



Autumn 2022

Issue 85

THE SPEEN & NORTH DEAN *News*



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Welcome!

to the Speen & North Dean
News Autumn Edition.

How lucky we were to have had such a glorious summer where we could plan outdoor activities without the need of a bad weather contingency plan. I hope you will enjoy reading about all the fun things that happened over the past few months.

In our last issue we celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and we were saddened to learn a few months later our dear Queen Elizabeth II had passed away.

Closer to home, we sadly lost four of our well-known residents who were active in our communities and who we remember in this edition. As a result, we have been unable to publish all your submissions but look forward to seeing them in the next issue.

As ever, thank you to all our contributors without whom we would not have our magazine.

Best wishes

Jill Roberts

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Front cover - a link to some of those we have lost recently:

The gate on the left leads to Cherry Dell, where Gloria lived and from where she emerged every day walking her two dogs; the view is that enjoyed by Don from his house (Two Stiles); and the field links the two villages of Speen and North Dean and would have been a well known walk to Megan over the years.

Next Edition

Copy for the next edition is **due by 10th March** with a planned publication date of early April. Please send photos separately from text, together with captions and a consent form (downloaded from the SNDN website www.speenbucks.org.uk) if any photos are of children. Please send to editor.sndn@speenbucks.org.uk.

With grateful thanks

To all our advertisers for their support of this magazine and to all the volunteers who deliver it to your door.

Welcome Packs

The Good Neighbours scheme was set up many years ago and is now run by Pat Richardson in Speen. The service is to provide new Speen residents with a Welcome Pack of village information, so if you know of anyone new to the area please call Pat Richardson on 01494 488627.

Village News

If you are not already signed up to The Village Messenger do email Village@SpeenBucks.org to be put on the mailing list, with the word 'include' in the subject line - they will keep you up to date via email on a monthly basis with all the latest village news and important dates.

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UPDATE FOR THAME

We are excited to be moving to a new premises in Thame in early May 2022. Previously Twigs and Twine nextdoor to Waitrose in Greyhound Lane. We will be delighted to welcome you
Watch this space for details.....

WHAT'S ON

in Speen & North Dean

REGULAR EVENTS

Sundays 1st & 3rd Sundays	Regular Service of Worship BCP Holy Communion	Speen Chapel 10.30am St John's Church, Lacey Green 8.00am	Timothy Deller or website
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NOVEMBER

Saturday 5th	Speen Fireworks Display	Speen Playing Fields	speenbonfire.co.uk
Saturday 19th	SHH Christmas Market	Speen Chapel Hall	Grainne Suter 07778 803 260
Saturday 26th	Speen School Christmas Fair	Speen School 11.00am - 2.00pm	

DECEMBER

Thursday 1st	WI – Jeff Roselaar - An actor's Life for me	Speen Village Hall 7.45pm	Jenny Pearce – 562333
Friday 2nd	SHH Pub Quiz Night	Speen Chapel Hall	Grainne Suter 07778 803 260
December date tbc	North Dean Xmas Carols	North Dean Village Hall	Dick Pooley 269615

JANUARY

Thursday 5th	WI – 63rd Anniversary Supper	tba	Jenny Pearce – 562333
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FEBRUARY

Thursday 2nd	WI – Di Rainbow - The Artist Stanley Spencer	Speen Village Hall 7.45pm	Jenny Pearce – 562333
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ISSUE 83 UPDATES

North Dean Golf Day

We reported in the last issue on the successful North Dean Golf Day.

Members present were a bit disappointed that we didn't highlight this effort from the North Dean



Captain on the longest drive competition. The photo shows the resting place of the captain's attempt having possibly travelled an 'impressive' fifty yards before finding a place to hide!!!

No Mow



In Issue 84 there were two references to the 'No Mow' campaign.

Mark Wengler also took part and he was rewarded with four *Anacamptis pyramidalis* and this delightful, tiny, *Ophrys apifera*.

Clive Rainbow

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THE QUEUE

Jill Roberts

We were all deeply shocked to hear that Queen Elizabeth II had passed away only 2 days after meeting our new Prime Minister, Liz Truss. We always knew this day would come but as the one constant figure in most of our lives the thought of her not being around was unimaginable.

The outpouring of grief from people all over the world was a testament to this remarkable woman and when it was announced that she would be lying in state over 5 days I wanted to pay my own respects to her and together with my husband Hugh and my family, we decided we had to join "The Queue".

Over the coming days, various news bulletins from all over the world showed The Queue getting longer and longer as thousands of like minded people all wanted to pay their own respects to her Majesty. When the Queue was suspended again on the Saturday morning, I thought that was the end of my mission and continued to go about doing my normal Saturday tasks such as shopping in Sainsbury's. Life goes on regardless.

When I got home, it was announced The Queue had reopened and that was it. The shopping was unpacked and put away with great haste and we set off to London.

We arrived at Southwark Park at 15:45 where The Queue started, and we were given pink wrist bands to signify we were part of the official queue and told to take great care as we would be required to show it at various intervals.

Along the journey to Westminster, we were guided around by so many stewards who ensured we were safe crossing roads and were going in the right direction. Not long out of the park on the opposite side of the road was a big sign outside of a house offering a clean toilet to use. This was the first of many kind gestures made to those of us in The Queue. We snaked around roads and saw some amazing buildings which we would never have normally come across – old warehouses converted into apartments and cobbled streets from Dickensian novels. We passed The Golden Hind, The Shard, Borough Market to name but a few points of interest. The Queue stopped and started but everyone stayed remarkably happy and resilient. Three hours into The Queue, whilst queuing past Tower Bridge we were treated to the sight of the bridge opening to allow an old sailboat through. What a magical sight accompanied by a very enthusiastic volunteer steward who delighted us with an entertaining commentary to keep everyone's spirits up.

We got chatting to three guys in front of us. Neither of them knew each other until they joined the Queue but quickly became

firm friends. The Globe and National Theatres kept their doors open to invite

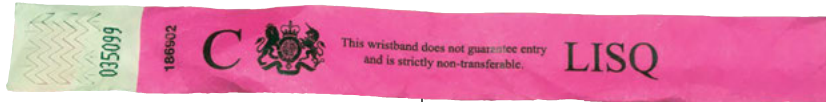
people to use their toilets which was much better than using a portaloos especially as it was getting dark. Many people enjoying their Saturday evening were taking photographs of The Queue and cheering us on and at various points screens displayed how many hours left until we reached our destination. Whilst in The Queue we were able to take photographs of the many iconic landmarks we passed as we snaked around the side of the Thames.

After seven hours, we finally saw the Houses of Parliament and knew we were almost there but couldn't work out why we still had 3-4 hours to go from Westminster Bridge. We continued to walk along the Thames towards Lambeth Bridge which although not far, seemed to take forever to get to. Eventually, we arrived at the gardens to the side of the Palace of Westminster and got very confused as to why we still had another 1.5 hours left. And then we saw the reason why. The biggest snake of a queue was waiting for us. Scouts and volunteers were placed at intervals along the snake, offering drinks and snacks as well as taking any unopened food and drinks we may have had for the homeless as no food or drinks could be taken past security. After 1.5 hours of snaking, we finally made it to the security checks manned by numerous police officers from across the country.

Just like airport security, our belongings were put into trays before we could walk through the x-ray scanner. I set the alarm off and had a thorough pat down by a very nice female police officer from Wales. Once it was established that I was not carrying anything threatening I met up with my family and we entered the Central Hall.

Silence immediately fell as we were guided either side of the staircase and slowly descended toward the catafalque. I stood with my daughter and bowed my head, tears welling up. It was now 2 am and we had been in The Queue for 10 hours, but it was worth the wait and the immense pain we were all feeling in our legs and backs.

We walked out of the Great Hall turning around to get the last glimpse and walked out into the night air once again. I cannot express how proud we all are to have had the opportunity to pay our respects in such a way and to have been a part of something so incredible that we will remember forever.



