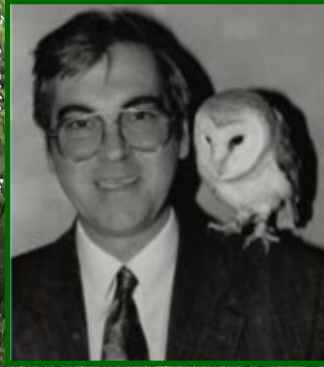


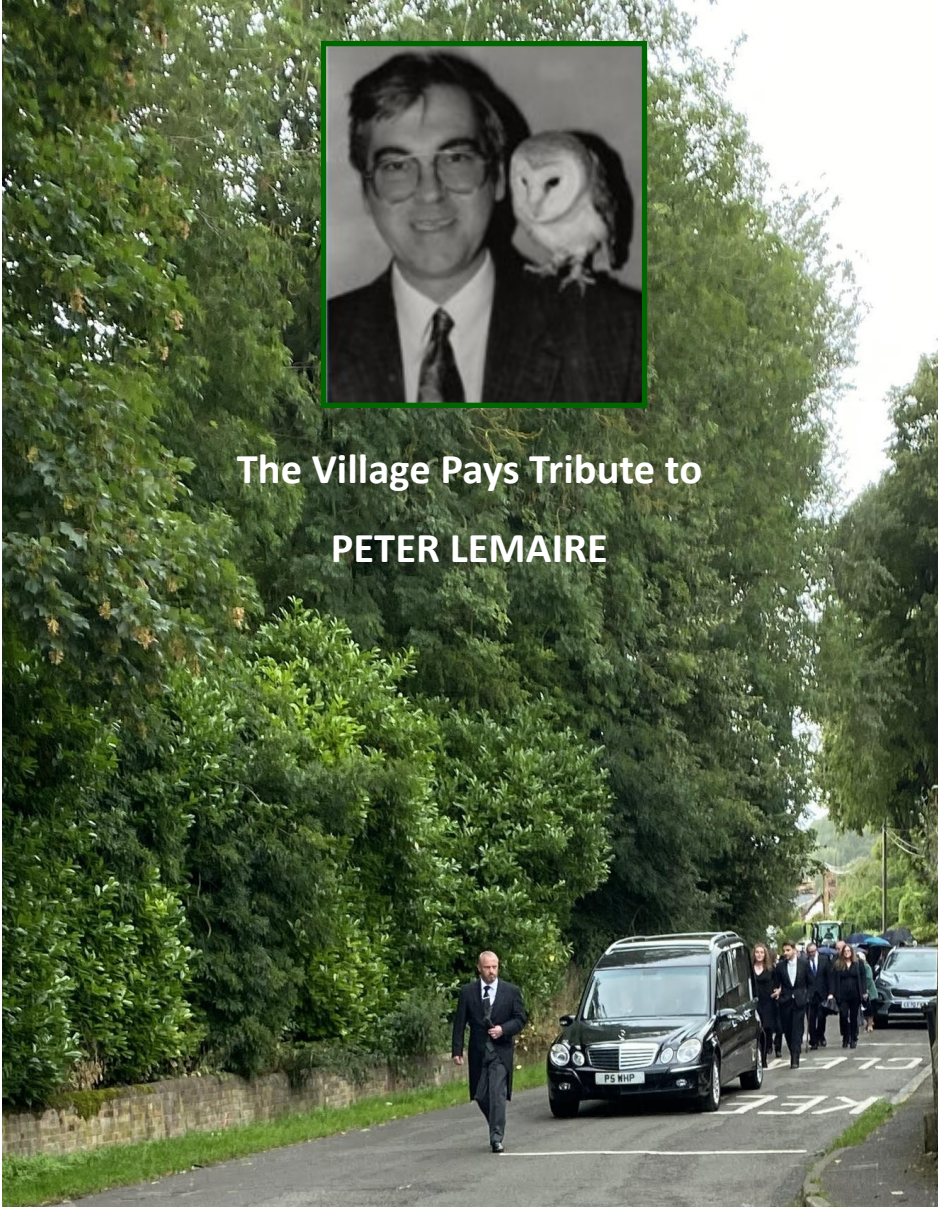
Ewelme News



August/September 2024



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Councillors:	Roger Moore	01491 838001
	Nigel Layton	07785244331
	Sally Stockings	01491 839287
	Rebecca Lanigan	07305680761
Parish Clerk (Mon-Fri)	Jo Brock	07510 250508
	clerk@ewelmepc.org.uk	

COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Freddie van Mierlo freddie.vanmierlo@oxfordshire.gov.uk

SODC COUNCILLORS

Sue Cooper 01491 835631
Andrea Powell Andrea.Powell@southoxon.gov.uk
Twitter: [@GreenAndrea](https://twitter.com/GreenAndrea) (@AndreaJPowell2)

EWELME CHURCH

Rector	The Rev. Dr. Patrick Gilday	01491 838535
Churchwarden	Sally Fehr	sally_fehr@hotmail.co.uk
	Martin Spence	martinhjspence@gmail.com
Visits Co-ordinator	Sally Fehr	01491 824822
Flower Co-ordinator	Angela Smailes	01491 836964

EWELME SCHOOL

Headteacher	Joe Ottaway	01491 839240
Joint Chair of Governors	Sam Masters	smasters@its.jnj.com
	Peter Ryding	Peter@peterryding.com

EWELME SOCIETY

Carol Sawbridge 01491 833154

EWELME STORE

manager@ewelmevillagestore.co.uk

01491 834467

EWELME VILLAGE HALL

Anne Critchley 01491 834403

EWELME VILLAGE PRESCHOOL

Jo Hoskin 01491 281266

Admissions 01491 613143

LARKMEAD VETERINARY SURGERY

01491 651379

MILLSTREAM SURGERY

Dr Lucy Jenkins 01491 838286

MILLSTREAM CENTRE

Lindsay Jenkins 01491 834889

NEWELME CLUB

Angela Harrison 01491 834111

WATERCRESS PAINTERS

Trisha Scott 01491 834734 or 07884330453

The Village Diary

3rd and 4th August

Nettlebed Art & Craft Show.

