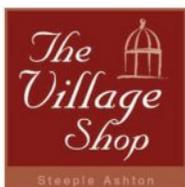


STEEPLE ASHTON  
**NEWSLETTER**  
GREAT HINTON  
**MAY 2022**



**Steeple Ashton High Street around 1900**

At first glance this early photo appears little different from the view today. However, a closer examination reveals differences: no overhead wires; a road surface of compacted stone; the wider grass verges; a triangle of grass, just visible, at the junction of Dark Lane North and the High Street; and the rear of Moorfield Farm, plus the roof of a thatched house that faced the church and burned down in 1926, can just be seen in the background.



**Steeple Ashton Village Shop**

**Opening Hours** - please see page **12** for the current shop opening hours.

**Shop telephone:** 01380 871 211

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## Editorial

Hello everyone - as I am writing this, it is cold and windy again. We knew it couldn't last but the weather for the holiday has been so lovely.

I hope you can all find time to pop into church to see the splendid flower arrangements which were done by the flower ladies for Easter. The Easter Sunday service was so well attended and it was really special to be gathered together again in our beautifully decorated church.

Talking of flowers, the village Open Gardens is at the end of this month - May 29th. We also have a concert to look forward to in the church on May 21st and Trowbridge Players are going to perform Community Spirit in the Village Hall on the 13th and 14th May - taking advantage of the new stage facilities. Please do try to support all these events. **Helen**

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## Newsletter Deadlines for 2022

**May 24th; June 21st; July 19th for August and September**

Items for the **next** newsletter should be received by **Tuesday 24th May**. They should be sent to Mrs Helen Montague-Smith, 1A Butts Lane, Steeple Ashton or by email to **helenmontaguesmith8@gmail.com**

All published items solely express **the views of the author** and are the copyright of the author and the newsletter unless otherwise stated.

The Editor would like to remind you that it is up to you, the readers, to supply all news and copy for the newsletter. The sender's name and address need to be received before printing. Telephone 01380 871285.

Inquiries for advertisements in the newsletter should be made to **Sarah Blake** on 01380 502648 email: adverts4steepleashton@gmail.com

Please send your ads by email if possible.

**Please note, we do not deliver flyers for advertisers.**

# **STEEPLE ASHTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **The Steeple Ashton Recreation & Community Development Group**

The working group is now meeting regularly on the second Monday of each month in the Skittle Alley at the Village Hall from 7.00pm. Members of the public are most welcome to attend. The group is discussing how to enhance the recreation areas at St Marys and Newleaze and copies of the agendas and minutes for the meetings can be found on the PC website. Dates of meetings will be publicised via Facebook as well as the website.

### **Parish Council Vacancies**

Your Parish Council currently has only seven members out of its normal compliment of nine. We would welcome the support of more community minded residents; especially, but not limited to, those who could represent the views of residents in Ashton Common, Common Hill, Holmeleaze, Newleaze and Elmsgate/Raydown.

New members can be co-opted to the council through a simple vote, there is no need to go through an election process. You do need to be over 18 years old and have lived or worked in the parish for the past 12 months. If you would like to find out more about joining the parish council, please contact our clerk Nicola Duke via phone (01373 864127 / 07971 987806) or email ([clerk@steeple-ashton.co.uk](mailto:clerk@steeple-ashton.co.uk))

### **Parish Council Website**

The new Parish Council website is now live.

Local groups and associations are invited to send any information they would like to see included on the website to the Parish Clerk – [clerk@steeple-ashton.co.uk](mailto:clerk@steeple-ashton.co.uk)

### **Parish Council comments on Planning Applications**

**PL/2022/01717** - 1 ST MARYS, STEEPLE ASHTON, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 6EN - Two storey extension to side of existing house to include double garage at ground floor and two bedrooms at first floor – No objection.

**PL/2022/01812** - 41 Newleaze, Steeple Ashton, Trowbridge, Wilts, BA14 6EF - Demolition of existing lean-to utility area and construction of extension to kitchen and formation of a toilet facility adjacent to front door – No objection.

**PL/2022/01792** - 42 NEWLEAZE, STEEPLE ASHTON, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 6EF - Extension to form new toilet and porch area. Adaptations to

existing open topped enclosure to form covered storage and entrance area – No objection.

**PL/2022/01865** - 60 A Yew Tree House High Street, Steeple Ashton, BA14 6EU - T1 - Yew tree - Monolith Yew tree to 3 m due to excessive decay in stem – No objection.

**PL/2022/02409** - BULLEN HILL FARM, ASHTON COMMON, STEEPLE ASHTON, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 6DY - Conversion and extension of an existing residential building to form two dwellings and erection of Garage Building – No objection.

**PL/2022/02611** - 43 HIGH STREET, STEEPLE ASHTON, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 6EU - Western Red Cedar - Fell as too close to house – No objection.