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Autumn term news from Speen School PTA

Since the return of school, the PTA have been busy planning some new events for the year ahead. We recently held a quiz and pizza night at school, which was a lovely opportunity for parents to socialise and meet other parents.

This year we are very focused on replacing some of the play equipment in the school playground. There are a number of pieces of wooden equipment which are no longer fit for purpose including the much loved Pirate Ship. We are planning to start some of these works very soon, and most of our fundraising efforts this year will help with the continuing work of this project.

We have just been approved for the local Co-op Community Grant to help with the playground project. If you are a Co-op member you can select to support Speen School. Please type in this link to find our funding page <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/70802> This means every time you shop in-store a proportion of your spend will be donated to

our fund. Please consider selecting us – all support is very much appreciated.

We are currently planning for Christmas. The Christmas Fair is back (26th November 11am-2pm in the School hall). This is the first Christmas Fair in a number of years, so we really hope this will be a lovely event for parents, children and villagers. We are also planning to run a Christmas wreath making workshop for the third year running, due to its popularity.

Next year we have some big events in the calendar including Safari Supper and the Speen Ball (please see Save the Date below). We look forward to seeing lots of you there.

Save the Date...It's Back

Speen Ball 2023

17th June 2023

Tickets on sale in 2023

SPEEN CHURCH

Pastor Tim Deller

Summer term news from Speen School PTA

In a world of turmoil, with crisis after crisis, stress and anxiety thrive. Even before the coronavirus pandemic and the resultant global economic crisis, life for many was stressful and uncertain. The crises of 2020/22 have been compared to some of the worst catastrophes in history. The feelings of panic, lack of control and uncertainty are fuelling worry and fear. We are told things will never be the same!

Read the words of the Nobel Prize winning writer, Rabindranath Tagore: "Hope is the bird that sings when the dawn is still dark." Now is a time of darkness for many of us and we cannot see the new dawn. So, how do we deal with that darkness going into a new year? How can we find peace of mind when life seems unpredictable and out of control?

When we try and deal with the darkness, whether it is suffering, uncertainty or the anxieties of the present and coming year, most often we look inside ourselves and to the world around us for answers. We put our hopes in our own efforts, or that in some way that others will come up with ways to improve the world around us.

We struggle to find a solution to bring about the fulfilment of the hope that we need for a better future. Maybe the struggle is because we spend too much time looking inwards and outwards and not

enough time looking upwards. Because for hope to be realised, we need something hope-worthy in which to put our hope.

Why does the bird sing in Tagore's poem? It sings while the dawn is still dark because it knows with certainty that the sunrise is coming. Where can you and I find that same certainty for hope in the future as we prepare to go into a new year?

In the Christian message, hope is not an abstract ideal. It's not something that we just have to try and live up to ourselves or achieve in our own strength. It's in and through the person of Jesus that Hope is embodied. It's embodied in a Person – God Himself made real for you and me in the person of Jesus Christ, who came into the world, on that first Christmas. Jesus who lived, died, and rose from the dead to give us hope and prove His hope-worthiness and His trustworthiness. Jesus is hope in times of fear!

If you and I want to take hold of that hope in 2023, all we need to do is step into or step deeper into a relationship with Jesus. Yes, the world does seem dark to which Jesus says now at the turn of 2022/23:

"In this world you will have problems. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world."

Have a hope-filled New Year!



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NORTH DEAN FETE

Dick Pooley

Saturday 13th August 2022 was one of the hottest days of the year and the chosen day for the North Dean Summer Fete.

We arranged for a good number of Villagers to help "set up" the Fete on the Thursday and Friday evenings beforehand and most stalls were in place in good time.

We decided to use all available gazebos, in order to give as much shade as possible to both stall minders and visitors and are indebted to the Horses Trust for lending us a further seven.

At twelve noon Hemleys Hill Billies Band began playing and were keen for folk to donate to their chosen charity.

Visitors were slow to arrive at first, but gradually the field filled with many families and friends.

Due to the intense heat we had to cancel the Dog Show, which was to have been one of the highlights of the afternoon, and of course the Fire Brigade were unable to attend due to other more pressing duties.

However, the BBQ, bar, tea rooms and the usual side shows were all very popular.

When the HHB Band needed a break, we were then kindly entertained by Mr Paul Rogerson with his selection of popular music that was played over his address system.

At three pm Piggotts Band took over and played some interesting pieces chosen by their conductor.

The other very popular events were the Bouncy Castle,



Tombola, Welly Wanging, Kids Races and all the regular side shows that both adults and children love to participate in.

A very enjoyable and successful afternoon and my grateful thanks to everyone who attended, ran stalls and helped both set up and taking down the attractions, and supported in any way.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL

Cllr Carl Etholen, Cllr Robert Carington and Cllr Shade Adoh



The Bledlow Ridge Household Recycling Centre closed in March 2019 due to Buckinghamshire County Council having to make savings due to financial pressures even though there was a petition with over 4,500 signatures opposing the closure. A Community Interest Company was set up with the support of 12 Town and Parish Councils to act as a vehicle to submit a planning application to re-open it independently. With the Covid pandemic and the transition of the Councils to the new unitary, the application went to appeal due to non-determination. The Planning appeal was dismissed in August 2021 by the Planning Inspector solely on the CIC not having an adequate Minerals and Waste Management plan.

With the transition to the new unitary, Buckinghamshire Council has made savings within the Climate Change and the Environment Portfolio, and with the expansion of Princes Risborough in the next few years, the Cabinet met on 22nd September and have voted to re-open this facility sometime in November if not sooner.

Details of this can be found here:

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/household-recycling-centres-permits-and-waste-facilities/find-your-nearest-household-recycling-centre/bledlow-recycling-centre/>

Carl Etholen	carl.etholen@buckinghamshire.gov.uk	07810 442617
Robert Carington	robert.carington@buckinghamshire.gov.uk	07515 997953
Shade Adoh	shade.adoh@buckinghamshire.gov.uk	07941 618331

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful Happy New Year 2023.



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SPEENFETE

Helen Davies & Clare Morris - Co-Chair, Speen Fete Committee

An 'Out of this World' Speen Fete Delivers for Charity Once Again



Speen Fete, back in July, was 'Out of this World', with plenty to keep everyone busy on a glorious sunny afternoon and raising over £4,850 for charity in the process. Thanks to all of you who visited, bringing family and friends, and emptying your pockets so generously to support us.

The fete was opened in dramatic fashion by big and little Darth Vader, accompanied by Stormtrooper and C-3PO. Crowds were entertained by Speen based local dance and drama group – All Access, jazz from Martin Hart's band, magic shows and of course Speen School Country Dancing.

Refreshments were provided by Speen Church and the W.I., whilst the Woodward's worked tirelessly quenching locals thirst at the very busy Pimm's and pints bar.

A variety of traditional sideshows, manned by village volunteers were great fun and many were delighted to have a bout on the pillow fight game after its covid interval. The book and plant stall were as popular as ever. Competitions showcased our talented Speen School children with fantastic colouring and creativity in the draw your own alien and design your own space craft categories.

Our main charity of the year was Ukraine to Chilterns, and we were delighted to raise £1000 for this important cause. In addition, and in line with our founding principles we were able to support each of the following eleven Speen groups and organisations with donations totalling £3,850,

each receiving a sum of £350:

Speen School, Village Hall, Women's Institute, Playing Fields, Guides, Church, Tennis Club, Heritage Group, Speen Environmental Action Group, Speen and North Dean News and Helping Hospices.

We would like to thank all those that made it happen, the advertisers, volunteers, village organisations and committee members. A special mention to our outgoing committee members, long serving treasurer Paul Rogerson, ex-chairs Amanda Dobbs and Lesley Thorn-Davies, book stall maestro Maureen Laing and advertising supremo John Radford.

Finally, it is with great sadness that we have said goodbye to one of our longest serving members, Gloria, who attended every meeting with her usual enthusiasm, delivered programmes and sold many a draw ticket, who organised the children's competitions and made cups of tea much appreciated by all the stallholders. She will be sadly missed but the best way to honour her would be for the fete to continue to go from strength to strength, bringing the community together in a day of laughter and smiles.