15th August, Thursday

Children's Activity Day at the Watercress Beds (Page 24)

10th August, Saturday

Nettlebed Dance (Page 25)

26th August, Bank Holiday Monday 2-5pm

Ewelme Horticultural Society Village Show

1st September, Sunday

Ewelme Horse & Fund Dog Show (Page 16)

11 September, Wednesday

Ewelme Parish Council Meeting, 7.30 pm in the Village Hall. (Page 11)

Interested in Ewelme's History?

Take a look at the Village History website and discover its rich past.

www.ewelmevillagehistory.uk

Regular Events

2nd Friday in month

Newelme Club 2.30 pm. Village Hall.

Every Wednesday

MUGS 10.20- 11:45 a.m. coffee at the Shepherd's Hut. Everyone welcome.

1st Saturday & 3rd Wednesday in month

Watercress Beds & Nature Reserve
Volunteer work mornings 9.30-12.30

1st Sunday in month May - September

Watercress Beds & Nature Reserve

Open Afternoons from 2 - 4.30 p.m.

The Ewelme News is published by the Ewelme Parish Council. The copy date for the next issue is the **19th September 2024**. Please send your contributions to the editor: sayerann863@gmail.com

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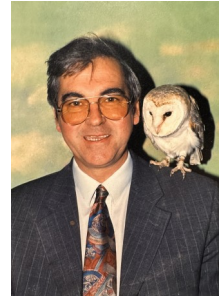
Kitchen: Double cooker, microwave, hot water dispenser, dish washer and fridge.

BOOKINGS & INFORMATION : ANNE CRITCHLEY ON 01491 834403

Tributes to the greatly lamented

Peter Lemaire; the man who kept on giving

Peter Lemaire, aged 78, died peacefully in his sleep at his home in Ewelme, in the early hours of 20th June 2024, with his family around him. His funeral was held on 16th July at St Mary's Church in Ewelme. Both his grandsons helped carry his coffin, and both his granddaughters read in the service.



The following is a transcript of the eulogy of his granddaughter, Ella.

Peter was a loving father to Anna, Emily & Robin, a devoted Grandpa to me, Peter, Zachary & Seren, a loyal husband to Kathy, a faithful friend and a fantastic role model.

Known affectionately as the Father of Ewelme, Grandpa dedicated over 50 years to this community, touching countless lives with his generosity, kindness, and unwavering commitment. His contributions to Ewelme were huge. He served as the Chairman of the Parish Council, the Editor of the Ewelme News, Secretary of the Horticultural Society, and was a member of the Village Hall Committee, among many other roles. His dedication extended to the church, where he was the church organist for 25+ years, here in Ewelme as well as Pyrton, even when his health made it difficult for him to drive or see properly.

As a teacher and headteacher, Grandpa inspired thousands of children to excel. His passion for education continued after his retirement, and in recent years he tutored children, and helped with reading in local primary schools. His impact on the lives of young people is immeasurable. For 27 years he organised the primary schools' St Nicholas Carol concert and raised tens of thousands of pounds for Save the Children. Generosity really was at the core of Grandpa's being. He never hesitated to help others, always putting their needs before his own.

Theatre and music were close to his heart. He often took family and friends to performances, sharing his love for the drama & the arts with those he loved. Grandpa also had a deep love for the beach and the sea, finding peace in watching waves crash onto rocks. He was passionate about wildlife and nature, especially birds of prey, and his support for Oxfordshire Wildlife Rescue, as well as other charities, reflected his caring and generous nature.

Grandpa's sense of humour was legendary. He had a unique ability to make everything fun, even in the most unlikely situations, and often when he shouldn't be joking! His laughter and joy were infectious, bringing light to everyone around him, even though he sometimes pretended to be a grumpy old man!

Our family have so many treasured memories of my Grandpa. From the times when he ended up camping in the marquee the night before the horticultural show, to his secret enjoyment of spiced rum and whiskey miniatures. From him queuing for ages at Disney World, just so Seren could meet her favourite princess when she was too small to go on the rides, to flying inflatable Angry Birds in the village hall. We remember his readings of “Fantastic Mr. Fox” and “The Twits”, and (very) early summer mornings playing cricket and rounders on the common which will always remind us of his playful spirit.

He did so much for so many, but never asked for anything. I simply do not think that the words exist to explain how I feel about my Grandpa. I’ve never known someone to do so much for the people he loves and for his community, or just for anyone who needed help.

I’ve never known someone who has achieved so much in their lifetime; not that his actions were driven by personal achievement or appraisal, quite the contrary - everything he did was selfless, everything he did was purely to help others. This moral philosophy was admirable, and it is one that I aspire to live by. My grandpa taught me so much, not necessarily explicitly, but what I learnt from his interactions, his demeanour, his behaviour, his general outlook on life, and the stories I’d hear from others about how he impacted their lives, are all lessons that I will never forget. These have, and will always, guide me for the rest of my life.

I remember being a nervous 11-year-old starting secondary school at Wallingford School, and at least twice a day for the first two years I was there, I’d have someone coming up to me with the most excited look on their face, asking “Is Peter Lemaire your Grandpa?!” “Are you Peter Lemaire’s Granddaughter?!” Initially this confused me, and I’d say “no... Peter Lemaire is my brother!” but I soon realised that they were talking about my Grandpa, and that he had taught them, or privately tutored them. And the stories they had of him just made my heart melt. He’d buy all of his students pencils or Easter eggs with their names on them. This was probably the first time I realised how much my Grandpa influenced the lives of so many. I was so proud of him. I was so proud of how he shaped the lives of others.

