

Your Parish MAGAZINE

What's on in
Seer Green
& Jordans
February 2022



**Local boy One
Can Fundraiser**

**Seer Green
head retiring**

**Rotary raise
£1,000**

**100 years of
Jordans Shop**



one pound

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From the Editors

The snowdrops are beginning to appear in our gardens, promising the start of Spring. This month Phil Moody and his son Nick have written us a very interesting article on Dutch Elm disease and we also have our lovely Tweet of the month and Gardeners news to keep us interested in the world outside our homes. Janet's Good Reads and

details of Jordans Picture House' programme will help us to while away the winter evenings until Spring really does arrive. There is news of the new Rector, Dan Beasley, and the recruitment process is starting for the vicar at Holy Trinity. Enjoy the February magazine.

**Phil Moody, Sue Puttergill
and Carol Wright**

Next Month's Magazine

Please send all contributions for the **March** issue to:

editorseergreen@gmail.com by **7 February**. Diary dates for the next two or three months would be very welcome.

Articles should be **300 words max** and photos should be jpeg format, preferable 300 dpi.

Please note any items submitted may be edited for space, content or style.

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Licensed Lay Minister and Prayer Group
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 Monica Sado 01494 677851

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Jordans Horticultural Society
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Jordans Village Hall Office 10.00 - 1.00
 Chris Jenkins | Booking Secretary 01494 875177

Jordans Village Lunch Club
 Catherine Robinson 01494 873193

Jordans Village Nursery School
 Julie Leonard 01494 875603

Jordans Meals On Wheels
 Eli Merchant 01494 873471

Jordans Picture House
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Jubilee Hall
 David Howkins 01494 857760

Jordans Quaker Meeting House and Centre
 Alex Wildwood 01494 876594

Seer Green Allotments
 Barry Richardson / Chairman 01494 673407

Seer Green Baptist Church
 David Horncastle - Head Deacon 01494 677266

Seer Green Bridge Club
 Irene Machin | Secretary 01494 676321

Seer Green Church of England School
 Sandra Park | Head Teacher 01494 676344

Seer Green Gardeners
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Seer Green Lunch Club
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 Liz Bates | Parish Clerk 01494 874233

Seer Green Pre school
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Seer Green Montessori School
 Libby Wilson | Director 01494 672209

Seer Green Football
 - United (juniors) Tim Wyatt 07833 246819
 - FC (adults) Art Anderson 07919 027351

Seer Green Village Choirs
 Jane Smith 07759 841205

Thought for the Month



This time last year, we were anticipating the departure of both Cassa and Ian, and I was stressing over how we would manage the double vacancy combined with all the complications of Covid. It turns out that I need not have been so anxious – it has been extra busy, but here we are with a new Rector in place, the days lengthening into the promise of spring once again, and the prospect of an advertisement for a new minister for Holy Trinity Church going out soon.

In fact, looking back over the year (now that it is over!), I would say that it has been both memorable and rewarding, and a particular pleasure for me to be more involved in the work of Holy Trinity. However, while church affairs may be looking hopeful, we are still coping with the isolation, uncertainty and constant change imposed on us through the Covid pandemic.

Dr Anthony Clare, who used to host the Radio 4 program “In the Psychiatrist’s Chair”, offered six practices for maintaining mental health. One was that “you must be a leaf on a tree”. Unique, for sure, but attached to a source of strength bigger than yourself. A detached leaf enjoys its floating freedom but ultimately will not survive by itself.

The pandemic has enforced a degree of isolation on us, and we can become comfortable living and worshipping on our own terms, detached from each other. I hope this new season may be one of turning our minds toward others and making an extra effort to build up our common life in deep gratitude for both church and community.

Jenny Tebboth



Church Events | News

Church news



As I write this update, there is much to look forward to in the coming months; we are anticipating the arrival of Reverend Dan Beesley and his family - they move to Chalfont St Giles in early January. Dan will take up the post of Rector for the Benefice of Chalfont St Giles, Seer Green and Jordans following his licensing service on 27 January. We look forward to welcoming him to our villages of Seer Green and Jordans and to our services at Holy Trinity. He will be joining our 8am services on 6 and 20 February and our 10am service on 13 February. Come along and welcome him to Seer Green and Jordans.

