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Village News

Issue 124/August 2020



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Editorial

I hope you are all well and have come through the worst of the lockdown relatively unscathed. There have been plusses and minuses as far as I'm concerned – the plusses being more time spent with close family, plenty of walks in our lovely countryside and more time in the garden, and the minuses include not being able to socialise with other family and friends. Fortunately, there have not been too many cases of Covid-19 in Downley, but my thoughts go out to anyone who has been personally affected.

I am delighted to say that this issue of Downley Village News is being distributed once again to all households in the village, with thanks to our fantastic distribution team. Hopefully, by the time the next issue comes out, restrictions will have been eased further and we will be able to announce the re-opening of more of our clubs and societies. But of course nothing is certain in these uncertain times and we may be looking at a further outbreak of the virus instead. Let's hope not.

The next issue is our winter one (unbelievably, as I write this on one of the hottest days of the year!) and, as usual, we will be delighted to hear from any organisation in Downley (or the surrounding area) with news and information. You can submit articles via the email address editor@downley.org (copy deadline 31 October).

Anne, Editor • editor@downley.org



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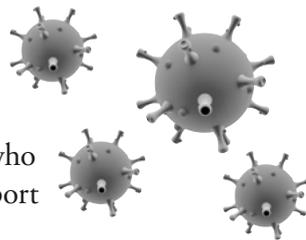
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BRING YOUR OWN DRINK

Downley Covid-19 Action Group

As we come gradually out of lockdown and learn to live with the restrictions on everyday living, the DCAG and the street reps are still helping to provide support to those who still need it. Bucks Council has requested that all local support groups remain in place until at least October in case of a second wave or a local lockdown occurring.



As a reminder here are the services currently operating in Downley

- Local street reps are available to support individual residents who need help. Find your local rep at www.downley.org/reps or call 01494 528133.
- Pharmacy collections: all residents are now encouraged to collect their own medicines from the pharmacy. However, if you are self-isolating or still need assistance then the pharmacy does operate a delivery service. Lastly, your street rep can help where necessary.
- Food deliveries: the Co-op will be continuing their delivery service for the time being. Notice will be given of any intention to close the service. Starlight will continue to deliver through the vegboxshop scheme.
- Food Bank: the Downley/Disraeli food bank at the Pastures Church will continue to operate for the foreseeable future.
- Listening Ear: street reps are available for a friendly chat, but if for whatever reason you can't contact them, then a team of volunteers is available by calling 07379 632281.

In the future we envisage that the street rep system in Downley may turn into a more general "Street Association" type organisation and we are therefore looking for someone to act as a street coordinator. This would be primarily a communication function but could also develop in response to community demand. We would be happy to hear from anyone interested in getting involved.

Bill Thompson. DCAG



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Downley Common News

This month's subject of interest is the flail on the DCPS tractor. As it's now summer, and the brambles and bracken have been growing furiously, it's the time when we fight back and attempt to keep things under control using the flail to cut back those areas that are particularly infested.

A passing comment that "the flail doesn't seem to be cutting very well" prompted a closer look at the flail to see if there was a reason for this and this opened a bit of a can of worms.

First a number of cutting blades seemed to be missing and a quick count revealed that 25 out of the total of 69 were missing – no wonder we were getting stripes! Then it appeared that the main shaft wasn't turning very freely which transpired to be down to one of the main bearings having lost most of the balls in the bearing race. Then a check of the bearings on the rear roller showed that these had completely disintegrated and needed replacing.

The front cover was also badly rusted and was allowing debris to escape and fly into the tractor cab so this needed to be repaired. Finally the universal joint in the power take-off shaft was so badly worn that it was in danger of coming apart and also had to be replaced.

Thanks go to Andy Gay for his hard work in putting it all to rights and to V&G for replacing the roller bearings which had completely seized in place. The flail is now almost as good as new and is whisper-quiet!

Bill Thompson. DCPS



Old bearing



New bearing



New Universal Joint



New Front Cover

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Downley Community Centre - REOPEN!

Following the lockdown period, extensive research has been undertaken and a risk assessment completed by a dedicated volunteer “restart team” to ensure the building complies with latest Government Covid-19 required processes.

A sanitiser station is in place for use on entry and exit and floor distance reminders. Cupboards and drawers have been taped off. Both kitchenettes have, in addition to regular liquid anti-bacterial soap, access to an alcohol-based hard surface sanitising spray. New signage includes posters and hazard tapes which have been generously supplied by Debbie and Mark from their local company WORK SAFETY SOLUTIONS – thank you! An enhanced cleaning regime has also been introduced between extended periods of non-use.

Based on social distancing at the time of going to press, BEECH room is limited to 12 people, OAK to 10 and MAPLE to 2. These measures all satisfy the Covid-19 protocol.

Several hirers have already returned including Emma Barr, a Downley based professional vocal coach and musical director, who ran a very successful week-long theatre workshop in August. Emma’s group divided themselves between the Beech room and the specially erected marquee to facilitate social distancing.



Refurbishment Updates

- a) Our next project is to transform the library into a multi-functional room tastefully decorated and furnished in style to extend the décor in Beech and Oak rooms. We plan to start very shortly.
- b) The second phase of the sound reduction project was completed in July when new acoustic panels were fitted onto the ceiling of Beech room.

The committee looks forward to favourable feedback after lockdown ends.

In response to the coronavirus pandemic the government announced support for small businesses and businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure industries in the form of grants, payable through local authorities. With the assistance of Cllr Paul Turner, the centre applied to Buckinghamshire County Council and a £10,000 award was quickly received specifically from the ‘retail, hospitality and leisure grant fund’.



