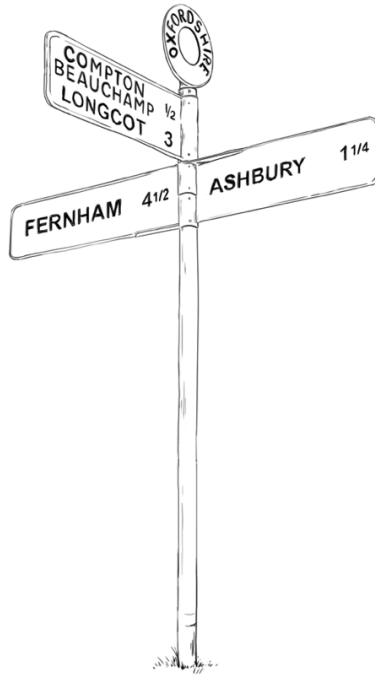


ASHBURY COMPTON LONGCOT FERNHAM NEWS

MAY 2020



**Thought for the month
“Art therapy”
Farming through the pandemic
Ashbury and Longcot news
Inside: making it accessible to those ‘offline’**

It has not been possible to print and distribute the Newsletter in the normal way but by putting it up on Facebook as well as on www.ashbury.org.uk as usual, we hope to make it accessible to the majority. If you have a neighbour who is 'offline' and you have a printer, perhaps you could print a copy for them? (Cliff Davies has kindly offered to do so for any K.W. residents) Additionally, in Ashbury I have printed a few individual copies which will be left in the bus shelter (in a card box) for anyone on their "daily exercise" to collect.

Thought for the month

Looking back at the pieces I wrote for this newsletter in May 2018 and 2019, the world was very different then. It was relatively easy to find current events on which to comment in an engaging way (that was the plan anyway!), and the reader could then move on to learn about all the upcoming activities around the benefice as we looked forward to summer and village fetes and flower shows.

Now in May 2020 it is such a different scenario. The lockdown has been extended and it is impossible to predict when daily life will return to "normal" and we can greet one another on the street without a polite side-stepping routine that those of us able to go out for a walk are rapidly perfecting.

In May 2020 writing the "Thought for the month" seems far from straightforward, although it is good that we can maintain circulation of the newsletter as another form of "connection" between us all.

Is it fitting to strike a sombre note as we think about the challenges and tragedies of the past month, which are very real and assault our news screens and social media in a seemingly unstoppable flow? Or is it better to lean towards a more optimistic viewpoint that this will one day be over and meanwhile we can enjoy the delights of spring uninterrupted by traffic noise and the criss-crossing of vapour trails overhead? Maybe the answer lies somewhere in between, and we should embrace both ends of the spectrum without judging the feelings of others. I have a daughter working in a busy city hospital, and I know of three people through work and extended family who have died of the virus, each in the tragic kind of circumstances we have come to expect because of the need for social isolation.

On a positive note, like many others, we have enjoyed beautiful walks, shared family news and social occasions on Zoom, and admired the efforts of Captain Tom Moore doggedly walking around his garden and raising amazing amounts of money in the process. We have clapped our NHS – and applauded the efforts of our teachers, bin men, parents who are home schooling, care workers, post and retail workers and many more besides.

The media pundits, seeking to bring fresh perspective to the daily newsround, debate

whether we will be changed by having “gone through this together” and maintain our community spirit once restrictions are lifted, or whether, as has happened following other cataclysmic events, we will revert to our previous way of life and forget “lessons learned”.

Speculation fills news channels but is not necessarily helpful. Perhaps we should continue as best we can to take each day as it comes, and just keep looking out for our neighbours, families and those who help us maintain a semblance of normal daily life. Some days will be easier to cope with than others, and sometimes we will be encouraged by something which in the general busy-ness of life we may otherwise have missed. The apostle Paul, who faced many hardships in his own life, gives us good advice in his letter to the Romans :

“Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another.” Romans 12:15-16 New International Version (NIV)

Isobel Weller

Views expressed in “Thought for the month” are those of the contributors

Ashbury News

We were very sorry to hear of the death of **Vera Tilling**, and send condolences to her family.

Ashbury Parish Council Update

It will surely come as no great surprise to hear that the current restrictions have resulted in much of APC’s intended work in the community being postponed – e.g. the replacement to the shopperbus service, the parish litter-pick, etc. However, our intention is to press ahead with these just as soon as conditions allow.

We are also being discouraged from contacting our district & county representatives on all but essential matters, the object being to leave all parties free to concentrate on their response to the current situation, and we apologise if some matters raised by residents are not progressing as speedily as we would wish.