We are also now looking forward to progressing the appointment of our new vicar for Seer Green and Jordans.

After a sparse year in 2021, when it was difficult for people to plan and organise events, we are enjoying celebrating the baptisms of some of the youngest members of our two villages and we have several weddings planned and a renewal of vows.

If you would like to discuss and plan a baptism or wedding do contact us for a chat.

Jane Spoerry (Churchwarden)



Contact us

Holy Trinity website

www.seergreenandjordanscofe.org

Church Wardens and
General Enquiries

Jane Spoerry 01494 677328

Janine Dunnell janine.dunnell@gmail.com

Holy Trinity Services in February

- 6 Feb 8am Book of Common Prayer Communion Service, in person only
10am All-age Service, in person & YouTube
- 13 Feb 10am Holy Communion Service, in person & YouTube
12pm Baptism Service
- 20 Feb 8am Book of Common Prayer Communion Service, in person only
10am Morning Praise, in person & YouTube
- 27 Feb 10am Holy Communion Service, in person & YouTube

Our streamed service will be on our YouTube channel:

<https://tinyurl.com/yc6nj52p>

For more information about families' activities, please contact Janna on 07764 490960.

Services may be changed if circumstances dictate. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page or website for more information.

Donations to Holy Trinity

If you would like to donate to the work and upkeep of Holy Trinity Church, there are many quick and easy ways:

- Go to our website: **www.seergreenandjordanscofe.org** and scroll down the homepage to 'Online Giving' and follow the link.
- Go to In support of Holy Trinity Church, Seer Green and Jordans - Give A Little. **<https://tinyurl.com/5adwwx4e>**
- You can activate our Online Giving page by using the QR code opposite.

Donations in cash/cheque may be delivered to our treasurer at 58 Chalfont Road. If you can Gift Aid your donation, please add your name and address.

If you would like to join our planned giving scheme, please speak to our treasurer Audrey Hardy on 01494 672592.



February Charity of the Month – Kisiizi

Kisiizi Hospital is a Ugandan Christian hospital, nursing and primary school and power company, and has been supported by Holy Trinity for many years. Despite the challenges Covid 19 has brought, Kisiizi continues to serve the community and offer a high standard of care. The pandemic increased costs and lowered income as fundraising stopped. Staff salaries were reduced by 20% and our continued financial support and prayers are really needed. The site continues to be developed to improve the care offered and financial stability, with a large guesthouse to accommodate visitors from across the world who provide much-needed income. The waterfall, which powers

the hospital and sells the surplus to the community, is a popular attraction, but once at Kisiizi people find more than they expect.

The website provides regular updates about Kisiizi life. Construction began last year on covered walkways between hospital buildings to improve conditions for patients in transit. On a larger scale, the Ugandan government plans to tarmac the current gravel roads to Kisiizi – although, unfortunately, the new road would go through the middle of the hospital site and involve demolition of some buildings. The hospital administration is trying to get the route moved, and our prayers are needed that good sense prevails!



In November, the annual Friends Day was held online. Go to **www.kisiizihospital.org.ug**, scroll down and click “Videos for Friends Day 2021” or email me (katharineparker@hotmail.com) and I will send you the links. The videos give a great insight into Kisiizi life and show what we have been supporting.



If you wish to donate:

- Visit **www.kisiizipartners.org.uk** (gift aid your donation).
- Send money to their NatWest account.
Account name: Kisiizi Hospital
Account number: 06513123
Sort code: 55-70-10
Reference: Holy Trinity SG
- Use a blue envelope for charity, available in church - write “Kisiizi” on the front.

Many thanks for your continued support and prayers!

Katharine Parker

Village Events | News

Local boy fundraiser for One Can Trust

During November, Will Jenkin (age 10) decided he wanted to do something for One Can Trust, and considered the different challenges people do. Eventually, he ran a 'sketch a day' challenge, where he drew a picture every day to raise funds for One Can Trust.

Will and his Mum, Claire contacted one can trust and set up a fundraising page, which we then shared with friends, family, and SG Community Chat. Anyone who wanted to follow his progress could join a separate WhatsApp chat group. On the WhatsApp group he posted the daily picture, and people gave encouraging comments.