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Considerable extra costs have arisen as a result of new safety precautions, incurred at a time when the Centre has ongoing fixed costs which exceed income from the few hirers now able to safely return.

The trustees have agreed that current hire fees, which have been held for the past 10 years should remain frozen until the end of 2020. In 2021 this will be reviewed in light of the above grant and hirer usage.

Downley Community Centre - Management Committee



Downley Day Update

It is with regret that the Downley Day Committee has decided that they will be unable to run either Downley Day itself or Concert on the Common this year. We had hoped to postpone them both to 19th September 2020 but the current restrictions make this impossible and the situation is very unlikely to change between now and next month.

Thank you to those people who had been making preparations in the hope that some sort of event might be possible. We will now transfer our efforts to putting the events on in 2021 and have fixed the dates as:

- Family Disco: 18th June 2021
- Downley Day: 19th June 2021
- Concert on the Common: 10th July 2021

Finally a reminder that Downley Day also organises the **Community Carol Singing just before Christmas**. We are still hopeful that we might be able to run that event but have yet to set a date. We will announce later when and if it can go ahead.

Bill Thompson

Bucks and Oxon First Aid, Safety, and Wellbeing Specialists

Downley based First Aid company has the following training sessions available at Downley Community Centre, HP13 5TR:

- **First Aid for Mental Health Awareness Training (FAA level 1)**
Friday 25th September - (1pm - 5pm) cost: £60 per person
- **Emergency First Aid at Work and Emergency Paediatric First Aid (FAA level 3)**
Friday 9th October and Friday 16th October 2 (2pm - 5pm) cost: £90 per person

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Downley Descants News

When The Lights Go On Again (All Over The World)



This was the title of a song recorded by Dame Vera Lynn back in the dark days of the Second World War and is quite appropriate now as we look forward to the end of these dark times, whenever that may be. Vera Lynn brought lightness and hope to many people 75 years ago and it was a sad loss when she died in June, aged 103. We need someone of that ilk now who can lift people by the power of music and song. Unfortunately, music and song (live anyway) seems to be one of the last things set to be allowed as restrictions are eased.

Downley Descants have been unable to meet since March and we are all missing our Thursday nights immensely. We have tried Zoom meetings, which are good for keeping in touch but not much good for singing unless you have a technological wizard on hand which unfortunately we don't. Many choirs have produced virtual recordings and videos, some to a very professional standard, but it would not work for us. We have missed out on our annual concert as part of Up! Downley and Downley Day. We do have Christmas Concerts scheduled. Taking into consideration the current state of affairs, there must be a certain degree of doubt hanging over these, but, as Monty Python once said: 'Always Look on the Bright Side of Life'.

In the past we have held a pre-term picnic on the Common and would very much like to carry on the tradition this year if restrictions in force at the time permit. We would observe whatever social distancing measures are necessary which would allow such an event

We accept we will probably lose members when things get back to the 'new' normal as it will have been many months since our rehearsals stopped. This is the last thing we want to happen, so just remember the joy of singing together and the camaraderie of Downley Descants. Although singing will be one of the last restrictions to be lifted we will be ready to recommence, whenever that may be, so please be patient.

COULD YOU BE A CHIPMUNK?



The Chipmunks are a small group of Woodcarvers who meet up once a week at the Downley Community Centre.

We would welcome new members, experienced or not, to our group. We meet on Wednesday mornings from 10.00-12.00 in the Oak Room at the Centre, just off School Close. Whilst not teachers we are happy to give advice and help.

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hannah.dixon@hartbeeps.com

for more details



Hartbeeps South Bucks



[hartbeepsouthbucks](https://www.instagram.com/hartbeepsouthbucks)

Chameleon Singles Group



The last few months have been interesting times for Chameleon Singles Group. For the first time in over 18 years we did not produce a programme of events for May and June 2020 due to the Coronavirus lockdown. A couple of our events at the end of March and all the April programmed events had to be cancelled too as the restrictions meant we could not physically meet.

The internet well and truly came to the rescue in the form of “Zoom Video Conferencing”. Prior to lockdown very few had heard of platforms such as this and none of us had experience in using them. However, after a few sessions we had become better than novices and were regularly chatting each week from our homes.

June saw some easing of restrictions which allowed small groups to meet outside. We were able to make use of this, moving our Pub Night and Lunch Club to the local parks. Totteridge Recreation Ground at Terriers provided the space for our initial events and more recently we have also met in the park along Rose Avenue in Hazlemere.

The further easing of restrictions in July still did not make it possible for us to meet as a group at a pub or restaurant. As a singles group we would just be too many households. It is however good that we have been able to meet up again observing the social distancing and other measures to ensure safety in what continues to be difficult times, with the virus likely to still be with us for a while yet.

Our on-line Zoom sessions will continue so those who for whatever reason cannot join us at an event can still keep in touch. We are also doing a walk once a month making further use of the warmer summer days to keep fit and active.

If you are single, 40-60's, looking for a great social life and new friends then why not give us a try? There are no strangers at Chameleon, just new friends to be made. We have several local people from Downley, West Wycombe, Sands, Cressex and surrounding areas and you would be very welcome too.

To find out more call our membership secretaries Terrie on 01494 445816 or Trevor on 01494 529067, or e-mail: info@chameleonsingles.org.uk. Visit us on-line at www.chameleonsingles.org.uk for more information and our current programme or connect with us through Facebook.