We begin to plan next summer's fete in January so if you would like to be involved, please email fete@speenbucks.org.uk. Everyone is very welcome. Next year's fete will be on the 8 July so please do save the date in your diary.

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Gráinne Suter

Gloria Holmes – SHH committee would like to salute Gloria and express their appreciation for her effort and energy fundraising for our four hospices. Gloria was a longstanding member of SHH, a marvellous networker who always knew the right person to contact, she was the “meet and greet” at all our fundraising events and we will miss her enthusiasm and positivity.

Many thanks to all who came to the wine tasting evening in September. It was a very good evening. Simon Lloyd of Lloyd’s Wines ran the event for the second year running and treated us to very generous glasses of wonderful wines. No telling tales out of school but, a number of cars were left in the car park that night! £777 raised for the hospices.

Next up is the **Christmas Market** on Saturday 19th November at the Chapel from 11.00 to 4.00. We have some new stall holders this year and it promises to be a great event. Enjoy a glass of Bucks Fizz and one of Judy Keen’s famous sausage rolls or perhaps a bacon and brie bap. So, write your Christmas lists and come and buy early and local this Christmas.

Pub Quiz Night on Friday 2nd December at the Chapel Hall hosted by Al Bowyer and Jill Rogerson. Tickets are £15 to include home-made cottage pie and apple crumble. Go to our website www.shh-shop.org for further information and ticket sales. We can cater for all dietary requirements. So, get a table of friends together and pitch up for a lively night!

A call out to all the golfers in the village and beyond 15th March 2023, Martyn Evans is organising a **Charity Golf Day** for SHH at Burnham Beeches Golf Club, Full details on www.shh-shop.org

Funding of hospices - Independent hospices only receive up to a third of their funding from the government and are dependent on charitable donations to keep hospices running. Every event we run with your support helps to ensure children and adults receive respite and end of life care.

Fundraising Challenge - Help raise money for Speen Helping Hospices in 2023. Speen Helping Hospices are looking for people to raise money for SHH by taking part in a local fun run/half marathon/cycle race or other event.

If you are planning or considering taking part in a sporting event, would you help others by fundraising for Speen Helping Hospices as you run/cycle/swim? We, at Speen Helping Hospices will support you on your fundraising journey, we would promote your participation locally and via social media and our website to attract sponsorship.

If you are up for this challenge, now is the time to plan it, visit our website at <http://www.shh-shop.org/FundraisingChallenges.htm> for information.

Other Dates for your Diary in 2022

Carol Singing - Dates to be arranged, the carollers will be out in good voice over three evenings. If you would like to get involved, please contact me on grainnesuter@btconnect.com or 07778803260

For further information about the events check out our website www.shh-shop.org

Don’t forget if you would like to support or sponsor a fundraising event, for example a golf tournament, offer a prize for a raffle or would like to help us in some way, please contact me grainnesuter@btconnect.com or 07778803260.



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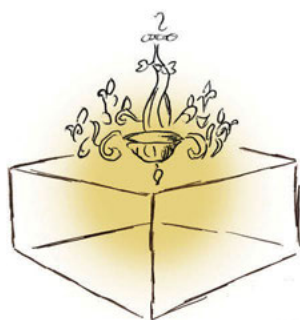
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Speen WI members have had a busy summer. Our monthly meetings have given us an insight into the Kennedy dynasty as well as Hughenden Manor's role as a military base in the second world war. Our most recent speaker, Sir Michael Willcocks, gave an amusing and informative insight into his military career and the role of Black Rod, a position he held for 8 years. This was an open meeting and our many visitors had a very enjoyable evening.

As usual we were kept busy at the fete serving tea and home made cakes under a star spangled backdrop. Hot work on a very hot day but an essential service!

Six members spent an evening with the Whiteleaf Bowmen learning the art of archery. This was so enjoyable that some are contemplating a new hobby. A garden visit was held even though it has been a difficult summer for gardeners. It was interesting to



see how this very large garden had been maintained and pick up some tips for environmentally friendly ways to ensure



our gardens can cope in these changing conditions.

The Summer Social evening took the form of a quiz night with cheese and wine. As usual at these things the answers from the teams were sometimes correct, sometimes not and often hilarious. Our new members realised that WI is all about fun and friendship as well as an opportunity to learn new things.



We were saddened by the death of Gloria Holmes, a loyal and hardworking Speen WI member since 1977. She served on the Committee and was President for several years. She will be missed for her enthusiasm and support.

With 5 new members this year and an interesting programme booked for the coming year, WI continues to play an important role for the ladies of Speen.

Look at our programme and come and visit us on any first Thursday evening in the Village Hall. We always advocate try before you buy and you will be made very welcome.

speenwi@gmail.com

RECIPE

Mandy How

Mixed Berry Cake

INGREDIENTS

- 175 g plain flour
- ¼ tsp xanthan gum
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 125 g castor sugar
- 30 g desiccated coconut
- 250 ml soya milk
- 75 ml rapeseed oil
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp salt
- 125g mixed berries (the smaller berries from a bag of mixed frozen berries)
- Icing sugar to dust



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Grease and flour a 20cm cake tin.
2. Sift together the flour, xanthan gum, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda into a large bowl and stir in the sugar and coconut. Add the soya milk, oil and vanilla extract. Whisk together until smooth. The mixture will look like a thick batter. Stir in the salt and frozen berries.
3. Pour the batter into the prepared tin. Bake for 45 mins or until a cake tester inserted into the cake comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 mins before turning out onto a wire rack.
4. When the cake has cooled, dust with icing sugar.

Nicholas Wheeler Robinson - died June 2022

Caleb Wheeler-Robinson

Nick Wheeler Robinson, who died in June aged 85, was a teacher and educationalist, poet and historian, cricketer and chess-player, wood-turner and raconteur. What he was not was a practical musician, which renders it all the more remarkable that he devoted the last 30 years of his life to hosting and organising Music Camp at his family home of Pigotts, a beautiful set of farm buildings set in his beloved woodlands above North Dean.

Nick was born in London, and educated at Marlborough College, and Trinity College, Cambridge. As he was blind in one eye, he was rejected from the RAF for national service, and instead became a teacher in a primary school. It was there that he found his passion for teaching, and organising education – specifically in secondary modern schools. Eventually he became headteacher at schools in Ealing and then Thatcham, Berkshire. He also took time out to obtain a masters and then a doctorate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education in the US.

Nick's father Bernard had founded Music Camp in 1927, and eventually bought Pigotts in the mid-1960s, not just as a home but as a centre for Music Camp. In 1988, Nick took early retirement from his teaching career and moved to Pigotts with his wife Rachel. Alongside bringing up a young family, he now threw himself into hosting countless musical gatherings, alongside art, poetry and philosophy groups, Polish dancers and school expeditions: not to mention any visitor interested in the work of Eric Gill, the controversial sculptor and typographer who had lived and worked in Pigotts in the 1930s.

By all accounts, Nick had been an inspirational teacher, treating pupils like adults, showing a genuine interest in their lives and allowing every pupil to pursue the mix of subjects and interests they wanted, no matter how eclectic. And he carried that great love of people into his 'second career' of running Music Camp. One of his most frequent sayings was 'it would be a shame if the place were empty': but that vastly underestimates the huge generosity in lending his home and his time to parties of up to 150 people at a time for the purpose of coming together in a shared enterprise, living simply and communally. Under the auspices



*Music Campers enjoying an evening celebrating 50 years of Music Camp at Pigotts in 2016.
Photo: Jeremy James*

of Music Camp, amateur and professional classical musicians come together in groups of 20-150 to make music for periods of up to 10 days at a time. Nobody gets paid to come, and all costs and chores are shared.

Nick was always keen to immerse himself in local activities: whether as a member of the Great Hampden cricket team (for whom he famously took all 10 wickets in an innings – for just 12 runs); sitting on the committees of the North Dean Village Hall and the Speen and North Dean News; acting as a school governor of Great Kingshill Primary School; or inviting local

music-lovers to the regular '7.48 concerts' on Sunday evenings at Pigotts.

