of Rodmarton village. We were met by John Biddulph, the current owner and the fourth generation of the family who built the Manor. It is a supreme example of a house and all of its furniture having been designed and made according to Arts and Crafts ideals. These are a belief in craftsmanship which stresses the inherent beauty of the material, the importance of nature as inspiration, and the value of simplicity, utility and beauty.

It was one of the last country houses to be built and furnished in the old traditional style and included specially constructed workshops for the use and training of local people. Everything was done by hand, using local stone, local timber and above all local craftsmen. We were also able to enjoy the eight acres of extensive gardens.

Finally we all enjoyed a fish and chip supper which was kindly organised by Lynn and Roger Corke.

Bob Langton

Pheasant & Mushroom Pie

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 or 3 pheasant breasts, cubed -
check for lead shot before using
- 1tbsp olive oil and 1 knob of butter
- 2tbsp thyme leaves
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 3 large shallots, finely chopped
- 8 meaty mushrooms
- 5 rashers smoked streaky bacon
- 1tbsp dry sherry or white wine
- 4tbsp creme fraiche
- 320g ready made puff pastry
- 1 egg, beaten with a little milk to make a wash
- nigella seeds, optional

Serves 4

METHOD:

- Pre-heat the oven to 180°C / 160°C fan / gas 4
- In a heavy bottomed pan fry the cut-up bacon in the oil and butter with the thyme, and stir until it starts to colour.
- Add the pheasant cubes and stir to seal.
- Add the mushrooms, shallots and garlic and stir for about four minutes.
- Season to taste and deglaze the pan with the sherry/wine.
- Stir in the creme fraiche.
- Remove from the heat and allow to cool completely.
- Roll out the pastry into a rectangle.
- Put the cold filling down the centre, dampen one edge with cold water and bring the edges together over the top, pressing together to seal the top and the ends like a big sausage roll.
- Place the roll sealed side down on a baking tray lined with non stick parchment.
- Brush with the egg wash and sprinkle on the nigella seeds.
- Bake in the oven for 25 - 30 minutes until golden and puffed.

Maggie Higgins

HORNTON

MAY DAY

6th May 2024

Our May Day celebrations and fete will once again return to the streets of Hornton. Whether you've previously run a stall on May Day, or would like to do so this time, please get in contact with us by Friday 22 March to let us know your plans for this year.

If you're spring cleaning and have any clothes, toys or bric-a-brac which could fill one of the many stalls, keep an eye on the village Facebook page and village e-mails for details of who is running the stalls.

We're looking forward to bringing the village to life with our traditional May Day celebration and we hope you will support the village causes by joining in the fun. Thank you.

The May Day Team

Jane Wain - Sally Spencer - Pete Lemon
e-mail: horntonmayday@gmail.com

- Morris Dancing -



The name 'Morris' is thought to be a corruption of 'Moorish'. It is believed that the exotic clothes and fierce dance movements involving swords or staves were originally brought to England along with other fashionable imports from Spain and France to entertain the wealthy upper classes. Indeed in previous years this would explain why some troops employed 'blackface' as part of their traditional dress.

The earliest mention of Morris dancing dates from 1448 when the Goldsmiths Company in London paid seven shillings for a performance. Whilst it began as an upper class fashion, by the late 16thC it had become fun for ordinary folk. In 1600 Shakespearian actor William Kempe danced from London to Norwich and kept a diary published as the Nine Daies Wonder. By the mid 17C it had become a Whitsun tradition and there were many rural troops of Morris dancers. After the Civil War however, it was banned by the Puritan Government of Oliver Cromwell, along with Whitsun Ales and many other festivities. When the Crown was reinstated the Springtime Festivals were quickly restored. Morris dancing continued to be popular until the industrial revolution, when the impact of social changes caused it to begin to fade away. Only four teams claim a continuous line: Abingdon, Bampton, Headington Quarry and Chipping Campden. It's interesting to see that all of these are fairly local to us. In the late 19C D'Arcy Ferris, a Cheltenham based musician, became intrigued by the tradition and sought to revive it. He found a team in Bidford and took the side all over the area including Malvern, Moreton and Bicester, increasing its popularity and encouraging a revival in villages.