After about a week, one of his classmates requested a Minecraft picture (up until then Will was just choosing his subject himself), and after that he had lots of requests, most of which he managed to accommodate.

He raised £645 and is donating his One Can picture to the team in High Wycombe.



He really enjoyed doing the challenge and loved the supportive messages he received from friends, family, and the Seer Green community. He is really pleased to have raised so much money so that he can make a real difference to families in need. The highest individual sponsor received a copy of their favourite picture, and a visit to the One Can Trust offices is being organised to enable Will to donate his One Can picture.

Claire Jenkin



Seer Green Scouts out and about

The end of 2021 was a busy time for Seer Green Scouts. At the end of November, 24 Scouts and Explorer Scouts took part in the Grimsdyke Hike, a competitive orienteering hike across the Chilterns, with 60 teams and over 330 hikers and leaders taking part. The weather was cold and wet and all of the Seer Green teams did very well and all finished with good times. One of our Explorer teams won the Misbourne Valley Trophy for being the first team in our District home, after two days of hiking, carrying all their kit and an overnight camp out in the rain. Well done Team Gingerbreads in Beds!!

December saw Seer Green Scouts raising much-needed funds for some new tents and hiking equipment and are grateful to all those who bought tickets at our hamper raffle at The Christmas Cracker Fair at Seer Green School.

Seer Green Scouts also provided and served the refreshments in the Scout Hall, at the finish line of the Rotary Santa Run.

Scouts are now looking forward to the start of a new term, with the next hiking competition only 4 weeks away. Quest is a hike almost entirely run in the dark, across the Chilterns with activity bases scattered throughout the route. Both the Grimsdyke and Quest hikes were cancelled over Lockdown so it is great to be able to take part in these adventures again. Find out how our teams got on in Quest in the March edition of the Parish Mag!

Rachel Gibson



Our Living Village – We are Live Online

Despite the continuing efforts of the coronavirus pandemic to disrupt us, I am delighted to announce that we've finally gone live with the Our Living Village website.

Please do log in, have a look, and give us your feedback at:

www.ourlivingvillage.org

Amongst other things you'll find here a fantastic set of dynamic historical maps of Seer Green and Jordans expertly assembled by Nigel Rothwell; an extensive history of religion in our two communities compiled by David Horncastle and Geoffrey Brand; a presentation of the extensive information collected for the Jordans Centenary celebrations produced by Chris Jenkins; a pictorial history of the historic buildings in

Jordans written by Nigel Morgan; and a history of the wonderful pubs in our two villages produced by Alan Kell.

There is still plenty to do, and over the coming months we will be developing and uploading several more historical themes under the leadership of the Seer Green & Jordans Society.

Many thanks to all of you who have provided such great support to this important community project - we look forward to your continuing involvement to capture and share even more fascinating information about our two historic and vibrant communities.

Alan Kell - Project Manager,
Our Living Village
alan.kell@igsystems.co.uk

Sandra Park, headteacher of Seer Green school, is retiring

The Governing Board of Seer Green Church of England School announces with much regret that our Headteacher, Mrs Sandra Park, has decided to retire at the end of the Summer Term 2022.

We will have opportunities during the months ahead to express our thanks to Sandra for all that she has done for the School over the past six years, to pay tribute to the School's successful

achievements under her leadership, and to wish her well for the future.

The Governors are putting in hand arrangements starting this month to recruit her successor, with a view to having the new Headteacher in post from September 2022.

Michael Phipps - Chair of the
Governing Board

Seer Green Gardeners

After long winter dank-ness, the extra day length that February brings lifts the spirits as we start to welcome Spring. Hellebores and Snowdrops are a magical combination and both are highly promiscuous, so if you're lucky enough to have them in your garden, consider sharing seedlings and overgrown clumps of bulbs with your neighbours.

Seer Green Gardeners' new WhatsApp site helps sharing and exchange, very much with planet-friendly gardening in mind. To join, just email your name and number to seergreengardeners@gmail.com.