**PL/2022/01502 and PL/2022/02724** - THE MANOR, CHURCH STREET, STEEPLE ASHTON, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 6EW - Internal and external alterations to house including new back staircase, relocating kitchen, changes to ceiling and floor heights, removal of 1 existing bathroom, addition of roof lights and general repairs. Alterations to modern garage and adjacent oil tank/bin store area – deferred to the May meeting.

### **Wiltshire Council Planning Decision**

**PL/2022/00298** - Pear Tree Cottage, 15 Dark Lane North, Steeple Ashton, BA14 6EY - Demolition of rear entrance lobby, construction of two storey extension with juliet balcony on first floor, gazebo to cover existing Jacuzzi in timber construction, reduction of tree canopy to facilitate new extension and proposed solar panel array - Approve with Conditions.

### **Parish Council meeting dates 2022**

The Parish Council will meet on the following dates, at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall:

Thursday 5th May 2022 – Annual Council Meeting

Monday 6th June 2022

Monday 4th July 2022

August – Council recess

Monday 5th September 2022

Monday 3rd October 2022

Monday 7th November 2022

**Parish Council Contact:**

The Clerk can be contacted on 01373 864127 / 07971 987806 or email [clerk@steeple-ashton.co.uk](mailto:clerk@steeple-ashton.co.uk). All Councillors have live [@steeple-ashton.co.uk](mailto:@steeple-ashton.co.uk) email addresses which are also posted on the website.