A visit to Nick was rarely fleeting: he loved people, he loved words and he loved to share ideas. Far from conventional in his outlook, the relative isolation of Pigotts gave him the chance to view the world askance and express some firmly held but well reasoned views: always interesting, always humane.

Nick was admired and loved by the thousands of people who he touched throughout his life: his family and close friends; his former pupils and colleagues; and those of us musicians and others who consider Pigotts a second home.

TREES

By Morris Bates, aged 9, who lives at Pigotts with his family, the closest neighbours of Nick Wheeler-Robinson who died earlier this year. The poem was written by Morris on his way to school in early October on what would have been Nick's 86th birthday.

Trees, proud, standing high, yellow and green leaves
swish, tinkle

And when you looked up - oh how beautiful they were!

They were glamorous mountains towering, tall over me

And when you looked at the leaves, they were broad
diamonds, glimmering in the moonlight

When you looked again - oh how beautiful they were!

All perfect to me from every angle.

How I wish to see them again

Trees

Gloria Holmes

22nd March 1938 - 15th Sept 2022

by Gloria's Family

We were all saddened to learn that long term Speen resident Gloria Holmes passed away suddenly on the 15th of September 2022 following a short illness. She was at the heart of her family and will be sorely missed by her husband John, and son Tim, daughter Susanne and their families who she was so interested and involved in. Gloria touched many of our lives over her 84 years and brought much love, laughter, and generosity of spirit to whoever she met and in whatever she did.



She moved with John to Cherry Dell, Speen 55 years ago, after a time in Downley. Before this she lived in Stafford and Eastbourne. She studied nutrition at Queen Elizabeth College, London where she met John who was studying engineering. She admits in her life story (self-written 2 years ago) that "I definitely made the most of my time at University and made many friends, and lived life to the full!"

Her first job after graduating was to advise farmers on the state of their silage, which was a bold move for a 23 year blonde straight out of University! After marrying John she moved to Stafford, and had Tim and Susanne soon afterwards. She subsequently worked part time at Wycombe Hospital in the biochemistry department.

Moving to Speen and having a house in the country was a lifetime dream. She borrowed a white horse called Cloudy and spent much time riding with local friends, around bringing up the two teenagers. Through her interest in riding, she became involved in setting

up High Wycombe Riding for the Disabled, and for her commitment and long service (45 years) was recently awarded The President's Award by Princess Anne. She also loved dogs and used her passion and skill at puppy rearing to good use, breeding many pups for Guide Dogs for The Blind in the UK and abroad. These pups went on to transform the lives of many blind people.

Gloria was very involved in Speen and North Dean as you will all bear testament

to. I am sure many of you would hide when you saw her coming, in case she found you a job to do! She loved music and dancing and was always the first on the dance floor and the last to leave the party. She enthusiastically helped at the annual fetes, fun days, Hospices fund raisers, carol singing, school reading, knitting of charity blankets, litter clear ups and supporting WI and Speen Stores to name but a few. She was delighted and humbled to have her and John's name on the Pavilion in Speen playing fields in recognition of their contribution to the community.



Gloria in her Caravan with dogs Nessa and Joy

Gloria was a regular and devout worshipper at Speen and Hughenden Churches where for many years she was involved in doing teas with the help of her grandchildren. Her support for both churches has been hugely appreciated throughout her life in Bucks.

A Celebration of her Life was held on Friday 7th October in St Michaels All Angels Hughenden preceded by committal and burial at Speen Church.

IN MEMORY

Don White 3rd Dec 1929 – 14th Sept 2022

Jill Rogerson with Jill and Stephen White

Don was born locally on 3rd December 1929 and later attended St. Edwards School in Oxford; he had an eventful adult life starting with National Service in the RAF from 1948 to 1950, being posted to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Following this, Don went to Reading Technical College from 1950 to 1953 to study Building Construction, and it was here that he met Mollie. They were married in Thorne Street Registry Office on 15th April 1954.



Don worked in the family house building business: White Brothers, who built Field End House in Studridge Lane, Speen, where Don and Mollie moved in 1954. After then living briefly in High Wycombe, Don and Mollie returned to Speen in 1969 and Two Stiles, Water Lane became their family home where they have lived ever since. with daughter Jill and son Stephen.

On moving back to Speen Don became a very active member of the village community, joining Lacey Green Parish Council in 1979 as an independent member for Speen. He was elected Chairman in 1984.

As Chairman, Don was anxious to keep Speen Post Office going - so when it had to move out of the 'Old Post Office' in the early 1990's, he arranged for a replacement to be set up for one day a week in the Village Hall until the new shop, Speen Stores, was built.

Also, as Chairman, Don was keen to ensure that the balance on the Council evenly represented the villages within the Parish and pursued the 'warding' of the Parish Council, resulting in 5 members representing Loosley Row and Lacey Green, with 2 members representing Speen. When Don retired from the Parish Council in 2007, having been Chairman for 23 years, he remarked that he felt that this (the successful warding of the Parish) was his greatest achievement.

Don was also a Trustee of Speen Village Hall Committee for over 50 years initially as Chairman and subsequently

as Treasurer from 1973 to 2017. In the late 1960's, when finances were low and it was not possible to get a quorum together, Don was successful in his campaign to save the Hall from closure.

Don also enjoyed taking part in Speen Festivals being: a soldier in Alice in 2001; a vicar in the Pied Piper in 2003; a jailer in the Wind in the Willows in 2003; and the Ghost Teacher in Three Cheers for Mrs. Butler in 2007.

Speen Fete was an important, never to be missed, event for the White family. As well as driving his Austin 10 in the vintage car parade, Don and the family ran the ice cream stall for some 25 years.

Don took a keen interest in vintage cars and he was the proud owner over the years of many vehicles including a 1954 Silver Dawn Rolls Royce; a 1933 Box Saloon; a 1931 Austin Seven Box Saloon and a 1933 20/25 Rolls Royce Fixed Head Coupe. The whole family enjoyed travelling to local fetes and vintage car rallies.

Don's other interests were wide ranging: he was an enthusiastic stamp collector; a lifelong member of the Chinnor and Princes Risborough Steam Railway Association and a keen fan of Gilbert and Sullivan, taking the family to many of the operas which were performed at the Sadlers Wells Theatre in London.

A close-knit family, Mollie sadly died on 16th March 2021 and Don passed away on 14th September 2022 after a short period of ill health. After Don's funeral on 4th October, Jill and Stephen welcomed family and friends of both Don and Mollie to refreshments at Speen Village Hall.

Bill Groves, the current Village Hall Chairman, says that "Don was a remarkable man with so many interests, he had a total recall of every event and served the Village superbly over the years."

"We would both like to thank everybody very much indeed for all the cards, flowers and kind messages we have received since our parents, Don and Mollie White, died; and also for attending the Grand Tea in the Village Hall on 4th October. The food was much enjoyed and provided us with two suppers and two extra teas afterwards. We appreciate the kind offers of help we have recently been given."

Jill and Stephen White

Megan Chinn (Evans) 20th Aug 1933 – 3rd Sept 2022

Dr Linda Bell, Trustee of North Dean Memorial Hall

A longstanding resident of North Dean, Mrs Megan Chinn, sadly passed away on 3rd September 2022. She lived a long and happy life, much of it in North Dean, and was actively involved in village activities. Her friends and family gathered at the Baptist Chapel in Speen to say farewell on 29th September 2022 and her niece Fay Richardson gave a lovely eulogy at the service of thanksgiving. After the service Megan was buried in the grounds of the church on a lovely autumnal afternoon.