Jobs for February

- It's a great time to plan for the coming gardening year and maybe resolve to keep a monthly record of your garden through the year to help with next year's plan!
- Spread as much organic mulch over bare soil as you can lay your hands on. This will make a big difference to your soil quality and help it retain water in the dry periods.
- Ask around for alternatives to buying compost in plastic sacks and definitely avoid anything with peat in it. Best of all, make your own!
- Prune wisteria correctly to ensure a good show of summer flowers - check out the excellent 'how to' video on the RHS website.
- Provide as much shelter in your garden as you can for wildlife. Consider leaving more areas of grass uncut and don't be too keen to keep everything tidy!

Sally Ash



Choirs back in action

The two Seer Green-based choirs, Village Voices and Seer Green Singers, run by inspirational music director Jane Smith, were “over the moon” to be able to meet and sing together again from September 2021.

Many hopes of reconvening after March 2020 had been thwarted by strict government rules, but both choirs are now rehearsing weekly in chilly conditions, as doors and windows at Jubilee Hall are kept

open to improve ventilation no matter how dramatically the temperature outside drops.

Many choir members took part in a sell-out concert at Wycombe Town Hall in October, and Jane is delighted to announce Seer Green’s own concert in Jubilee Hall on **Sunday 29 May**. Further details will follow, but please put this special date in your diary.

Fliss Coombs

Thank You from Seer Green Gardeners

With pandemic rules lifting, hopefully for good, the Seer Green Gardeners have been reviewing their specially-curated lockdown programme and wondering which, if any, of the new events might be repeated in future, and which of those we have traditionally run in the past, we should now resume.

The obvious thing to do was to ask our members, so we created a survey which was sent via email and WhatsApp in early January, and the number of people who responded way exceeded our expectations, so we extend a very big “Thank You” to everyone who took part.

At the time of going to press we were in the process of assessing all the responses, including some

interesting ideas and suggestions, and – very importantly – offers to help with the events and activities we run for the benefit of the community.

Your feedback will help shape our programme for this year and the future, further information will be coming soon. Thanks again from everyone on the SGG committee.

Seer Green Gardeners

www.seergreengardeners.org



Toddlers in the Woods



Friday 7 January was the first week back after the holidays and was a bright sunny morning. There were 15 children and their parents/carers who enjoyed the week’s theme of ‘Worms’. There was a popular story about ‘Superworm’ and the children all made clay worms.

Toddlers in the Woods meets in the Centenary Clearing in Crutches Wood, Jordans every Friday in term time at 9.15am, whatever the weather. All pre-school children and their carers are welcome for an hour of fun. A small donation of £2.50 is welcome. For more information contact Ali Cork 07803 139079 or email alicork686@gmail.com

The Toddlers in the Woods team will be there to meet you. We look forward to meeting you soon.

Rachel Gibson

I have only helped out at two Toddler in the Woods sessions, and have enjoyed joining in with the children, singing action songs to keep warm, themed craft activities and playing with the many push-along trucks and toy bricks. The last session before Christmas included a decorated festive biscuit hunt through the trees and a surprise visit from Father Christmas, who couldn’t stay too long as he had left his reindeer in the neighbouring field!



Rotary raise over a thousand pounds for charity



Thank you to the two villages for their superb support of Father Christmas in his journey around the streets in December. We collected the magnificent figure of £1200 over the three days and we will decide at our next meeting which local charities we will support.

The Seer Green Santa Dash was a great success too with 100 people of all ages taking part and over £400 profit going to local charities. We had a lot of fun running/walking and finishing with refreshments in the Scout Hut.

A big thank you to the Scouts, Emma Pamington - our first aider, Waitrose,

M&S, Lidl and Co-op who donated chocolates, Christmas puds and fruit.

Lastly a huge thanks to all that took part. See you next December!

Here is the programme of speakers for the next four months, Rotary Club meetings are held at Beaconsfield Golf Club on the 4th Monday of the month 7pm for 7.30pm. Should anybody be interested in joining us for those talks please do contact us we should be very pleased to welcome you.

Our secretary's phone number is at the front of the magazine or contact me, Jenny Owen, on 01494 677571.



Monday, 24 January

Ian Hawes from St Tiggywinkles, '30 years of volunteering'.