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Top Notes



News from St James



This year we remembered 75 years since the D Day landings which marked the beginning of the end of the second world war, but it took was 11 more months before VE

day and a further 4 months before VJ day. I have often thought about those who fought during those intervening months, especially those who lost their lives in that period. They knew that they were nearly there but they still had to battle through to that final ceasefire and there were some big battles which still had to be fought like the Battle of the Bulge. I can't help feeling that there are some similarities to the position we are in now. Things have started to lift, we can go back to pubs and restaurants and leisure centres, yes and to churches, but there are still many restrictions in place and things are in no way normal. We are also aware that there are still many potential battles ahead; we don't know if there will be a second wave or another spike in the winter and, if there is, then we know that sadly there will be more casualties.

So we are starting to emerge from this enforced lockdown with all sorts of mixed feelings. There is joy at being able to meet up with family and friends again, frustration and sadness that we still can't hug each other, anxiety and fear about what the coming months will have in store for us. I think I am not alone in liking to plan and know what I am doing next. The big challenge for me of dealing with Covid has been the constantly moving goalposts. We get used to one way of doing things, then the rules change and we have to adjust again – and even though some of those changes are positive they are still changes, so it feels like life is quite unsettled. I have spoken to people who have had to spend so much time inside and on their own that they are now quite fearful about going out and socialising again.

It feels like we are in a place of transition, but that we could be here for some time. On the positive side, we have freedom to do things in a way that we did not have a few months ago, and we have learned a new appreciation for things that we previously took for granted, like our beautiful countryside and our communities. Yet life is not the same and won't really be until we have a vaccine that is fully operational, and that's really tough for us, perhaps more tough in

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some ways than the initial changes which we all faced with grit, determination and great community spirit. I think many of us are now tired of having to cope with the limitations and long for a return to normal; our patience has run thin.

What kept those armed forces going in the last months of World War 2? It was the fact that the end was in sight; they were starting to see the enemy retreating and places being freed. For us, its important to celebrate the changes that we are seeing and to keep praying for all those involved in researching, trialling and producing the vaccine that will see the end of this virus in our community, country and world.

The bible has many verses that can really help in times of challenge and difficulty and in times of waiting. Here are a couple you might find helpful:

Psalms 33:20 “We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.”

Romans 15:13 “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Hope for the future is key for us now. There have been some amazing initiatives in this community of Downley, a place which already had a strong community spirit, and in this time relationships have deepened and new relationships have developed which I am sure will continue to grow and flourish in the years ahead.

It has been lovely to start seeing people from the community since we opened St James for private prayer on Thursday mornings. From August, we will have a short communion, 10-10.30 on Thursday mornings, then private prayer and outside chat until 12 noon. If you would like to come in to pray and have a chat with someone do pop in on Thursday mornings - we would love to see you.

We are looking to restart our Sunday services in the church in September whilst continuing to stream using Zoom as well, but will be reviewing this at the end of August.

In the meantime we are continuing our 11am interactive Zoom services; do join us, you can get all the details on our website www.stjamesdownley.org.uk.

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News from Downley Pharmacy

Flu vaccinations - Autumn 2020

With the COViD-19 scenario continuing, with no clear proven treatment or vaccine available at this time, it is of high priority that the seasonal flu vaccination campaign for 2020-21 is a successful one. We will as usual be offering flu vaccines both NHS and privately. It has been announced that the NHS will be targeting a larger group this year. All over 50's will now be included as well as the over 65's and those in vulnerable groups as per previous years. It should be noted, however, that those over 50 not in a vulnerable group will not be targeted until later in the season.

Social distancing and cleaning requirements between patients will mean how we do things will be different this year. As yet we have not received the specific guidelines and protocols but we are planning as best we can. Screening for possible COVID symptoms will be needed alongside use of masks (now required in shops anyway) and hand sanitiser. Large supplies of vaccines for all adults have been ordered, but due to supplier delivery schedules we may at times be without stock of the appropriate vaccine for you.

In previous years we have simply offered a walk-in service but that will not always be possible this year. Demand will be high and we still need to perform our usual roles and services. Our aim will be to offer appointments in timed slots, with priority given to those pre booked; we do not wish to see queues developing! Details of how to book will be publicised on Facebook and with displays and fliers at the pharmacy. Look out for the Patch of Pride publicity!

Destruction of unwanted medication

please help us control the volume of waste

Return of unwanted medication (not required or out of date) to pharmacy for safe disposal is one of our NHS contracted duties. The guidance around COVID has led to the bulk of this waste taking up much more of our limited stockroom space (collections are only once every 2 months). Prior to COVID we undertook to sort and minimise the hazardous content, removing excess packaging to recycling or general waste. This process is now not possible as our guidance is to double bag the items returned and immediately place in our collection bin. We are therefore asking that as much packaging is removed as possible before return to the pharmacy. Any stronger painkillers should be

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Bragi is a semi-retired security guard

Elizabeth, loves being active and finds housesitting also offers her the chance to travel the world on her pension. Bragi, started housesitting on turning 60, as a way to escape Winters working as a security guard in Iceland and preparing for his retirement.

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separated as these may need denaturing before adding to the collection bin. If you need specific advice about a large amount to be returned, please ask.

We cannot accept used needles. These should be placed in a proper sharps disposal unit which can be collected by the council, call 01494 586550 or visit the council website to arrange this.

Finally the best way to reduce waste and its cost to the NHS is to only order and take from the pharmacy what you actually need and have a current use for.

Coffee Stop News



Hello again everyone.