His legacy of kindness, humour, and generosity will live on in all of us. Though he may no longer be with us, his spirit will continue to inspire and guide us.

Rest in peace, Grandpa. You will be forever loved, deeply missed, and never forgotten.

Peter the Parish Councillor

From David Cooper: For most of my 49 years living in Ewelme, I have had both the pleasure and privilege of being a friend and colleague of Peter, most notably during the eight years I spent on the Parish Council under Peter’s chairmanship. During this

time, Peter was not only Chair of the Parish Council but also of the Village Hall Management Committee and played a leading role in virtually every village organisation to the extent that he could appropriately be called “Mr Ewelme”. But it wasn’t just Peter’s work with clubs. He was a skilled musician and used these talents to play the organ regularly for church services and to entertain at village concerts.



Peter the Organist

Peter’s generosity – of both his time and in more material ways – was legendary. A lot of this went privately under the radar, but the annual parties that he gave for people in the village served both to provide entertaining events and to bring together people from different social groups in the community.

Peter the Conservationist

From Ann Truesdale: Every time I attend the first Sunday of the month open afternoons/guided walks at the Watercress Centre I set out a range of local books and post cards and I remember Peter. We still have large postcards with a photo of the beds, and two sizes of fridge magnet - all ordered by him at his expense which we sell to visitors. He loved to buy stuff on-line and was an exceptionally generous person. Another time a bagful of extra-large T-shirts emblazoned with a watercress beds photo arrived unexpectedly.

Peter was a larger than life character who made a significant contribution to village life. I must have met him over 20 years ago when I took semi-retirement and wanted to get involved in wildlife and conservation. The Watercress Beds, a designated local nature reserve was right here on my doorstep. I began turning up on the first Saturday in the month to help at the work mornings. I don’t recall Peter donning his wellies and getting in the stream but he may very well have done so - but I got to know him when I joined the Management Committee. He was a member representing the Parish Council and the Friends of the Watercress Beds. I will certainly miss him.

Peter the Quizmaster

From Vern Miners: Peter and I sat on the Friends of the Watercress Beds Committee together in the 1990s. When it was decided to raise money to fund the upkeep of the beds I volunteered to run a quiz night. Whilst I was fine with the task

of setting questions and answers for a quiz I needed someone to help with printing and such. Up stepped Peter who had up to date computers and printers in his office at Firethorn Cottage. Peter asked me to bring my quiz questions round to his house and I remember him calling me upstairs to his office. On walking into the room there was a large glass tank to my left housing a 4 foot PYTHON! left for Peter by one of his children (I don't like snakes!).

We spent many late nights getting the quiz organized and I am pleased to say it was a successful event for many years becoming an annual fixture in the Ewelme calendar. Peter not only provided the printed sheets for the 80plus quizzers he also refused to take any money for his considerable outlay. Peter was generous to a fault and an asset to many committees and functions in the village.

Peter the Horticulturalist

The members of the Ewelme Horticultural Society Committee are saddened by the loss of a truly valued member of our Committee. Peter had been a loyal member for many years always willing to take on any duty that was thrust upon him. He was an amazingly vibrant character always bringing a smile to our meetings.

The committee has lost a treasured member, the village has lost a much loved villager and friend, known for his kindness and generosity and the world has lost a truly special person.

The Lemaire Family would like to say thank you to everyone for coming to the Service, and also to the many people who have helped them. Peter would have been very proud!



Donations can be made in Peter's memory to Oxfordshire Wildlife Rescue here: <https://peterlemaire.muchloved.com/>

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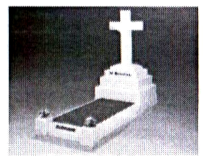
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Ewelme Horticultural Show

The Annual Village Show

August Bank Holiday, Monday 26th
August starting at 2.00 pm

This is the Society's main event of the year and, as always, we would be extremely grateful for any donations of cakes for our 'tea and cake' stall.

Please bring them along on the day or, if you would like them collected, please ring **Lin Reader** on 07986 133718

Thank you !

CHURCH TOURS TEAS

Could you spare the occasional hour helping to serve tea to visitors to St Mary's Church?

Visitors in organised groups come from far afield frequently to St Mary's Church and Almshouses in Ewelme to admire the exceptionally fine medieval architecture and the tomb of Alice Chaucer. They pay a small fee for a talk, a cup of tea and a slice of Tracy's delicious cake. The money raised is used for the upkeep of our beautiful Church. If you could spare some time to help with the teas, please contact the organiser:

Sally Fehr 01491 824822

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Ewelme Parish Council

Notes on the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday July 10

The idea of these notes is not to duplicate or precis the minutes, which can be viewed on the Parish Website at www.ewelmepc.org.uk Much of the business of the Parish Council is necessary but less than edifying, and the idea of these notes is to expand a little on some of the items of greatest potential interest to parishioners.

Cow Common flooding Several village residents had raised the issue of flooding of the playing fields, which takes place in very wet periods and precludes the playing of cricket matches sometimes for months on end. It is linked to very high groundwater levels, and examinations of the levels at the borehole at Stonor Park show that levels were highest in the spring of 2001, 2014 and 2024, the years of flooding and disrupted cricket matches at Ewelme. Whether or not anything can be done to eliminate this flooding in a cost-effective manner is doubtful but it was agreed to collect as much information on the history of the problem and of land drainage attempts in the area to inform the next stage of investigation. A report will be tabled at the next meeting of the Council on September 11.