Monday, 28 February

John Bradley from Milton's Cottage – 'Paradise Lost – literature, language, and augmented reality'.

Monday, 28 March

Nicholas Barber from Bucks Tree Society – 'Can trees answer back ?'

Monday, 25 April

Jaz Elkin, from FCC Environment – 'What a load of rubbish'.

Jenny Owen

Did you know pancake races started in Bucks?

Shrove Tuesday falls on 1 March this year. It is always 47 days before Easter and the word comes from 'shrive' meaning to hear someone's sins and forgive them. Pancakes were made to use up sugar, eggs and milk before the start of Lent, a period of abstinence and reflection.

A famous pancake race at Olney in Buckinghamshire, not far from us, has been held since 1445. The story goes that a woman was so busy making pancakes that she lost track of time. When she heard the church bells ringing for the Shrove Tuesday mass, she ran as fast as she could to make it and arrived still carrying her pancake in the pan!

Now the contestants, traditionally women, carry a frying pan (skillet) and race to the finishing line tossing the pancakes as they go. As the

pancakes are thin, some skill is required to toss them successfully while running. The winner is the first to cross the line having tossed the pancake a certain number of times.

Maybe we should have a Seer Green and Jordans version?



Seer Green 8 O'Clock Club

At the end of November, 41 members of the Eight O'Clock Club celebrated an early Christmas, with a very tasty meal, at Beaconsfield Golf Club.

Whilst enjoying ourselves we did give thought to those who need to use a food bank: a donation of £150 plus some goods in kind were given to Jordans and District Rotary Club to provide Christmas treats.

Looking to 2022, our first meeting will be at **8.00pm on February 3,**

Jordans resident Bob Hall will give a talk - 'Global Warming - What About OUR Carbon Footprint?'. Cost £3. Venue - Seer Green Baptist Church

Then on **3 March 2022**, a talk about the management of our household waste and recycling entitled 'What a Load of Rubbish', by Jez Elkin, Waste Awareness & Education Manager of FCC Environment.

Monica Sado

Greetings from Katie Bacon

Katie used to live in Seer Green and moved to Suffolk to be closer to her family. She was a regular worshipper at Holy Trinity church and took part in lots of village activities. She is now 96 and sends best wishes to people who knew her.

Katie now has 6 great grandchildren - the last one, a girl, was born in Australia

Monica Sado

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Remember a loved one this spring with a Forever Snowdrop

Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity has partnered with Waddesdon Manor for a special event to remember loved ones and raise funds for local hospice care this Spring.

In March, there will be a stunning temporary display of 500 metal snowdrops at the Aviary Gardens at Waddesdon Manor. Each Forever Snowdrop will represent the life of a loved one and has been designed and hand-crafted by British Ironworks.

The Charity is offering you the opportunity to be a part of this event by purchasing a Forever Snowdrop, including an invitation to a private viewing of the display on Monday 21 March while the grounds are closed to the public. The Forever Snowdrop installation will remain on display to the public for two weeks. When the installation is removed, you can take the flower home to display as a Forever Snowdrop keepsake.

The money raised from the display will help raise vital funds for hospice care, ensuring that the Florence Nightingale Hospice team is there to support patients and their families through the toughest times.

Dedicate your Forever Snowdrop at <https://www.fnhospice.org.uk/foreverflowers> or call 01296 429975 for more information.

About Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity

Florence Nightingale Hospice is located at Stoke Mandeville Hospital and provides first class specialist palliative care which is accessible and free of charge to those with a life-limiting illness in Buckinghamshire. The Hospice also provides other services such as their new FNH@Home services, providing end-of-life care for patients in their homes, Florrie's Children's Team respite care for families, the Day Hospice and Bereavement Support.

Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity commits to raise over £1,000,000 annually to ensure the continued funding of local in-patient and at-home palliative care services.