APC wish to take this opportunity to formally thank all residents that are providing assistance to neighbours that may otherwise be struggling in the current ‘lock-down’, with particular thanks to Sally-Ann Spence and her team for coordinating the parish-wide response. If you are adversely affected by the ‘lock-down’ do not hesitate to make your local co-ordinator aware, and do remember that the Ashbury Shop is providing a delivery service for groceries and other essentials if needed.

As the current restrictions are set to continue, our thanks in anticipation of such efforts to support the more vulnerable in our community continuing. **Cliff Davies**

POST OFFICE, at Rose and Crown

The pop-up Post Office has re-opened at the Rose and Crown, and they have confirmed they will be in Ashbury, as before, on- Wednesdays and Fridays from 9.30 am - 11.30 am.

Longcot

Longcot Village Trust -update You will all know about the limitations imposed on our lives by COVID-19; we all need to keep members of our community safe. For that reason the trustees of Longcot Village Trust (LVT) have decided that they must take their own action to match the government's advice on how to protect everyone from the coronavirus infection.

So, in common with many local and national organisations, LVT has postponed all of its public events until it is clear that audiences are safe. This means that we will have to:

Postpone the Trust's Annual General Meeting until July at the earliest (we are required by the Charity Commission to hold one as a public meeting every year).
Cancel the evening concert scheduled for 9 May and a second concert that had been suggested for the middle of the summer. We hope that we may be able to schedule an Autumn concert but will have to wait to see how the coronavirus crisis plays out.
On a more positive note we can report that we are making progress with the Community Hub project in St Mary's! We have had our first grant offer (rapidly accepted) and are waiting for decisions by another 8 or 9 charities.
Finally, LVT is looking for a Chairperson to head up the charity and for volunteers who would like to help expand future community activity in the village by becoming a trustee.

If you would be interested in contributing to village life in this way please contact **Keith Reid** the Trust Secretary on keith.e.reid@btinternet.com.

Longcot Flower Festival and Concert.

Sadly we have had to postpone the VE Day themed ' A Village Celebration' but we hope to put it on sometime in the future and here is a flavour of what we are planning.

The church will be decorated in a 1940s style with flags, bunting and a street party to celebrate the end of WW11. Several of the windows will represent Longcot tales from that era such as the story of the Americans in the village. When there was beer

at the Bricklayers Arms they came in numbers to sit and drink on the Green. At the end of the war a lorry was sent to collect the children to take them back for a party at Shrivenham camp to say thank you to the village. Then there is Grace's story. In 1939 she was evacuated from the Isle of Dogs and arrived in Longcot as a shy, frightened 11 year old. She was billeted with Marjorie and Jack Larkin in Rose Cottage who welcomed her into their family and taught her to ride a bicycle and milk a cow. She visited them for the rest of their lives.

Vicky Medcalf has been working with the Clarinet Collective, returning to bring us a concert programme featuring works by composers of many different nationalities to link in with the theme of peace among nations on VE day. It will include timeless classics by Mozart and Ravel alongside popular music from the Twenties, Thirties and Forties including Gershwin's famous Rhapsody in Blue and a medley of Glen Miller's greatest hits. The rousing Dambusters March will round off what promises to be a lively and entertaining evening.

Stay well everyone and as soon as we can, we will bring you a Village Celebration.

Shirley Dalton-Morris

Church Matters

God of Love

In time of peril you draw close to us with words of peace and comfort.

We ask you to protect your people, the frail, the sick, the vulnerable and those who risk themselves in the service of others.

Be with them and with us all, grant us courage, compassion, healing and hope

that in your strength all may be kept safe and life begin anew through

Jesus Christ who is the same, yesterday, today and forever. Amen

Although the church buildings are closed, the church itself remains active please take a look at the benefice facebook page (search @shrivenhamandashbury) and like our page to keep up to date .

Please contact Rev'd Fergusson (vicar@shrivenhamandashbury.co.uk) for pastoral issues and the churchwardens or benefice administrator (shrivenham.ashbury.benefice@outlook.com) for other church enquiries

The Prayer Course

David Ahern is leading The Prayer Course at 10.30 on Wednesdays in the slot previously occupied by The Bible Course. This is an eight week journey through the Lord's Prayer

using the course devised by Pete Greig (founder of the 24/7 Global Prayer movement). If you would like to join in, please contact David Ahern for details of how to take part.

01793 783521 thestable@protonmail.com

Worship

Sunday services continue – generally a live streamed service of Holy Communion at 11am. During May we will mark VE Day and Christian Aid week so please keep an eye out for further details.

We are also streaming Morning Prayer at 9am on Tuesdays (using the Iona liturgy) and Thursdays (using the Book of Common Prayer).