(Thanks: Open Morris)

Morris dancing is excellent exercise - although any benefits are probably quickly offset by the equally traditional hours spent in the Pub after dancing.

Ian Harris and his team have done a terrific job keeping the tradition alive locally and he would welcome some new members - any age, male as well as female.

Ian told The Gossip:

Sunrising Morris

In 1985 a group of morris dancers mainly from the Adderbury traditions decided to revive dances from the village of Tadmarton which appeared to have died out in about 1850. In the early days there was both a mens' and womens' side and practices were held in the Pavilion. At the same time it was suggested that the tradition of maypole dances should also be revived and that the village fete which had been held on the Pavilion field for some years should instead become a May Day event on the Green. Every year since then children, mainly from Hornton School, and Sunrising Morris have performed on the May Day Bank Holiday. Sadly the womens' side did not last many years but the men have kept going supported by dancers mostly from other villages.

Hornton has always been considered to be the base for Sunrising so it would be good to involve more people from the village to ensure the revived tradition continues to thrive.

We are therefore planning to hold training/practice sessions and are looking for volunteers. The dances are not too difficult to learn and as we generally only perform on May Day and perhaps one or two other events each year it is not a major commitment of time. It's good exercise and fun so if you are interested please ask for more information and when the practice dates are fixed, probably on Sunday afternoons in the Pavilion, come and have a go - I'm planning two Morris Dance training sessions on Sundays 28th January and 11th February at 3pm in the Pavilion.

You can contact me by phone: 670304 or email - ii.harris@btinternet.com

Ian Harris



Sunrising Morris

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Ring-necked Pheasant

Phasianus colchicus

Pheasants are native to Asia and the Far East, indeed the Green Pheasant is the national bird of Japan. They appear to be particularly sensitive to earth tremors, and are traditionally used to warn of earthquakes. There are many myths and folk stories in both China, India and Japan featuring the venerated pheasant. The Romans introduced the bird to Europe as domestic poultry and it was probably brought to England by the Normans around 1066. It is therefore classified as an introduced, non-native species in this country and not subject to any conservation status. The wild population is about 3-4 million.

Pheasant can live for up to twenty years in captivity, but usually 1-2 years in the wild, where they reach an average weight of 1.4kg feeding on seeds, berries, leaves and insects, frogs and small mammals. They are durable and can live for several days without food and in periods of bad weather hunker down and wait for the weather to improve. The males (cocks) have superb, colourful plumage which is at its peak during the winter months, when he will attract a harem of plain brown ladies (hens). They roost in trees and form flocks in the winter, foraging in fields and hedgerows and sometimes in gardens if attracted by bird feeders. Rearing a family is womens' work in the pheasant world - during April, May and June the cock will mate with all of his harem, who will then incubate the eggs and rear the chicks on their own. Sometimes the hens will share a nest, which will be on the ground and concealed in long grass under a hedgerow. The cock will remain on patrol and defend his family fiercely. 5 to 15 olive green/pale blue eggs are laid which take 23 - 28 days to hatch and chicks are flightless for about two weeks. Birds become independent after 10 to 12 weeks. Hens nest once a year, but will repeat if the nest is destroyed. As we've all noticed, pheasants can fly, but they prefer to run, and take-off is a fairly noisy, short and laborious business.

Around 47 million pheasants are reared in pens every year in Britain to be released in late summer just before the shooting season



Golden Pheasant

begins. The British Association for Game Shooting and Conservation has researched the causes of death for pheasants and concluded that 25% die between release and the start of the shooting season, mostly due to predation by foxes, 37.5% were shot outside of estate shoots and 16% survived until after the shooting season - and most of those are then rounded up and killed. This estimates that only 21.5% are actually shot on official shoots. This 21.5% represents approximately ten million one hundred and five thousand birds.