Megan was born Megan Olwen Evans on 20th August 1933 in High Wycombe. She was the youngest of the daughters in a large family and was particularly close to her younger brother, Trevor, who survives her. She was said to be “a bit of a tomboy,” preferring to play outside with her brothers rather than staying at home with the female members of her family. She left school at the age of 15 and started work in a local factory sewing covers for bed mattresses. She then moved into other jobs before meeting her husband, Bill Chinn, on a visit to family in Wales. They were married on 5th July 1958 and later purchased a plot of land in North Dean where they built both a house and their life together. They called this house Chinnynook. She never learnt to drive but somehow this never stopped her getting out and about when she wanted to; several members of her family or friends, especially her longstanding next-door neighbour, could always be talked into giving her a lift for various outings when she needed help. As well as building their home, Megan and Bill created a terraced garden to the rear of their house which produced lovely displays of flowers throughout the year as well as a wide variety of garden produce for their own consumption. They were joined at Chinneynook by a cat, who they named Thomas, who turned up on their doorstep one night during a storm and decided to stay for good. Megan also very much enjoyed choral singing and was an active and enthusiastic participant in church life throughout her life.

For many years she was an active member of the North Dean Memorial Hall Committee where, among other things, she managed the administration of hall bookings, making sure that hall bookings were recorded, fees were collected and passed on to the Treasurer for payment into the bank account and that keys were available for users of the hall when required. It is, however, particularly her bric-a-brac stall at the annual village fete for which she will be remembered.

Her tireless energy was directed to receiving donations, setting up the stall, commandeering unsuspecting villagers and loving members of her family to man the stall and finally clearing away the unsold items at the end of the fete, which she stored in her garage for use the next year!

I met Megan when our family moved to the village in 2010 and she wasted no time in co-opting me to help on the bric-a-brac stall that year(!) and then talking me into putting myself up for election to be the Treasurer of the Hall Committee. She was always very cheerful and welcoming when I dropped in to see her on Committee business and clearly was someone who enjoyed life and the company of others. After stepping down from the Hall Committee she continued to serve on the Board of Trustees for several more years where she was known for enjoying a glass of beech leaf gin made by Dr Nick Wheeler Robinson, a fellow Trustee who also passed away recently.

Megan and Bill lived together happily for many years and after he died she was looked after by her large family, some of whom live nearby, who visited her regularly and keep an eye on her as she grew older. Although she suffered with various health issues in later life, she was always pleased to receive visitors and did love to laugh and joke with you, a twinkle in her eye. I think it can be said of her that hers was a life well lived.

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Going Green in Speen and North Dean

Speen resident, Shaun Butler, has been doing some amazing things to reduce his family's carbon footprint and energy bills.

Shaun explains his latest project below:

What is it it? A home battery is a device for your house that can store energy and release it at a different times.

Why do this as opposed to other forms of energy generation? It is another, more affordable, option for those who may be unable to access other renewable energies. You can charge it up at night when energy is cheap and use it in the day.

What is the make of your batteries? Mine are "Growatt". There are quite a few suppliers in the UK now. Ultimately, most of the batteries come from the same factories and it's just packaging.

What size is it? It's a bit bigger than a carry-on suitcase and typically could fit in an understairs cupboard.

What does installation involve? They are quite flexible, mine are in a small plant room, typically they will go in a garage, understairs cupboard, loft or even on an outside wall. The installer would prefer it to be near the consumer unit (fire board) but really it can go anywhere. They can sit on the floor or be mounted on a wall.

Who can install a battery? I installed mine myself. There are a few official things that need to take place: the network operator needs to be informed (in Bucks it's UK Power Networks). You also need to notify building regs or have an electrician sign it off. With all these things there are good companies and the ones trying the hard sell. Since doing my own and proving it works and saves money a number of people have asked me to do the same for them.

What is the cost of the equipment/installation? Between £4,000 and £10,000 depending on the size of the battery. This can be determined with a look at a house's energy bills and what the plans are in the future (like having an air source heat pump, solar or an electric car).

Is it only beneficial if you have a particular type of energy tariff? It's ideal if you move to a dual rate tariff: that way you can charge up cheaply at night. Octopus energy has a tariff called "Octopus go" which is 7.5p per kWh at night. You would charge up at night, when electricity is cheap, then use the battery power rather than the grid in the day when most people are paying 34p per kWh. It would be even better if you have solar because you can charge it up for free in the day.



What is the saving in layman's terms?

Without solar, about 70% reduction in electricity costs per month, with solar about 90% reduction. Personally I think it's one of the best investments you can make, with current energy prices it's a 20% return on investment. After the system has paid itself back in 5 years or so it's effectively a permanent discount.

Are there any cons/dangers/fire risks as you are using batteries?

The up-front cost is an issue for some people. They are very safe but you can put them in a garage or outside for extra peace of mind. Put it this way, I would rather have batteries than a boiler in my house. Very few negatives.

Does anything affect the performance?

They don't like extreme heats, so no direct sunlight or extreme colds. They would work ok in a garage and they are optimal at room temperature.

Can you briefly describe your house size and the savings you have made?

We have a typical detached 2-3 bed home. Since we installed the battery, the energy bills have gone down from £200 to £50 a month and with solar and other eco improvements in progress I'm expecting the energy bill to go negative. Even over this winter with the solar panels disconnected, the government's £66 a month to all households will be more than we use, so we should come out of the winter in credit.

How is this a green option? The grid is much less carbon intensive in the night, so charging at night and avoiding the day time peaks is good for the environment. If you can also get solar panels then you can effectively go off grid and be independent energy wise, you can also export excess solar and export energy from your battery at peak time to help the grid go green. It's also an enabler for lots of other green technologies like air source heat pumps and electric cars because they can all be programmed to work efficiently with the battery. Ultimately we are all on a journey to go green, that journey may cost £50,000 over a period of time but after insulating I think a battery is probably the next smartest thing to do money-wise.

What happens in a power cut? With a little more planning, the house can automatically switch over to the battery and run in off grid mode for a day or so.

Where can I find out more? YouTube - look up the Fully Charged Show, and locally, I'm happy to show anyone my set up and either help directly or point people in the right direction. -Shaun Butler, 07540 635024, Grubbins Lane, Speen.

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DARVILLS HILL FARM

Charlotte Downing

Operation Orchard Restoration at Darvills Hill Farm

The fields of our farm, like many in the British Isles, all have names. Some are obscure such as The Craft, some more obvious like The Ten Acre and The Point (it's pointy shaped) and then there is The Old Orchard, the only clue to the field's past glory being its name. Since the 1950's the UK has lost nearly 90% of its traditional orchards, including the one at Darvills Hill Farm which was grubbed up in 1974. Historically the farm produced a variety of fruit for the London markets until cheap imports from continental Europe and an EU grant for grubbing up orchards combined to make this fruit producing enterprise unsustainable.

In 2008 traditional orchards became listed as a priority habitat in the UK biodiversity action plan. It is now understood that the unique structure of low density, diverse fruit and nut trees, growing in pasture grazed by livestock, with hedgerows on the boundaries, makes traditional orchards a biodiversity hotspot.

In our ongoing mission to regenerate the farm, we have already planted a

small orchard but earlier this year we decided to embark on the much bigger project of reinstating an orchard in the five-acre Old Orchard field. We have been successful in a bid for funding from the Chilterns Conservation board, Farming in a Protected Landscape grant., who are generously supporting us in buying the trees, protection and irrigation supplies.

Once again, this winter will find us tree planting. This time 91 trees including four varieties of cherry, apple, pear and plum, quince, medlar, Kentish cobnut, mulberry, apricot (a bit out there but the climate is changing) and an old variety called an Aylesbury prune.

This is of course a long- term project with the trees not producing fruit for at least another eight years. But we are hoping in a few years not only will we be producing fruits, juices and nuts for the local community, but that a small army of birds and invertebrates might be considering taking up the offer of a new home.



MOLLY BROWNBRIDGE

Jill Rogerson

Photography student, musician and lover of nature

Focus on Molly Brownridge: photography student, musician and lover of nature

Molly, age 17, is an A level Photography student. She took the photos at Speen Fete this year – these can be seen as part of the article of the Fete on page 13.

'I moved to Speen in 2014 with my family and I go to Claire's Court sixth form in Maidenhead having been at Wycombe High School for years 7-11. I have a passion for plants, and I also enjoy singing and playing the oboe.