For more information visit www.fnhospice.org.uk



Beaconsfield Library Notice

What's happening this month

Tuesday's	10.30am – 11.00am	Storytime (under-fives)
	2.00pm – 4.00pm	Talking café
	4.00pm – 4.30pm	Phonics club
Wednesday's	10.30am – 12.30pm	Knit & Natter and Scrabble
Thursday's	2.00pm – 4.00pm	Scrabble for adults
Friday's	10.00am – 10.30 am	Bounce and Rhyme (under-fives)
Saturday's	10.30am – 12.30pm	Meet your local councillor (1st Saturday of each month)
	2.00pm – 3.00pm	Lego club (2nd Saturday of each month)
	11.00 am – 12 noon	Adult Book group (3rd Saturday of each month)
	2.00pm – 3.30pm	Chess club (Weekly)

We are restarting our popular Lego club, but we need a volunteer to help run this group, if you have a spare hour once a month to supervise/help young children on a Saturday, please contact us here at Beaconsfield library.

We are also looking for a volunteer to assist with our Chess club.

Please note you need to book in advance for all groups (except knit and natter – which is a drop in).

Please pop in for more information and check our facebook page for updates.

Carolyn Ing - Library Service Officer
Carolyn.ing@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Telephone: 01296 382415

100 Years at the heart of our community



It is with enormous pleasure and great excitement that we, the Jordans Village Community Store Committee, launch the celebrations for the **Centenary of our village shop**.

100 years ago this year, as Jordans was literally rising from the ground and self-sufficiency was still a tough order in an area of uncultivated fields and relatively few animals, the embryonic idea of a commercial business in the form of a village shop was conceived.

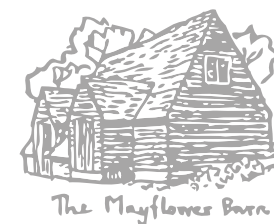
Moving from a worker's cottage to the now Estate Office building, and subsequently to its current site right in front of the newly built Village Hall

and overlooking what was to become the Village Green, right from the outset our shop made its presence felt. **Jordans Village Community Store**, with its position right in the centre of our village, rapidly took on its role as the 'heart' of our village. Despite the invasion of supermarkets over the last 40 years creeping closer and closer to Jordans, this heart is still beating strongly after 100 years.

It is an achievement that few local villages can claim, it is an achievement made possible by you, our villagers, and it is an achievement to celebrate.

Please join the Jordans Village Store Management Committee and Staff for a weekend of Celebrations from **Friday 1 April 2022**.

Ali Cork - Jordans Village Community Store Committee



Jordans Picture House



The Jordans Picture House Committee appreciates the support received throughout 2021 and hopes to see everyone back in 2022. It is now putting together its "Long List" of films for September to May 2023: Please let them know if you have any suggestions!

Our Programme for February - May 2022

Friday 11 February: "The Good Liar" (15) 2019

Cast: Helen Mirren, Ian McKellen and Russel Tovey.
Director: Bill Condon.

Con man Roy Courtney has set his sights on his latest prey: recently widowed Betty McLeish, worth millions. But what should have been a simple swindle escalates into a cat-and-mouse game with the ultimate stakes.

Received 5 nominations and Rotten Tomatoes audience score was 85%.

Doors open at 7.15pm
programme starts 8pm.



Tuesday 22 February: "Revolutionary Road" (15) 2008

Cast: Leonardo DiCaprio, Kate Winslet and Christopher Fitzgerald.
Director: Sam Mendes.

A young couple in a Connecticut suburb during the mid-1950s struggle to come to terms with their personal problems while trying to raise their two children.

Nominated for 3 Oscars, with 20 wins and 73 nominations in total. This and enthusiastic reviews promise an exceptional film.

Doors open at 7.15pm
programme starts 8pm.



Tickets £8 from:

www.jordanspicturehouse.co.uk
(no booking fee!); or

Jordans Box Office:

Alan Sealy
alan@janetsealypartnership.com
01494 873205

Seer Green Box Office:

Gill Pettman
gillyp4@btinternet.com
01494 678050

NB. Please note that the door (for tickets) and the bar will be cashless: we will take card payments only.

To help us through this challenging period, we ask supporters to donate an additional £2 on top of the £8 ticket price. This is a temporary measure, until the Covid situation calms down and we return to normal audience levels.

We all look forward to welcoming you to our ongoing programme of films.