**Find us on Social Media!** Through the **Parish Council page** and **Steeple Ashton Village Discussion Group**, we cover many topics of interest to our residents. Please be assured that this page is monitored regularly, and we take all requests seriously, actioning where appropriate. We also have a group called **'Steeple Sells'** for those of you that would like to buy and sell things locally – this is not a page that is part of the Parish Council policy or procedure, just a natural extension of social media activities. We would love you to get involved – search for 'Steeple Ashton' on Facebook. If you are a village group and need help with your social media or village event promotions, please get in touch with Pippa at [pippabirch@steeple-ashton.co.uk](mailto:pippabirch@steeple-ashton.co.uk) or 871578.

~~~ [www.steeple-ashton.co.uk](http://www.steeple-ashton.co.uk) ~~~



**DH3**  
**CONSTRUCTION**

NEW BUILDS  
EXTENSIONS

ALTERATIONS  
RENOVATIONS

01380 870355 / 07540 102841



## Steeple Ashton Village Hall

Firstly, if you receive this Newsletter in time, can I remind villagers that our AGM is to be held in the Village Hall on 6th May at 7.30pm. It won't be a long affair and I'm afraid we are not offering drinks or nibbles on this occasion. But the Village Hall is there for everyone and it is an opportunity to hear what has been achieved so far and to find out what plans we have for the future. It is also an opportunity to put forward ideas for the committee to consider. As one of the committee members is standing down, we will only be 6 so we ask if you could give some thought to joining us in order to help take this valuable sociable space forward for the community. The majority of major improvements have now been made but we are a small team and would really appreciate some additional help in the future.

We need people who:

- Have a genuine commitment to the Village Hall and the village
- Are proactive
- Have a friendly attitude
- Are prepared to share in the daily running of the hall where necessary and to help with any issues that arise
- Are happy to help with planning and organising fundraising events

If you think you might be interested but are not quite sure and would like to meet Clive or myself at the hall to discuss it further (with no obligation), please do make contact on the number below.

Our chairman is currently researching and discussing hearing loops! This has long been an issue for those who have difficulty hearing, and as the Village Hall is there for all and wishes to be inclusive, we felt it was very important to try and put this right. To this end we have discovered that our Hearing Loop system was not installed in the best way. So in the next few weeks, a dedicated omnidirectional microphone will be installed, connected directly to the hearing loop, which will help those with hearing aids hear better even if the speaker is not using the main microphone. Hopefully this will allow those in our community with impaired hearing to feel more involved and able to fully enjoy using the hall.

You may have noticed our lovely new planters outside the front of the hall. These were hand made in Acacia wood (very durable) by Dave Seabourne of Green Man Woodcrafts in Erlestoke. Dave works in sustainable Chestnut wood but had this Acacia wood available and felt it was more suited to our purpose. We hope you like their chunky, country look and that they will help soften and brighten the exterior of our 1970's Village Hall. Our aim was to have something that will stand the test of time and not rot away within a few years.

The planting has begun and we are extremely grateful to the following for their donations towards this:

*Steeple Ashton WI - Ann & Ken Hunt - Sue Ivey - Gill & Bill Aldridge*

Rather than something very formal, the idea is to create more of a cottage garden feel, more suitable for the village environment, with mixed permanent planting and interspersed each spring/summer with annual plants. We are going to try and plant some annual summer flowers in Red, White and Blue this year, in recognition of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee, but so far we have planted a *Trachelospermum Jasminoides* to cover the wall, Nandina, Hebes, Aubretia, Cowslips and Tête à tête narcissi.

**Marian Little**

**BOOKINGS:** Sandra Stevens 07827 291945 or email:  
steepleshtonvh@hotmail.com

**SECRETARY:** Marian Little 01380 871161 or email:  
secretary@steepleshtonvh.org.uk

**Please feel free to contact us at any time with any queries**

## **NATURAL HISTORY CLUB News**

Spring is definitely upon us and we are now seeing the birds slowly arriving that choose our village and surrounding area, along with the sedentary species, to breed. Already reports from members of Blackcaps, Whitethroats and Chiff Chafs arriving. Birds such as Skylarks, Linnets, Mistle Thrush and Yellow Hammers are being heard singing which means the mating and breeding season is getting well underway.

There are a lot of caring folk in the village who want to help our wildlife when it needs it and one of the best points of contacts for this area is the Wiltshire Wildlife Hospital. Their contact phone number is 07850 778752.

They are a team of dedicated volunteers and will offer advice on pretty much any situation. Their website also offers some invaluable advice: <https://www.wiltshirewildlifehospital.co.uk/advice>  
It is worth looking here first before calling.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 16th June at 7pm in the Methodist church hall, steeple Ashton. One of our members will give a short talk on 'rain forests'

All are welcome and meetings are free for everyone. (A small donation for the hire of the hall appreciated). So please come along if you have an interest in all things nature and meet us.

In the meantime, please report anything of interest such as sightings of animal / bird / insect activity etc. Or unusual or rare plants. Is there something you can't identify? Contact David Culverhouse, 01380 871621 [42anchor@gmail.com](mailto:42anchor@gmail.com) or Roger Ferguson 01380 870860 [r.ferguson550@btinternet.com](mailto:r.ferguson550@btinternet.com) If we can't answer your question then we probably have a member who can.