I am studying photography, textiles, and history at A-level. I chose to take photography A-level, alongside textiles and history, late into year 12 after dropping another course I didn't enjoy. I had discovered an interest in photography through using this in my textiles A-level - I then borrowed my Dad's

camera until I was given one of my own for Christmas.

I chose to swap to photography as it paired well with textiles and many of the skills I had learnt such as the basics of Photoshop (image creation, graphic design and photo editing software). I had also decided at this point that I wanted to pursue a career in the creative field so two creative A-levels would set me up for that well.



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In photography A-level you learn the basics about a camera and taking photos such as composition, camera settings and how to use Photoshop. In the first year you chose a title that interests you to investigate during the year. I chose the distortion of nature, where I have investigated different editing techniques inspired by the artist and photographer Oz Van Rosen. In the second year/year13 you are given a few titles by the exam board to choose from which you then investigate. Alongside this, you also write an essay/ related study where you research 3 artists related to your title in response to a question/ title you chose.

I am really enjoying the photography course as it allows me to be independent and engage with a topic that I enjoy - I have chosen a topic about nature as I have a passion for houseplants with a slightly excessive collection of over 60. I also find that I can always be inspired by nature and my surroundings such as the landscape around Speen and North Dean.

Next year I am going to do an art foundation course to further refine my skills and decide what, if any, degree I want to do and what area to specialise in.



To create this photo I painted a Lily with UV paint and illuminated it. I edited the photo using a technique inspired by Oz Van Rosen's editing style where she stretches pixels. I find this technique interesting as it creates interesting patterns and is like dissecting a flower.

SPEENMARQUEE

Greg Cook, Jem Symondson, Adrian Farley and James Entwisle - Speen Marquee Committee

It has been a busy year for the marquee team. From the Jubilee celebration early in the season to a wedding celebration right at the end, demand for the Speen Marquee has been brisk.

Firstly we would like to say a huge THANK YOU to all the volunteers who turn out enthusiastically whenever we put out the call. Without you the marquee wouldn't be the great village institution that it now is.

Back at the turn of the millennium a few inspired individuals decided that a marquee would be a useful addition to village amenities. Many generous Speenies put their hands in their pockets to fund the first marquee - a secondhand ex-rental model. It proved such a success and became such an integral part of the village events that it was replaced about 10 years later. This time a brand-new one was bought, funded by the gradual accumulation of our modest rental charges. A decade later, 2022 has been the year when we have once again invested to keep up the high standard by acquiring the next generation of Speen Marquee. Again it is paid for from rentals over the last decade. Hence for the 2023 season the marquee will be even more dazzling bright and white than in recent years. The old one will be



making an appearance on eBay or similar sites soon!

Aside from saving up for a replacement every decade or so, rental charges cover spares, insurance for the marquee (and a few packs of beer to motivate the workers!). We would welcome a

couple of new pairs of hands/enthusiastic minds to join the committee over the next few months to help us out. Please speak to Greg if you think that would be your dream role as a contribution to our community.

We look forward to springtime and the first upping of 2023 with eager anticipation.

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VOLUNTEERING AT WADDES DON

Liz Whetton and Carol Hardy

Winston Churchill said "You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give." This occasional series on volunteering undertaken by residents of our two villages illustrates the breadth of opportunity and personal satisfaction gained from becoming involved in a whole range of activities on a voluntary basis.

Liz Whetton and Carol Hardy, friends and house-sharers, live in Coleheath Bottom, Speen, and have volunteered at Waddesdon Manor for 13 and 15 years respectively. They volunteer for two days a week, receiving travel expenses only, and have covered a wide range of activities: as house hosts, undertaking guided tours and latterly assisting in archiving projects.



Carol and Liz, volunteers at Waddesdon Manor © Waddesdon, A Rothschild House & Gardens. Photographed in the Red Drawing Room, photographer Adam Hollier

Carol taught at a secondary school in Beaconsfield for over 30 years. She says when she stepped down gradually from her work, she felt the need to fill the gap and keep her brain ticking over. She feels it is important to keep active mentally, and that standing and walking up and down stairs for five hours during the two days a week that she and Liz spend at the Manor keeps them fit physically too.

Liz says that when she moved to this area in 1979, she visited Waddesdon Manor and found the building and grounds incredibly beautiful and interesting on every level. She decided that she would become a volunteer when she retired from her post as deputy headteacher at the same school as Carol and has found her years at the Manor both intellectually challenging and fulfilling.

Waddesdon Manor was built by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild between 1874 and 1885 to display his outstanding collection of decorative arts and to entertain the fashionable world. Opened to the public in 1959, Waddesdon Manor and 165 acres of grounds are managed by the Rothschild Foundation on behalf of the National Trust, who took over ownership in 1957. The Rothschild family maintain a private home at Eythrope on the Waddesdon Estate and still own 6,000 acres of grounds and farmland on their estates near Aylesbury.

The main archives belonging to the Rothschild family are in London, however a significant

collection of records is at Windmill Hill Archive, Silk Street, Waddesdon, a purpose-built facility opened in 2011. Liz and Carol have worked on several projects over the years both on this site, and also at the Manor. For Liz this has included digitalizing an inventory of silver collected by Baron Ferdinand and his sister Alice, supplied by Garrards. Liz says she

could not believe how many silver coffee sets the family might need!

Liz has transcribed 40 tapes of oral histories; written up a collection of recipes left by the French chef and Carol has made a record of wages books from 1900 – 1920's with sums of money written in 'old money': pounds, shillings and pence, a challenge in comprehension for anyone under 60! She has also itemised the contents of garden ledgers from 1906: huge orders for bulbs, trees, shrubs, roses (the latter replaced annually), orchids, fruit and vegetables, and soil from Brill especially for the strawberry beds.

One of the most interesting tasks Carol has undertaken has been to write synopses, not transcripts, of letters written by James de Rothschild (who owned Waddesdon Manor from 1922 and who bequeathed Waddesdon to the National Trust in 1957) to his wife Dorothy between 1913 and mid-1930s. This time frame included the First World War when he served in the French and British armies.

As well as continuing their two day a week volunteering duties, Liz and Carol enjoy putting talks together and delivering these to local societies such as W.I. and U3A.

If anyone is interested in becoming a volunteer at Waddesdon, they should contact Helen Franklin, Volunteering Manager, email address: Helen.Franklin@waddesdon.org.uk.

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A House Through Time



Abbots Hill was one of the Edwardian homes built in Speen in the early years of the 20th century. In 2020, it was purchased by Anne and Chris Dolan, who have set about a complete renovation, restoring some of the original features. They purchased the house from Dominic Cooney, the retired dentist who was well known in the village. He had lived there with his family for around 40 years, but before them there was a succession of interesting owners.

The builder and first owner of the original house was Renée Vosper, the wife of a commercial traveller in the paint industry. Early in the First World War they let the house to a tenant, Gwendolen Bax, who bought it in 1919. She was a very interesting and active woman. I hope this article and a subsequent one can bring her to life.

Gwendolen was a vivacious personality and a great beauty. She came from a prosperous London family and in 1896 married Gerald Bishop, an early socialist and Fabian. In these circles, Gwendolen met many of the leading literary and artistic figures of the day, including George Bernard Shaw. She became an actress involved in avant-garde theatre. In 1909, she was divorced from Gerald Bishop and in 1910, married Clifford Bax, a versatile writer and playwright. They had a daughter, named Undine. But early in the First World War, they had separated and Gwendolen came to Speen with Undine.

Gwendolen was very patriotic, becoming a munitions worker in London during the week, visiting Speen at weekends to see her daughter but found this very tiring and so moved full time to Speen. She wrote to the Bucks Herald urging the collection of lavender to soothe wounded soldiers. (See page 33.) She developed the garden as a source of food for sale. She also became a publisher under the imprint Abbots Hill Press, which produced a small number of books. One issue in 1915 was *The Thought Rhythms of a "Munitioneer"*, a book of poems about her experiences.

