

Holton, Waterperry & Waterstock News

MARCH 2026



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Holton, Waterperry & Waterstock News is delivered monthly and free-of-charge to all households in the parishes of Holton, Waterperry with Thomley, and Waterstock.

The magazine is run on a not-for-profit basis, and paid for largely through advertising revenue along with financial support from the three parishes. Its finances are overseen by Waterperry with Thomley Parish Council.

We welcome letters, articles and announcements from individuals and organisations, but reserve the right to edit or to publish or not.

All copy must be received no later than the 18th of the month prior to publication and with its author's name attached.

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor.



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March Church Services

March 1st	9.30 St Leonard's Waterstock
March 8th	9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Bartholomew's Holton 5.00pm St Mary's Waterperry
March 15th	9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Leonard's Waterstock
March 22nd	8.00 St Mary's Waterperry 9.30 St Helen's Albury 11.00 St Bartholomew's
March 29th	Palm Sunday celebration and Procession 10.00 St Leonards Waterstock walking to 10.45 St Mary's Waterperry
April 3rd	12 midday Good Friday Meditation St Mary's Waterperry
April 5th	9.30 Easter Sunday St Leonard's Waterstock 11.00 Easter Sunday St Mary's Waterperry

There will be a Lent Group running on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm all through March. The group will look at the Creeds of the Church under the heading 'What we believe. How we live.' All are very welcome. Contact David if interested.

St Leonard's Waterstock

Flowers and cleaning rota

March 1st	A. Ashby
March 8th	A. Ashby
March 15th	S. Edmondson
March 22nd	S. Edmondson
March 29th	G. Spencer
April 5th	Easter Sunday

St Mary's Waterperry

Flower rota

March 1st	Lent - no flowers in church*
March 8th	Lent - no flowers in church*
March 15th	Lent - no flowers in church*
March 22nd	Lent - no flowers in church*
April 5th	Easter Sunday

*Emma has kindly offered to put a vase of flowers in the church porch during Lent

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For more details contact
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Letter from the Vicarage

Charles Dickens wrote in *Great Expectations*; “It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade.” As you would expect from Dickens he captures the moment well. March is a month of contradictions; we can portray it as a month of a battle between retreating winter and advancing spring. Those whose birthday is in March are born with one foot in each season. The colours of the early spring flowers are always at risk of being covered with a late snowfall and shirtsleeve warm sunshine and frost can occur in the same 24 hours.

I love Peggy Toney Horton’s experience of March as not so much a seasonal battle but as a toddler’s plaything when she wrote “March is like a mischievous child. It startles, delights and vexes—all in the same day—then, suddenly, with a sunny smile, it declares total innocence.” Whether we characterise March as a seasonal battleground or the result of the whims of a weather child, one thing is true – while it may be unpredictable it moves us from winter to spring. March takes us on a journey of longer days and life stretching like the first yawn and shake after a long sleep. All around us are the stirrings of new life. The birds which have deserted us for winter warmth are now returning to mate and build new families and buds start to swell with the promise of new leaves.

The equinox, the brief moment when day and night are suspended in equality, which is celebrated on the 20th/21st, is also World Storytelling Day. How wonderful that we turn the corner and launch ourselves into our period of longer days than nights with a celebration of the power of telling stories. All through the history of humanity we have made sense of our lives, our very existence, through telling stories. Stories make sense of our history and who we are, they create community and within them is the promise of our future.

Of course not all stories are true or helpful but those that offer us assurance and hope. And one such story, the greatest story ever told, is the story of redemption and new life that we tell during Lent which takes us through the whole of March this year. In Lent we remind ourselves of the necessity of understanding our own fragility and weaknesses but also of the love and power that God offers through Jesus as we prepare to celebrate the Easter story. It is a period of optimistic introspection that offers us a chance to grow as individuals.

In Lent we tell the true stories of who we are in the light of God’s immeasurable love for us. We come together as a community who wants to open ourselves up to the infinite possibilities that we are offered in our relationship with God and we try to understand a bit more what those stories tell us about God and his care for us.

