

Holton, Waterperry & Waterstock News

MAY 2025



Editor/Advertising
Lawrence Wootten
lawrencewootten@aol.com
or
mail@waterperry.org
07808 761710

Holton News
Mel Ault

Waterperry News
Helen Marshall

Waterstock News
Michael Tyce

Advertise in The News

Delivered free to all houses in
Holton, Waterperry, Waterstock

Contact
lawrencewootten@aol.com
07808 761710

DIRTY CARPETS, UPHOLSTERY, RUGS



Most carpets dry within the
hour

Unbeatable results, removes
almost all spots & stains

call
GRIMEBUSTERS

01865 726983 01235 555533

www.grimebusters.co.uk



Gorman Civil Engineering & Groundworks Ltd



**DRAINAGE & GROUNDWORKS
FOR
RENOVATIONS, EXTENSIONS,
NEW DWELLINGS**

**SEWER CONNECTIONS
CONCRETE BASES
UNDERPINNING
DUCTING & REINSTATEMENT**

Contractor to Oxford City Council

The Laurels, Holton, Oxford, OX33 1PS www.gormangroundworks.co.uk
T: 01865 875530 M: 07885 703943 E: michael@gormangroundworks.co.uk

May Church Services

May 4 th	9.30 St Leonard's Waterstock
May 11 th	9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Bartholomew's Holton 6.00pm St Mary's Waterperry
May 18 th	9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Leonard's Waterstock
May 25 th	8.00 St Mary's Waterperry 9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Bartholomew's Holton
June 1 st	9.30 St Leonard's Waterstock
June 8 th	9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Bartholomew's Holton

St Leonard's Waterstock

Flowers and cleaning rota

May 4th	C. Tyce
May 11th	C. Tyce
May 18th	M. Talbot
May 25th	M. Talbot
June 1st	W. Court
June 8th	W. Court

Mowing rota

M. Ritchie
J. Getty
J. Getty
G. Talbot
G. Talbot
M. Wates

St Mary's Waterperry

Flower rota

May 4th	Jan
May 11th	Jacqui
May 18th	Susan Fonge
May 25th	Rebecca
June 1st	Zena
June 8th	Helen

PRIVATE CHEF - SHONA ARTHUR

Are you planning a dinner party, small gathering, or a summer event? With over 15 years experience in luxury hospitality, I specialise in creating unforgettable culinary experiences.

Services Offered:

- Dinner Parties & Small Events (up to 30 guests)
- Canape Parties
- Summer Gatherings
- Bespoke Picnics for Your Summer Outings

Contact Me:

- Telephone: 07477554628
- Email: shona.arthur@gmail.com

Follow my Instagram: [@shonamarthur]
(<https://instagram.com/shonamarthur>)



Wheatley Dental Practice **01865 873314**

*We are currently accepting
new patients at our friendly local dental
surgery. Please phone our receptionists
or call in for more details!*

Tooth whitening and facial
aesthetic treatments available.

Catherine Peers BDS
Claudia Conde MClintDent Lond
Dental Surgeons

Rachel Hyde, Pranvera Breshanaj
Dental Hygienists

96 Church Road, Wheatley, OX33 1LZ
wheatleydental@gmail.com

Private CLEANING
OXFORDSHIRE

 **01865 58 08 79**  **07411 606 609**

www.privatecleaningoxfordshire.co.uk
privatecleaning_oxfordshire@yahoo.co.uk

- ✓ We are based in Wheatley
- ✓ We have 10 years experience
- ✓ We can provide excellent references
- ✓ We are fully insured
- ✓ We are family-run

Letter from the Vicarage

Hello,

May is often, in song at least, referred to as the merry month of May. It would appear this stems from a poem written by the Elizabethan dramatist and poet Thomas Drekker in 1599 which opens:

*O the month of May, the merry month of May,
So frolic, so gay, and so green, so green, so green!*

The gem stone for May traditionally is the Emerald so the theme of green runs through the month – the green of spring taking full hold and with it bringing the joy of fresh new growth and better weather. Trees and hedge rows are now in full dress – even the beeches have pushed off last year's leaves and are mantled in fresh colour and light. Longer daylight hours mean accelerated growth and fauna as well as flora seem to relish the opportunity that nature offers to make the most of every moment of that daylight.