**Roger Ferguson**

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### **Steeple Ashton WI is a happy place to spend the evening!**

There was such a happy buzz at the April meeting of the WI. The speaker Audrey Phillips was coming to speak about her discovery of her late husband's incredible WW2 experience and how she had the story published. Audrey taught at Nelson Haden Girls School and then at Clarendon. It seemed like a good idea to invite her old pupils still living or connected to the village to the open meeting. Of those who wanted to accept the invitation three 'old' girls couldn't make it, but five others did. Two members were also taught by her. It is difficult to decide what gave the most pleasure. Audrey's exciting story or the reaction of the renewed acquaintances! 'Mrs Phillips' was delighted to see her 'girls' and they were equally pleased to see her, and each other. One old pupil was pleased to report, 'She said she remembered me for my beauty; that was nice but I expect it was for other things!' All the members enjoyed the talk and the happy atmosphere of the evening and hopefully some young ladies, having discovered we are a nice friendly bunch, will come back again!

The competition, WW2 memorabilia, attracted many entries from a home guard wooden practice rifle, would you believe, to a government leaflet advising how to prepare for war, a daily newspaper and a range of badges and photos. The winner, voted by the members, was Bett Horox.

The May meeting is the annual 'Resolutions' meeting. Members will hear the arguments concerning promoting moves to raise awareness of 'Autism' and 'Attention Deficiency' in girls; two syndromes often undiagnosed until late in a girl's education. Each institute decide how their delegate will vote at the annual meeting in June. The completion will be to complete the sentence, 'If I were Prime Minister I'd...' It will be fun to discover how innovative members can be with their new laws to rectify the annoyances that aggravate us all! How about bringing back school milk?

---

## **Steeple Ashton WI - Outing to Kew Gardens – Tuesday 21st June 2022**

**We are planning an outing to Kew Gardens and may have extra spaces on our coach. If you would be interested in joining us please let me know by completing the slip below and returning it to me. Obviously the sooner you can do this the better, so I know how we are doing for numbers. Alison**

Leave Steeple Ashton at 8.00 am. with Chandlers Coaches, estimated arrival 11.00 am with comfort stop en route. Depart Kew 3.00 pm, estimate return to SA 6.00 pm, comfort stop if required.

**Price:** Coach £15  
Entrance £13. (concessions) £14 adults  
Optional 1 hr tour £5.50

If you have a discount voucher, e.g. Gardener's World 2 for 1, please make your own entrance booking. You can be included in the tour.

There are 53 seats available for the coach.

Please complete the following booking slip and let me have the money by 8th June (WI meeting). **Alison Evans**

16 Acre Short Lane (01380 870623) tonyali1947@yahoo.com

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Alison Evans

16 Acre Short Lane (01380 870623)

Kew Gardens Outing 21st June 2022

Name:

No of seats on coach @ £15:

Entrance: £13      £14      Own booking Yes/No

Tour @ £5.50

Total to pay:

Cheques payable to Steeple Ashton WI or cash please.

## FORGET-ME-NOTS CLUB

At the time of writing members are making sure they have their felt tipped pens ready to play the twelve games of Easter Bingo, on 20th April, which will be followed by tea and cakes.

The date for the Extraordinary Annual General Meeting is 18th May, and as this is a very important event the Chairman and Committee are very much hoping that all members will make a special effort to attend. The Speaker for that afternoon will be giving a talk on “Donkeys”.

Visitors always welcome. Further information can be obtained by contacting Gloria Philpott on 01380/870593 (Chairman) or Glynnis Oakley on 01225/775681 (Sec)

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### Useful Information

#### Postal Collections:

**Longs Arms** - Weekdays - 4.15pm; Saturday - 10am

**Newleaze** - Weekdays - 12noon; Saturday - 11am

**Mobile Library Visits - Wednesdays;** Longs Arms - 11.00 - 12noon;  
Ashton Common Bus Stop - 3.35 pm - 4.00pm

May 4th, May 18th, June 1st, June 15th

#### Friends of Steeple Ashton Oil Scheme

We are changing arrangements for the oil scheme!

It will take a few months to get acclimatised I'm sure so don't worry about getting it wrong for a month or two.

There is a new email address **sahtonfoil@gmail.com** – the nearest available to S. Ashton oil, I'm afraid. The telephone number is the same 01380 870119 and, of course, a note through the door at 9, Church St gets the same result.

Please can you order the week you receive your newsletter for delivery the following Thursday. This will make it easier for those of us who forget until the last week!

The scheme was begun to reduce lorry deliveries to the village, to be a member of the scheme (£2pa) you must be a member of the Friends of Steeple Ashton – also a gift at £2pa – subs due now.

If you'd like the job of being secretary for the scheme get in touch as above.

**Rosie and Colin**

## **STEEPLE ASHTON VILLAGE SHOP**

**Normal Opening times:**

**Monday – Friday: 7.30am to 4.30pm**

**Saturday: 8.30 am – 4pm**

**Sunday: 9am to 12noon**



After the run of the most beautiful warm, still days we enjoyed in March when the sky was as blue as it can be on a perfect summer's day, as I write the weather is less spectacular. There is a light damp mist in the air which looks set to stay but, to reassure us that spring really is here, the blossom is abundant and brown hedgerows are a delicious, delicate green and new growth in the fields and gardens around us is prolific.

