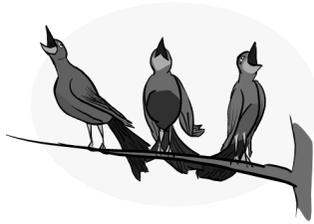


BIRDSONG

April 2023
and
May 2023



**BIRDINGBURY
NEWS
NO 115**



Dancing Days

Birdingbury Parish Council Report

The year seems to be racing away with Easter now upon us. The Village Litter Pick on Saturday 18 March started under grey clouds and rain, but ended in warm, bright sunshine, my wet coat tied around my waist. A big ‘Thank You’ to the 12-15 volunteers who collected about 20 bags of other people’s rubbish, along with the last bits of the car that had missed the bend under the railway bridge over the winter.

Much of the litter is thrown from cars, but there is also evidence of fly-tipping (tyres, household junk, etc.), something that we’ll refer to RBC and keep on eye on.

Much of the Council meeting in March was also road related. We have agreed to fund two traffic surveys to measure the number and speed of vehicles on Main Street and Marton Road. This will help to build a picture of our traffic and to make a case for traffic control measures if necessary. Thanks to Dick and Chris who attended the Council meeting and for their advice.

Parking was discussed and we have a clearer picture now of what is allowed and what isn’t and, like so much else in a village like ours, it generally comes down to give and take between neighbours. Giving a brief thought about other road and pavement users (including wheelchairs and pushchairs) will probably be as good a guide as anything else. But if anyone wants to ask about specifics in any part of the village, please let me know.

We also discussed the Birbury, as the Parish Council is the leaseholder for the room. The Birbury Management Committee has agreed to pass the management of the room to the Club Committee (see later in Birdsong for new booking details) and we are discussing what ongoing oversight and fund management is needed. More details will be provided at the **Annual Village Meeting on Tuesday 2 May**.

We also looked ahead to a couple of other events in May. There are **local authority elections on 4 May**, and it will be the first election where you will need photo ID in order to vote. There is a poster on the back of the bus shelter and guidance at www.gov.uk/how-to-vote/photo-id-youll-need. The local authority elections this year include the Parish Council and information is on the noticeboard giving guidance to anyone who would like to stand. Applications need to be submitted by 4 April. If anyone would like to know more about what the Parish Council does, please let me know. The new Parish Council will sit for the first time on 15 May, volunteers all.

The second event to take place in May is the **Coronation of King Charles III**, providing further opportunities for us to come together as a community. More details can be found later in Birdsong. The national theme for Bank Holiday Monday is Volunteering and there will be an opportunity at the Community Café held that day for people to suggest ideas, request support or even make a personal commitment – all entirely ‘voluntary’, of course!

Finally, the Parish Council is considering buying a new bench or refurbishing an existing one to mark the Coronation. If anyone has any suggestions, let me know or pop them in the Village Chat WhatsApp.

Guy French, Chair, Birdingbury Parish Council

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Club Update

It's a bit of a packed but functional Club update this time around, meaning I need to be brief – so strap in ...

The Birbury – As you'll have read in the PC report, the Club will pick up the day to day running of the Community Room from 31 March, so from that date if you want to use the room, please can you drop into the Club and speak to Suzie or the bar staff and they'll happily help you out.

Works – You'll start to see some of the minor improvements we're planning start to take shape over the next couple of months, with the most obvious being the impending repainting and refurbishment of the Club frontage. We are very reliant on the goodwill and help of a number of people in terms of skills and manpower for this sort of thing because funds are always tighter than we'd like. We'll put more information out on what we're thinking shortly and if you can help in anyway, please do let us know.

Membership – The Club is, and always has been, owned by its members and, with the exception of a couple of annual village events, we do need everyone who uses the Club to be a member. If you or a member of your family have not quite got around to renewing your membership this year, or indeed you are thinking of joining for the first time, please do drop into the bar anytime and pay this year's fees. It's only £1 a month (paid as £12 annually). Don't worry, if you forget next time, we might take the opportunity to remind you when you're at the bar (wink). But seriously, it is the village's club, so it would be great to see as many villagers as possible continuing to be, or becoming, active members.