Gwendolen kept up her connections with the artistic world. On Christmas Day 1918, her guest was Hilda Doolittle, an American imagist poet who published

under the initials HD. HD was married to Richard Aldington, the writer and poet but at the time separated from him and was expecting another man's baby. Gwendolen found her a place to live in Speen – Peace Cottage, along Coleheath Bottom – and she lived there during her pregnancy.

After the war, Gwendolen continued to be active in local life. She donated the first radio to the village, as reported in the Bucks Herald (*below*). Sadly, later, boys in the village, curious to see how it worked, took it apart and it never worked again.

At first, Undine was taught by Gwendolen at home, but she then boarded at the Farm School near Wendover. When Undine moved to Bedales School in Hampshire, Gwendolen moved there to be closer to her daughter, leaving Speen to almost forget her.

The new owner was John Connell Anderson, who lived there with his wife, Annie. Anderson was a retired marine engineer, who had spent his working life in China, travelling to Britain occasionally. He extended the house and built the prominent conservatory overlooking the garden.

Anderson died suddenly in 1931 and his wife sold the house to Arthur Hulton the following year. Hulton lived in Abbots Hill with his wife, Violet and his daughter Beatrix who were all active in village life. Mrs Hulton was President of the WI. Hulton came from a landed family in Lancashire and was a lawyer by training, becoming a Justice of the Peace in Shropshire. After moving to Speen he continued as a judge, becoming Deputy Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Quarter Sessions. After Hulton's death in 1966, Beatrix donated the land for the Scout Hut at the end of Coleheath Bottom.

I am grateful to Mary Dawson for providing her deeds relating to the early history of Abbots Hill, and to Valerie Large, granddaughter of Gwendolen, for information about Gwendolen's time in Speen.

SPEEN Gift Wireless. -Owing to the generosity of Mrs. Clifford Bax, Speen is now provided with a most efficient wireless receiving installation. A committee has been entrusted with the custody of the apparatus, and the arranging of entertainments in the Village Hall, and elsewhere. At the first concert, held on Saturday, the audience expressed great appreciation to Mrs. Bax for her generosity, and to Messrs. Simmonds and Ward for the services they had rendered in erecting the equipment. The Chairman (Major Caldwell) stated that it was proposed to form a wireless concert club, and also to loan the apparatus to residents who desired to listen-in at their own homes. During the evening the broadcasting concerts at London and Birmingham were greatly enjoyed.

Bucks Herald Saturday 5 May 1923

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Life Before Speen

The article on page 31 on Abbots Hill's owners, introduced Gwendolen Bax and described her time in Speen. Gwendolen was a vivacious personality with many artistic friends. Here is a description of her in the mid-1900s by Ford Madox Ford, the novelist and critic.

When I left my doorstep I would perceive bearing down on me from opposite directions Mrs Gwendolen Bishop and Mr Ezra Pound. Mrs Bishop was a lady of striking appearance – of great beauty, indeed. I think she danced snake dances and made pottery. Mr Bernard Shaw broke up the City Socialist League because he drank champagne from one of her shoes on the premises of that body. But no one could have drunk anything from her shoes in those days for she habitually wore sandals on bare feet. In addition, she wore a very short blue skirt. It would be entirely covered by a leopard skin that descended from her shoulders; her head would be bare and she carried a string bag filled with onions"

From *Return to Yesterday*, Ford Maddox Ford. 1931

Gwendolen came from a prosperous London family and married Gerald Bishop, a photographic dealer in 1896. From about 1904, she became involved in a branch of artistic theatre, first as an actress and then as a producer and director of plays.

In 1904, Gwendolen appeared in a play put on by the Guild of Handicraft in Chipping Campden. Gwendolen is described in *The Simple Life: CR Ashbee in the Cotswolds* by Fiona MacCarthy.

Mrs Bishop, ..., was a semi-professional actress, used to audiences a good deal more sophisticated than the farmers in corduroys in Campden village hall. Gwendolen Bishop with her enigmatic beauty, her soft tawny hair and strange green eyes, fashionably dressed in shapeless sludge-brown robes from Jaeger, was a glittering example of one of Shaw's New Women. Her private life was packed, perhaps inevitably, with dramatic incident. While Gerald worked somewhat prosaically in a photographic business in Soho, ..., Gwendolen herself had more flamboyant aspirations. ... she had recently returned from Florence where she had been – without her husband – 'seeing LIFE!'

A year later she again appeared in the Guild's play, as Rosalind, in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, right.

Gwendolen was active as an actress, appearing in over 20 plays between 1904 and 1915. Many were based on Greek theatre and others were experimental pieces, including works by Strindberg and Oscar Wilde. She appeared in one of George Bernard Shaw's first plays, *The Philanderer*, in 1905. The reviews of her performances often mention her striking appearance rather than her acting. In



some, she acted with Harley Granville-Barker, an early advocate for a National Theatre. Gwendolen adopted the idea of taking theatre to the working classes and in 1910, founded the People's Free Theatre for Poetic Drama with the objective of "proving the appreciation of fine poetic drama by the "masses" to draw attention to the need of a state-supported theatre which would serve as a valuable instrument for instilling high moral principles into the public mind". She put her principles into action in 1911 producing performances of Euripides' *Electra* in Whitechapel, then the poorest part of London. She returned in 1914 to stage *Hippolytus* of Euripides in which she played the goddess Artemis. The audience was bemused by the lack of scenery and showed an inclination to giggle at the wailing of the Trojan women, but the reviews also spoke of the appreciation of the spectators.

Gwendolen divorced Gerald Bishop in 1909 and, shortly after, in Venice, married Clifford Bax, a poet and playwright. In 1912 Gwendolen acted in the first of Clifford's plays, a short, rhymed play, *The Poetasters of Ispahan*, written as a wedding present to her. For a short time, they collaborated on other plays and on joint books of poetry, including *Japanese Impromptus*, later published in Speen by the Abbot's Hill Press. The couple moved to Wiltshire but separated shortly after. Gwendolen came to Speen in 1915, living here until 1924, as described in the previous article. Sadly she died of cancer two years later, aged 52.

LAVENDER FOR MILITARY HOSPITALS. TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUCKS HERALD. SIR,—Soldiers in hospital have told me how delighted they are when people bring them "smellies" i.e. something to smell. It scarcely requires imagination to realise the nauseating effect of the necessary disinfectant odours in a surgical ward. The village of Speen is preparing to gather the lavender from its gardens, to bring it to one who has undertaken to make an unlimited number of little cushions, and to take them to the hospitals. I urge that each village in England do this. It is small and yet so gracious, so sensitive a gift for our "men of blood and iron" now lying with the bold blood drained from them and the nerves of steel shattered to splinters. Momentary relief may come, and visions of gardens and quiet things as the little lavender cushion is pinched and turned, and the fragrance creeps through the coils of a wearied brain. Children can help in this, and I think there is not a cottager in England whose garden grows a bush of sweet lavender who will not give all or part of it gladly for such an end, if they are put in the way of doing so. This your courtesy in publishing this letter will do. The bags should be made of butter-muslin, and no more than two inches square, sown on all sides, not tied like a sack, and loosely packed. I trust that the example of Speen village will be quickly followed, for now is lavender time. Yours truly, DAPHNE BAX. Abbot's Hill, Speen,

Bucks Herald Saturday 31 July 1915

Looking Ahead to Winter

The colder months of autumn and winter can be a difficult time for older people and for those living alone.

Especially if you live in rural areas like the Chiltern Hills. Although our countryside is beautiful, accessing the outdoors, popping into Princes Risborough or making the most of our lovely countryside surroundings is much more challenging in the colder weather and when the darker nights draw in.

"According to Age UK, more than 2 million people in England over the age of 75 live alone, and more than a million older people say they go for over a month without speaking to a friend, neighbour or family member." Loneliness can be a real problem for those whose children have left home, their spouses or friends have passed away. Winter can be much harder for those living alone and if you don't get to see anyone or do anything, it can be very demoralising. And although it can seem daunting to ask for help, evidence proves that a companion carer - someone who visits regularly once or twice a week for a couple of hours at a time - can make a significant difference to enhance overall wellbeing and positive emotional outlook.