Thank you to those villagers who completed the shop survey last month. We are taking note of your comments as we want to continue to stock the items you regularly need in addition to the gift and luxury goods with which you are already familiar and your suggestions are really important to us.

Emma Bridgewater fans will have spotted the pretty square tins (containing mini jelly babies) decorated in her inimitable style with bright, cheerful close-ups of spring and summer flowers, tulips, buttercups, cornflowers, dog roses, to name a few. Could they be the perfect little gift? These are displayed alongside tins of speciality biscuits such as lemon shortbread and locally made chocolates – can we tempt you?

If you like to bake but struggle to find gluten-free recipes and ingredients, you will be pleased to see the new range of gluten-free, plant based baking mixes we have for sale produced under the name Hale & Hearty. There is a dark chocolate one using plantain flour and a little dried beetroot for cakes or muffins, an American style pancake mix made with plantain and flaxseed flours (this is also sugar-free), a dark chocolate oat cookie mix made from oats and pumpkin seed flour, and a waffle mix which contains plantain and brown rice flours. Recipes are given on the packs and can be made without eggs or dairy if preferred.

Also new to the shop is a range of fruit curds and jams produced by Mrs Marion Darlington. We stock the lemon, lime and orange curds and blackcurrant, apricot and raspberry jams. This is very much a family run business which was started by the good lady herself in 1980 when a surplus of eggs from the family farm led her to use them up by making batches of her homemade Lemon Curd. She would sell this on her egg round in the

local towns and villages. The local Brownies collected jars and Marion's daughters did the labelling after school for the princely sum of a halfpenny per jar and occasionally friends would pop in to give her a hand. The business grew rapidly, her daughters joined the team and nowadays the range includes chutneys, pickles and savoury sauces which they export all over the world!

**Caren Felton**

**Shop Opening Hours over the May and June Bank Holidays:**

Sunday 1st May, normal Sunday hours      09.00 – 12.00

Monday 2nd May, Bank Holiday              09.00 – 12.00

After which normal shop opening hours apply, until the end of the month.

**The shop will be open all day on Sunday 29th May for Open Gardens**

To celebrate the **Queen's Jubilee** two further Bank Holidays have been declared:

Thursday 2nd June                              09.00– 12.00

Friday 3rd June                                 09.00 – 12.00

Reverting to normal shop opening hours thereafter.



**The Friends of Steeple Ashton**

Village Hall, Friday 20th May 2022

**AGM at 7 pm, followed at 8 pm by  
'Digging for Britain – archaeology with veterans'  
by Richard Osgood MBE, Senior MOD Archaeologist**

**Wine and cheese refreshments after the talk**

**Door entry £5 per head – please bring cash**

(also an opportunity for new and existing members to contribute their 2022 annual subscriptions in cash - £2 per head, £2 per household for the oil scheme)

# FROM THE ARCHIVES

## Steeple Ashton & Great Hinton Newsletter'

In May 1975...

DONATIONS TOWARDS COST OF NEWSLETTER: Anon(SA) Anon(Hinton), Mr.A.Davidson (SA).... Total £2.50. Royal British Legion(Women's Section) £0.50; The Friends of Steeple Ashton £3.00. For the 2nd. time in its 3<sup>rd</sup> years' existence, the NL has run into deficit(of about £2), as a result of a bill of £19 odd for paper. This underlines my view that six sides is enough.

### ANALYSIS OF REFERENDUM SLIPS RETURNED (up to April 24)

There was a very poor response to my request for views on what interested readers in the Newsletter. About 415 copies are issued each month but only 20 slips, completed by 26 readers, were returned to me. This represents a slender foundation on which to assess what should be omitted when available material exceeds the space available (my limit) of six sides; but it will have to do as a guide.

Two of the comments received were: "We think politics are out of place in this medium" and "I think the Methodist Church news should be included in the Vicar's monthly bulletin" (this is hardly fair to the Vicar - Editor)

|                          |                              |    |        |
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### "THE FRIENDS OF STEEPLE ASHTON" Annual General Meeting Apl.24

A report on the activities of the past year included an invitation from the Cement Works to notify their Production Manager if any nuisance was noticed from sulphur fumes; and the attitude and reactions of The Friends to planning applications (21 of these had been considered in the year and only 4 had been objected to outright).

There was a longish discussion on the problem of cows in the village streets. The general feeling was that only the goodwill of the farmers could alleviate the fouling of footpaths and the damage to verges. There was finally a talk by a County Council officer on trees and other matters; he said that all the elm trees in this country are doomed.

More members would be welcomed. Subscription is 25p a year (family 50p). The main purpose of The Friends is 'to maintain the particular character and scenic qualities of Steeple Ashton'. Mr.I.Hockmeyer, 2 Ashton Common, is the Hon.Treasurer. (Editor)

**David Berrett**



11 am Holy Communion and Baptism (CW)  
St Mary's, Steeple Ashton (OL)  
**Sunday, 22nd May \* THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
9.15 am Holy Communion (CW) St Thomas', Southwick (OL)  
10 am Family Service St Nicholas', North Bradley (RH)  
11 am Start of Rogation Sunday walk from St Mary's, Steeple  
Ashton

**Thursday, 26th May ASCENSION DAY**  
7 pm Holy Communion (CW) St Mary's, Steeple Ashton (OL)  
**Sunday, 29th May THE SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**  
11 am Benefice Holy Communion (CW) St Nicholas', North  
Bradley (OL)

CW - Common Worship, Order 1 (contemporary language);