The reality of climate change is becoming more apparent year by year and for our island nations, affected by movement in the gulf stream as we are, it is becoming more difficult to predict our weather although whatever it is it seems more extreme. Historically May is one of the driest months of the year as you would expect but overall rainfall in the UK has risen decade on decade since the 1960s, although the wettest year on record was actually a quarter of a century ago in 2000.

One reason rainfall stats are important for May is because we have more bank holidays in May than other months and want to enjoy rain free days off. The second of these holidays began in medieval times as a week off (one of only three during the year) for villeins, a break in the constant farm work for their lords. It was called Whitsuntide – the week following Whitsunday which became known as Whitsun. This was the seventh Sunday after Easter which celebrated Pentecost – the gift of the Holy Spirit, God's permanent and intimate presence to the brand new Church.

The tradition of having the day off after Whitsun carried on until 1971 when, after a trial, the government instituted it as a permanent and fixed bank holiday at the end of May. Whitsun is the last of the Church festivals of the year and, in the Church calendar, marks the beginning of what is called 'Ordinary Time' which continues to the end of the Church year which is the day before Advent.

The liturgical colour for Ordinary time is green. Green, the colour of May, the colour of growing and fresh life. And that infusion of new life was the message and result of the first Pentecost and celebrated at every Whitsunday subsequently. The promise that Jesus gave his disciples (and so us) was that he would never leave them and at Pentecost that promise was fulfilled for any and all who wanted his presence with them, then and now. So just as May gives us the base for the summer of growth and the autumn of harvest so Pentecost/Whitsun celebrates the love of Jesus present with us which is the base from which we can build eternal lives with God.

Stay blessed,

David
Rev David Bendor-Samuel
01865 872102,
dbendorsamuel@btinternet.com

Holton Parish Council

Holton Bus No 49

The Community Bus Service started in April – 09.55 from Holton Bus Shelter on a Tuesday and a Thursday – route via various villages arriving at Cowley Templars Square 10.40 and Oxford Carfax 10.55. Return 13.00 from Turl Street via various villages again to Holton Bus Shelter around 13.50. Successful start with many villagers taking advantage of the service, so much so that the bus is sometimes full before the end of the route leaving disappointed passengers in its wake!! The bus company is monitoring this and will take steps to ensure that everyone is accommodated. Unfortunately, the bus failed to turn up in Holton one day due to a scheduling error they say, but the bus company have promised not to repeat this error.

The contact telephone number for the bus company is posted on the Bus Shelter Notice Board, if an issue arises in the future.

Contact: 01865 768329 (Barton End Depot) fleetservices.east@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Planning Applications:

P25/S0939/HH Terence House, Holton. OX33 1PS

Installation of 28 solar PV panels onto the main roof of the dwelling house.

P25/S0887/FUL Home Farm House, Holton. OX33 1QA

Use of land for residential purposes and garden.

P25/S1032/FUL The Park Sports Centre, Holton. OX33 1QZ

Installation of photovoltaic panels on the existing flat roof of the Park Sports Centre, demolition of the existing electricity sub station enclosure and installation of a new electricity sub station enclosure in same position. Installation of two Air Source Heat Pumps.

Planning Decisions SODC Planning:

P24/S1030/FUL Land west of Oxford Brookes University Holton Campus off Holton Park Drive. Full planning application for access and associated works from Holloway Road and Holton Park Drive to Wheatley Campus.

Granted

Appeal Decision – St. Andrews Field, Holton. OX33 1PZ.

Conclusion that the appeals should not succeed, the enforcement notice upheld with variations and refusal to grant planning permission on the application deemed to have been made under section 177(5) of the 1990 Act as amended.

Refused

Annual Holton Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Thursday 22nd May 7.30 pm in the main hall at Holton Village Hall. This is the meeting for the whole parish to hear reports from village organisations and to discuss matters of interest to villagers. This is not a Parish Council Meeting but is chaired by the Parish Council Chairman. Any items, other than the usual reports, which you may wish to be placed on the agenda please let the Clerk know in advance. It is hoped that we will have an up-date report on the Brookes Site Development and the facilities that will be provided on the site, a progress report on the Churchyard extension and an annual report from Holton Village Hall.

Agendas and Notice will be posted on the Village Notice Boards and Parish Council website.