Other services in May include the ASK service of Holy Communion at 2pm on 6 May and Worship & Praise at 5.30pm on 15 May

All our churches continue to rely on donations to stay active and provide care and support to everyone. If you normally contribute through the envelope scheme or collection plate, would you consider continuing that and leaving your envelopes or donations with your treasurer or churchwarden? Or possibly moving to direct giving through your bank if you can arrange this without travelling to your branch?

For Ashbury Church, you can always donate by phone! Text STMARYS5 to 70085 to donate £5

In common with all churches, **Longcot Chapel** is sadly closed for now so TTime Fellowship and our monthly united services are on hold until the current crisis is over.

However, it will be great to see everyone again eventually when 'normal service will be resumed'! In the meantime, be assured that everyone in Longcot is held in the thoughts and prayers of all of us associated with the chapel. Stella Tidmarsh.

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

Art Therapy

I don't think I am alone in that during 'lockdown' I have been able to devote more time to hobbies and mine is collecting paintings. I have been trying for years to properly catalogue all of my paintings. It is a long task and I'm still nowhere near completing it, but this time of isolation has given me the opportunity to make significant progress with it. I have been asked to write a piece about art for this newsletter and at first I thought it would be easy, but when faced with a blank sheet of paper I have found the task a little daunting..... I love art and I can talk about it and bore people with it for hours, (and I often do!). My wife (Suzanne) says I can talk for hours on the single subject of art.... This is

probably true, but to s[ay] the same she doesn't need a subject!

I thought it would be good to try to put a local slant on my article and to try to make it topical. I have pictures by well over a hundred different artists, but I have multiple works by some artists, and just a few artists I have larger numbers of their works maybe 10, 20, 40 or in the case of the artist I will write about....well over 150! His name is Adrian Graham Hill (1895 – 1977) and he is of local interest because I understand that he often used to visit Ashbury and stay with Sir William Cash who used to live in the old Vicarage before Airey Neave lived there. I'm not sure when this was but I remember speaking to Mae Welch who lived in Malt House Bungalows and she remembered him visiting, as I think she used to work for Sir William Cash. She had a pencil sketch of 'Church Lane' by him, which he gave to her. I felt very tempted to offer to buy it from her, but didn't want to be seen to be taking advantage of an old lady. As I say I have over 150 of his sketches, many of them are originals for illustrations used in some of the many books he wrote about painting and drawing, but alas I have none of Ashbury. (Although in some of his books there are a number of sketches of the village).

Most of the paintings I have are not by very well-known artists, but I buy them because I like them and often I find some connection with the artist for example, some I have met, some I have met or know their children or siblings and others, like Adrian Hill, have some local connection.

Adrian Hill was quite an interesting chap, his works are held in various public galleries around the country. In WW1 he served with the Honourable Artillery Company and was the first 'official war artist' to record the action on the Western Front. He studied at the Royal College of Art and later became an art teacher at different art schools. In later life he became President of the 'Royal institute of Oil Painters and also became a well-known character on television as he used to have a show called 'The Sketch Club', where he showed people the techniques of painting and drawing.

He contracted TB in 1938 and he spent a couple of years recovering from this and he convalesced at a hospital in Midhurst. It was while he was here that he began to recognise the restorative effect of painting and drawing on one's physical and mental health. He was believed to be the first person to coin the phrase 'Art Therapy' and after he recovered he used to go round hospitals teaching and encouraging art amongst the patients so it could help them recover. He was one of the founder members of the British Association of Art Therapists, although he later found himself at odds with them as they increasingly leaned towards a more psychoanalytical approach as opposed to just using 'art for art sake'. He says in his book 'Art Versus Illness' that "To be happily occupied is at all times a gift from the gods and in a period of long convalescence, it is a positive saving grace" I think perhaps we could liken this 'lockdown' to a long convalescence and so it will be good to be 'happily occupied', which may involve spending time with whatever hobbies we have and so if we use this time wisely it will have a positive rather than negative effect. Although I am not an artist myself, perhaps there

may be some merits in just picking up a paintbrush, or even just a pen or a pencil and trying to draw what we see around us. This is certainly what he started doing when he was confined in the hospital. The thing which holds me back from doing this is a fear of failure, or that someone would laugh at your efforts don't be put off by this ...just have a go! The children are doing it, so why shouldn't we try too?.... After all we are all just big kids.

I will attempt to try to include a few of his sketches with this and one, which I only rediscovered when sorting out a drawer during lockdown, is a sketch he did in 1938/39 and is used as an illustration in his book 'Art Versus Illness', and shows how he just drew the mundane, everyday objects he saw. Some of his sketches are presented in a dreamy, almost allegorical way, others were more straightforward sketches, faithfully recording what he saw. The ones dated after 1939 were presumably done when he was going back into hospitals to support his theories on 'Art therapy'. **Andrew Bunce**



Here is one example of his work. Others can be found at the end of the of the newsletter.

