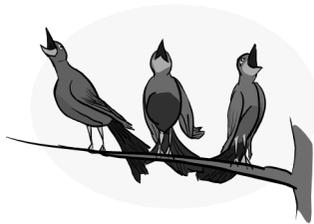


BIRDSONG

**April and May
2025**



**BIRDINGBURY
NEWS
NO 127**



Raising the Barrs

Cheers to everyone!

Birdingbury Parish Council Report

Our March meeting was the last of the Council year which ends in April and re-starts with the Parish Council AGM in May. It is also the last before the **Annual Village Meeting** (7:30pm on 29 April in the Birbury – see notice later in Birdsong) when the Parish Council gives an update on its year, followed by updates from other village organisations.

In our meeting we discussed the Stockton Road junction and I am pleased to say that there has been progress there. The developers (Noralle) have been happy to engage when issues have been raised with them, and they share the Parish Council's concerns about the flooding on that corner. Noralle have cleared the ditch and both ends of the blocked culvert, but we are still waiting for confirmation from Highways when the culvert itself will be cleared. We have escalated the delay to our County Councillor, Dale Keeling.

I'd like to thank the ten or so families who responded to my request for views on the playing field equipment. Whilst most of the children understandably liked everything, the priority from parents was 'slides and swings' and that, when it comes to balance and agility equipment, simple pieces are often better than bigger units. We have received updated quotes from suppliers and the cost of replacing the mound slide is rising. As a result, we're looking at completing our more urgent priority first, i.e. the replacement of the broken nursery swing, hopefully with a double unit.

I try to avoid this next subject in these updates, but we also discussed the concerns expressed on the Village Chat WhatsApp group about dog mess. We have two dog bins in the village already and we discussed extra signage but concluded that anyone allowing their dog to leave a mess on other people's lawns and doorsteps is hardly going to change their behaviour just because of a sign or two. The vast majority of dog owners act responsibly, so this is probably the regular behaviour of just one or two.

The Parish Council retains some funds that had been accrued over the years when we had a Bonfire Night event. As this has now stopped, we have agreed to allocate the remaining funds to help pay for the replacement playing field equipment. David Preston has the lighting equipment used to illuminate the path and cooking tent for Bonfire events and these are available as 'village assets' to anyone needing a bit more light for an event of their own. Please let David know if you'd like to borrow them.

As some of you may know, Lisa and I are likely to be moving this summer, so I have stepped down as Chair and Councillor. So, most importantly, **this creates a vacancy** for anyone wanting to get involved. Please contact a Councillor or the Clerk if you are interested.

As this is my last Parish Council update, I had a quick look back at my ramblings from the last 6 years and was struck by the range of global and national events – two

General Elections, five Prime Ministers, Covid, Ukraine, Gaza, a 70th Jubilee and a Coronation – most of which have affected village life in some way. May you live in interesting times, they say! Meanwhile, the Parish Council has discussed planning, pumping drains, parking, pooing, litter picking, play equipment and tree planting.

However, the memories that mean the most to me are those about community: the Café, the re-energised Club and its events, Swap Shop, Birdsong, Remembrance Sunday, the Recreation Field work gang, and the Litter Pickers. So, I'd like to finish by thanking anyone and everyone who has been involved in the Parish Council or any of the community organisations and activities that make this village what it is.

Thank you.

Guy French, Chair, Birdingbury Parish Council

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Community Café

The Café continues to run weekly and is a lively hub of conversation and laughter. All ages are welcome; our youngest visitor this year just two weeks old and our oldest approaching her 90th birthday this year!

We couldn't run if it weren't for our fabulous band of willing volunteers who serve and bake with a smile, week in and week out. We are so grateful to them.

Since December 2024, thanks to your generous donations for excellent bakes and drinks, we have donated £275 to the Club's refurbishment fund, and £750 to charities including Unicef, the NSPCC, Rugby Foodbank and Crisis at Christmas.

By this coming December, Jean and I will have been running the Café for almost 3 years. We've enjoyed it immensely, but feel we'd like others to step up and take it on now. We would propose to pass over everything that we have built up for the Café: cash float, equipment and supplies. We will happily work with anyone to hand over and show you how we've run it.



The Café is really valued by those in our community who find it hard to get out and about these days, so we hope that someone, or maybe a group of people, will find room in their hearts and diaries to take it on and keep it running for our community.

Jean and I will continue to take the lead until the Café closes for Christmas 2025, but are happy to pass it over before that if someone feels able to take it on. Sadly, if no one comes forward, the Café will close at that point, and our equipment etc. will be offered to the Club.

Have a chat with us if you'd like to know more.