The next Parish Council Meeting is the Annual Parish Council Meeting when the Parish Council Chairman and Vice Chairman will be elected. The meeting will be held on Monday 12th May 2025 starting at 7.00 pm In Holton Village Hall Committee Room. Agendas will be on the village notice boards and Parish Council website. Contact details below:-

Clerk to Holton Parish Council (Sonja Barter) Home Farm House, Holton, Oxford OX33 1QA

Email: clerk@holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 01865 872334

Copies of Holton Parish Council Meeting Agendas and Approved Minutes can be viewed on the Holton Parish Council website www.holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk

F.J.WILSON

Independent Family Funeral Directors

Established 1798

PROMPT PERSONAL ATTENTION, DAY OR NIGHT

HOME ARRANGEMENTS IF DESIRED

PRIVATE CHAPEL OF REST

MEMORIALS SUPPLIED

GREENWAY, HADDENHAM

01844 291200



What's On this May



Waterperry
Gardens



CELEBRATION: 10th & 11th May
THE MUSEUM CELEBRATES
BEING OPEN 25 YEARS

EXHIBITION: 10th - 18th May
OXFORD ARTS WEEK IN THE
GALLERY - FREE TO ENTER

WORKSHOP: 17th May
WILLOW GARDEN STRUCTURES*

*Please see website for any changes and to book.

EVENT: 24th May
SAXIFRAGA DAY – WALLED GARDEN

HALF TERM: 24th May - 1st June
GNOMETASTIC TRAIL

OPEN DAILY
10:00AM - 5:30PM

**250 varieties and colours
of basket &
patio plants
all grown
on the nursery**

Busy Baskets Nursery trading as:



Purely Plants



**HANGING BASKET
SPECIALISTS**

**VEGETABLES
& HERBS**

**BEDDING &
CONTAINER PLANTS**

**PERENNIALS,
CLIMBERS & SHRUBS**

*Seasonal Opening: April-July & September-November
See website for details*

e: andy@purelyplants.co.uk

01491 833 831

w: www.purelyplants.co.uk

**Purely Plants Nursery, 142a Wantage Road,
Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 0LU**

Holton Village Hall

Village Hall Committee AGM

The Village Hall Committee AGM will take place on Thursday May 8th in the Village Hall at 7.30pm. The AGM will then be followed by the May monthly committee meeting. All villagers welcome to the AGM.

New Committee Members

We are always on the lookout for new committee members to bring fresh perspectives and ideas forward, especially for fundraising. Please contact us if you are interested. Please contact admin@holtonvillagehall.co.uk

Afternoon teas.

The coffee mornings and afternoon teas at the Village Hall continue to be a great success. Many thanks to everyone who helps for all their hard work. There will be afternoon teas in May 2025 on 8th, 15th and the 29th. They will be from 2.30pm until 4.00pm. These events are really well attended so come along for Tea, Coffee, Cake and a chat with friends and neighbours.

Village Hall Spring Clean 10th May

There will be a spring clean on Saturday 10th. Please can you all help out to keep our Village Hall clean and tidy. Thank you.

The Next Film Night

Will be Friday 20th June – details to follow.

Summer BBO Friday 1st August 2025

Arrangements are ongoing to organise the summer barbeque this year. If you can help in any way please contact admin@holtonvillagehall.co.uk.

50th Anniversary

It will be fifty years since the Village Hall was opened and the Village Hall Committee are looking to organise an event to mark the occasion. Look out for further details coming soon.

Future Events

For up to date information on all events at the Village Hall please access the website at www.holtonvillagehall.co.uk

Booking the Village Hall

If you would like to book the Village Hall please call **07873 857063** or please E-mail bookings@holtonvillagehall.co.uk

Take care

Mel Ault

Holton News

The weather during March and April warmed up, the sun came out and the village bloomed. It's been the best year for blossom and spring flowers for a good while and the birds and bees are enjoying all the benefits. A bumblebee took an avid interest in me before it decided I was no use and flew off. The honeybees are busy and insects are on the move. Unfortunately the dandelions are also doing well. Roll on summer!

A sludge gulper called 'Drain Line' has been working through the village. Let's hope that the blocked drains which were causing rivers to flow through parts of the village have been cleared at last. On inspection many of these drains were blocked by mud or debris but we won't know if they are properly cleared until it rains again.