Jordans Picture House Committee



Registered Osteopath

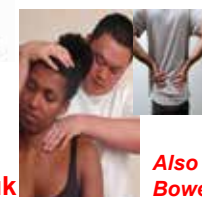
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Janet's book reviews



The Disappearance of Adele Bedau – Graeme Macrae Burnet

This 'Crime' novel centres around a restaurant in a small French town and the disappearance of a waitress, Adele. The story flits between two main protagonists – Manfred, a restaurant regular and Gorski, the local detective. The narrative also switches between their current and past lives, which as you read, you discover are woven together adding to the 'small town' feeling of the novel.

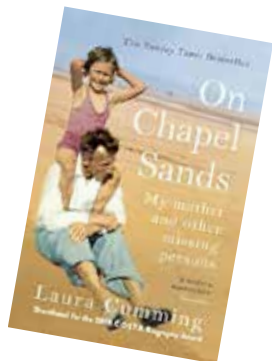
As the story moves along, up-tight, controlled Manfred slowly finds his life unravelling while we see Gorski put his past behind him in a satisfying conclusion.

I found this book surprisingly gripping and completely absorbing. You just get settled into the tale, then a few chapters in, the rug gets pulled out from under you!

It's an undiscovered gem in my opinion and much more than a traditional crime novel. Loved it.

On Chapel Sands – Laura Cumming

A fascinating true story told by Laura Cumming as she tries to unravel the mystery surrounding her mother's past. As a child, Laura's mother disappeared from her local beach in Lincolnshire for 5 days before being safely returned. This book is an unravelling of a family mystery with black and white photos from the family album providing clues to the full story. Many of the villagers know the circumstances surrounding the event, but all keep them secret.



The author is an art historian and references works throughout the book showing how art can be revealing to a narrative. It is beautifully written, somewhat ponderous, but a deeply authentic, emotional story.

Islands of Mercy – Rose Tremain

Rose Tremain is one of my favourite authors, the diversity of her subject matter is truly remarkable. Her latest novel is no exception.

The pivotal character, Jane, a 6ft tall, highly respected nurse at her father's doctor's surgery, gains herself the title of Angel of the Baths for the remarkable therapy she gives at the renowned Baths. Her father's assistant, Dr Valentine Ross, receives a knock back when his advances to Jane are rejected and determines to follow his brother Edmund, a botanist, to Borneo.

The scenes shift from Bath to Borneo via London and Ireland, while the characters, all entangled with each other in one way or another, travel to fulfil their fate. Set in the 1800's, the story focuses on much that was shocking, illegal and kept behind closed doors. Interesting characters leading complicated lives, makes this a fascinating book with flashes of humour within the twisting plot. A challenging, thought provoking read.

Janet Stewart



Wycombe Homeless Connection Update



On the 1 December, we opened our emergency winter accommodation and it is already full. Fifteen people, who otherwise would have been rough sleeping in south Buckinghamshire, have been given a place to stay and are being supported by our team of staff and volunteers.

Because of your support, we are able to make sure our guests have food, clothing and toiletries; we are helping people get the healthcare they need, including ongoing access to vaccination and booster clinics and, of course, offering our in-depth homelessness support services so they can rebuild their lives.

We knew there was likely to be high demand for shelter this winter and even though the shelter is currently full, we plan to keep offering emergency accommodation and support to anyone found to be homeless. We have a range of options and there will be spaces coming up in our main shelter as although finding more permanent homes can be hard, we are working with our guests to do just that.

The government recently announced some pandemic-related funding for local authorities to make sure anyone who is rough sleeping can be offered accommodation this winter. We continue to work in close partnership with Buckinghamshire Council, running a large portion of the local winter shelter provision, and we will continue with our projects and step in where statutory support for people who are homeless is not available.

This additional funding is welcome news, but the demand for our help is high. It is so difficult to see so many people still becoming homeless and needing emergency shelter, especially in the winter. Our homelessness prevention work is becoming more important than ever.