Events – I need to start this bit by thanking everyone who's come along or taken part in our food nights and music nights. There's been a real buzz about the place! But I do get asked about what happened to the quizzes and other events we did before covid, and while it's not been a conscious decision not to do them, it's true that we haven't done them for a while. What I'd say is that rather than getting the usual suspects to run them, are there any of you who have an idea for an event and would be willing to run quizzes, games nights, etc? Let me or Suzie know if so.

Tony Flint, Chairman, Birdingbury Club

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

If You Go Down To The Woods Today...

How lovely it was to see fellow Birdingburyians making their way across the field to the little wood and footpath just past the viaduct to help with the planting of trees as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project on 28 January!



The QGC project was conceived to mark the Platinum Jubilee year of 2022 and, although her Majesty is sadly no more, the initiative was extended until March 2023, to give people the opportunity to create a living legacy remembering the country's longest reigning monarch. Over a million trees were planted in the first planting season, across October 2021 to March 2022 and so our own batch (some 60 odd) will add to those.

As ever, many hands made light work and we were actually finished within an hour. This followed wise planting advice from Dick, optimum placement (two metres apart), digging duties performed by many strong souls (I was good at watching that bit), gentle bedding in and the application of protection against animals. We then all enjoyed Dick's excellent apricot biscuits/cakes.

Watering will be needed later in the year, volunteers will be welcomed for that. We also hope that we may be able to put in some sort of bench to enjoy the lovely surroundings and the bulbs that Heather is proposing to plant.

Huge thanks to Wallace and Heather McCurdie for allowing us to use their land for planting – it's an absolutely beautiful spot. Thanks also to all the volunteers – you know who you are, but here are some photos to evidence it!



Sara Kendell

Farewell to a Birdingbury Legend

Val Elliot-Smith of Back Lane recently passed away after two strokes which left her mind as bright and switched on as always, but her body increasingly frail.



Val will be remembered with great fondness by many in the village. She was born in Marton in 1942 and moved to Birdingbury 52 years ago. For 35 years she ran Birdingbury Club, having taken it over on a temporary basis from husband, Adam, when he was injured in a sports match. She always kept a good pint and was a formidable member of the Club darts and skittles teams.

Over the years Val was actively involved in many village activities. Amongst her hobbies she enjoyed decorating her house with her teapot collection and regularly arranging flowers for the church. She loved her garden and creating celebration cakes for special occasions. Amongst her more unusual interests were photography and railway modelling.

Val leaves behind her an extensive family. Son, Darren, and daughter, Teresa, gave her six grandchildren and nine great grandchildren, including the latest additions, Rónán and Isabelle. She was also very involved with her brother's family, also Back Lane residents.

The funeral service will be on Tuesday 4 April at 12 noon at St Leonard's Birdingbury, and thereafter at 1.30pm at Rainsbrook Crematorium. This will be followed by a Reception at Birdingbury Club.

Val's Family and Friends

Please note:

- Parking for the funeral will be available in the village and at the Club. Please park there as there is very limited space outside church
- The Community Café will not take place on the day of Val's funeral.

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

The Altar Guild AGM

This year the Altar Guild AGM will take place on Wednesday 17 May at 3.00pm in the Club lounge. Afternoon cream tea will be provided.

Please contact Liz on 632379 to confirm your attendance. We look forward to seeing you then.

Liz Ellis, Eira Owen and Jasmine Coles



Thank You From Sara

I have always known our village is such a great place to live but these past few weeks have made me realise how very special it is.

I recently had an operation and Matt happened to need to go away with work for a week shortly afterwards. I couldn't quite walk Oscar yet as he sometimes pulls like a train.

It wasn't great timing but luckily we are surrounded by such helpful, caring and very kind people.

A lot of people helped me walking Oscar. One time, I tried to walk him by myself, and I only made it up the road before he was pulling quite a bit. I looked around for help and it was a great feeling to know that I could just ask someone, and they would probably be likely to say yes. I believe that doesn't happen everywhere: only at a special place like Birdingbury.

The community cafe is also amazing. It was so lovely to see everyone and have a laugh over coffee and scrumptious cakes and freshly baked sausage rolls.

Little things mean so much and I couldn't do it without you all.

Thank you so much.