Karen Armbrister and Jean Foroughi

Wine and Cheese Evening 8 March 2025



Birdingbury Club was once again packed in anticipation of the night ahead. Six wines and accompanying cheeses were sampled by the attendees.

Our Parish Council Chair prepared himself for the fun ahead by donning full PPE and 'lining the stomach' with a drop of the black stuff.

A few subtle changes were made with the introduction of a mystery wine and a quiz at the interval. Judging by the levels of noise and laughter, they were well received and gave everyone a welcome breather.

Wines and cheeses on the night were:

- The Wines Society's Exhibition English Sparkling Wine, with Per Las
- Tony Bish's Fat & Sassy Hawkes Bay Chardonnay 2023, with Delice de Bourgogne
- Parker Station Pinot Noir 2019, with Brie de Meaux
- Beaujolais-Villages, Chateau de Lacarelle 2022 (mystery wine), with Epoisse de Bourgogne
- Weinert Carrascal Malbec 2022, with Black Bomber
- Graham's Fine White Port, with Gruyere Cave Aged.

As the night looked to be coming to a close, the music was cranked up, tables pushed back and suddenly the dancing began.

Everyone continued to party, though it is unlikely Strictly will be visiting any time soon.

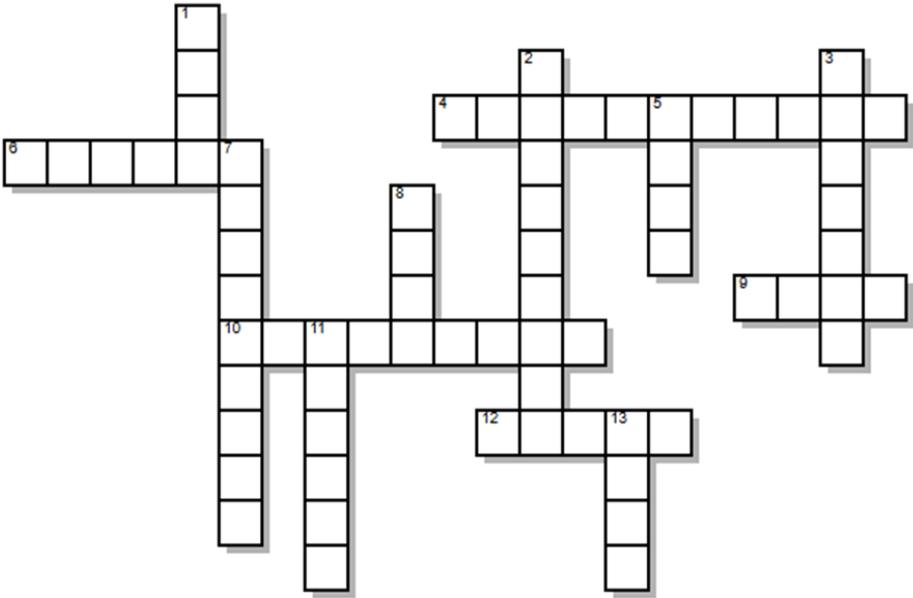
In fact the best 'move' of the night was by Steve Edgar who pretended he needed some assistance home just to gain the company of these three lovely ladies!

John and Jenny Barr



BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Another Tasty Teaser from John and Jenny



Across

- 4 Dark Destroyer
- 6 Argentina's bold red
- 9 Edible or not, it's part of the cheese
- 10 A wine expert's title
- 12 Land of Chianti, Barolo and Prosecco

Down

- 1 Not red, not white but
- 2 Normandy's creamy cheese
- 3 To turn grapes into wine
- 5 Types of cheese with veins of mould
- 7 A must-have wine tool
- 8 Soft cheese fit for a king
- 11 A large bottle of wine
- 13 Streaks that wine leaves on a glass

The Sealed Knot Society



The Sealed Knot is the oldest re-enactment society in the UK, a registered educational charity, and the single biggest re-enactment society in Europe.

The Sealed Knot brings history to life by staging events throughout the country all year round, offering a chance to experience at first hand the horrors of a nation at war with itself, as well as

providing a glimpse of everyday life in those days.

Back in February 1968, following a garden party in cavalier costume to publicise the launch of Brigadier Peter Young's book on the Battle of Edgehill, he and a group of friends came up with the idea of forming a period army. This idea soon took off and within two years there were more than one thousand members of this Royalist Army.

Now we are about to enter our 57th year, with the addition of the Army of Parliament and later the Army of Ireland and Scotland. Our membership has grown to make us the biggest re-enactment society in Europe. The aims of the Society are not to glorify war, but to honour those who died in the many battles of the English Civil War, to educate the public about those wars and about the lives and times of people in that period, and to entertain people.