So while the month of March may be the problem child of our year weather wise it is also the time in our year when through our Lent experience we can take some time out to re-focus our lives away from the day-to-day and give ourselves a chance to expand our horizons to embrace the totality of what it means to be human – mind, body and spirit.

Stay Blessed,

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



A great place to grow

Greetings from The Maple Tree!

This term we have had a few tweaks to our schedule!

Mondays: Messy Monday (back by popular demand) at 10:00-11:30am

and Twins' Club at 2:00-4:00pm

Tuesdays: Smart Start at 9:30-11:30am

Wednesdays: Maple Babies at 9:30am-12:00pm

Thursdays: Time to Rhyme at 9:30-11:30am and

The Maple Tree at Forest Hill Village Hall from 10:30am-12:00pm

Fridays: Little Learners at 10:00-11:30am

Saturdays: Family Fun at 10:00-11:30am on February 21st, March 14th and April 18th

We will be open every morning during the February half-term and most days during the Easter holiday – please check our website or social media for details. We have another Emergency Paediatric First Aid for parents and carers coming up in February too!

Here is an additional date for your diary;

22nd March – our fabulous **Daffodil Day 2026** with Forest Hill's St Nicolas Church will start at 2:00pm. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Laura at the email below. We need volunteers for all sorts of roles during the event, from ticket collectors to refreshments servers to parking attendants. Beforehand, we will need lots of bakers and some people to set up traffic signs. We also need muscles to set up and later to take down gazebos and tables and chairs. It is a lot of fun in a beautiful setting, and it is satisfying to raise much-needed money for these two worthy charities. Do consider joining us as a volunteer or just come to enjoy the ambiance, the stunning setting, and of course the daffodils!

Wish List:

- A volunteer on Monday for our Twins' Club sessions from 2:00-4:00pm
- A fundraising-loving trustee!
- A finance, number-adoring trustee!

We are here to help if you need advice or support: 01865 236700.

Email: info@mapletree.org.uk

Website: www.mapletree.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheMapleTreeWheatley

Instagram: [@themapletreecentre](https://www.instagram.com/themapletreecentre)

Holton Village Hall

www.holtonvillagehall.co.uk

Village Hall Committee

New Committee Members

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

Afternoon teas

The Afternoon teas at the Village Hall continue to be a great success. Many thanks to everyone that helps, for all their hard work. There will be afternoon teas in March on 5th and 19th, from 2.30pm until 4.00pm. Come along for Tea, Coffee, Cake and a chat with friends and neighbours.

Solar Panels

The Village Hall is planning to install Solar Panels in order to make us self-sufficient for electrical energy. A planning application has been submitted, so watch out for developments.

Film Night

On Friday 6th March, the film will be Bridget Jones Mad about the Boy (15). This is the latest episode in the ongoing story of Bridget Jones. Now widowed, middle aged and the mother of two children, Bridget sets out on a new adventure. Starring Renee Zeltwegger, Hugh Grant, Colin Firth and Emma Thompson plus supporting cast.

7.00 for 7.30 pm.

ENTRANCE - cash only Adults £5 Under 18s £3

TEA, COFFEE & CAKE - cash only

BAR OPEN – card payments preferred

Archive Exhibitions 14th March

There will be exhibitions in the Village Hall from Holton village archive, Wheatley Park school's Holton park archive and archaeology Club collection, and Jack Turner's geology collection on Saturday March 14th 2026.

12.30pm - 4.30pm

Free entry

TEA, COFFEE & CAKE - cash only

Future Events

For up to date information on all events at the Village Hall please access the website at www.holtonvillagehall.co.uk. The noticeboards on the green and at the Hall will also display forthcoming events closer to time.

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 Parish Council

Planning Applications

P26/S0214/LB The Hay Barn, Pond Farm, Holton. OX33 1PY
Installation of EO mini-EV charger on external wall.