Bus Shelter The bus shelter opposite King's Pool no longer serves its original function, but it is a substantially built structure with potential alternative uses. However, the roof is in a poor state of repair and needs replacing. EPC have obtained quotes for replacement of the order of £2000, and a decision has been taken to accept the lower quote and proceed as soon as possible. An alternative use being explored at present is as a shelter for information boards covering local facilities, village history, local walks and local organisations. As soon as the repairs have been completed a proposal for such a development will be put forward.

Car Park extension at Cow Common Since Covid, the car parking facilities at the Common have become more popular, and the parking area is often full so that cars park along the roadside, damaging the verges and representing a road safety hazard. EPC have been exploring the possibility of increasing the size of the parking area, including ways in which the visual and environmental impacts could be minimised, the benefits optimised, and options for funding. We have arranged to meet with SODC officers to discuss planning implications and opportunities. Thanks are to Barry Tindall for

progressing this.

Hazell and Jefferies CLEUD In December 2023 Hazell and Jefferies applied for a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use and development (CLEUD) for waste handling operations at their site on Eyres Lane. This has been operating without planning permission for many years, and a CLEUD is a mechanism to sidestep planning permission where the applicant can demonstrate continuous operation without challenge for 10 years. EPC consider that the application lacks detail of the history of the volumes of traffic using the site and that to grant a CLEUD without a strict definition of traffic levels would be a carte blanche for unrestricted operation, and have submitted an objection to the application. OCC have been considering this application now for eight months, and we understand that their report is currently with their legal department. We understand that should OCC be minded to grant the certificate based on the current application it will be called in for consideration by their planning committee. We will continue to make representations to the ongoing process. Details of the application and the objections received can be seen on the OCC planning website under application MW.071/23.

Metal detecting on Council land There has been an increase in the last year or two in metal detecting on EPC land, especially Cow Common. EPC were anxious to regularise this as unrestricted activity means that many finds of historic value may be lost without being properly recorded. We therefore decided to authorise a group of three village residents with an interest in local history to undertake detecting activity under an agreed code of conduct which ensures that all finds are properly recorded and appropriately processed over if they prove to be historically important or valuable. Regular reports of finds will be made on the Ewelme Village History website.

Ewelme News Ann Sayer has been doing a superb job of editing and producing the Ewelme News single-handed for several years, and we hope she will continue to do so for many years to come. However, we are very aware that the present arrangement leaves us with no contingency plan for Ann's holidays or any unscheduled absences, and no succession plan. We are therefore seeking an assistant /understudy for the Editor. If you might be interested in becoming involved please contact the PC Clerk to discuss further.

Next meeting The next scheduled meeting of the Parish Council is on Wednesday September 11 at 19:30 in the Village Hall. Please do attend if any of the above issues are of interest or if you wish to see village democracy in action.

David Solomon, EPC Chairman

News! from the Village Shop

The skies may have been grey, the weather from day to day may have been extremely changeable but we, in the shop, are here for our customers every day of the week, supplying all your needs, come rain or shine.

We love all our locals popping in, buying a pint of milk, a loaf of bread, half the week's shop, whatever it may be, we're there for you. The ice lollies are still flying out, the freezer is regularly restocked. Don't forget the delicious Chiltern ice cream tubs, both large and small, if you want to stock up at home. Salted caramel is my favourite with Dark Chocolate a close second!



Our Dry Cleaning Service We wanted to remind everyone that we are still providing a dry cleaning service and have recently taken delivery of a brand new sign displaying all the prices.

Postage Stamps Too You can also buy your postal stamps from us for home and abroad so no need to go further field!

Too Tired to Cook or Just Feel Like a Change? Why not try our ready meals? The Cook meals for one person are very popular and we regularly change the options but

always have the old favourites!

FieldFare is another option for easy lunches and suppers. Did you know we also stock individual desserts as well? The little lemon tarts are simply delicious!

Tracy, Our Weekly Manager, has had a Light Bulb Moment! We're loathe to mention it (shh, Christmas...) but we really do have to think about it at this time of year. She has asked if you, our customers, can think of any particular products, foodstuff or otherwise that you would like us to stock and would come in and buy. Please do come in and let us know! Now is the time to place our wholesale orders.

We wish everyone a wonderful summer's end and look forward to saying hello from behind the counter! *Sue Evans*



Try FieldFare's little Portuguese lemon custard tarts. Known as 'Pastéis de Nata' they are justly famous throughout Europe.

Just pop them in the oven for a few minutes and enjoy.

The Watercress Painters



Firstly, on a personal note I'd like to thank everyone who so kindly came to support me at my recent Oxfordshire Art Weeks exhibition in the church – David and Yvonne Solomon, Anne Critchley, Debbie Farrell and, most of all, my dear sister, Kirstie. It was really great to see so many of you and some of you even bought a painting, a mug, coasters, bookmarks or cards! It was an exciting but nerve-wracking experience.

The Watercress Painters have just entered our 12th year but, sadly, our group is getting smaller and smaller either through people moving away from the area or moving on to other things. We'd love to have some fresh faces, so if there's anyone out there who loves to paint or sketch in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere, please do get in touch with me for more details. You don't have to be an experienced artist – we are all here to help and encourage. We meet monthly (sometimes twice monthly) at Roke village hall.

In April we combined with a group from Wallingford Art Group for a visit to Kelmscott Manor, a most magical Cotswold Manor house with a mystical garden. Sadly it was rather a wet day (when has it not been wet!) so we gave up the idea of sketching although, although a couple of our members completed paintings on their return. We followed the visit with lunch followed at a nearby French-run pub.

Carolyn Tyrer, artist and tutor, came in June to give us a workshop on stormy skies and seas and she was much appreciated being a skilled and imaginative teacher. The experienced artist Cat Croxford will come in December for our winter workshop which may be on colour mixing. We've been slightly hampered by the weather for our *plein air* sessions but did manage a morning at the Cheese Shed in Nettlebed recently. Chris Wright, ex Higgs in Wallingford, is currently designing a new logo for us – we felt it was time after 11 years – which we will, hopefully, be able to unveil shortly if we can ever all agree on a design!