Country Matters

My motivation for these notes is to improve the connection between town and country which was recently reported as nationally poor but surely, I hope, better here.

Since the start of the lockdown on March 26 we have enjoyed three weeks of good weather and with our team healthy farming has definitely not stopped and we are so fortunate to be still busy in the open air without restrictions other than care over

distancing. We have planted malting barley (for lager), milling and naked oats (for breakfast cereals) and spring beans (for animal protein). Winter wheat which took a bashing this winter is starting to improve. Environmental wild bird cover/nectar strips, some of which doubles up for shooting cover and forage maize for a neighbour's dairy cows, will follow later when the soil is warmer.

The point is that farm production has so far escaped the consequences of this evil virus. Fat cattle have been sold and more younger cattle have arrived. Cattle markets are continuing but with only buyers present and no vendors allowed. We are still loading bread wheat off the farm from last harvest.

That said, the same cannot be said of the marketing, with dire repercussions in places. As in the 2002 foot and mouth crisis which then badly affected Cumbria, the lockdown of the service and hospitality sector to include all restaurants and hotels and garden centres means that those businesses and farms supplying that sector are in trouble. In our benefice there is at least one farmer with a large 3m litre/year dairy who has had to discard milk because the buyer, Freshways, which largely supplies coffee chains and hotels rather than supermarkets can't take his milk because their demand is heavily down. They are also currently delaying payment. That's very worrying.

We all know that panic buying created empty shelves. Home baking created a temporary shortage of flour. Fresh vegetables supply is still patchy and with the asparagus season imminent, growers need a land army of pickers this summer to replace the migrants who cannot get here. The beef market is still weak. Pigs are very strong because production in China, which is 50% of world supply, is down 25% on the back of mortality there from African Swine Fever. With lambing in progress sheep meat is also firm but worries persist going forward next year over tariffs affecting trade to Europe. I know of one local organic chicken /duck producer struggling to keep up with demand. Grain prices are stronger but profits there are thin, though we shall enjoy some cheaper diesel prices.

This crisis has focussed the nation on its food supply. Supermarkets, butchers, farm shops and farmer markets have benefited and are very busy but are earning their keep with home delivery to the vulnerable. Successive governments have never been interested in enhancing our nation's food security. This crisis might just alter this. Meanwhile I hope farmers and landowners can continue to welcome sensible access to walkers and riders onto their land. I am not so keen on the 4 wheel drive selfish cowboys who drive across our crops.

Richard Green

Contacts

Ashbury Parish Council

Chairman Cliff Davies 01793 710712 chairman@ashbury.org.uk

Clerk to the council: Laura Evans email clerk@ashbury.org.uk

Defibrillator: On the wall by the School entrance

St Mary's Ashbury Parochial Church Council

House-for-Duty – Rev. Nina Summerfield [announced]

Church warden: Maggie Simons 01793 710801

Secretary: Roger Simons 01793 710801 rogersimons1@outlook.com

Vicar (Shrivenham) Revd Norma Fergusson 01793 784338

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

Ashbury Village Hall

Maggie Simons 0193 710801 maggiemsimons@outlook.com

Secretary Margaret Smith 01793 710800 mbsmith5@hotmail.co.uk

Bookings: Lin and Kevin Clarke 01793 710326

Ashbury with Compton Beauchamp CE(A) Primary School and little Berries Preschool

Headteacher Rachael Smith 01793 710259 www. <http://www.ashburyprimary.org.uk>
office.3851@ashbury.oxon.sch.uk

Ashbury Village Shop 01793 710068

G.P. Surgeries Shrivenham 01793 782207 Lambourn 01488 71715/72299

Post Office at the Rose & Crown Wednesdays and Fridays 9.30-11.30am

Vale of the White Horse District Council 01235 422422

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/>

Recycling/Rubbish collection queries admin.vale@biffa.co.uk

Food waste is collected weekly, green/black bins alternate each week. Garden waste brown bins fortnightly. Mondays except Bank holidays.

Your Local District Councillors are: Elaine Ware 01973 783026

elaine.ware@whitehorsedc.gov.uk and Simon Howell 01793 784491

simon.howell@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

County Councillor: Yvonne Constance: 01235 751475/07976934884

yvonne.constance@oxfordshire.gov.uk

M.P. for the Wantage constituency: David Johnston david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk
0207 219 3000

Newsletter entries for June 2020. Submit your entries for June by **24th May** to: M. Turner Claremont, Ashbury SN6 8LN. marionlturner@me.com 01793 710302 For more of “what’s on” and local information see the Ashbury Village Website www.ashbury.org.uk and the community page on Facebook.



6 o'clock Rest Hour.