P26/S0308/FUL St Andrews Field, Holton. OX33 1PZ
Erection of a self-build 1.5 storey dwelling with a detached garage and store.

Holton Litter Blitz Saturday 21st March 10.00 am start from Holton Village Hall

Litter pickers, hi-viz vests and bags to be provided. Full bags to be left next to the litter bin by the hall entrance, for collection on Monday 23rd March.

Please join in to spring clean the village. Wear sensible clothing, shoes and gloves for scrambling up and over banks/verges etc.

Traffic Order published for extension to 20 mph limit between Wheatley Park School entrance and roundabout at Park Hill/London Road.

This completes the 20-mph limit throughout Holton and joins up with the 20mph limit in Wheatley.

Verge damage, potholes and water on road

Constant dialogue with Highways, Thames Water and County Councillor Tim Bearder to solve the surface water problems in areas of the village, the resultant potholes and damage to verges. Please report issues on Fix My Street and to our village super users Mel Ault and Clive Ganczarski or via the Clerk's email.

Highway road drains – please, if possible, ensure that the road drains near your properties are clear and running. If blocked report as above along with location details or clear them yourselves if possible.

We are all working hard to resolve these annoying issues.

Holton Parish Meeting to be held in May – date to be announced later

Please let the Parish Council know of any agenda items you wish to be discussed by the whole Parish at the Annual Meeting of the village where reports are received from organisations in the village and matters of general interest can be aired and discussed.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 9th March 2026 starting at 7.00 pm in Holton Village Hall Committee Room.

Contact details: 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, Approved Minutes and copies of HWW News can be viewed on Holton Parish Council website:-

www.holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk

Holton & Waterperry W.I.

Another wet day but another treat - this time an excellent, tasty and convivial meal at the King's Arms, Wheatley on the 10th February. This followed on from our fun, instructive indoor bowling session at the City and County Bowls club on the 26th January which is to be repeated by popular demand.

We have also been delighted with our last craft session on the 19th January in the village hall committee room. The craft was Indian Block Printing, expertly tutored and hugely enjoyed, so much so that we hope to repeat it. The blocks are varied patterns and the inks are bright and cheerful and we all came away with designer zip bags and cards. We hope to have a different craft session in April.

Our speaker on the 3rd February was Katie Chester, a well being coach based in Wheatley. She gave us information about the techniques and then guided us through a relaxation session and showed us how to use acupuncture points for tension relief and then finished with an energiser routine.

Our 3rd March meeting is our AGM with a 'Pointless' type quiz. Subscriptions were collected at our February meeting and the rest are due in March. Some committee members are standing down so we are looking to others to replace them. Please consider being a committee member. New members are always welcome.

Barbara Martin

Holton Cock and Bull

Criminals don't always get their own way as John Pointer from Cardiff can testify.

Undeterred by forgetting his gloves and balaclava helmet, he burst into a post office and promptly dropped his savings book, containing his address. He waved a fake gun at staff and demanded the safe keys but, demonstrating a marked inability to use them, he had to be helped to open the safe.

He then attempted to leave the post office clutching several thousand pounds, but thus encumbered he could not open the door and had to ask two children to help him. They subsequently took the number of the car that he had parked outside.

Becoming stuck in traffic he decided to take a train to Stockport, booking into a hotel under a false name even though he was known there. His parting words to the receptionist were, 'If the police ask for me, I'm not here!'

Name and address supplied

Dr Rogers Trust Educational Grants for Young People in Holton

When the Trust was set up in February 1980, the Constitution stated:-
“The objectives of the charity is to promote the education (including social and physical training) of children and young person’s resident in the area of the ancient parish of Holton. The Trust Deed instructs that Trustees shall have special regard to the promotion of education in accordance with the principles and doctrines of the Church of England”.

The Dr Rogers Trustees will be meeting in April 2026 to consider applications from apprentices, trainees and students, aged 14 to 21, who are resident in the parish of Holton, for grants to assist in the purchase of books and equipment or towards the cost of educational trips or courses.