Lastly, we are hoping to put on a Watercress Painters exhibition October 2025 but more about that nearer the time.

Trisha Scott for Watercress Painters Trisha.watercress@hotmail.co.uk 07884330453



*Kelmscott barns
by Jeni Serreti*

Tom's Nature Diary

Insect Life takes a battering

Well flaming June seems to have given way to flaming July but not in the normal meaning of "flaming." June broke the 12-month sequence of above average monthly rainfall but back to square one in July which is already 60% above average and we are only halfway through the month. As all will know it is good for green growth and its perhaps just as well it is not too warm otherwise, I dread to think where we would be. All this rain has significantly affected the insect population and, as an example, my butterfly count round the cress beds on the first week in July usually averages at 125 individuals. This year I only counted 69. Many butterflies and moths pupate in dead leaves on the ground or even within the soil and the prolonged wet weather will inevitably have drowned huge numbers.



Why Untidy is Good!

This highlights the perilous state that our insects are in. Insect numbers have declined by between 60 and 80% in the last 20 years. I'm sure drivers, over the age of about 50, will remember having to clean the windscreen several times during a long journey. It is said that every third mouthful of food we eat depends on insects. Birds and mammals rely on invertebrates especially for feeding their young. I must admit I do a fair amount of screaming when people complain about areas left untidy. Obviously, vision splays on roads have to be kept cut but other areas. – UNTIDY IS GOOD.

Tom opened the moth trap and look what was inside - this beautiful elephant hawk moth.

I'm afraid mine and many other voices are either not being heard or are being ignored. I had just about finished penning this when I broke off to drive over to Ewelme to count butterflies. As I drove past the aircraft crossing, I noticed they (RAF or their contractors) were cutting the hedge. Was it checked for nesting birds? Even if it was how about all the insects, spiders and caterpillars living there which the birds rely on? Hedge cutting in July – why? Although many birds have finished nesting, some will continue into August or even early September with further broods so put away your hedge cutter till October unless you are obstructing pathways etc. in which case carefully check for nests first.

Rant over for now.

The watercress is back! Earlier this year I was bemoaning the fact that we couldn't get watercress to grow – that will teach me – it is growing so rapidly the volunteers have a full-time job maintaining channels through the beds.

Parts of the wildflower meadow are still under water or at least very damp, but the orchids seem to appreciate the conditions. Unfortunately, the rampant vegetation made counting impossible but previous experience would indicate numbers were similar or perhaps even higher. I walked round the meadow with my son recently who was responsible for lots of the wildflowers we now enjoy, and he pointed out that the common spotted orchids had hybridised with the southern marsh and very few, if any “pure” orchids remain. I was slightly concerned that they would be infertile and lead to the demise of orchids, but it seems that the opposite is the case and, if anything, they are more fertile.

We are always looking for more volunteers (first Saturday and third Wednesday each month) and please don't be put off thinking “the work is too hard” just tell me you can only manage light duties and I will find something. Also if you haven't been to one of our open days on the first Sunday of the month (2pm – 4:30pm) come along and meet us – it gets very lonely if no-one turns up! *Tom Stevenson*



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The Ewelme Horse & Fund Dog Show

Sunday 1st September



Once again the Show is held in the field at the top of Wine Glass Corner by kind permission of Miss Marlene Edwards. The Gate opens at 8 am for the show jumping and showing classes.

The first of the 11 Fun Dog Classes commences at 1 pm with 'The Waggiest Tail.' All dogs must be on leads and fully vaccinated. This year the profits from the Dog Show will be donated to Therapy Dogs Nationwide.

Plenty of refreshments will be available from the Burger van and ice cream van which will be there all day and, of course, you can bring your own picnic too.

We are very grateful to our local sponsors who give very generously to enable us to get the Show up and running and also to our helpers, judges and stewards who give their time freely.

We also like to donate any profits we make from the Show to charities. Last year we were able to help the following Societies:

Outreach £300, Brain Tumour Charity £250, Spinal Injuries £150
Air Ambulance £100, Pancreatic Cancer £150, Therapy Dogs Nationwide £225
Cancer Walk £100, Riding for the Disabled £100

The Show is sponsored by Downlands Kennels, Cholsey, and prizes have been kindly donated by Blakes, Benson Tack & Feed, Berkshire Hydrotherapy and Frances Sutton.

Let's hope the sun shines on us again this year for another successful and popular Show.

Sandra Ayling



Did you know that SODC has an extensive programme of grants, which are open to a wide range of local non-profit organisations and community groups?

If you are looking for some external funding to support a new activity, to upgrade some infrastructure or to cover one-off costs relating to a specific project, why not take a look at the eligibility criteria and consider an application? The purpose of all our grants is to improve the quality of life for the residents of South Oxfordshire, although we do require projects to align with our strategic priorities such as nature restoration, climate change adaptation, community well-being and inclusion & accessibility. A Community Grants Panel made up of elected Councillors considers all applications (we are nearly always over-subscribed) for the major grants, while individual ward members determine how to allocate their individual Councillor Grant fund (see below).

Revenue Grants

Each year, SODC provides core funding to a number of voluntary and community sector organisations (VCSOs), covering up to one third of their annual running costs. This vital funding offers multi-year revenue support to help build and support thriving communities and improve the quality of life for the residents of South Oxfordshire. The current scheme runs until March 2025 and current recipients include the Citizens' Advice Bureau, Millstream Day Centre, Riverside Counselling Service, Oxfordshire Play Association and Style Acre. This scheme will open again in September for new applications.