BCP - Common Worship, Order 2 (traditional language).

OL - Fr Oliver; TL – Fr Tony; RH - Richard Havergal

\* Please note the variation of service times on Sunday 22nd May.

\*\*\*

On account of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and in consideration of those around you, you are strongly encouraged to maintain physical distancing; use hand sanitisers; and wear a face covering - unless you are exempt from doing so.

\*\*\*

**Morning Prayer is said at St Nicholas', North Bradley,  
Monday - Wednesday at 9.30am.**

*"We lift up in prayer the people of our Benefice each morning; please let us know if you would like us to include in our prayers any particular person or cause." All are welcome!*

\*\*\*

**St Mary's is open for individual prayer during the day.**

\*\*\*

Please visit the Benefice website **www.threeinonebenefice.org** for details of services, which may be subject to change - and for a range of information about the Parish and the Benefice.

*And note that the Blog is now up and running !*

## Other Notices

### Headstones in the churchyard, St Mary's, Steeple Ashton

If you happen to be responsible for the maintenance of a headstone that has been laid flat for safety reasons (i.e. heir-at-law), please let us know without delay that you are content that the memorial should remain as it is, or that you would be prepared to refund its refixing.

Please also note that any repair or refixing of a headstone may only take place *after prior consultation with the Vicar, churchwarden and PCC.*

**The Vicar, churchwarden and PCC.**

### Occasional offices

For baptisms, marriage services and funeral services in church, please *contact Fr Oliver.*

### Vacancies for church officers at St Mary's

There are currently vacancies at St Mary's for the role of churchwarden and PCC treasurer and PCC secretary.

*If you are interested in any of these roles, please contact Fr Oliver.*

### St Mary's Annual Church Meeting

Our annual meeting will be held in the church at 7.30pm  
on Tuesday 24th May

### Dear All,

Three years ago this month, I wrote in the Newsletter a piece about Rogationtide and its origins, and my hopes that we might re-introduce in some form in the Benefice the tradition of the beating of the bounds. Last May, to mark Rogationtide, we held part of our Family Service in St Mary's churchyard; and now this year our plan is to reaffirm and consolidate what we achieved.

In place of an 8 am celebration of Holy Communion on **22nd May**, you are invited to gather **at St Mary's at 11 am for a short, perambulation – in the churchyard and a little beyond - saying prayers for our Benefice and singing hymns as we go.** It will be

adapted for those of differing physical abilities - and may it draw together in fellowship those from both parishes and from further afield.

As a reminder of what Rogationtide is about, the bulk of my piece from May, 2019, is reproduced below.

**Rogationtide**, which takes place in the fifth week after Easter week, is the adaptation of a festival that sees its origins in ancient Rome.

The festival of Ambarvalia was kept in late May, in honour of Ceres the goddess of agriculture and grain crops, at a spot in the old perimeter of Roman territory. Here a crowd would assemble to move in procession around the cornfields, with singing and dancing, the sacrifice of animals, the driving away of winter with sticks, and other enjoyable rites, intended to rid the cornfields of evil.

Around AD465, when the Western world was afflicted by earthquake, storm and epidemic, the bishop of Vienne in what us now south-eastern France, ordered that prayers should be said in the ruined or neglected fields on Ascension Day or the three days preceding it. And in this way “Beating the Bounds” became a Christian custom.

It was introduced into England in the 8th century, and ever since, during Rogationtide, a party might be seen setting out to trace the boundaries of the parish. Typically, the priest or bishop would march at the head, with a minor official bearing the Cross, followed by a crowd of people. Many would hold slender wands of willow, like those of May Day, peeled white, and sometimes crowned, a little below the top, with a knot of flowers. Every now and then, at well-known landmarks – a bridge, or stile, or an ancient tree – the Cross halted, the party gathered about the priest and a litany, or rogation was said, asking God to send seasonable weather, keep the corn and the roots and the boughs in good health, and bring them to an ample harvest. At some point along the way beer and cheese might be waiting, provided out of small endowments for the purpose.

These perennial marches fixed the geography of the parish in the mind of everyone present, and opportunity was taken to rebuild any tumbled landmark.

George Herbert in *The Country Parson* tells us that the clergy should encourage the beating of the bounds for four reasons:

“...a blessing of God for the fruits of the field; Justice, in the preservation of the bounds; Charitie, in loving walking and neighbourly

accompanying one another, with reconciling of differences at that time, if they be any; Mercie, in relieving the poor by a liberal distribution of largess, which at that time is or ought to be used...”

Of paramount importance for some is blessing the corn, the pastures, the fruit trees and gardens. For others the beating of the bounds is a physical challenge to be embraced and enjoyed.

The beating of the bounds, in any case, tells us something about our history and our roots; it reminds many of us of our connection with the land and its economy; and it speaks of the continuing and powerful relationship between God and humankind in our countryside.

**Yours, in Christ, Fr Oliver**



**Dates for your diaries:**

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Saturday August 6th



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A talk by our stonemason

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Our next SAGE meeting: **‘Summer’ will be held on Thursday June 9<sup>th</sup> , from 7:30pm, in the Village Hall.**