A maximum of 2 grants per applicant will be considered, the first whilst at school and the second for undertaking further education up to the age of 21.

In 2025 six grants were awarded to young people.

If you would like further information, please contact:
Carol Johnston, Trustee/Clerk, Chance Cottage, Holton
Email: carol.johnstonfj@btinternet.com

Applications **MUST** be made in writing to the above by **12th April 2026**.



March Birthdays

A very Happy Birthday this month to:



Nea who will be turning 14

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

FILM NIGHT

Holton Village Hall

Friday 6 March 2026

7.00 for 7.30 pm

Bridget Jones: Mad about the Boy (15)

Starring

Renée Zellweger; Chiwetel Ejiofor; Leo Woodall
with Colin Firth and Hugh Grant

Run time approx. 2 hours

In this romantic comedy, the fourth film of the Bridget Jones series
(and considered by many to be the best)
Bridget juggles work, parenthood and love.
With the help of her loyal friends, Bridget navigates
romantic encounters, as she strives to forge a new
path in life.

ENTRANCE - *cash only*

Adults £5

Under 18s £3

TEA, COFFEE & CAKE - *cash only*

BAR OPEN

Holton News

Well, it's still raining! That may sound like the beginning of an old music hall joke but it's everywhere at the moment. We have had the odd sunny day, which is great, but they don't last. Apparently, there is a massive high pressure over America which is directing the jet stream right at us, loaded with low pressures and lots of rain. So it's not just American politicians causing us trouble, it's their weather as well! Just to add to the blockages, there is another large high pressure over Scandinavia which is blocking the low pressures from going east as normal. The result is endless rain. To rub it in, the great inland sea has returned across the road from Asda and all along the left side of the road to Thame. We haven't seen that for some time. Difficult times for those living in low lying areas or near rivers. I did hear of plans to build an Ark but no-one is sure where to get the gopher wood from.

The Village Hall held a very successful and very well attended Race Night. Nearly fifty people attended. There were six races and people were allowed to bet small amounts on each race. The odds were calculated on the night by an expert "specialist team". The bar was kept busy and the biggest winner was Julia Dobson who won £28.00, well done Julie! The hot lasagne followed by chocolate cake was a great hit and everyone enjoyed themselves. We are looking forward to the next one! Thanks to Clare Wright for organising this and producing a lot of the material to support the races, and to her family for running the tote and organising the food which was very well received. Thanks also to the other helpers who manned the bar and cleared up afterwards.

There are more events to look forward to in the coming weeks in addition to the usual regular social gatherings for Tea at the Hall. These include: orchard pruning on 28th Feb, Film Night on 6th March, an Exhibition on 14th March, and a litter blitz on the 21st – not quite so much fun but very important nonetheless.

In the meantime, the 'Potholers' have received training in the revised highways pothole reporting system and are getting back into action, particularly as a 'super pothole' has appeared opposite the fire station on the Holton side of the T-Junction. You may see them (the above-mentioned potholders) resting from their labours at one of the teas. Some potholes have already been registered on the system despite not being able to mark them with white paint (which is a new feature) as they are too wet.

Take care

Mel Ault
mel_ault39@outlook.com

Holton Bus Shelter Dates for 2026

Here are the dates for the various events planned to take place at the Bus Shelter in 2026 (but not including the times when a bus actually stops there). As per last year there will be four seasonal Bring and Takes plus an art exhibition, two book weeks, a Remembrance commemoration and a Christmas display.

Book Week 1	14th-22nd March
Spring Bring and Take	26th April
Art Week(s)	2nd-16th May
Summer Bring and Take	19th July
Book Week 2	15th-23rd August
Autumn Bring and Take	27th September
Remembrance Commemoration	7th-13th November
Christmas at the Bus Shelter	6th December

Allan East
Holton Parish Council
aeast@holtonoxford-pc.gov.uk

Follow Holton Village Hall on Facebook to stay in the loop!

Holon Village Hall has a new Facebook page where you can find out about upcoming events and activities at the hall.