The Holton Players production of 'Enchanted April' was worth waiting for. The usual months of rehearsals gradually coalescing into a fully formed play with costumes, props, lights, a set and all the paraphernalia of a theatre is quite an achievement just on its own. What a set, what a performance! We have never had stage curtains before which add an air of mystery because what lies behind? Well, what lay behind was a lovely piece about a lady who decides in the first half to hire a castle in Italy for the month of April to get away from awful London weather and manages to induce three other ladies to go with her. Then the fun starts, the minimal sets in the first half give way to a beautiful Italian veranda in full sunshine complete with lawn. Fab-u-lous. Of course the characters rub each other up the wrong way to start with but soften with the climate. Then their left behind husbands and boyfriends turn up who also relax and they all live happily ever after. It sounds trite but I loved it and although I won't pick out any particular actor, they all did very, very well. Nice timing, tight cues and good energy. Well done Nick Bale (the director) for pulling all this together. What's next please?

Quiz Night 11th April

What a night! What a quiz, what questions! Jas Smith-East returned as quiz master and blew our minds with a series of cunning challenges. It was a barnstormer of a quiz, won, for the first time ever by the Cox's Hill Mob and they richly deserved it given the level of difficulty. Thanks to all those who attended and made the evening special. Full marks to both Jas and the Village Hall Committee for putting such an excellent evening together. Fab bar team, a good harvest supper, all well organised and fun all round. Roll on the next one.

Farming Life by Nina

Being born as a human brings different feelings together. Looking at the greatest designs makes you feel proud. Looking at daily management of simple things makes you question our ability to adapt and sustain. Every single aspect of life and its logic became a challenge. As a customer we got used to cheap easily accessible food in shops. The reality of it of it there is always hidden catch. We are living in times when efforts and outcomes of them do not match any more. Farmers businesses' even the longest and profitable struggle to meet ends. Weather does not help. Policies and new regulations do not meet reality of life. Climate is changing all the time. Humans do not help with polluting the environment and taking resources for granted. Bringing contaminated traces of elements from abroad, not checked for diseases is one of the reasons some diseases are spreading through livestock.

Modern people are so far from understanding, some more than others, how things are made or grown. I came to the conclusion; how about if we start to grow more locally? Even if it is a small chilli plant on a windowsill for us to understand the process. Maybe some tomatoes in small green house? We won't be able to have a field with wheat or a pig in the back garden but at least individually we can do research into what is involved to relate to the land. Maybe there is a hope if the mindset is right.

*Charles Darwin said: "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change".
I wish you all a good month ahead.*

Nina

Take care

Mel

Mel Ault

mel_ault39@outlook.com

The Holton Village Hall Needs Help!

The Village Hall will be celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, having been a central part of the Village for many events and celebrations.

Hopefully it will continue for many more years to come.

However, because many of the 'original' volunteers have stepped down after many years' voluntary service for a well-deserved rest, we are looking for some new volunteers to help look after and run the Village Hall as part of the Committee.

We are always looking for new, fresh ideas to implement & update our role in the community and would love to hear from you if you are interested.

Only one short meeting each month, and various roles with which you may be able to help.

Please contact admin@holtonvillagehall.co.uk or speak to any of the current Committee members.

The Hall is a charity and can only continue to exist if there are sufficient volunteers willing to help.

(Charity no. 273526)



Art Weeks at the Bus Shelter

It's not too late to help us to add some colour to the bus shelter for art weeks! We are looking for your/your child's drawings/paintings/photos or other pieces of creativity to hang in the bus shelter during May.

Contributions from all welcome, young and not so young and it's definitely not a competition! Please either hand to Dominique at afternoon tea or drop off at Treetops (just down the dead end, near the green) as soon as possible and we will do the rest. Please pop your name and address on the back so that items can be returned.

Thank you.

Dominique (domisqueak@gmail.com) and Mandy (smithama@btinternet.com)

Holton & Waterperry W.I.

We were spellbound by Steve Wilkinson's 'Defying Logic' demonstration on the 1st April. He mesmerised us with dice, key and card tricks, entertaining us in a gentle and kindly way. Very clever.

Old and new members have re-joined and the new programme is available. It includes medical advice from the 1700's, jewellery making, complementary therapies and the WI in WWII amongst other talks.

Notices on the village noticeboards. Do be persuaded to join us.

Other activities include the resumption of the monthly walks, the first on the 25th April; a theatre visit and the possibility of starting a craft group.

At our May meeting on the 8th we will welcome Carol Parker from Wheatley Farm Shop. She will show us how to make our hanging baskets and get the best from our flower tubs.