Further details will be printed in the June Parish Magazine, and on Facebook site, Village notice boards and at the Shop.

Of course, it will include the usual social, refreshments, book table & raffle.



**SAGE 2022 outings update:**

- ❖ Thursday 28th April - Peto Garden, Iford Manor, Westwood – **fully booked**
- ❖ Thursday 7th July - Bishop’s Palace Gardens, Wells – **fully booked**
- ❖ **Thursday 22nd September - Broadleas Gardens, Devizes – places available.**

*This visit is booked for a 10.45am arrival in time for the talk and tour of these gardens by the head gardener which starts at 11am. The main attraction is the small valley reminiscent of Cornish gardens.*

Cost for entrance, tour, tea/coffee & cake is £15pp

Please note all these trips are **self-drive**, and numbers are limited.

If you are interested, please contact Jennie Willis at [jennie.willis@btinternet.com](mailto:jennie.willis@btinternet.com)

- ❖ A SAGE call out for **Open Gardens Plant Stall**, run by Gill Aldridge. Always a favourite part of the Open Gardens event....soooo.... any donated home-grown seedlings, cuttings, vegetables, herbs and potted plants, both indoors and out., would help to make this a wonderful stall for everyone!

**Jobs to do this month:**

Plant out summer bedding at the end of the month \* Regularly hoe off weeds \* Lift and divide overcrowded clumps of daffodils and other spring flowering bulbs.

Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2548517398732853>

## **Bryan writes...**

The recently discovered front-cover picture shows Steeple Ashton High Street during times far different from today. We are fortunate in having some written memories of that time from an article which appeared in the December 1976 issue of the village newsletter, entitled 'Miss Bartlett Remembers'.

Margorie "Marj" Bartlett was interviewed by the editor Dennis Hobson, who then transcribed her recollections into an article for the December edition.

Miss Bartlett was born in Semington in 1892 and moved to Steeple Ashton as a child around 1896. She spent her early years in the cottage that is now used as an extension to the north end of The Old Merchants' Hall. During that time the cottage was the village Post Office run by John and Jane Bartlett, and Old Merchants Hall was one of three village general stores.

Marj remembered that before 1900, when the original Village Hall was constructed in Church Street, meetings would be held in the Longs Arms. However, she did not mention the Magistrate's Court, which was also held in the pub at that time, and later moved to the Village Hall.

Miss Bartlett did recall that the Longs Arms was used for collecting the yearly rents from the tenant farmers living on the Long family's Rood Ashton Estate – and that the farmers also received a free dinner at the pub. She mentioned that the cottage adjacent to (and now forming part of) Ashton House was also used to hold meetings before the Village Hall was built. Marj said that in addition, the property was used as a reading room cum billiard room – where books were provided, but not, she thinks, newspapers.

Marjorie recalled that the traffic consisted of horses, traps and farm wagons, and the roads were maintained and repaired with stone from local quarries, which would be dumped in large lumps at various points in the village. She remembered there was always a large dump of stone on the grass verge on the east side of High Street (under the garden wall of The Lodge, opposite Old Merchants' Hall). These were later broken up by stone-breakers, who periodically arrived in the village to pulverise the stone into small fragments and renew the road surface. Marjorie remembered a water cart going up and down the street during the summer time, to control the road dust.

There was hardly anybody living in the village who did not work within the parish. Most were in agriculture; oil-driven farm machines not having been invented, farmers needed much more labour than they would in later years. Others were carpenters, wheelwrights and blacksmiths. There were also many workers in the Long estate workshops. Parts of these still exist today – as a U-shaped layout encompassing the rear garden of 50 High Street, home to Fiona and Mike Bruce-Smith. These are visible running parallel to Acreshort Lane behind the three bungalows on the east side, and bordering the old school playground.

A steam engine there provided power for the sawing up of tree trunks for field gates, posts, fencing and other carpentry jobs. The workshop whistle, which “shrieked as far as the furthest house”, summoned the men to work at 6.00am, “knocked them off for breakfast at 8am, recalled them at 8.30 and similarly for dinner and, at the end of their day at 5pm, whistled them back home and took a well-earned rest itself.”

There were more farmhouses in the village then. The Manor House, behind the church, was a farmhouse, and its farmyard was what is now the Cottle’s farmyard at the end of The Strand – Manor Farm. Dennis Hobson writes how:

“The Moon’s house in Church Street was until about 1960 a farmhouse, where Ken Berrett and his father lived as farmers. It is ironic that the room there where favoured guests enjoy their Christmas drinks was less than twenty years ago a busy parlour for milking mud-encrusted cows. *Sic transit gloria agricolae Berrettii.*”

Dennis Hobson was talking about Moorfield Farm – where my brother and I lived with our parents until they sold up in the autumn of 1958, to take on the village shop at 48 High Street. In 1976, Moorfield was owned by Ray and Mary Moon.

Having spent my early teenage years hand-milking those very cows in Moorfield’s lean-to cowshed (which was attached to the south end of the house), I must say that “mud-encrusted” was an exaggeration. While these animals may not have been always spotlessly clean, they were often cleaned and groomed, and they had their udders washed with warm water twice a day before milking. In fact, as this herd of just 16 milking cows was our only source of income, they were given the very best treatment, almost like family pets. So too was their environment. Fresh straw bedding every day, and following their walk back to the surrounding fields (twice a day during