Do follow the page if you live in Holton and want to be in the loop on what's on.

Search on Facebook for 'Holton Village Hall, Oxfordshire' and 'follow' the page.

I also suggest you join Nextdoor.co.uk for Holton to receive updates.

Clare Wright

Joint Archives History of Holton Exhibition



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SATURDAY MARCH 14TH 2026.

HOLTON VILLAGE HALL.

12.30PM – 4.30PM

EXHIBITIONS FROM HOLTON VILLAGE ARCHIVE, WHEATLEY PARK SCHOOL'S HOLTON PARK ARCHIVE AND ARCHAEOLOGY CLUB COLLECTION, AND JACK TURNER'S GEOLOGY COLLECTION.

Waterperry News

Nothing happened here...

Laurie and Lorna, who live on the bend, have a plaque on their gate that says 'On this site Sept 5, 1782 Nothing happened'. This date is nearly 244 years ago. They may be right but the church archives tell another story of our village. William Shaw, Henry Chandler, Elizabeth Smith and Mary Brandum were baptised. Joseph and Elizabeth King and also John and Alice Clark were married. In that year there was only one burial, that of James Grey. We have interesting (and also very boring) paperwork held by our church!

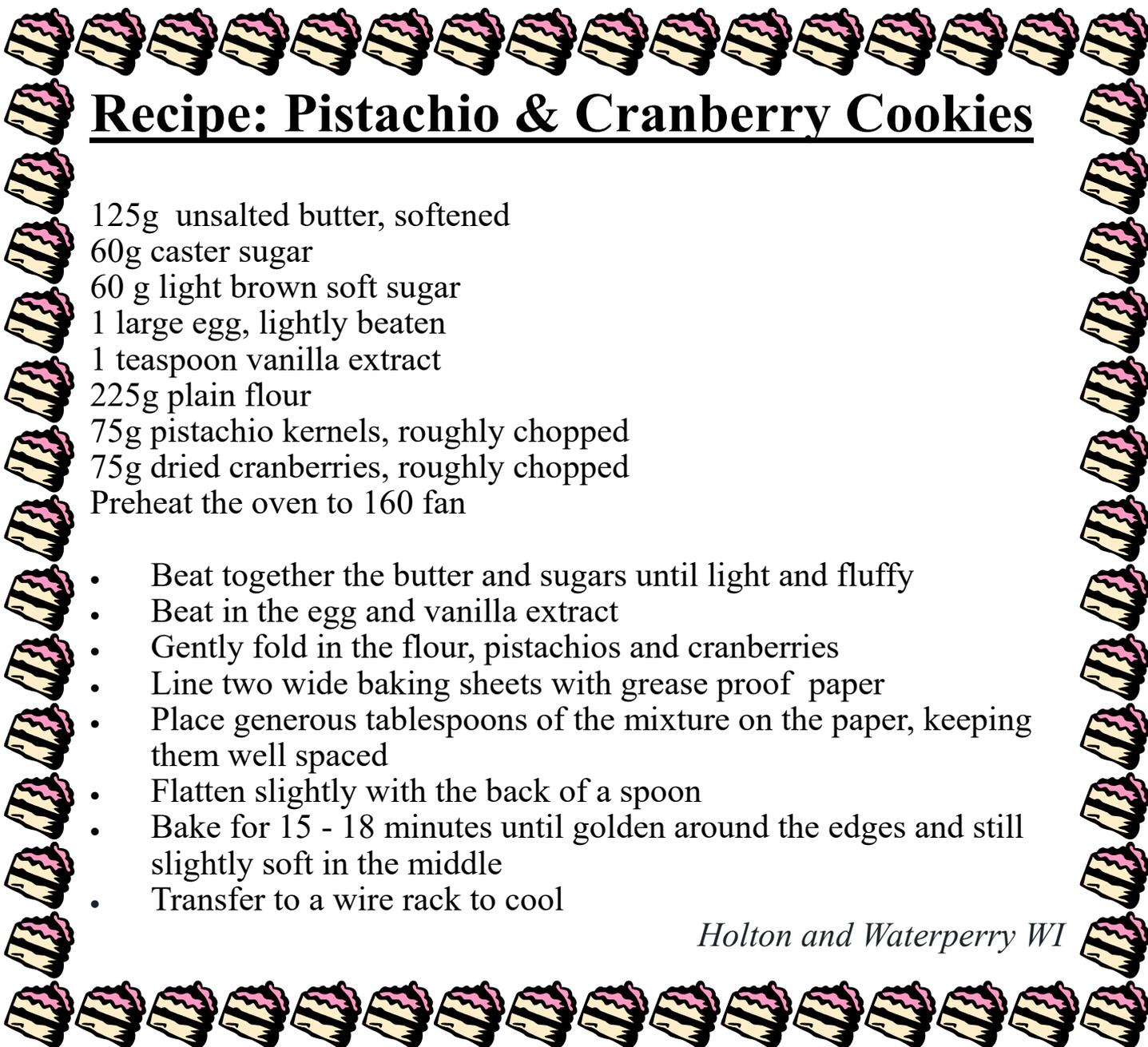
In 2024/25 there have been changes in the Parochial Church Council. This is the body that has responsibility to support the vicar and St Mary's. Sue Parker stepped down as Church Warden and now Jacqui Connelly has this role. I have taken over the job of Treasurer from Frances Axford who will remain as a member of the PCC. Looking through the accounts I can tell you that she has done a splendid job since 2004 and has kept meticulous records. At the carol service the vicar presented both ladies with bouquets to thank them for their work. As a parish we should be very grateful to them for their work. Jennie Buchanan and Jan Hockley remain as members of the PCC which is chaired by our vicar David Bendor-Samuel. If you would like up to join us in supporting our church please let any one of us know.