We will briefly discuss the Resolutions on that evening.

Visitors continue to be very welcome.

Barbara Martin

Holton Cock and Bull

The following is not intended to present a role model but it does raise a smile or two.

Noticing burglars in her garden shed, a woman called the police expecting an immediate response. However, she was told that no-one was available and the police would attend when they were able to. Having considered the matter for a few minutes she called the police again, reminding them of her earlier call, but saying that there was no rush as she had now shot the burglars.

Within several minutes a number of police cars had arrived on the scene together with an armed response unit and the burglars were arrested. Feeling slightly put out, the officer in charge said, 'I thought you said you had shot them', to which the woman replied, 'I thought you said there was no-one available'.

Name and address supplied



Recipe: Treacle & Rubarb Tart



350 g shortcrust pastry

350 g golden syrup



Grated rind and juice of small lemon

1 egg



6 tablespoons double cream

125 g fresh white breadcrumbs



75 g cooked rhubarb, sweetened with 25 g sugar and strained



- Heat the oven to 190 c / fan 170c / gas 5.
- Roll out the pastry and line a 10 inch fluted flan tin.
- Combine all the remaining ingredients and place in the pastry case.
- Bake for around 30 minutes until just set.



Holton and Waterperry WI



May Birthdays



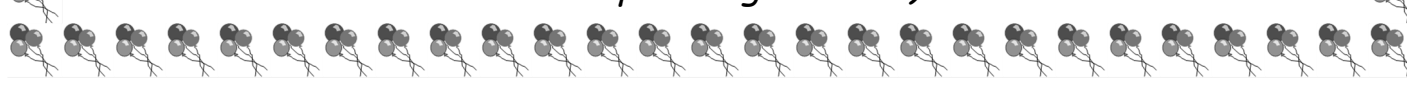
A very Happy Birthday this month to:

Ronnie who will be turning 11

Halle who will be turning 13

Lizzie who will be turning 14

(to have a birthday included in the magazine, please email Dominique - domisqueak@gmail.com)



Waterperry News

So, he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side

As the 80th anniversary of VE Day approaches on 8th May here are some words on the two men connected to the village who died in the Second World War.

Their names are permanently memorialised in the church on a lectern by the altar, with the words above by John Bunyan, and also in a framed calligraphy tribute in the nave.

Helen Marshall

Leslie John Slater - Rifleman 14621699 King's Royal Rifles 17 May 1923 - 10 September 1944

This piece is written by Les's niece Sue Bradbury (nee Slater) the daughter of his brother Dennis.

Leslie Slater came from a family who had been in Waterperry for 300 hundred years and lived in several different house over that time. In 1944 they lived at 24 Waterperry. He was the first child of William and Winifred Slater. His brother Dennis was born in 1925, followed by Geoffrey in 1927, Grace in 1930, Jean in 1935 and Doreen in 1939.

Les and his brothers enjoyed a very happy upbringing leading an outdoors country life. Les's grandfather was the gamekeeper for Waterperry House and lived at the Common. He would have taught him all the country ways, but he died when Les was 6 years old. My Father told me that he and Les as the eldest two boys had to garden and were taught to shoot by their father William, who has served in the First World War in the Kings Royal Rifles, being the son of a keeper, it was assumed you could shoot well. My Grandfather was awarded the Military Medal & Bar in action in France in the First World War and would never talk about it.

But this lovely rural country life was soon to come to an end for Les. When aged 20 he was enlisted into the General Service Corps and embodied in the Territorial Army 3rd June 1943. My Father always said that Les would like to have joined the RAF, but because of his father's war service was soon transferred to Kings Royal Rifle Corps later that year. On 9th August 1944 his overseas service began when he was transferred to Rifle Brigade on 13th August. Less than a month later whilst 14th, 15th and 16th Divisions were clearing the village of Helchteren in Belgium (south of Eindhoven, North of Maasrticht) on the 10th September 1944. Whilst grouping by the church they came under mortar and sniper fire. Seven men were killed in action that day including Les. He was 21 years old.

Les is buried at the nearby War Cemetery at Leopoldsborg. I had the honour of visiting in 1986. Since then, my Aunt Doreen (who was only 6 when Les died) and cousin visited in 2019 and my brother and family in 2024.



Doreen Lowe, Les's youngest sister adds these poignant memories.