Please, consider giving to our winter appeal which will help fund all our services as well as the shelter - see: www.wyhoc.org.uk/winter-appeal

James Boulton

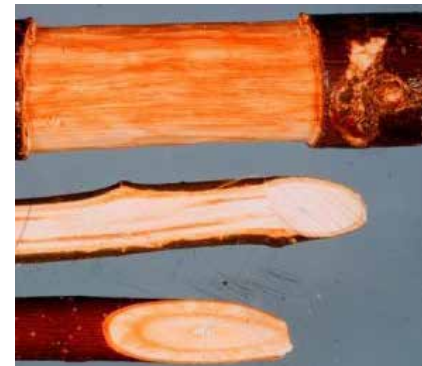
The Environment

This year, we are running a series of articles on the environment. This month, we look at Dutch Elm disease.

Dutch Elm disease ('Dutch', because of early research in Holland) is caused by the fungus *Ophiostoma novo-ulmi*, which was introduced accidentally to the UK from the USA in the late 1960s on imported logs.

The main symptoms are wilting and death of foliage and branches, and damage is seen between summer and early autumn, when foliage suddenly turns yellow and then brown, wilts, shrivels and dies - the tips of affected young shoots sometimes curl into a 'shepherd's crook'. Peeling bark from affected branches reveals brown streaks in the outer wood, which appear as a broken or continuous brown ring in the outer growth ring if the branch is cut across.

Discolouration of wood just under the bark indicates the presence of the fungi.



The fungus is spread by elm bark beetles, particularly *Scolytus scolytus*. These breed in dead and dying elms, including those killed by the disease, where the larvae tunnel in the bark and outermost wood, forming galleries. The fungus produces sticky spores in these galleries, which contaminate newly hatched adult beetles. They fly to healthy elms, where they feed on young bark and introduce the pathogen into the tree, where the fungus blocks water flow and causes rapid wilting and death. It can spread rapidly down rows of hedgerow elms through root grafts formed between adjacent trees.

The beetles tend to attack trees over 20 years old. The first wave hit the UK in the early 1970s, and the diseased and dying trees were cut down. There followed a lull while the trees regenerated from suckers, but the regenerated trees have in turn succumbed.

On the bright side, there is increasing use of resistant cultivars from Spain, Italy, the Far East, and the USA across the UK, particularly in Brighton and often in parks (e.g. in London). These commonly include "New Horizon," "Morfeo," "Sapporo Autumn Gold," "Wingham" and "Accolade".

Phil and Nick Moody

Tweet of the Month for February

Knock-knock, who's there?

As the days get longer, the cold gets stronger, goes the old saying. But by February, spring is glimpsed round the corner, our resident songbirds are tuning up, and the Great Spotted Woodpecker's rat-a-tat-tat rings out in local woods.

The 'Great Spot', *Dendrocopos major*, is one of the UK's three breeding woodpeckers, along with Green Woodpecker and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. Both Lesser and Great Spotted are dapper in black and white; but LSW is Sparrow-sized and rare, while the Blackbird-sized GSW is common through most of the UK.

Although classed as a songbird, GSW's song – establishing its territory and advertising for a mate – is the rapid drumming of beak against hollow tree, made possible by a specially adapted shock-absorbing skull. It also has a sharp, squeaky 'whick whick whick' call – not the 'Ah-ha-ha, ha-ha' laugh of Woody Woodpecker, who is a North American species, *Dryocopus pileatus*.

GSW's crisp tuxedo is set off by red under the tail, and in males by a red neck patch; while the juvenile wears a red cap, signalling 'feed me!'

Last August I watched a cheeky young woodpecker making his devoted mum feed him peanuts – though I saw later that he was quite capable of extracting them himself.

GSW's diet includes beetle larvae, tapped out from bark and extracted with its long tongue, plus adult insects, caterpillars, spiders, nuts, pinecones, and small birds' eggs and chicks. (Metal plates round nest box doors discourage GSW from drilling in.)



Juvenile and adult male Great Spotted Woodpecker
(Wikimedia Commons public domain)

Last autumn an Oxfordshire friend saw a juvenile GSW naively prospecting for grubs – as it seemed – in a creosoted telephone pole. Then he realised it had mastered the art of collecting ripe hazelnuts, jamming them into a crevice in the pole, and cracking them open with its formidable beak.

Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming and calls:
<https://tinyurl.com/yvv294tx>

Nora Bennett



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