the summer), Church Street was cleaned as far as the High Street by my father – especially before Sunday church services, which, once a month, was by 8.00am for the Holy Communion.

The room where Mr Hobson said that “favoured guests enjoy their Christmas drinks” was probably the room at the rear – which was extended into the cowshed during Ray Moon’s time, while the rest of cowshed nearest the road became the Moon’s garage. During recent alterations, this ex-cowshed has been completely removed.

The editor’s little finishing flourish of Latin commentary translates as “Thus passes the glory of Berrett farmers.”

With thanks to John Berrett of Hilperton Marsh, who made me aware of the front-cover photo. **Bryan Berrett**

---

## **STEEPLE ASHTON FILMS**

### **WEST SIDE STORY (12A)**

**SATURDAY 7 MAY 2022**

**7.30 PM (DOORS OPEN AT 7 PM FOR REFRESHMENTS)**

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Directed by Steven Spielberg, it is set against the authentic backdrop of New York City with the flavour of Latin America. Most of us know the story of the Jets and the Sharks, two rival gangs and the love story between the sister of the Puerto Rican leader of the Sharks and the best friend of the leader of the Jets! Inspired by William Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet.

Nominated for six Oscars, this is a highly acclaimed remake of a much loved classic and is part of our cinematic history! For those of us who remember an earlier version of West Side Story and feel nostalgic, this is a new and exciting production which is colourful and impressive and will not disappoint. You will recognise all the familiar songs and we hope you will join in with the singing, clapping or just hum along! Time to really enjoy yourself!

If you have tickets for Spencer and wish to exchange them, you may choose from any of the next season’s films West Side Story, Death on the Nile or The Duke.

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Saturday 11th June – **Death on the Nile**

Friday 8th July – **The Duke**

**TICKETS £6 FROM STEEPLE ASHTON VILLAGE SHOP. cont...**

For Reservations, please ring Alison on 01380 871345 or for up to date news about Steeple Ashton Films, join our mailing list e-mail safilms268@gmail.com or look on Facebook.

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The old man beamed at me with his one tooth, and explained that he'd only left Sark once – and that was for a day trip to Guernsey! The family and I climbed aboard the rickety old cart for a grand tour of the island. The horse clip-clopped ahead of us and the cart rattled and shook as we drove along the dusty track.

As the tour progressed, the driver handed the reins over to my very young son. I was worried. The boy hardly knew left from right, and as we drove past the cliff-tops I wondered if we might roll over! But when my son pulled right we turned right, and when he pulled left we turned left. The blinkered horse had no idea where he was headed; he simply obeyed. He trusted the driver implicitly.

Jesus said, "Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. For the yoke I will give you is easy and the load I will put on you is light" (Matt.11:29-30)

To be yoked to Christ means what it says. We are blinkered and He steers. We don't know the road ahead but He does. We are servants and He is the Master. As we actively seek His guidance for our lives, we discover what it really means to be disciples. We can't expect to plan our lives in the Lord's service, nor choose the opportunities we think are best. We must actively seek the Lord's will and submit to it – even when we don't agree!

**Rob Frost** – *The Way of the Cross*

## CHURCH DIARY

|          |      |             |                        |
|----------|------|-------------|------------------------|
| Sunday   | 1st  | 9.15 am     | Pauline Tiller         |
| Saturday | 7th  | 10.30-12.00 | Coffee Morning         |
| Sunday   | 8th  | 10.30 am    | United at Westbury URC |
| Sunday   | 15th | 9.15 am     | Ed Colling             |
| Sunday   | 22nd | 9.15 am     | Eric Clifford          |
| Sunday   | 29th | 9.15 am     | Marie Farrimond        |

## **CATHOLIC NEWS**

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST TROWBRIDGE & ST BERNADETTE'S  
WESTBURY (incl VILLAGES).**

**PARISH PRIEST FR TOM FINNEGAN**

TELEPHONE: 01225 752152

[www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk](http://www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk)

Diocese of Clifton Registered Charity No 1170168

**Please see below the usual weekly  
timings of our Masses: but please  
check newsletter for changes.  
St John the Baptist - Trowbridge**

### ***Sunday & Weekday Masses:***

Saturdays 12noon & 6pm (Vigil Mass)

Sundays 10.30am & 12noon

Monday/Weds/Friday 9am (First Friday  
of the Month 6pm) Tuesday 6pm

### **St Bernadette's - Westbury.**

Mass times will be:

Sunday 9am

Thursday 10am

Pope Francis has invited the whole Universal Church  
to walk with him towards a Church Synod in 2023.

Resources to help engage with this process can be found at  
[www.cliftondiocese.com/synod](http://www.cliftondiocese.com/synod)

### **Live streaming:**

All masses are streamed live on

[www.Churchservices.tv](http://www.Churchservices.tv) or on

You Tube 'Mass in Trowbridge'

### **Parish Newsletter:**

This is available weekly on the Parish website

[www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk](http://www.stjohnthebaptisttrowbridge.co.uk)

# Steeple Ashton Open Gardens



Sunday 29th May 2022  
11am - 6pm

Refreshments & Cream Teas  
Plants & Flower Sales  
Raffle & Tower Draw  
Pimms on the Lawn



 Advance Tickets from:  
The Village Shop - £7.50  
[www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk) - £8.00  
Tickets on the day - £10.00 