I was only five years old in September 1944. I had just started school and was put on a coach that picked up the school children from Waterperry and Holton. I can remember being taken off the coach at Holton to the infant's school. Grace and Jean stayed on the coach and were taken to Wheatley C of E school. You can probably imagine this was quite traumatic for a five-year-old. Holton was a foreign land for me and I felt I had been deserted. No wonder I was never fond of school.

On the day Mum and Dad received the news that Les had been killed Geoff was sent to collect me from school and he and his girlfriend took me for a ride. We stopped for tea somewhere. But it was obvious it was to keep me out of the house while the initial shock and grief were dealt with.

My memories of Les. He was always wearing uniform I can still remember the feel of the fabric. I remember what must have been his last leave. Dad had just staked the runner beans and Les picked me up and said he was going to toss me over the runner beans. I was wearing a new coat at the time. I remember being more worried about damage to my coat than damage to me. I remember he took me fishing I don't remember catching any fish but we found fresh water mussel shells on the river bank. The mussels caught and eaten by otters. We were near the bridge over the river at Waterstock Mill.

Thomas Van Oss - Major, Northern Command
14 March 1901 - 3 November 1941

Tom Van Oss was born to an English mother and Dutch father in Suffolk. He was educated at the Dragon in Oxford and then in Holland. In 1930 he married Favell and lived abroad and in Suffolk. He studied law and worked for his father's newspapers but his calling was in art as a landscape and portrait painter. He exhibited in London and Oxford. He and his wife had three sons born in 1931, 1932 and 1936 and they lived in Walberswick and later in Deddington near Banbury.

Tom joined the Officer Emergency Reserve pre-war and undertook a specialist course on camouflage. He served in France on the Maginot line and was one of the last off the beach at the retreat from Dunkirk. On his return he was promoted to Major and was responsible for camouflage on a large stretch of England's east coast. He was on a boat off Boston, Lincolnshire inspecting defences when it hit a magnetic mine and all 15 were killed. Tom was 40.

Tom is commemorated on Deddington's war memorial but also in our church in Waterperry. This is because Favell and their three boys moved here after his death and lived here until 1956. She took in paying guests and taught French in Headington Rye School. She married again and moved from the village in the 1960s. She died in 1996 aged 95.



Richard Van Oss, Tom's son has provided the following about life in Waterperry after his father's death. His daughter Celia Randell and niece Angela Van Oss helped in getting this to the magazine.

The family came to Waterperry as an uncle was the bursar at Magdalen College who post-war sold off rental properties of which the Old Rectory was one. It was bought by an uncle for thirty thousand pounds for the family.

Richard remembers his mother creating a lovely (and productive) garden there with the help and friendship of some of the students at the Horticultural College - including Valerie Finnis - who was to become a renowned plants woman and plant photographer. Favell was a keen gardener until well into her eighties.

He was studying at boarding school in Lambrook when his father was killed. The headmaster told him of his loss and then sent him straight back to lessons.

In the holidays, the boys ran fairly wild in the Oxfordshire countryside and Richard developed a keen interest in wildlife as well as gardening - particularly birds and butterflies which were abundant. The summers were magical - but the house was very cold in winter and there were always logs to chop.

They kept hens and a pig as well as growing vegetables, and to supplement the meagre wartime rations, Richard and his brother John became skilled fishermen and crack shots. With just their air rifles, they shot (and later ate) pigeons, rabbits and even crows and squirrels - though the latter were pretty disgusting, they drew the line at rats!

The boys went barefoot during the summer to save on the cost of shoes for rapidly growing boys. They were allowed new shoes at the start of the school year.

All phone calls had to go through the local exchange and the postmistress liked to listen in on calls, however private, and knew everybody's business.

After Lambrook Richard went to Radley College and because of petrol rationing he and Favell would cycle there from Waterperry at the beginning and end of term while his luggage was sent in advance by train.

After National Service, he went on to read Zoology at Oxford where he met his wife Phoebe. By then he had a small and unreliable car and he and Phoebe would often drive to Waterperry to see his mother at weekends and to enjoy the garden there.