Capital Grants

This programme helps to fund new infrastructure or to repair existing capital assets such as village halls, sporting facilities and playgrounds. Awards can be up to £75,000 and must demonstrate that they will benefit significant numbers of South Oxfordshire residents. The next scheme will open in July. There is also a new capital grant scheme funded by the s106 contributions made by housing developers, where projects must be shown to mitigate the impact of housing growth. Ewelme PC has already applied to this fund for an extension of the Cow Common car park, since this is often overwhelmed by visitors' cars.



Everyone Active Grants

Do you have a project that could improve the health and wellbeing of residents or provide high-quality active opportunities in the local community? We have a budget of £50,000 available annually for our voluntary sector who support communities to become more active and sustain activities, tackling inactivity and addressing the inequalities that challenge our society. This scheme has recently opened and can award up to a maximum of £1000 per application.

Councillor Grants

We both receive an allocation of £5000 per year to award to local projects and organisations. In the past year we have been very pleased to make awards to a number of excellent local groups including Wallingford Rowing Club, Style Acre Forest School, Benson Community Gardens, OX10 Draught Busters project, Oxfordshire Wildlife Rescue, Crowmarsh Scouts, the Bensington Society and Benson Area Nature Group (which includes Ewelme). We try to ensure that our total pot of £10k is equally distributed across our ward and we try to prioritise projects for whom a small grant would make a big difference. Here is a photo of us both attending the launch on 2nd June of a new juniors' boat purchased by Wallingford Rowing Club and partly funded by a Councillor Grant.

How to Apply

All applications must be made via the SODC website as they are assessed by SODC's Community Wellbeing team for eligibility before being approved. All our grant schemes are explained in full on the SODC website at www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants. If you would like to find out if your project is likely to be considered for a grant, please email us at andrea.powell@southoxon.gov.uk and sue.cooper@southoxon.gov.uk. **Good luck!**



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AN APPEAL FROM THE WALLINGFORD FOOD BANK



We are a registered charity operating a food bank based in the centre of Wallingford with the aim of providing emergency food

packages to those who need them. We began serving the community in 2011. Sadly, we continue to see significant increases in demand for our help. We are now halfway through the food bank year, (for historical reasons we start in December). The number of households requesting food is 22.0% higher than in the first six months of last year. A household might be a single person, or a family with several children. In 2023 we fed double the number of children that we fed in 2022. Overall last year the numbers of households requesting food increased by 55.1%.

‘ In 2023 we doubled the number of children we fed in 2022.’

It may not be a surprise to many of you, that with this seemingly endless increase in demand, despite your steady support, we are finally joining other UK food banks in facing a deficit. Other local food banks, (Abingdon, Didcot) have already faced huge issues in providing for their clients. We have calculated that with a continuing increase in demand we are likely to run out of funds by the end of the year.

I am now in the position of asking those of you who already support us financially, to consider a small increase in your regular giving, if you are able. If you do not already support us financially, please would you consider doing so. A small regular amount would be an enormous help. It is straightforward to do so. If you receive this report electronically just click on the link <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/7211#!/DonationDetails> If not, please visit our website and look at the donate page for ideas as to how to help, both financially and with donations of food.

<https://wallingfordfoodbank.org.uk>

GET THE FREE APP If you *are* thinking of donating food to us, please do consider getting the Bank the Food app for your smartphone. You can download the free app from the ‘App store’ if you have an iPhone or from ‘Google Play’ if you have an Android phone. Then register on it and ‘follow’ our food bank (you can easily find us if you enter OX10 in postcode search).

When you shop at Waitrose in Wallingford, or the Co-ops in Benson, Woodcote and Dorchester, the app will ping your phone with a list of the most urgent items we need **when you arrive**. Those using the app already are making a real difference as they donate what is urgently needed. If you are one of those, thank you – and ask a friend to get the app too! With very many thanks for all your support. *Alice Penney, Manager*

The Ewelme Society

The Rector versus the rebellious Almsman

Francis Winfield was the bane of Rector Simcox's life. Henry Simcox (Rector from 1889 to 1901) was perturbed throughout his incumbency with various problems relating to the "slipshod" running of the Ewelme Trust's affairs in general, and the neglect in particular by the Masters of the Almshouses (the Regius Professors of Medicine at Oxford). Simcox complained to the ailing Master Sir Henry Acland that due to this neglect Frank Winfield [1822-1898] had become an additional burden he did not need. Simcox insisted it was the Master's duty to enforce almshouse discipline not his, and he deplored the lack of interest and personal visits of the Masters. (Although not an easy journey from Oxford before motorisation, he did offer lunch if they made the effort!).

In 1898 he wrote to the new Master, Sir John Burdon-Sanderson protesting that for over 2 years Frank Winfield had allowed his daughter Rhoda* [1848-1920], and her illegitimate teenage daughter Lucy, to sleep in his bedroom! (*This Rhoda should not be confused with a younger Rhoda Winfield born in 1853, the blameless daughter of James and Sarah Winfield). Although wives had been allowed into the almshouses for over 50 years, when their husbands died, they were evicted and destined for the workhouse or a dutiful daughter's home. Thus, Frank Winfield was overstepping the mark. *"Not only is this indecent, but the daughter is dirty in her habits and the house*

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stinks.” Frank was also breaking the regulations – “He was moreover earning regular pay as a shepherd, in addition to his pay as an almsman, which is quite contrary to the design of the Foundation and keeping this dirty woman and her illegitimate daughter in comparative idleness.” To top it all Frank neglected his almsman’s duties – “He very seldom came to church even on Sunday evensong!”