The name of the Society derives from a group which, during the Protectorate, plotted for the restoration of the monarchy. Here the similarity ends as the present society is non-political with no affiliation or ambitions.



The Sealed Knot charity commemorates our history in a number of ways. Principally, we perform re-enactments in local communities based around battles, skirmishes and sieges of the English Civil War. This includes annual events at Nantwich, Cheriton, Basing House, Stratton, Marston Moor, Naseby, Edgehill and Ripple. We try to support local heritage projects related to artefacts, battlefields, commemorative plaques and monuments.

Our events vary in size. A major battle takes place over two or three days, often over Bank Holiday weekends, and can see thousands of combatants taking to the field.

At the other end of the scale, in small groups we visit schools at their request to give pupils a more hands-on approach to history by seeing us in costume, being able to ask us

questions, and also handling some of the equipment we take with us. In their own schools pupils can learn cookery, clothes, education and politics alongside the weapons and battle strategies from people who have studied the period.

I have been a member since 1971 and during that time have fulfilled a number of different roles. I started as a pikeman, rising through the ranks to be a Colonel-General. In the mid 1980s, work meant that I had to reduce my involvement at which time I reverted back to being a musketeer, which I have been ever since.



If you are interested in knowing more about the society and where our events are taking place then please get in contact with me on 07768 707485 or jrp.owen@btinternet.com.

John Owen

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Club Opening Hours

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Monday – Wednesday | Closed |
| Thursday | 6pm – 9pm |
| Friday | 5pm – 11pm |
| Saturday | 2pm – 11pm |
| Sunday | 12noon – 7pm |

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Birdingbury Allotment Association

There are plots available at Birdingbury Allotments, just in time for spring planting. If you'd like to grow your own fruit, vegetables and flowers this is a great way to start. For more information and to view the plots, please contact me on 07580 674341.

Vic Shayler

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Birdingbury knows
the poems of prancing lambs
tails that should be bard

Thin Jethro Laskey



Five months around the globe...part 2

Part one of our journey concluded in Vanuatu and our next destination was a three hour flight over to Fiji. We flew into Fiji's largest island Viti Levu to the city of Nadi. Fiji consists of over 300 islands and our plan was to do around five days on the main island and around a week travelling the Yasawa islands.

Fiji has a lot of Indian influence, which was good news for us as we both love Indian food! On the main island, we hired a car and travelled between Nadi and the capital, Suva. It was a fun few days with a mixture of hiking, climbing the Sigatoka sand dunes, visiting the mud pools and exploring the beaches. The island gave us arguably the highlight of the entire trip, which was diving with sharks. We dropped down to around 15 metres and were surrounded by thousands of fish and around 50 sharks, including bull sharks, nurse sharks and lemon sharks. It was an exhilarating experience to be out in the open water (no cage!) only metres away from these stunning creatures.



After exploring the main island, we had two home stays planned in the Yasawa islands. Rob sent over a quick WhatsApp to the person we were going to stay with and we (Rob) took the decision to take the local boat. It turned out the 'local boat' was a local in a boat around three metres long who would be whizzing us both over to the island. It was a two hour journey and the first 30 minutes was beautiful with tranquil seas. The tranquillity didn't last long, the open ocean arrived and with it the waves! The next hour and half was spent pounding against the water. Every time the boat dropped, water would soak us. We were holding on for our lives. The only respite was when we needed to stop and Rob had to help refill the petrol as we had ran out of fuel! 90 long minutes later we arrived at the home stay – every single part of us and our clothes were drenched!

We were the only tourists on the entire island so we had a really authentic stay. No air conditioning, our shower was a bucket of water that we threw over our head, and our food was expertly caught and prepared by our hosts. It was lovely to spend three days immersing ourselves in the local way of life – watching how happy the villagers were without all the western comforts we take for granted was a lovely experience.

After a second home stay in the Yasawas, we headed back to the main island where we would take our next flight to Tahiti, French Polynesia. This flight would involve crossing the international date line. Our flight left Fiji at 10.30pm and arrived in Tahiti at 4.50am on the same day! For us, 30 October was 46 hours long, and it felt that way, after arriving into Tahiti at 4.50am and not being able to check in to the accommodation until 3pm!

The sea in French Polynesia is unbelievable. Every picture we took belonged on the front page of a travel brochure. We had a few weeks here, which involved island hopping through Tahiti, Maupiti, Bora-Bora, Raiatea, Huahine and Moorea. This is an expensive part of the world so for a significant part of this leg we were back in the tent!