*They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, or the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.*

(from For the Fallen by Laurence Binyon)

Waterperry with Thomley Parish Council

We had a very interesting and worthwhile meeting last month with Chloe, from the OCC Highways Community Engagement Team. She spent well over an hour with us, walking the whole length of the village, taking lots of photos of problems and although – of course – it was a quiet morning, she could appreciate how much traffic uses the road, more than would be expected for an otherwise small no-through road. We were immensely impressed that by the end of that same week, a team had been sent to fill in a nasty large pothole across Smith's Lane, on the way up to Waterperry Common and, on the Sunday morning (!), a lorry turned up to empty and jet-blast blocked drains opposite No.24 and Deasland and also further down near Nos 4-6. The drains man commented that they obviously hadn't been cleared for many years.....so we'll stay on top of this now.

We also found out a few useful nuggets of information, for instance, that the council has up to 3 years to call back utility companies to make good any repairs to the highway that fail after their work is completed. We have passed on details of the Thames Water contractor to Chloe, for her to request that they return to make good the very soft and pot-holed verge that was left after drain excavation opposite No.6 last year.

Chloe also explained that it is impossible to patch-repair the deep ruts that have appeared along the road edges along the verge and on the Manor Farm bend, as these have occurred where verge, rather than tarmac'd road surface, has been eroded so there is no hard sub-surface on which to bed a repair. This is why they have stopped using "dragon patching" at road-edges as it fails so quickly. Our only alternative is to reinstate the verges and then find ways to protect them. Various suggestions were made and Chloe is going to look at what might be viable for the village.

We discussed the area of very uneven road surface roughly around the recreation ground gateway and Chloe said this would need a 'proper' resurfacing job rather than more patches, and that she would earmark it for repair. Unfortunately it comes under the third level of priorities so is unlikely to happen in the next year or so. Again, I think what we learnt was that if a utility company does not complete a decent job of filling and resurfacing, we should report this immediately for the Highways team to enforce remedial work.

She told us that our best portal to Highways' ears is still to use FixMy Street. *And on that note...* Thank You Laurie Clarke for reporting the graffiti under the motorway bridge at Holton and persevering to get it cleaned. It looks so scruffy and just leads to further vandalism and rubbish dumping, so it's well worth getting it cleaned and tidied.

We're hoping to be able to give you more information on ideas that came out of our meeting at the Annual Parish Meeting, so please come along to find out more.

Waterperry Annual Parish Meeting – Wednesday 7th May 2025 7.00pm in the classroom at Waterperry Gardens.

An opportunity for all parishioners to catch up with what is happening in the village/parish and what is important to the community and to raise issues relating to the area.

More information will be available on the Parish Council's website - www.waterperry.org or www.waterperrywiththomley-pc.gov.uk

*Sue Parker,
Chairman, Waterperry with Thomley Parish Council*

Waterstock News

Nothing can be more delightful than to report that we have two new baby girls, in the Shipperley family at Home Farm and the Garrad family at the White House.

Lucia reports from the White House:

Friday 21st March my little sister arrived. My mummy and daddy picked her name and decided to call her Mila Sienna Garrad. I wanted her to be called Rosie!

She drinks lots of milk (no sweeties) and she is very small! One day she will be big like me and we can play.

I love having her as a little sister, she makes me happy!

My mummy and daddy are disappointed because she doesn't sleep all night and they don't get enough sleep! I luckily don't wake up though when she cries.

Chuck and Rolly dogs like Mila too but they sometimes bark too much and wake her up.

We all love her lots and lots and lots.

Words from Lucia Garrad (big sister!)

White House

Good new too from Home Farm, Janet reports:

"Janet and Stephen are proud to announce the arrival of their first grandchild! A beautiful girl, Cora Sienna Miles, born to Nicole and Craig on 16th March 2025, weighing 7lb1oz. She is flourishing and Nicole is doing well. Hopefully you will get to meet Cora soon, when they are out walking in the village on their regular visits."

This is the start of the month of May. May seems to have entered the English language about a thousand years ago in the 1050s when Waterstock was already a flourishing community. Shortly afterwards Saewald was the "lord of the Manor" with five hides (around 250 hectares, not far off the size of the present parish) and Waterstock Mill was operating, although it was not then in the relatively modern five hundred year old form we see today. May itself was named after the Greek goddess Maius, a nurturer and earth goddess which is surely appropriate as May is the month in which nature is finally recovering from its winter slumbers.

As Cicely Osmond Smith – who lived at Orchard End and many will remember – wrote twenty five years ago for the May 2000 edition of this magazine: "some of us have heard our first cuckoo and seen our first swallow of the season. Tree-wise some of the horse chestnuts already show their candles". Compared to Cicely writing 25 years ago, we have not heard a cuckoo yet at Camilla Cottage, but we saw our first swallow a week ago; the horse chestnuts have yet to start displaying their white candles, despite all the glorious blue skies and wall to wall sunshine during the first two weeks of April.