Firstly I must share with you the very sad news that our long-time friend and customer, Doris Bromley, passed away in July; she was 99 and had been coming to us since the very early days.

I am sure you realise that at the moment we can't see the prospect of opening up again anytime soon. There are pages and pages of instructions to follow before opening up meetings of organisations and as most of our customers, and indeed the majority of helpers, fall into the extra vulnerable groups we have to be extremely careful.

Janet has managed to gain access to our cupboard. She removed the things that were out of date and gathered together anything else useful and donated it to the "One Can Trust" charity.

The village volunteers have all been amazingly efficient and leapt into action to make sure that people are supplied with their shopping and medication and we are very lucky that nowadays we have so many methods of keeping in touch so we have been able to speak with friends. In my retirement village we have been very tightly controlled but also cocooned, and we feel as safe as is possible. I really hope that, once this eventful year is over, we may be able to pick up roughly where we left off but sadly there will be no Harvest Lunch this year. I hope you have all found something positive to get you through the difficult times; for example Andy is now the proud owner of a new puppy, Poppy, and others have discovered or revived enthusiasms for gardening, crafts, baking, learning languages etc, as well as finding other ways of volunteering.

Stay safe everyone; best wishes

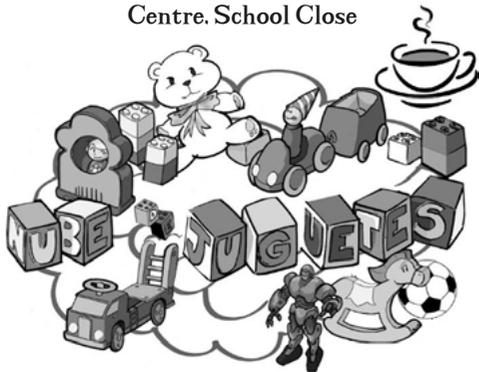
Ann Buxton

Downley Toddler Group

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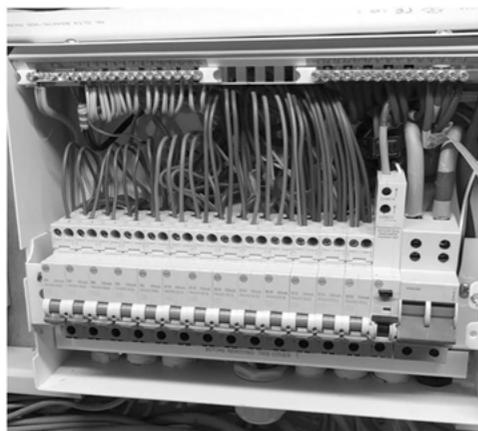
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Downley Local History Group

The Best Laid Plans o' Mice an' DLHG, Gang aft agley. *(With apologies to Robert Burns)*

Back in March the Downley Local History Group began to make plans for an autumn meeting. We agreed that that the meeting would be a two-way affair with us providing further information on the history of Downley and those attending being asked to bring along any photos or other memorabilia they may have relating to Downley past.

Well, Covid-19 has certainly put the kibosh on that. However we also agreed that, at the planned autumn meeting, the website we are putting together on the 'History of Downley' would go live. The intention to go live is definitely still on (bearing in mind that this is written in July), but trying to find it via Google or another search engine may take some patience. We suggest that initially you type the following directly into the search bar www.downleyhistory.uk.

We are still at the very early stage of collating and recording Downley History and hence you are likely to find many references to 'website under construction'. We hope that even with the limited content you'll find something of interest there and perhaps be encouraged to let us know about items relating to the past that you may have tucked away in your cupboards

We also have a number of photographs for which we have little to no information as to why and when they might have been taken. These can be found in the site's menu item 'Help Wanted'. Any thoughts or guidance would be greatly appreciated.

Finally, as we slowly come out of lockdown we would really like to include personal records as to how Downley folk coped with homeschooling, social isolation and distancing, working from home, and any of the many other ways that the lockdown and the virus have affected 'normal' life. Perhaps your children would also like to contribute. Some contributions have already been posted but we are always happy to receive more to give future generations a flavour of what life was like under the threat of coronavirus.

**If you can help in any way please
e-mail downleyhistory@btinternet.com**

or contact

Brian Knott on 07791 853504.

In the meantime Stay Safe!

***Can anyone help with information on when
and on what occasion this photo was taken?***



Downley Parish Council

Meeting Dates

Meetings are on 2nd Tuesday of the month.

War Memorial Hall 7.45pm

January, March, May, July, September and November

Downley Community Centre, School Close 7.45pm

February, April, June, August, October and December

Up to 30 minutes are allowed for public questions.

Agendas are posted on the Parish Council notice boards at least 4 days in advance. Copies of the Parish Council's Minutes are available at the Downley Community Library for residents to read. They are also included on the Parish Council Website.

The Clerk (Chettina Masters)
can be contacted on 01494 444683
Email at: downley_pc@tiscali.co.uk

Downley Parish Notice Boards

Notices for the Parish notice boards should be left at the Community Centre. Notices must be received one month in advance of the event. Notice boards are updated on the first Thursday of each month. Please post notices into the letterbox at the Community Centre clearly marked for the Clerks attention. Please notify the Clerk if you have posted a notice at the centre by emailing to downley_pc@tiscali.co.uk

All notices must be for local non profit organisations.
Please ensure that A5 size notices are supplied.

DOWNLEY BRIDGE CLUB

meet every Thursday
at the Downley Community Centre
from 7-10 15pm.