Each island has its own unique charm but the highlight was Bora-Bora. Bora-Bora, known as the Pearl of the Pacific, is idyllic in every sense. Within the space of seconds you can be swimming with huge manta rays, encountering sharks up close and looking back over the lagoon at Mount Otemanu, an extinct volcano covered in lush greenery.



All French Polynesia was a tropical dream and much less commercialised than we were expecting (apart from the £10,000 a night over-water bungalows!).

Next up was New Zealand – we crossed the date line in the other direction. We left on Thursday and despite only having a six hour flight we arrived on Saturday! Here we would spend ten days on the North Island and three weeks on the South Island.



The North Island has immense geothermal activity and stunning coast lines. We hired a car, bought a tent and went on our merry way. Highlights on the north island included visiting Hobbiton (home of Bilbo and Frodo from Lord of the Rings), hiking around geothermal sites with magnificently coloured lakes, and exploring the Coromandel coast.

Our favourite day on the north island was completing the Tongariro crossing. This is a 19.4km

hike through dramatic volcanic landscapes. The trail winds past rugged lava fields, steaming vents, emerald-coloured lakes and Mount Doom from Lord of the Rings. The climb to the red crater offered stunning panoramic views.

We took our sore legs back to Richard's house, where we were staying for a couple of nights. Richard was a lovely man, who had spent many years working for DOC (Department of Conservation) – across our trip we met so many lovely, kind, helpful people and Richard epitomised this.



Our travels continued to the South Island. The South Island has dramatic and diverse landscapes. Drive an hour and you're in a new stunning landscape that looks completely different to the stunning landscape you saw an hour before. The Southern Alps dominate the island and we got great views of Mount Cook during our trek on the second day. The lupins were in bloom around Lake Tekapo, which offered an idyllic setting for a glass of Sauvignon Blanc with New Zealand lamb. To the west of the island, Fiordland national park features deep fiords, towering waterfalls and lush rainforests.

We spent Anna's 30th birthday in Milford Sound, which was a true highlight. We were also fortunate enough to experience our first helicopter ride that offered beautiful panoramic views over several glaciers and the Southern Alps. We finished the South Island in the Marlborough region sampling the world renowned wines!



Finally, we had told all our family at home that on Christmas Eve, we would be flying to Sydney to enjoy Christmas and New Year in Australia. Little did they know that the whole time this was a decoy (planned in conjunction with Karen Armbrister) and we planned to fly home to surprise them on Christmas Day. A three hour flight to Sydney was followed by a fifteen hour flight to Dubai and an eight hour flight to Birmingham. The plane was serving Christmas dinner, which we enjoyed with a Baileys!

After visiting Rob's family in Coventry we took a taxi over to Birdingbury. Thirty-five hours earlier we had left Christchurch, New Zealand and now we were finally back in Birdingbury at 5pm Christmas Day. Lisa, Guy, Kate and Henry were all at Karen and Andrew's without any idea that we were about to walk in. Karen snuck us in the back door and we strode into the dining room. Stunned silence. Open mouths. Disbelief. The thirty-five hour journey was absolutely worth it!

Anna French and Rob Cleaver (who also wrote part one!)

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Twitterings

Congratulations to Alice and Liam Munro on the birth of baby Noah. He's already visited the café!

Speedy recovery to Rhondda Barney, Cynthia Rogers, Roger Hawes, Tony Higgins, Chris de Nahlik and others feeling below par (you know who you are!).

Sad to say goodbye to Nellie, a much loved Birdingbury dog known for her joie de vivre despite losing a hind leg jumping off the viaduct as a puppy.



Something for Everyone



Rugby's Percival Guildhouse is kicking off its summer term with a wealth of new courses from computer game development, animation, and mobile film making to character concept design and much more.

These are among 18 new offerings at the adult education centre which has been combining learning and fun for 100 years. Also new are several additional courses in well-being and introductory foreign languages. Courses vary in length, with many new courses taking place in the evening.

The summer term starts on 28 April. Course bookings are now open.

In addition, whether your interests tend towards art, family history or exercise, there will be something for you among the Saturday workshops at The Percival Guildhouse. Day courses in Life Drawing, Watercolour Painting, Air Dry Clay Ornaments, Family History and Tai Chi are being run on 5 April.

Full details are available at www.percival-guildhouse.co.uk or phone 01788 542467 between 9am and 3.30pm on weekdays or visit www.percival-guildhouse.co.uk for details of all workshops.

Clare Turnbull

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Easter Art Exhibition

Napton Art Group are holding their annual Easter Exhibition of members' work at Napton Village Hall (CV47 8LS) on Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 April 2025, between 10am and 4 pm.