Sara Hancock



BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

The Village Crocks

Just to remind villagers that there is a large quantity of glasses, cups and saucers, and other items available for free loan. There are:

- 96 Wine glasses and 36 Tumblers
- 96 Cups and saucers
- 100 each - knives, forks and spoons
- 55 Large white dinner plates and 80 Side plates
- 90 Small bowls
- 90 Medium melamine plates (ideal for barbecues)



These are all kept at The Barn in Back Lane. If you would like to borrow them please ring me on 632094 to reserve them or for more information.

Rhondda Barney

Where Have All The Birds Gone?

Overall this winter in Birdingbury has been mild, but interspersed with spells of dry frosty weather. However, when it has been freezing, we have hardly been inundated with birds visiting our garden feeders. It's a very unscientific observation, but I think 40-50 years ago thrushes, long tailed tits and starlings would have been common garden visitors.

One winter, in our early days, in the village we had thousands of starlings roosting in trees on Main Street. I have good memories of murmurations in the evening skies by McCurdie's farm. The downside however was having to wear a hooded anorak.

Sadly, it's not just a loss of bird species, when it's dark and cold, but each year there seem fewer swallows and martins. Also, it's now very unusual to hear a cuckoo.

I think watching birds is good for the soul. However, they are also part of a pattern of biodiversity loss and indicative of worrying trends. I don't want my experience of seeing a wide range of British birds to be through TV programmes, focussing on unspoilt places and nature reserves.



The reason they became extinct?

What then can we do? Maybe, in the long term, the proposed UK farmland subsidies system will help, but so can our individual and community actions. It was good to be involved recently in the planting of a small copse of mixed woodland on the footpath to Frankton. Many of us tend to be tidy gardeners, but even a small area of uncultivated land is good for wildlife.

We need actions that will not only help our village to be more bird friendly but which are beneficial for all forms of wildlife. Maybe you have other suggestions?

Dick Withington

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Birdingbury knows

Every year the clocks go on

but tic toc cannot

Thin Jethro Laskey



Ukrainian Update from Hereford House

Just before Christmas, as shelling around their home town intensified, Alina's mother, father and younger brother decided they should leave. Alina and Igor were naturally pleased and relieved. They had previously attempted to persuade the rest of the family to join them but without success. However, with the situation deteriorating, they agreed the time was right. Conditions there have been poor for some time with limited electricity supplies, often rolling blackouts, supplies shortages and the constant air sirens meaning little sleep for anyone. The relief for Igor and Alina was clear.

For our part, the decision was easy: we would stand as sponsors for the rest of the family on the basis that they would land here for the minimal amount of time before finding suitable accommodation. We did not feel we could house five refugees and the plan had always been to help them set up in their own accommodation, so this was perhaps the kickstart they needed to find their own place!

As Igor and Alina had been tentatively looking around the Banbury area. Now there was a new impetus to their quest, as we had applied for the family's visas which were quickly approved. On Monday 19 December they moved into their own place: a new build, three-bedroom house just on the outskirts of Banbury. I visited that evening, taking a few small bits they left behind in the rush to move. I found them looking happy but tired. The washing machine (kindly donated by the Kilvingtons) was in and already going round!

Last minute arrangements in Ukraine meant that there was a slight delay in Ivanna, Roman and Arsen's arrival. They came straight to see us the following day. The tired and slightly haunted looks were familiar, but they seemed genuinely glad to be here.

A week or two later we were invited over to Banbury for a bracing February BBQ! Apparently, it's totally normal to have BBQs in February, Igor assures me! Arsen, aged 12 years, will study online Ukraine School, while Ivanna & Roman will look to work in the car seat manufacturing factory, alongside Igor and Aline.



Left-Right: Igor, Alina, Arsen, Ivanna & Roman

The colour in their cheeks and relaxed smiles told of unbroken sleep and a sense of safety at last. Long may that continue . . .

Rosie and Mike Wallace

The Coffin Walk

We saw the sign for this walk many years ago, near the now closed Shoulder of Mutton pub in Stretton-on-Dunsmore, and resolved to walk it one day.

Well, on 9 February we finally did it and what a lovely short walk it is. We decided to use the bus from Birdingbury and have lunch at the Oak and Black Dog in Stretton. The bus service from Birdingbury is very good and something to be very grateful for, but careful planning is needed to fill in the gaps around the bus times. So, joined by our friends Kev and Sue we caught the 9.16 bus to Princethorpe (Fosse Way), using our bus passes (well most of us did but Kev's bus pass had run out 4 days previously). On alighting, we headed down Sheepdip Lane to the start of the walk.