We are a small friendly club and all standards of players are welcome with or without a partner. Our club would be ideal for those who play bridge but are hesitant in taking the next step and joining a club.

For anyone wanting to learn bridge no previous knowledge of bridge is necessary. Lessons every week at 6pm

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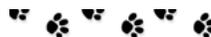
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Up! Downley Virtual Festival

Downley.com has been our host for the village festival in 2020; The Art Show, Scarecrow Selfies and Open Garden.



We must start with a shout out to Mark Starkey our downley.org webmaster who despite continuing work, found time to support the Covid Action Group with their updates and emails as well create the festival pages and image galleries.

Mark tells us the Up! Downley Virtual Festival saw over 2000 visitors to the Art Show, over 300 for Scarecrows and 190 for Open Gardens.

Art Show

We have always enjoyed good numbers of visitors to the Village Art Show but to see 2000 browsing the physical show would be quite something! If you found pleasure visiting the online version do give the real show a try when it returns to the Community Centre as there is so much more to see and take in.

As we do with the physical version we asked visitors to vote for the pieces of work that particularly took their eye. This is just for fun as the work is so diverse and created by all ages and levels of experience. The most votes went to 'Downley Memorial Hall' a collage by Ada Worth who is under 16 with the 3 following works (all by senior artists) being equal runners up; 'Wooffed Out' a photograph by Amelia Parkinson, 'Colourful Cow' a painting by Gill Richards and 'Still Waters' a painting by John Morris. All of the work plus the image galleries for the Scarecrows and Open Gardens can still be viewed at downley.org.



'Downley Memorial Hall'

by Ada Worth



'Colourful Cow'

by Gill Richards



'Wooffed Out'

by Amelia Parkinson



'Still Waters'

by John Morris

Support your local Library



Downley Community Centre
School Close, Downley HP13 5TR
T: 01494 528133

E: enquiries@downleylibrary.org.uk

Library Opening Times

Mondays 10-12 noon · Thursdays 3-5 pm

Saturdays 10-12 noon

Library Update

For all of you who are wondering when the library will re-open the waiting time is nearly over. As you know doubt realized the library was shut due to the Covid-19 virus. But it will soon be open after a facelift, it will also have a totally new layout. The refurbishment is planned to start in the middle of September which means we would hope to re-open the library in early October, if all goes to plan.

Please be advised that you will have to wear facemasks in all parts of the community centre.

 Follow us on Facebook, you can link to us through 'Groups'. See what's new on the library shelves!

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Downley Evening WI

How lovely to greet you all again! I hope you are all well.

2020 has been a very strange experience so far, hasn't it? When we think back to last Christmas and New Year, all the hopes and plans and expectations we had for this year seem to belong to another life. In fact, that's exactly what it is, really – another life. Towards the end of April, a good six weeks into lockdown, I found myself feeling different, less positive than at first, and when I examined myself closely, I found that what I was actually feeling was grief. Not because I had lost someone but because my life as I'd known it was irrevocably changed. Recognising that, though, helped me to adjust and deal with those feelings and share them with neighbours and friends and to carry on with the challenges of lockdown in a positive manner.

Our WI meetings have been suspended through this time, of course, but we have kept in touch via email, so we are aware of what decisions have been made at the highest level of the WI. Normally, we would have had our AGM in early June and the voting would have taken place as to what will be the subject of next year's campaign. Each year, the delegates at the AGM vote on the merits of the 2 resolutions which have emerged from a rigorous process of scrutiny, elimination and voting at local level. This year, however, the NFWI Board of Trustees took the decision to put forward both resolutions for members to campaign on in the coming year, as both had received strong support among the membership. The campaigns focus on modern slavery issues on the one hand, and the need for more stem cell donors on the other. We'll see what 2021 brings ...

Downley Evening WI usually has a sociable summer programme, with get-togethers and outings, and our annual garden party in Janet Durkin's lovely garden. Not possible this year, but I am happy to say that I was able to get my yearly 'fix' of Janet's garden recently when she kindly invited me to a socially-distanced tea with 2 other members. It was so good to see them and to hear at first hand their experiences of the last few months. Janet, our President, has been doing a wonderful job of getting members together, a few at a time, since lockdown was eased and people have been allowed to meet in each others' gardens and I'm sure we're all very grateful for her kindness and hospitality.

Dear readers, I'd love to be able to close with my usual plug for our regular meetings, but while we hope we may be allowed to assemble sometime in the autumn, everything is still far from certain. So I will simply sign off with the phrase that has become the watchword of 2020 – stay safe.

Angela Taplin

Jill - Tutor



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Resident in Downley, I am a science graduate, a qualified teacher and a mum.

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Downley's Coronavirus Friendship Tree

– the next step ...

The initiative taken by Michelle Read (street rep on Commonsie) for this project has touched many Downley residents. Michelle and other Downley organisations now invite your ideas on how to dismantle and conserve this initiative

The concept and creation of the Friendship Tree was featured in the last issue on page 9 of Downley Village News (available to view online) The front cover features a very good photograph.



But what to do next? In summary, the most practical suggestion so far for conserving the tree is in photographic form but a few more photographs would help conserve the initiative before the exhibits deteriorate further.

If it is impractical for the remaining items to be stored in Downley, a representative single donation of 3-5 mixed items in good condition could be offered to Wycombe Museum in Priory Avenue. Michelle will offer a selection of items from the tree which remain after 20 September, along with a photograph of the tree and background information. Downley Community Centre may be able to display a maximum of two photographs for a time.

For the remaining unclaimed exhibits one suggestion is to store these in a time capsule buried close to the tree, maybe with a commemorative plaque nearby.