In 1985, fifteen years before Cicely wrote, the May Parish Magazine reflected on the recent loss of the abundant elms which had characterised the landscape of Waterstock, until the beetles carrying Dutch Elm Disease destroyed them all. Some saplings still try to grow but are fatally infected as soon as they reach the height at which the beetles fly.

The loss of our canopy of magnificent elms left the Parish bare.

Thus, the Magazine reported how "very grateful we all were to Mike Haffey who has

worked so hard to order and see to the planting of trees in and around the village from Waterstock Turn to the Ickford end of the lane. When a few more planes have been delivered there will be 135 more trees for us and future generations to enjoy. They are mostly limes and horse chestnuts and I expect the birds will enjoy them too”.

Mike Haffey’s present day reflections follow this article.

Finally with May comes Oxfordshire Artweeks. Helen MacRitchie tells me that she and Jane Hanson will be opening their studios in Waterstock each day except Monday from Sat 10th to Sunday 18th (between 10 and 5 for Helen and 11-6 for Jane) for anyone who'd like to visit.

They have Artweeks catalogues with maps and full listings of all the artists taking part, if you need to pick one up.

Look out for the bunting and signs!

Happy May to you all.

Michael Tyce

Forty Years On, Mike Haffey’s Personal Thoughts and Reflections on Tree Planting

Michael Tyce has very kindly reminded me that 40 years ago to the month, a short piece in the parish magazine thanked me for my efforts to organise a tree planting scheme in the hedgerows and roadsides of Waterstock. It was a village effort and we planted 135 trees, with the aid of a council grant and the generous cooperation of the late John Bull our local farmer.

In 1985, I had only just moved to the village and for me, a ‘townie’, it was extraordinary to be in such a rural place, with history close to hand. No motorway, no services, not even the golf course. Inconceivable that we might have an industrial estate as a neighbour.

It was very much as shown on the 1880s 6 inch OS map. An exception: the map showed hedgerow trees in very large numbers. A friend recalled that, before Dutch Elm Disease, the lane from Waterstock Turn was a tunnel between huge elms. Those too young to remember the ‘60s would not believe what a dominant feature of the Oxfordshire countryside the elms were. Anyway, I wanted to try and help restore something of what was lost. Not elms of course, but planes, limes, horse chestnuts, a few oaks and maples.

Some, particularly along the lane and in the meadows near the river, did well. Others not so well - especially on Stockwell Lane.

Did I think, then, I would still be in the village forty years later? I don’t think so. The young don’t think that way. However, I did imagine the trees, big and beautiful. Not just big, but fully mature, and, in my mind, I was there to see them. A fantasy. Even in another forty years they will have a long way to go.

To see these trees gives me, and I believe others, pleasure and a sense of satisfaction both for the result and the joy of neighbours working together.



It is with great sadness that we announce the closure of Waterperry Farm Shop, after nearly 7 wonderful years of trading. Since we first opened it has been a true privilege to get to know so many of you and become a community hub for the village - thank you to those of you who have supported us.

This decision has not been an easy one due to a number of reasons.

Firstly, increased overheads for small businesses, most recently from the latest budget, have made profitability almost impossible.

Despite our unwavering commitment to providing high quality, ethically farmed meat, we have found it increasingly difficult to compete with supermarkets and sellers who care less about the origins, welfare & slaughter of their meat.

Staying true to our values and prioritising animal welfare, sustainability & supporting local farming has always been at the heart of what we do. To run an independent farm shop comes at a big cost and sadly economies of scale from the big players have beaten us.

I would like to thank our incredible team who, I'm sure you will agree, have consistently produced outstanding produce for you all to enjoy.

The farm will continue as normal and the farm team here are planning for a busy lambing & calving period ahead and onwards into 2025. We will continue to uphold our values on the farming side of the business and continue with the routes to market we have established there.

With thanks for your support and best wishes for the future.

Lois & the Waterperry Farm Shop team.

In better news... coming very soon...we hope to return 'back to the beginning' and offer home grown beef & lamb boxes on a smaller scale, direct from the farm. To be kept up to date, please put your email address into the contact form on our website www.waterperryfarmshop.co.uk, and we will keep you posted!