Looking at our books for St Mary's we are in a poor financial state. We have accounts going back to 1966 and income has steadily fallen as has the congregation. Generously a couple of households give by Gift Aid monthly as do our small congregation of about six who attend services. We also have sales of postcards and booklets together with donations by visitors in cash and by the contactless machine which also all qualify for Gift Aid. We don't though pay our way of the costs of providing our vicar and also need cash in hand to undertake works to keep the church safe and maintained as well paying insurance, internet and electricity costs. We are grateful to the Gardens who lock and unlock the church and to the House who provide other practical help as well. Last year under supervision from the House a group gave the church a deep clean.

In the coming year we will look to raise more money from events and new initiatives. We hope that you as villagers can contribute to, and indeed benefit from, this. At the Christmas Day service, when we had 32 attendees the vicar was very clear that all are welcome in the church as believers, non believers and those who follow different paths. If you ever need his counsel, prayers or help please do not hesitate to contact him. Even with so few attending church, myself included, it remains an important part of our village and was obviously important to many generations before us. Who knows who will follow us.

More information to follow but in the meantime please send any comments or suggestions to me, Jacqui, Jennie, Frances or Jan.

Helen Marshall
2 Waterperry
Hfismith@icloud.com
07726 763154



Recipe: Pistachio & Cranberry Cookies

125g unsalted butter, softened
60g caster sugar
60 g light brown soft sugar
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
225g plain flour
75g pistachio kernels, roughly chopped
75g dried cranberries, roughly chopped
Preheat the oven to 160 fan

- Beat together the butter and sugars until light and fluffy
- Beat in the egg and vanilla extract
- Gently fold in the flour, pistachios and cranberries
- Line two wide baking sheets with grease proof paper
- Place generous tablespoons of the mixture on the paper, keeping them well spaced
- Flatten slightly with the back of a spoon
- Bake for 15 - 18 minutes until golden around the edges and still slightly soft in the middle
- Transfer to a wire rack to cool

Holton and Waterperry WI

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When the surgery is closed, please contact the Out of Hours service by phoning 111

Visit **Morland House Surgery Website** for a wealth of information and guidance on managing a vast number of health conditions, symptoms, and treatment: www.morland-house.co.uk For example:

Are you a Carer? – find help and support if you are looking after someone unable to care for themselves

Medical Records and Test Results - guidance on how to access this information.