There will be about 200 paintings including oils, watercolours, acrylics and pastels: greetings cards of some of these will be 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 People's Favourite' painting.

The nominated charity this year is the Air Ambulance. Group members will be displaying small paintings that will be for sale at a cost of £10, with the proceeds going to the charity. Payments for items can now be made by card/phone as well as cash/cheques.

The Art Group has a membership that now stands at over 50 and meets every Thursday afternoon at Napton Village Hall. Our programme features a wide range of demonstrations and weekend workshops. Visitors who might wish to join the group are welcome on any Thursday afternoon between 2pm and 4 pm. Contact me on 01926 813181 for further details

Howard Collerson

Birdingbury Cancer Research Fundraiser

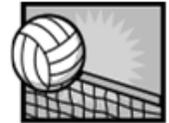
Join the fun help and help raise funds on

Saturday July 12

11.00 am Village local history walk
- approx. 3/4 mile



2.00 pm 5 a side football at the park
- all ages welcome



4.00 pm Barbecue with the
Birdingbury bbq guys



7.00 pm Open mic with local talent
and special guests



The idea for doing a fundraising day for Cancer Research came to me some time ago when quite a few of our friends and acquaintances were experiencing problems relating to various types of cancer.

This was the criteria for choosing Cancer Research UK as our chosen charity, since their work covers all types of the disease. I have a keen interest in history and especially local history. Likewise, football is very popular in the village and should appeal to all ages. The open mic idea was a no brainer with such talent among our villagers and friends. Finally who can resist a village BBQ! More details will come in the June/July issue of Birdsong. Meanwhile, I hope to see a good turnout and sunshine on the day.

Steve Edgar

BIRDINGBURY TRACTOR AND CLASSICS ROAD RUN

With afternoon entertainment and an evening with
The Great Dr Busker



Saturday May 3rd 2025

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 licenced 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 07888699355

Birdingbury Annual Village Meeting

Tuesday 29 April at 7:30 p.m. in the Birbury

The Parish Council is pleased to invite you to hear about progress and plans from the Council and from village organisations. The expected agenda is:

- Update from the Parish Council
- Updates from village organisations, including:
 - The Club
 - The Birbury Management Committee
 - The Parochial Church Council
 - Birdsong
 - Community Café
 - Swap Shop

It would be lovely to see you there.

Birdingbury Parish Council

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Birbury Management Committee AGM

Tuesday 29 April at 7:00 p.m. in the Birbury

The Birbury Management Committee meets three times a year and its Annual General Meeting is open to the public. This will be held before the Annual Village Meeting. The agenda is:

- Update on Committee activities for 2024-25
- Presentation of BMC accounts
- Report on the Distribution Fund

All are welcome.

Birbury Management Committee

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Make Me No Shadows

She tramped
The southern hills,
Singing her old song
Like a lantern
Made of sound.

The sharpness
Of widowcraft
Had bitten her face,
And her hair
Was almost blue.

At nightfall
She stood
Where the path divided...

No longer alone
Listening,
As from before,
An orchestra
Of feathery tongues
Sang praiselessly
A small thunder
Pressing through
The empty air.

‘Make me no shadows,’
She said,
‘For I have brought my own.’

Pilgrim

Regular Events

There's always lots more going on and details can change at short notice.
Keep your eye on Village Chat WhatsApp group and Birdingbury Club Facebook page.

| When to eat | What to eat |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Friday 4 April from 5.30pm | Bad Boys Burgers Mouthwatering burgers and fries |
| Thursday 10 April from 4.30pm | Chippy Van Club open from 4.30pm |
| Saturday 12 April from 5.30pm | Pizza Van Wood fired pizzas made to order |
| Friday 18 April from 5.30pm | Village Kitchen Curry Freshly made in our Birdingbury kitchen |
| Friday 25 April from 5.30pm | That's Nugs Chicken nuggets street food style |
| Thursday 8 May from 4.30pm | Chippy Van Club open from 4.30pm |
| Friday 9 May from 5.30pm | Cajun Kitchen Cajun and Creole comfort food |
| Saturday 17 May from 5.30pm | Pizza Van Wood fired pizzas made to order |
| Friday 23 May from 5.30pm | Village Kitchen Curry Freshly made in our Birdingbury kitchen |
| Friday 30 May from 5.30pm | Bad Boys Burgers Mouthwatering burgers and fries |

Mobile Library

4 April 2025 2 May 2025 30 May 2025

13.40 to 14.00

Outside the Club



Birdsong Editor:

Lesley Fleming

Moonrakers, Back Lane Tel 632508

Copy date for next issue – 18 MAY 2025