The Rector was probably relieved to bury Frank Winfield in October 1898, but the problem did not go away. In desperation Simcox wrote to Sir John the following month reiterating that Rhoda and Lucy having lived at least 2 years in the almshouse were still there! *“If you had gone into that house anytime during the past two years, I venture to say you would as soon, or sooner, have gone into a pigsty, so offensive was the smell of stale dirt; other people did go in and when they asked ‘Where is the doctor? Where are the authorities?’ the only possible reply was ‘The authorities are away at Oxford, and there is no one in authority here.’ I myself should be surprised to hear that Dr Winslow had ever entered Frank Wingfield’s house, the old man had, I believe, never called him in. I think the fact that Mr Morrell [Trust solicitors] did not know of Rhoda Wingfield’s living (and sleeping) in the house with her father, is a proof how little the authorities know of what goes on in the almshouses. I do not think that, if you had known Rhoda Wingfield’s character, you could have sanctioned her living in the almshouse.”* (The incorrigible family saga continued, as in January 1899 Lucy gave birth to her own illegitimate daughter Dorothy and in 1901 to another – Agnes. Our records do not show when Rhoda and Lucy were eventually evicted, but in 1901 they both lived at 41, The Hill – Rhoda defined as a charwoman. They seem to have remained unmarried, but Rhoda’s granddaughter Agnes married Joseph White and died in 1981 in Hounslow.

The discipline of the Almsmen was not Rector Simcox’s only concern. He also tirelessly campaigned to restore the provisions of the old Statutes that appointed a separate chaplain to oversee the almsmen. He also wanted a nurse engaged to care for them. He suggested the present Nurse’s Cottage, and another dwelling, now demolished, further down the hill, would provide housing for both Nurse and Chaplain. In addition, he argued that the medieval Founder’s original intention was



One of Rector Simcox’s proposals was implemented in the early 1900’s. Sister Badcock, a qualified nurse was appointed to care for the Almsmen. The photo shows her outside her pretty cottage in Ewelme.

the provision of a Ewelme Grammar School with a Grammar Master in the Grammar Master's house.

The Final Straw came in October 1900 when Simcox received a letter from Vice Chancellor Sir William Anson stating the Trustees were "*constantly embarrassed*" by his efforts to override the revised Scheme of 1860 and "*to pursue a barren controversy was futile*". Henry Simcox had burnt himself out. He resigned the Living and his Trusteeship, but before doing so he wrote one last hurrah to Oxford on June 16th, 1901, helpfully costing his innovative proposals for paying the Master, additional Chaplain, Nurse, (plus a Medical Attendant to assist her), the 'Poor Men' and Clerk at £2. 10sh per day or £910. 10s per annum – easily achievable from the Trust's income. He died in Worcester in 1905 aged 66. but was buried in his old battleground in Ewelme churchyard.

Sadly, Simcox just missed seeing some of his sensible proposals fulfilled. In 1904 Sir William Osler was appointed as Master. He was the first Master to regularly drive from Oxford 'in a motor' and with Lady Osler took a keen interest in the Almshouses. In the first decade of the 20th century a qualified Nurse was appointed, the first probably being Sister Babcock. The Grammar School was not re-established, but at a meeting of the School Managers in 1907 a scheme was submitted for the provision of Scholarships for opportunities to higher education for able pupils between 12 and 14 from the Trust's elementary schools at Ewelme, Marsh Gibbon, Ramridge and Connock. They would be chosen by the headmasters to take an exam to qualify for a scholarship. The scheme was refined, and the Ewelme Trust funds bursaries to financially assist 'Ewelme Scholars' for this purpose to this day.

Carol Sawbridge – Ewelme Village Archive



Sir William Osler was appointed Master in 1904. Unlike his predecessors, he visited regularly with his wife and took a keen interest in Almshouse affairs.

Dr Kate Tiller OBE

We were sorry to hear that Dr Tiller passed away recently. Dr Tiller was a distinguished Oxford University academic specialising in local history. It was at one of her lectures to the Ewelme Society in 1994 that she urged us to record Ewelme's recent history. This suggestion was taken up and resulted in the Millennium Exhibition and recording of Ewelme's 20th Century history. The late George Cannon attended one of her Local History courses and his research formed a basis for the village archive with an expansion into past centuries. Kate also wrote and updated the booklets *History and Guide to Ewelme Church* published in 2003 and its sister publication *A History and Guide to Ewelme School*. Those interested in Benson and Ewelme's past owe her much for her contributions to the recording of their village history.

Friends of Ewelme Watercress Beds

Annual General Meeting summary report



We were pleased to see about a dozen “Friends” at our Annual General Meeting on 30th April and we were just as pleased to be able to report on a successful year for the association. David Solomon, the Chair of the Friends, reported on several events held during the year, including the annual “Dr Anne” activity day for children, the summer picnic and the hugely successful Social Event on 24th February. This was a great success, with some 80 tickets sold and over £1300 raised towards the costs of maintaining the cress beds and supporting the Management Team in its work. Those attending enjoyed a wonderful display of artwork as well as an interesting talk from Andrew Walker of Working to Restore Ewelme’s Nature (WREN), a table quiz, a hot supper and live music from The Night Herons. Many thanks go to David and Sue Cooper for running the bar and to Cynthia Winfield for managing the raffle, both of which contributed several hundred pounds to the final total raised. And of course to the team who provided supper.

A big thank you to Gemma Benoliel

At the AGM David Solomon paid tribute to Gemma, who has stood down from the committee after many years. Her wisdom, experience and kindness will be much missed by the rest of us, but she has said she will still bake cakes for the work days, hurray!