According to Eco Hustler every cartridge fired will contain about 300 lead pellets, resulting in the single major cause of environmental lead contamination in the UK and leading to the deaths of scavengers, raptors and kites. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is neutral on the ethics of shooting, but they do keep an eye on the industry and speak out if they have evidence

of serious harm to wildlife or the environment. They are particularly concerned about lead pollution and the impact of the release of so many reared game birds on local populations.

The Law says that the legal control of predators such as weasels, stoats, crows and foxes is routine on gamebird shoots and is legal under both general and individual licences. The British Association for Shooting and Conservation publish a code of good practice and say that ' Game shooting is an accessible sport, enjoyed by many thousands of people from all walks of life. No longer the preserve of the landed gentry it can provide a valuable bridge between town and country. It offers on one hand recreation in the countryside and on the other economic benefits to help sustain a healthy rural community.'

Birdbrain

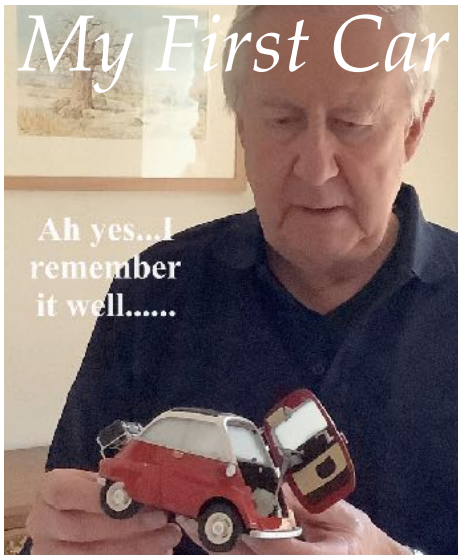


White Pheasant
Some shoots 'fine' a gun that shoots a white pheasant.

In my sixth form years I took a Saturday afternoon job on the local paper taking down football reports for the evening edition of the sports "Green Un" as it was known. The idea was to save up enough money for some driving lessons as my Dad couldn't really afford to pay for them. A couple of months after my 18th birthday I passed my test at the first attempt.

Mobility up until that point was either a local bus (infrequent), bike (second hand) or walk! I decided to keep on with the Saturday job and actually apply for a part time degree course offered to budding reporters on the Leicester Mercury. So, getting paid at the same time was a great attraction. Eventually I had saved up half the cost to buy an Isetta Bubble Car. So, with lacklustre support from my parents I took out a hire purchase agreement and became the proud owner. The cost was about £185 from memory.

It changed my social life a great deal as girl friends were much easier to find if you had any form of transport. The big attraction for some owners was that if you blocked out the reverse gear you could drive it on a motorbike licence. It was not ideal for chaps 6 feet plus tall, as the front opened out (which included the steering wheel) and then you sat on the bench seat, locked the front back in place and off you



went. The engine was at the rear. Some versions had just one wheel at the back and others two.

For the next 12 months I had great adventures with friends of both sexes sitting beside me (tight but just enough room). Not much room for luggage when my friend and I went down to London from Leicester in a snowstorm down the newly opened M1. It really was quite a dangerous vehicle and my father had great misgivings about it. Those misgivings turned into reality while I was away on a

six-month Camp Counsellor project with the Boy Scouts of America. When I got back he had sold it and paid off the HP contract. I was once again back to a bike.

Not to be daunted and thanks to some good fortune, the Leicester Mercury moved me to one of their branch offices which meant I could leave home and find a flat in Loughborough. I had broken free and a few weeks later I was the proud owner of another weird and wonderful car called an Austin Metropolitan – made for the American market with few available for sale in the UK. It was cheap to run, again just a front bench seat and no real room at the back for other passengers. A red and white combination with a gear stick on the steering wheel and the ride resembled a choppy day at sea. I eventually sold it for almost what I had paid for it and with some of the money bought a one-way ticket to Cape Town. But that is another story.

Bob Langton



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