Why 'Coffin Walk'? The best information I could find is that it is a former cross-faith burial procession route between Stretton village church and that of St Marys Priory at Princethorpe. I would welcome any corrections or further information on this. The path was maintained at five feet wide to accommodate the coffin and bearers and was renovated by the boy scouts a few years ago. It is no longer five feet wide and a bit muddy in places.



The walk is a little over a mile and so we arrived at Stretton by 10.30 with lunch booked for 12.00. So, after a welly and paw wash in the village stream, we headed to the community café in the village hall (which luckily takes place on a Thursday) where we were greeted by none other than Karen Armbrister and Barbara Sweet.

We enjoyed lovely coffee and cakes, followed by the short walk to the Oak and Black Dog for lunch. The Oak is now the only pub in the village where once there had been ten.

The bus stop for the journey home is right outside the pub, so we got on to the 14.49 and arrived back in Birdingbury by 15.00. It was a lovely, varied day out.

The path is very easy to follow and shown clearly on the OS explorer 222 map. Well behaved doggy friends are well catered for and welcome in the community café, on the bus and in the pub.

Happy walking!

Steve Edgar

A Big Thank You....

Ella and I would like to thank our friends and neighbours for the messages of congratulation and gifts received for the birth of our son, Evan. They are much appreciated.

Evan was 5lb 9oz when he was born on 2 March, 3 weeks early. Since then, he has made great progress and is visibly growing each day. He has already made his first visit to Birdingbury Club.

Peter Owen



...and Another One!



Proud parents Chelsea Mckinlay and James Munro welcomed baby George Ian into their family on 14 January. He was born in Warwick and weighed in at 7lb 15oz.

We are pleased to note that he has already sampled the delights of the Community Café (although he was asleep most of the time!).

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Community Café – Tuesdays 10.30 to 12

We have been delighted the Community Café has been so well received with between 25 and 35 people of all ages, joining us on Tuesday mornings in the Club and Birbury, for home baked goodies, barista coffees, hot chocs, teas and plenty of good chat. We estimate that over 60 villagers have called in at some point since we started in January. It couldn't happen without our fabulous bakers, baristas, servers, and welcomers or without our wonderful community turning out to support us.

In typical Birdingbury fashion, donations have been generous and, so far, we have been delighted to make the following donations* from the Community Café:

Disasters Emergency Appeal for Turkey and Syria £200

Rugby Foodbank £50

MIND Leamington Branch £50

The Ups of Downs £100

Alzheimers Society £100

*Two donations are made each month and are determined by how much cash, after expenses, is available. Charities are chosen by us and our regular helpers. We try, wherever possible, to support local charities or local branches of bigger charities.

New volunteers will be welcomed with open arms! Give us a call if you can help.

Karen Armbrister and Jean Foroughi

BIRDINGBURY TRACTOR AND CLASSICS ROAD RUN

With afternoon entertainment and an evening with

The Great Dr Busker



Bank Holiday Sunday 30th April 2023

Fun for all the family and all vehicles welcome.

£10 per vehicle including a burger or hotdog.

Meet at Birdingbury Club at 9am for tea, coffee and bacon rolls
prior to getting on the road.

Burgers and hotdogs on return with liegeed bar.

All money raised will be donated to SANDS and RABI

Pre-booked camping available.

For information or to book please call or message John on
07888699555

Birdingbury Coronation Weekend Events

Saturday 6 May

- The **Coronation service** will be screened on the big screen at the Club from 11am (exact time tbc)
- It's **pizza night** at the Club from 5.30pm



Sunday 7 May

- Do join us for a **special church service** at St Leonard's, as we celebrate the Coronation of our new King Charles III and his Queen Consort. The service will start at 11.00am with coffee, last around 45 minutes, and be informal and suitable for all ages.

We invite everyone to come dressed for a coronation! Red, white and blue, or in outfits suitable for mixing with royalty!

We'd also love you to create wooden spoon families (as we did in previous years) who can come along to church and then be displayed in the lych gate for the week to follow.

We will finish at the Club, following a royal procession down the hill through Main Street.

We'd love to celebrate with you in true Birdingbury style!