Pharmacy First Service (PFS), whereby pharmacies can treat directly seven common health conditions.

Winter Vaccinations for flu and COVID-19 - information on eligibility and booking

Expansion of RSV vaccine to those aged 80 and over

Online Resources for Clinical Help via self-referrals

Faster Access to Help for Joint and Back Pain

Group Consultation Clinics – successful group clinics for menopause and hypertension

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Whooping Cough infections, symptoms and treatment

Weight Loss Medication

Childhood Immunisation

You and Your General Practice – a guide downloadable from MHS website

Ordering Repeat Prescriptions: Please use the NHS App or log into your account on the NHS website. For more information on ordering, visit the 'prescriptions' page on our website.

Medicine waste costs the NHS around £300 million/year. Only order the medicines you need. Once medicine leaves a pharmacy it can no longer be re-used even if unopened.

Scam NHS cold calls - beware of fake calls from "receptionists" or "doctors" asking you to update your GP records or risk being removed from the surgery.

Waterstock and Tiddington WI

If you live in the Waterstock or Tiddington area and want to meet new people and make friends, then come and join Waterstock and Tiddington WI and meet our friendly group.

We meet on the third Tuesday of the month in Tiddington village hall at 7.30. We often have interesting speakers and activities or sometimes just a social evening for all to enjoy. You are welcome to contact us below if you want to know more, or come to a meeting that interests you to see if you like us. We would welcome anyone thinking of becoming a new member.

For more information contact Debbie Millett: Waterstock & Tiddington WI waterstockwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk The WI is a registered charity No 803793.

Waterstock News

Whilst February is normally a dull and wet month as I write this we seem to have had more than our fair share of rain and the surrounding fields seem to have been flooded for ever. Apparently and according to the Met Office we have only had two days this year when it hasn't rained.

It is with great sadness that we heard of the passing of Anne Bull on the 10th February and Susie has very kindly prepared the following obituary:-

James and I are sad to announce the recent death of our mother and long time Waterstock resident Anne Bull, widow of John, a few weeks short of her 91st birthday.

Although Mum was born in London she spent her childhood and youth between Surrey (where she had relatives) and the Thame area where her father Arthur was proprietor of the Thame Service Station. Her maiden name was Blanchard - she always claimed this name originated from ancestors who had come over with Huguenots - and sure enough when we gave her a DNA test for her birthday this proved to be the case!

Horses were in her blood - her father's family had always worked with horses and then like many of the grooms and coachmen of that era changed to looking after horseless carriages instead. Arthur instilled into Mum a love of horses which was to endure for all of her 90 years and also an attention to detail which could be difficult to live up to! Much to his unhorsey wife's despair, Arthur would regularly buy and bring home mistreated or undernourished horses and ponies so they could have a better life.

In the mornings, Mum used to open the pumps at the garage then cycle down Thame High Street with her saddle on her handlebars to the stables. She rode her pony to school in Tetsworth and later attended Holton Park Grammar Girls' school. One of her teachers was concerned that the often absent delicate child who missed so much school may catch a chill sitting on wet grass. Little did she know that Mum wasn't missing school because she was ill, but she was bunking off to follow the hounds of the South Oxfordshire Hunt across the local countryside in all weathers!

With her trusty Irish cob, Copper, no hedge or fence was too big and she soon attracted the attention of some of the local farmers' sons including one John Bull of Waterstock. It may or may not have been a match made in heaven, he had the land where she could keep her horses and he thought a girl who could carry two full buckets, could cook and was also a 'good looker' would make the perfect farmer's wife. They married in Thame Church on the auspicious date of 23-4-56 and celebrated their Diamond wedding anniversary 60 years later, just a few weeks before Dad died.