Financial Report

Andrea, our Treasurer, reported that funds have increased in total by £534 over the past year, mainly because there haven’t been any significant one-off expenses incurred by the Management Team. At the time of writing, our bank balance stands at some £6,640, which gives us a healthy fund to cover expected costs this year, including a ride-

Financial Report to AGM, 30 April 2024		
	£	£
Balance at AGM 2023 (24 April 2023)	6,050.47	
Income 25/04/23-30/04/24	2,331.10	
Subscriptions & donations		1,326.00
Book Sales		259.00
Raffle and bar at social event		746.10
Expenditure 25/04/23-30/04/24	1,796.28	
Social event costs		565.30
Green Gym expenses		560.00
Maintenance (hedge cutting)		420.00
Activity/AGM/work day expenditure		250.98
Balance at AGM 2024 (30 April 2024)	6,585.29	

on lawn mower and an equipment store. We also cover the costs of hedge cutting, travel expenses for the Green Gym volunteers and those associated with our events. So thank you for your ongoing support and financial contributions!

Alison Barraclough gave a detailed report on the work done by the Management Team

and the various groups of volunteers who give of their time so generously to keep the beds in such good condition. All of the weirs are gradually being replaced and several beds have been replanted with watercress plants to replace those lost in the cold weather last year. We are also hoping to see new display boards some time this year to spruce up the visitors' centre and to provide useful information to passers-by.

Membership of the Friends currently stands at 113, so while we are picking up new members all the time, there are still quite a few Friends who have not yet renewed their membership for 2024. A reminder email was sent to all of them after the AGM, and this has resulted in quite a few people paying their subscription fees. If you have new neighbours, or if you know of anyone you think would be interested in joining this small but vital local association, do please put them in touch with Andrea – andreaipowell@yahoo.co.uk who will be happy to provide them with more details!

Ewelme Watercress Beds at the Wild About Benson Nature Event

Over 850 people visited the fabulous “Wild About” event organised by the Benson Area Nature Group, which now encompasses Ewelme and other local villages, over the weekend of 8th & 9th March. There were displays of maps, books and photographs illustrating the Ewelme Watercress Beds and Committee Members and Management Team representatives were on hand to talk to visitors and to encourage them to visit our very special Local Nature Reserve.

Children's Activity Day

The annual activity day for children (accompanied by a responsible adult), known as the “Dr Anne” day after the late Dr Anne Millar, who was a huge believer in the benefits of nature, will be held this year on **Thursday 15th August**. This is a fun-filled day of activities for children aged 5-10, although younger and older siblings are also welcome. Please pass this on to any children in this age group in your family and encourage their parents or guardians to put this date in their diaries! Space is limited, but children are just as crucial for the future health and wellbeing of our nature reserve as the natural environment is for theirs! If you would like to reserve a slot on the day, please contact Margaret Connolly – b.e.connolly@live.co.uk. Please bring a packed lunch, but we will provide refreshments and ice creams on the day! The cost is just £5 per child; payment in advance is required to secure your place – please contact Margaret on the above email address. We are also in need of some additional adults to help out on the day, so if you're planning to come with your children or grandchildren, please consider offering to help with the organisation as well.

Regular work parties take place on the first Saturday and the 3rd Wednesday of every month, and the Visitors' Centre is open during the summer on the first Sunday of the month from 2.00pm to 4.30pm. *Andrea Powell*

Benson Garden Club

Our forthcoming talk, 'Abundance', will be given by Toby Buckland in October. You may recognise Toby's name as a **Gardeners' World presenter** and his talk on practical tips and advice on plants for an abundant garden will spur those of us into action who jealously admired fellow gardeners' trugs of produce over the summer (how do courgette plants produce so much!). Visitors are very welcome to attend and tickets are available now for £12 each. Please email us to purchase (contact details below) or buy them in person from Derry's Den (26 High Street, Benson). A reduced price is available for members.

If visiting gardens with a friendly group of gardeners appeals to you, further information about the club and how to join as a member can be found on our website, or please feel free to email bensongardeningclub@gmail.com. And if you are looking for an interesting talk to inspire you, please do consider coming along to Toby Buckland's talk on 3rd October!

Liz Harrison

'Ewology' to a little lamb

Little Esmerelda, the 3 month old daughter of Esme, the 2023 Easter Lamb, was recently found dead under a tree at Fords Farm. Esme was distressed and all who knew Esmeralda were saddened by the news.

Unfortunately, lambs can die unexpectedly at three months for no apparent reason. Hopefully, Esme will have better luck next spring.



NETTLEBED DANCING & MUSIC FRIENDS

A Social Dance with Dave Anderson

Saturday, 10th August

Dave is a well known Country and popular 60's/70's singer and will be on stage for an enjoyable evening. 8pm until 11pm. The Nettlebed Club RG9 5DD. We are a not-for-profit group of friends but do ask for a donation of just £10pp on the door. Free local parking. Disability facilities. Good size dance floor. Bar also sells tea and coffee. Always a very friendly atmosphere. Bring your friends with you and have a good night out. Should you have any queries, please do call Keith on 07752 374 610

Murder,

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The local history walk that delves into unexpected, unusual and unsolved events from Crowmarsh Gifford's lively past.

**Sunday 4th August and Sunday 11th
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Education support

Do you have experience of working with children? Could you help to run our environmental education programme?

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Our Education Support volunteers assist the education team to deliver Earth School sessions to a mainstream primary audience.

For more information on the roles, email the team at :

volunteering@earthtrust.org.uk

Thank you.

Sharon Squire, Communications, Earth Trust

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Nature's Power – Alas, this peaceful perch at the top of Burrows Hill is no longer. The seat has gone and the lacy blossom of Cow's Parsley has given way to brambles and nettles. So, now, it is the realm of Brer Rabbit, butterflies and birds and we must let nature take its course and enjoy the blackberries instead.



*ODE TO A WOODEN
BENCH*

I stop walking

*The wind is pleasantly
cool*

*I sit down on the
wooden bench*

*Surrounded by fields of
weeds and wildflowers*

The sky is light.....

*I don't know why I am
so happy -*

Happy just to be alive

Shalom Freedman 2012



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