- We are planning a **shared lunch** at the Club/Birbury from 12.30pm (ish). We will need some volunteer chefs and servers for this so please make yourself known if you can help! Contact Tony at antonyflint@aol.com
- The **Coronation concert** will be shown on the big screen in the Club in the evening, time tbc.



Monday 8th May

- The new King has specified he'd like the whole country to focus on volunteering efforts on the Bank Holiday Monday of the Coronation weekend - thinking about how communities can come together to support and help each other.

We plan to move the **Community Café** to Monday 8 May, so we can build on this: introduce the café to those who are unable to come along on normal weeks, and, perhaps, grow our list of willing volunteers.

We will be open for business on the Monday from 10am to 12 noon and will be looking for some helpers and bakers – whether you have done it before or not! If you're around and could offer some help, whatever your age, then contact Karen on 07919 594559 or Jean on 07826 539775. We'd be delighted to hear from you.

And, if you can't offer help, then just come along and join us for coffee, cake, good chat and companionship.

Bring along any ideas about how we could develop the volunteering culture in our community. We will have the 'The Birdingbury Big Help Out Board' in place where we're going to try to find and record as many offers of voluntary help to do good things in the village as we can!

More details will follow nearer the time. Keep a watch out for a flyer, on the village Facebook page, and the Village Chat WhatsApp group.

Tony Flint, Karen Armbrister and Guy French

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG



Open Mic Night

Join the Jammers

at Birdingbury Club

On Thursday 13 April



from 8 'til late

Jo Young and Steve Edgar

Easter Art Exhibition

Napton Art Group are holding their Easter Exhibition of members' work at Napton Village Hall (CV47 8LS) between 10am and 5 pm on 8 and 9 of April.

There will be about 200 paintings in all mediums including oils, water colours, acrylics and pastels, with greetings cards of some of these available.

Admission is £1 with free entry for children and there will be light refreshments in the pop-up cafe. Everybody who comes can vote for The Best in Show.



The art group has a membership that now stands at over 60. We meet every Thursday afternoon at Napton Village Hall and have a programme featuring a wide range of demonstrations and weekend workshops.

Contact me at hjc05@icloud.com for more information.

Howard Collerson

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Bowling at Leamington Hastings

Our outdoor season is approaching fast, with the traditional opening of the green match on Saturday 22 April. We will have our fingers crossed for good weather but if it rains (or snows), we'll get wet!! Thereafter, we will be bowling outdoors every Wednesday at 6pm from Wednesday 26th April.

In the meantime, we continue to bowl indoors in the Leamington Hastings Parish Hall every Wednesday from 2pm until 4pm with a short break for refreshments and a catch up. If you would like to come along and have a bowl, indoors or outdoors, it doesn't matter if you have played before or if you are a complete beginner, you will be made very welcome.

Our indoor season has been very well attended creating an enjoyable, sociable atmosphere with some unique coaching tips given and taken in good humour.

We held our Skittles Night last month raising £455 for the club. Well done everyone: it was another success with the last ball of the evening winning the tie break by one pin! The hall certainly heard some cheering that night.

We wish all our members good health and those who have been absent, we hope to see you soon.

Susan Turner

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

The Dancer

Where is the red haired girl
Who danced upon the stage
That night?

His face was drained
As time re-entered
All its empty rooms.

He could not find
Beyond that face
A name,
Only the fire
That danced so bright
Within its flame.

Then he, a windblown
Speck of dirt
Moved on.

Where is that girl?
Where is that moon?
Where are those early eyes?
And why such stubborn tears?

But there was nothing,
Just a face afraid
Of all the fuss
At dancing it had made.

Pilgrim

Grub at the Club

Serving times vary from around 17.00 to 20.30.

The schedule can change at short notice.

Keep your eye on Village Chat WhatsApp group and Birdingbury Club Facebook page.

Date	Menu
Saturday 8 April	Pizza Night
Thursday 13 April	Village Chippy
Saturday 15 April	Zack's Burgers
Friday 21 April	Village Kitchen - Curry
Saturday 6 May	Pizza Night
Thursday May 11	Village Chippy
Friday 19 May	Village Kitchen - Mexican

Polling Day on 4 May

Don't forget your photo ID!

Mobile Library

The Warwickshire Mobile Library will be visiting the Club forecourt from 13.30 to 14.00 on:

17 February 2023

10 March 2023

31 March 2023



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