Sue is a companion carer for Ashridge Home Care and visits several people who live alone in Buckinghamshire. She says: "I have a great bond with my clients, we will sit and chat over a cup of

tea, discuss today's news, I can bring shopping and prescriptions with me." She continued: "They always open the door with a big smile knowing they have a visitor. Nowadays a lot of family live far away or are busy raising a young family. There's no shame in accepting help and companion carers can not only offer a great deal of practical support but are great company and a welcome distraction on an otherwise quiet day."

Now is the time to look ahead and consider how a companion carer could positively support you or maybe a loved one this winter.

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SUPPORTING UKRAINE

Jill Rogerson

Ukraine to Chilterns

Readers will be aware that the charity supported by Speen Fete this year has been Ukraine To Chilterns, a registered charity with the specific aim of supporting Ukrainian refugees within the local area of Princes Risborough. All proceeds from the Grainne Hunt gig on 10th September, organised by Jem Symondson, were donated to the charity. The latest figures are that 109 host families and over 220 Ukrainian families and individuals have been supported by the charity which has formed a strong partnership with the Princes Risborough Rotary Club.



I met Tetiana, Anna and Sofia, one of two Ukrainian families hosted in Speen, who have been staying with Louise and Giles Brooks-Usher since the middle of June. They described the trauma they had experienced before leaving their home town of Dubno, a city of approximately 40,000, situated north-east of Lviv. With the help of Ola, a translator, Tetiana spoke of how rockets were fired into the city indiscriminately by Russia from the beginning of the war in February. The family often had to shelter for long periods of time with other occupants of their apartment building in a small, cold storage cellar until the shelling ceased.

Tetiana talked of an apocalypse-type existence: mass panic, shops and schools being shut and difficulty getting food. She says that everyone tried to help by cooking and sharing the food they could obtain with each other and with Ukrainian soldiers; they tore strips off donated green and dark material and knotted these on to fishing nets draped over wooden brackets – to make camouflage nets. From Day 1 of the war, Tetiana had wanted to protect her family and her home, but the final straw for Tetiana, her daughter-in-law Anna and her daughter Sofia, was when Urpin was overrun by the Russians; they heard of the atrocities being inflicted on both the Ukrainian military and civilian population.

Louise and Tetiana met on Day One of the war on the Accommodation, Help and Shelter for Ukraine Facebook Group, which provides details both of potential hosts and individuals/families wishing to leave Ukraine. Louise describes how she and her husband, Giles,

would speak daily with Tetiana and would watch the news every day, often in tears. Tetiana had wanted to leave earlier but wished to travel with her brother and his family who had only internal travel documents; so the two families travelled by bus to Katowice in Southern Poland where Louise has a good friend with an empty apartment. After five weeks the visas were sorted out in Warsaw and the families were able to fly to Heathrow to an emotional welcome and meeting on 15th June with Louise and Giles, and Tetiana's brother and family with their hosts in Lacey Green.

Sofia, aged 14, says she misses her home, her friends and her cat. She goes to Princes Risborough Upper School and believes that she copes fairly well with the lessons despite the language gap; she also can access on-line lessons from Ukraine. She worries about the impact on her education of the two years of disruption due to the Covid pandemic and now the war with Russia.

Tetiana is a florist and has her own shop in Dubno; since arriving here she has found part-time work as a cleaner locally while Anna is working part-time at a café in High Wycombe.

Tetiana says that their main difficulty while living in the U.K. has been not being able to communicate and they find the rural environment very different from living in a town at home in Ukraine. Used to a culture of close family and friendship ties in Ukraine, they were not expecting the degree of warmth and kindness which was extended to them by the local community here, saying that there have been "arms around them", supporting them at all times. She says that this has particularly been the case with Louise and Giles, who have held the family's hands every step of the way from the early days and through the whole journey. Before she arrived in the U.K., Louise and she would write to each other every day and she says that it seemed like Louise was actually with her.

Registered with the Government's Homes for Ukraine Scheme, the family could stay in the U.K. for 3 years, however they are naturally wanting to return to Ukraine



as soon as it is safe for them to do so, possibly in 6 months' time after the winter. Meantime, they particularly want to thank Louise and Giles for supporting them and keeping them 'afloat' and to the community and the U.K. more widely for all the kindness and support shown to them.

The support for Ukrainian families has been widespread within the community: with local schools providing English language support and a solid wider education; special youth club evenings for Ukrainian youngsters; the Adult Education Service giving free one-to-one tuition in English reading and writing at Princes Risborough Library; Hypnos donating beds; Wainwrights providing new school shoes; and the

New2U Clothes Barn sourcing clothes, both donated and new – a small snapshot of what has been made available locally.

Princes Risborough Rotary, which has a number of members from both Speen and North Dean, have raised significant funds for the Ukraine To Chilterns charity, from hosting a barn dance and donating funds from the Kop Hill Climb. This money is used to offer financial support to some cases of extreme hardship and in supporting the New2U Clothes Barn.

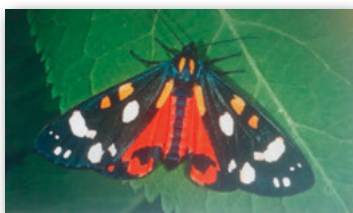
**Further details of the Ukraine2Chilterns charity are available on their website:
www.ukraine2chilterns.com.**

WILDLIFE WATCH

Peter Symonds

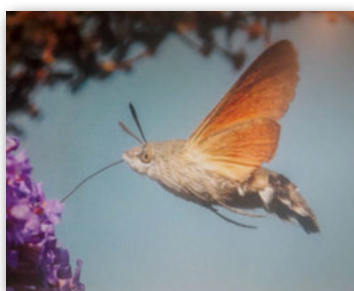
Autumn 2022

Summer 2022 will be remembered for the lasting drought. Every single wild pond seemed to dry out completely. Whilst birds can fly to local garden ponds which retain some water some of our mammals must have suffered with no accessible water and baked hard ground. Both badgers and foxes will normally eat earthworms, amongst other things, but these become inaccessible in very dry conditions. Antony Palmer reported crows damaging apples and plums on garden trees, which may have been a response to the dry ground. Local rodents which have extensive diets do not seem to have been badly affected with village reports of problems with rats, Glis glis (edible dormice) and squirrels in roof spaces and gardens. Reptiles cope well with hot conditions. Ian Warr reported a large snake in his garden which was probably a Grass Snake.



Insects have fared better with hot conditions attracting several unusual species. Several villagers recorded a

number of Scarlet Tiger Moths in their gardens. This is an almost tropical looking moth which was previously confined to the south and west but may be spreading with global warming. Likewise, several villagers sent



me videos of Hummingbird Hawk moths in their gardens. These moths hover as they feed from flower heads sipping nectar down a long curved proboscis. In October the village was invaded by huge numbers of tiny white insects which were blowing around like small snowflakes. These may have been Whiteflies that develop from aphids that appear to have fared well in the warm.

Numerous villagers continued "no-mow May" into the summer with some interesting flowers appearing. The Wenglers were rewarded with 3 Pyramidal Orchids and a less common Bee Orchid on the verge on Hampden Road.

The Cluster Farm bird survey in late May revealed farmland birds in the locality that many of us do not regularly encounter. In Lacey Green the survey recorded 4 Corn Buntings, 8 Blackcaps, 10 Whitethroats, 2 Lesser Whitethroats, 3 Yellow Wagtails and 50 Skylarks. Slightly further afield a Cattle Egret was at Weston Turville reservoir in early July with a Purple Heron recorded there in late August. To the south a Red Necked Phalarope was at Marlow Gravel pit and a rare White Rumped Sandpiper at Dorney Common in July. Another interesting record was a Nightjar at Monks Risborough in early August. In our own garden 6 of the 13 Mallard hatched from a second nest flew off in July whilst 5 Moorhens survived from a second clutch again after an initial failure.

**Please report any interesting sightings
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