All suggestions and photographs welcome please, to ginn8.michelle@gmail.com by 12 September 2020.

Downley War Memorial Hall

Although High Wycombe Library is now open for certain services, this does not include the Local History section. Consequently, I will not be reporting on the Second World War in this edition.

Hopefully, things will have improved for next time.

The Hall is still not fully open but the Committee is working on the actions required to allow our regular hirers access from September.

Alan Baker alanbaker49@btinternet.com 07890 762527



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Downley Methodist Church (Sunnybank)

After a few months of having to remain closed, I'm delighted to say that we're carefully starting to open again.

We've enjoyed several occasions in June and July when our organist Ed played the organ and piano for an hour on alternate Sunday mornings, and we have taken the opportunity to combine that with socially distanced private prayer and reflection. If you've gone past the church on one of these days, I hope you were able to hear and enjoy the music!

Although our meetings are quite a bit different from what they were even six months ago, we're now getting together every week with readings, reflections and music, although at the time of writing face masks are required and we're not allowed to sing.

Our Sunday worship time has been changed to 10.00, lasting approximately an hour, and we'd love to see you and will offer you a very warm welcome.

We're expecting the pre school playgroup to be back in September and are looking forward to welcoming other users again as soon as restrictions allow.

We look forward to seeing you.

Clive Knapman, Sunnybank Steward

Downley Theatre Group

At time of writing, there continues to be little positive information about when theatres up and down the country will be reopening for live performances. There have been some guidelines for coach companies enabling trips to be organized, but we have decided not to arrange any outings until the situation is much clearer.

We will keep members of the Theatre Group informed of developments and sincerely hope we will be able to offer outings in a safe future.

Alan & Claire Baker

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A Tragic Death and a Narrow Escape

On a Saturday evening in July 1884, a horse-drawn van overturned on the road from Gerrards Cross to High Wycombe. The family were moving furniture to Wycombe. On the van were Alfred Beck senior; Alfred Beck junior (aged nine); George Turner and his wife Florence and their baby, just a few months old.

Florence, Alfred senior's daughter, gave evidence at the inquest.

'The horse seemed to go towards the left-hand side'. She cried out to her Father: 'we're going'. They all fell out the left-hand side except the baby which fell onto the horse and then on to the road. The horse ran off and Alfred Beck senior went over to his young son: 'let me lie, father – let me lie'. The wheels of the horse-drawn van had run over his stomach.

George Turner, who had a broken arm, and Alfred Beck junior were taken to Wycombe Cottage Hospital. The rest only had minor injuries, and the baby, despite the fall, survived with a few scratches.

At 2 o'clock the following morning a surgeon attended young Alfred who was found sitting outside on the verandah. He was weak but seemed to have only slight scratches and grazes, he walked back to the ward and was put to bed.....He died the same afternoon. Verdict – accidental death caused by internal injury.

The baby was my Grandad Turner's older brother. Later in life he was to have his own son who became a Squadron Leader in the RAF, serving in Special Forces Operations behind enemy lines in the Far East in WW11. Florence and George were my Great Grandparents, who four years later became parents to my Grandad Turner.

So many 'what ifs'? So many lessons about the fragility of life from this small story found in the local newspaper.

Paul Turner

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J. Heartycough's Horticultural Hints

Autumn 2020

Wal, hello again, orl my gardinin readers, wot a business this virus thing is, eh? Wot is virtual and wot isn't that's the big question I reckons! Mrs H is avvin virtual meetins every day, sittin there a'talkin to her screen, wal wot about the virtual gardin and virtual plot eh? Ave I been a'diggin up virtual spuds and pikkin virtual beans for my virtual supper-wot I reckons is we've gone barmy eh?

Anyway wot about the autumn jobs? Wal there's lots of 'em- and wot will you ave done orl ready? In the gardin you needs to sort out yor roses and climbers of orl sorts, mostly they likes a good old prunin, yor clematis a good example, if you can be brave enough cut em back to only a third of where they was, mind you that can corse a bit of a problem with Mrs H, she loves her clematis, why not cut a bit orf, then leave a week or so, then a bit more and she won't notice eh! Ha ha! Then orl them erbashush plants wot ave got too big, sum you can split and give sum away, git rid of them old leaves for compost but leave sum for winter protection. Just don't make yor gardin look as though you've mown orl the borders – A 'mulchin is the thing, you can use orl the grass cuttins or that wood chip to smother them weeds, then there's orlways the fact that mulchin makes a good home for slugs and them snails to hide up for the winter!

Then Autumn's the time to think about bulbs a'plantin, just remember where you had em orlreddy, but get sum more in before the winter so they can establish themselves for the spring, now that's optimistic eh? Wal, wot about the plot eh? Nothin like getting it reddy for the winter- and its not

virtual digging, its real! Mind you you'll ave got yor sprouts a'planted, and yor overwintered cabbages and wot about them leeks eh! I reckons leeks is marvelous for yor winter veg, nuthin seems to bovver em, not even them pidgins, pekkin leeks makes their eyes water eh! Orlso if you've got sum spare ground after croppin yor stuff try a'sowin sum green manure, like clover or summat, then you digs in the growth in the early spring to give sum sort of hummus to the soil, try this after you've got yor spuds up eh? Can you get anything a'growin orl reddy for next year? Wal broad beans is a good one, aquadulce, you can direct sow em, but give em a wash with paraffin or white spirit to keep the mice orf em, wal that's wot my uncle Sid from up Stoken said, he was a fabulous gardiner. You knows by now that I luvs a bonny, wal you gets orl that luvly wood ash wot is potash I thinks, that is good for the gardin and plot, so arfter the bonny scoop up the ash and spread orl over you ground, brilliant eh! And finally wot about my French cussin Jean d'Artichoke? Wal e's not in lock down now, so e's back on his plot, tidied it up, trimmed his grapes and sprayed em with that blue copper powder wot e's got a stock of to git rid of mould, and he's a'snoozin in the sun, "wot virus? "he ses in French, "never erd of it"

Wal now for a not virtual snooze myself, so keep on a'diggin,

Cheerio and a'bientot,



J.H. sent from my iSpade.