The early years were a challenge- their first marital home the virtually derelict Home Farm had been empty for some years and in 1959 they lost all their herd to Foot and Mouth disease. Better times lay ahead in the sixties with John gradually taking over the farm from his father Jimmy Bull who lived at Park Farm and with Mum's support building it into a thriving mixed farm, eventually buying the house and land when Waterstock Estate was sold off. They found time for an active social life of hunt balls, racing and riotous parties while also producing and raising Susie and James. As always horses and ponies were to the fore. This was never more so than when John's Californian Uncle Cliff, sent a cowboy he knew called Greg and his 30 quarter horses to Waterstock to do quarantine when they emigrated to Australia. For nearly a year every stable, paddock and chicken shed was filled to capacity with horses. It was probably the busiest time in Mum's life but

also the most fulfilled! As we children grew up, she became very involved with running the local Pony Club teams. Eventually we moved on to our adult lives and marriages.

Mum's next big project was planning and overseeing the conversion of Home Close Barn when they left Home Farm. Sadly it wasn't to be their forever home and this difficult time was brightened by the arrival of grandchildren Jack, Alice and Sophie and later on by William and Charlie. She was thrilled that the older ones all rode and had ponies, three of the five went to agricultural college and all were interested in nature and the countryside.

Charlie's football was maybe more of a learning curve for her but she took an interest and supported them one and all. As Dad's health deteriorated she spent the last ten years of his life supporting him and in later years she was proud to see Jack become Master of the Kimblewick Hunt and attended the weddings of the three older grandchildren. In time she became GG to six great grandchildren: Florence, Pippa, George, Mathilda, Oscar and Hugo. As she became less mobile she loved to look at the regular photos of them all. Of course, the star of the show was an elderly pony called Derek which Jack acquired, the perfect school master for teaching the next generation to ride.

She achieved her wishes to celebrate her 90th birthday with a family party, to avoid hospitals and care homes and die at home. It was a privilege for us both to play a part in looking after her at home as she became more frail. We'll miss her in many ways but perhaps we won't miss the fact that wherever you drove she always had a hunting anecdote to tell about the surrounding fields, often featuring their old hunting friend 'The Colonel' (Clerke-Brown)

She will be scattered with Dad in Jubilee Spinney, a more fitting resting place for two country lovers than a formal grave.

A big thank you to all those that came and supported the Waterstock Wine Bluff on the 23rd January. It was a really an evening of fun, with a full house and the bluffers, Sarah Bell, Ali Plumb, Johnny Powell and Henry Manistys were brilliant. Best of all we raised £1638 to be split between Cancer Research and the St Leonard's redevelopment fund. Thanks to everyone that helped, not just by coming along but making cakes, donating raffle prizes, setting up and washing and tidying post event. A big success.

Keith Ashby

And a little extra!

As you may have read, several events are being planned to mark David Attenborough's 100th birthday, which takes place on 8th May. One of these is a new wildlife television series called "Secret Garden" made for the BBC by Plimsoll Productions. It is narrated by the great man himself, and explores the wildlife in five different gardens in the UK.

The first episode is billed to take place on Easter Day at 6pm on BBC1-- although BBC schedules can change. A good showing of otters, mayflies, kingfishers, and other wildlife, as well as two incompetent gardeners, awaits anyone who tunes in to watch on Easter Day.

You may be surprised how familiar that particular secret garden seems!

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msmelectrical61@gmail.com

What's On this *March*



Waterperry
Gardens

Open Daily
10:00AM – 5:00PM

FREE EXHIBITION IN OUR GALLERY
GREEN WORKS, SPRING EXHIBITION
(14TH FEB UNTIL 26TH APR)

- 6** COURSE: ROSE PRUNING*
- 7** COURSE: VEGETABLES EVERY DAY*
- 14** WORKSHOP: WILLOW GARDEN STRUCTURES
- 15** MOTHERING SUNDAY
(50% OFF GARDEN ENTRANCE FEE)
- 28** BIG EASTER BUNNY HUNT
(UNTIL 19TH APRIL)

*Please see our website for any changes and to book.