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Puzzle Corner.

Solutions to puzzles from the last edition of Downley Village News (May, Issue 123 - This can still be found on the Downley Community website).

Puzzle One: Fox, Goat, Cabbages.

Bank 'A': this is where Bert (not his real name) starts.

Bank 'B': this is the (opposite) bank Bert has to reach.

- Bert takes the goat across the river to bank B (and leaves it there).
- He goes back (solo) to bank A.
- He takes the fox across to bank B (and leaves it there).
- Next he takes the goat back to bank A.
- Now he takes the cabbages to bank B, where the fox is.
- Again, he goes back (solo) to bank A.
- Finally, he takes the goat across to bank B.

So Bert has taken the fox, goat and cabbages across and nothing got eaten! Well done, Bert!

Puzzle Two. The Nine Pearls.

- Put three pearls in one tray/pan (or 'plate') of the balance scale and three pearls in the other.
- If the two trays balance ('static equilibrium'), all six pearls are fake.
- The remaining three pearls therefore **MUST** contain the real pearl.
- If the two trays do **NOT** balance, the heavier tray/pan **MUST** contain the real pearl.
- So, in either case, whether balanced or not, the tray/pan containing the real pearl is identified.
- The same process is repeated but now with one pearl only in each tray/pan.
- Voila!

For anyone mathematically-minded, note that the 'clue' to solving this puzzle is based on set theory.

Each of the two trays/pans (with three pearls) is a set; however, the three 'leftover' pearls form the third set. So, don't ignore the third set!

Puzzle Three: The Egg Timer Puzzle.

Here are two solutions (there are more), a 'slow' method and a 'fast' method. Well done if you got either, especially the 'fast' one:

The slow method for boiling an egg for 9 minutes:

- Start the 7-minute and 4-minute egg timers
- When the 4 runs out, flip it
- When the 7 runs out, there is 1 minute left in the 4
- Put the egg on
- When the 4 runs out (after 1 minute), flip it
- When it runs out, flip it again to get 9 minutes
- This means I won't get my egg for $7 + 9 = 16$ minutes.

The fast method for boiling an egg for 9 minutes:

- Start both the 7 and 4 timers and put the egg on
- When 4 runs out (elapsed time 4 minutes), flip it
- When 7 runs out (after 7 minutes), flip it
- When 4 runs out again (elapsed time 8 minutes), flip the 7
- When 7 runs out (total 9 minutes), the egg is cooked
- So I get my egg in 9 minutes.

I hope you enjoyed the puzzles!

The Puzzle Master.



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Open letter to Downley Village News

Speeding in Downley.....

...is not a problem. For example, if you are coming from Commonsidge and are going to town, you just need to slalom round the parked cars on Littleworth, jink to the left onto Plomer and drop down to second for the tricky left hander onto The Pastures, drift out to the right hand lane in order to straight line the Hillfield chicane and you should be hitting 60 by the time you pass Downs Park. Keep your foot flat to floor and you are up to the ton for the main straight!

All joking aside, that is how it feels as at times. As a Covid rep for the top end of The Pastures, I and my fellow rep Geoff have been made aware of the concerns of a good number of the residents on our 'patch'.

From personal observations, I can say that the majority of offenders are not the 'fast' cars that use this road - the Aston Martins, Ford Mustangs, Bentleys and Jaguars - nor even the 'racing' cars, (Subarus, Porches, Caterhams etc), or even the majority of motorbikes. No, most of the vehicles that I have observed travelling at a speed noticeably over 30 MPH have been middle of the road cars.

Anyway, the question is - What can be done about it?

Personally, I believe that the obvious road humps just increase pollution and are very inconvenient for locals and speed cameras have only a limited effect. The camera on The Pastures by the junction with Middlebrook Road slows the traffic coming up the hill, but many vehicles are obviously speeding by the time they get to Downs Park. Recruiting an armed militia and setting up a couple of roadblocks might be frowned upon by the authorities. So, what to do?

Martin Sharpe

Editorial note:

Any suggestions, please email info@downley.org and we will pass these on to the Parish Council, who have been actively working on this issue for some time.

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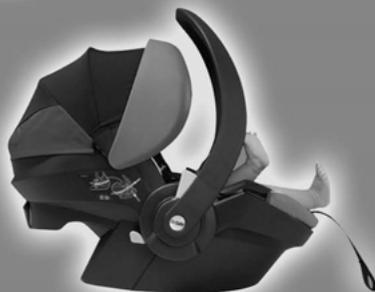
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From Westminster

Steve Baker - MP for Wycombe

Since I last wrote in Downley News the Government has lifted some of the coronavirus restrictions. I hope you are getting back to a more normal life, seeing friends and family and enjoying some of the lovely weather we have been having recently.



The Government has produced data for each MP on the support it has given businesses and employees during the lockdown period. I have been told in Wycombe 17,300 workers have been furloughed through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, and 5,300 self-employed people have been helped as well. 1,885 businesses have been offered government-backed Bounce Back Loans, whilst separately supporting local businesses through offers of 121 government-backed Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme facilities. These loans are worth a total of £94,386,224. 511 local businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sector, and 14 nurseries will pay no business rates this year. 1,249 local businesses have received cash grants of up to £25,000.

Despite the support the Government has given, I know there continue to be some individuals and businesses who have found the last few months very difficult indeed. As you probably know, I sit on the Treasury Select Committee and we held an evidence session looking into people who were not receiving furlough support from the Government. The Committee made a number of recommendations about how people such as freelancers, company directors who pay themselves principally through dividends, and people on short-term contracts could be helped. I will continue to do all I can to ensure these people are not forgotten.

In his Summer Economic Update the Chancellor announced measures to support jobs and help the economy. One of these announcements was the lifting of Stamp Duty on house sales of up to £500,000 until March next year. He also announced a £3 billion green investment package to drive forward home improvements and decarbonise buildings to kickstart an eco-friendly economic recovery. The packages will give up to £5,000 per household and £10,000 for low-income households for green home upgrades to help cut energy bills. If you were thinking about additional home insulation measures please look out for details of how to apply for a Green Homes Grant which will be announced shortly.

This year has been incredibly challenging for schools, teachers, and students due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The Government wants every school to have the resources to deliver the high-quality education all parents expect and is more committed than ever to level up opportunity and transform the lives and prospects of a generation.

The Secretary of State for Education recently announced significant investment in our schools with an overall increase of 6.4% in Wycombe, which is above the overall national average, and The Downley School saw one of the biggest increases locally with its budget



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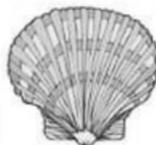
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going-up by 6.9%. There is also extra money for high needs funding to support children with special educational needs and disabilities. Special funding has been announced for the next academic year, worth a total of £1bn, to help support children to catch up after the recent period of disruption to their education. Alongside this, there is a new £350m tutoring programme for disadvantaged students, to give high quality tuition and to accelerate their academic progress and tackle the attainment gap. Headteachers can decide how best to use their school's premium to address the impact of lost teaching time but are encouraged to spend it on small group or one-to-one tuition, or additional support for great teaching.

It just remains for me to thank every single person who has helped their neighbours over the last few months with grocery shopping, collecting prescriptions and so on. It really shows the strength of the local community and is a tribute to the generous and kind people who live in Downley.

As ever, if you like my assistance on a national Government issue please call the constituency office in the West Wycombe Road on 01494 448408 for an appointment.

Downley Cricket Club

What a delight it has been to see live cricket again!

After a long, long wait live International cricket returned to our TV screens with West Indies, Ireland, and now Pakistan visiting England, despite all the Covid restrictions, playing in bio-secure bubbles in Manchester and Southampton. Several matches have seen pulsating cricket, even though they have been played in empty stadiums.

Our own pitch on Downley Common has seen months of careful preparation, with even the undergrowth beyond the boundary's edge being cut, yielding, no doubt, several abandoned cricket balls, propelled there by many a batsman.

We finally began playing on Saturday 18th July under strict safety guidelines set by the ECB, after detailed consultation with government scientists. The ball is sanitised every few overs, the pavilion is closed except for the toilets, there are no teas or handshakes, etc.

The First team had been promoted at the end of last season to the exalted heights of the Championship Division of the combined BCMB League, no Downley cricket team in living memory ever having reached that level. Matches have been tough, and every victory savoured. Non-availability of some players due to work and family commitments has meant some from the Second team have had to step up to play for the Firsts. To their credit they did this and have enjoyed some success. The Seconds have fought hard and, despite rain disruptions, stand poised to chalk up some good results.

We are always looking for new players and if you are interested in joining us please contact Graeme Aitken at webmaster@downleycc.co.uk



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News from Buckinghamshire Council

As we all come to terms with the situation we find ourselves in, I would firstly like to re-iterate my thanks and comments contained in my last piece published in the on-line DVN in May, still available to view on the Downley Community website.



For up to date information from the Council in response to Covid, including help available to individuals, organisations and businesses and the latest service provision, please see <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/coronavirus/>. Regular news by email is available; to sign up go to <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/signup>.

Council and Committee meetings remain virtual and are available to view as a webcast either live or recorded. I have attended as a Committee Member the meetings of the Children's and Education Select Committee, the North West Chilterns Community Board (which includes Downley) and the West Buckinghamshire (former WDC area) Planning Committee.

The Community Boards will be officially launched in September. The initial meetings have discussed the proposed remit of each Board which will include Children and Older People; Covid and Post-Covid Response and Support; Highways and Traffic and Supporting Economic Regeneration. Community Boards will help us respond to local needs by working in partnership with residents, Town and Parish Councils, community groups, police and healthcare organisations.

Community Boards will:

- enable Councillors to make recommendations on local issues
- empower members and communities to influence service design and delivery
- bring communities together with members and partners to find local solutions

Each community board will have a delegated budget with which to address agreed local priorities and issues.

To end, I would like to acknowledge the huge contribution made by our local shops and businesses over the past four months in providing help to those who have needed it in the local community. They have supported us, and to show our appreciation we need to continue to support them.

Keep safe.

Paul Turner, Buckinghamshire Councillor for Downley
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Steering Committee

The Downley Communications Forum set up as part of the Community Plan, provides oversight to the Village News, the Village enews and the downley.org website.

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