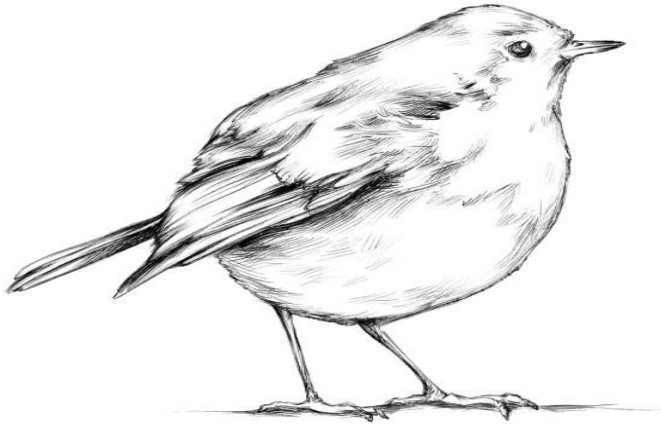


April 2024

PITCOMBE

news



April 2024

In this issue

Rector's Bit

Origins of April Fool ?

Oppenheimer- Shepton Montague

MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR THE PARISH OF PITCOMBE

What's on...

April 2024

Sunday 7th	11am Holy Communion
Tuesday 9th	7.30pm Parish Council Meeting HVH
Thursday 11th	2-4pm Sarah Dyke MP Public Meeting in Bruton—see poster pg 13
Sunday 14th	9.30am Holy Communion
Sunday 21st	11am Morning Prayer
Sunday 28th	6pm Evening Prayer

Weekly

Wednesdays at 7.30 **Short Mat Bowls Hadspen Village Hall**

welcome

PITCOMBE NEWS

Hope Springs Eternal, as the saying goes, but the month of April is bought to mind, with the prospect of warmer days, the blossom of spring flowers and a general feeling of optimism in the air. Clocks go forward on 31st March and there is a chance the Easter Bunny might make an appearance on that very same day. April is further renowned for the sighting of meteor showers, so look out for those as well.

Our rector, Jonathan Evans, reminds us: "The Easter season is a time when the Church celebrates and gives thanks. We use the word Alleluia liberally, expressing our thanks and praise to God for all that is good in life. This is a response to the resurrection of Jesus and the gift of life we find in him."

Following the sad demise of our wonderful centenarian Kathleen Apperley recently, the memorial Service in celebration of her remarkable life is to be held on May 10th at St Leonard's - more details will follow in the May Edition of the PN

True to form, our April edition is filled with cheerful reports from the gardening associations, announcing their Spring programmes and with hints on what to be doing in the garden as summer beckons. Elsewhere, in the Parish Council report, emphasise is brought to bear on the deficiencies of county council services and it draws attention to an important public meeting, led by our MP, Sarah Dyke, on April 11th, where these issues will be addressed, and to which you are urged to attend. See the poster on page 13

Your editors must apologise for the errors that occurred in the March edition Crossword. Several clues were inadvertently omitted, causing disappointment to avid followers. It was not the setter at fault, but your editors.

Happy Easter everyone!

MARCH 2024

ST LEONARD'S

All are welcome to attend our services at St Leonard's, with services every Sunday in April having times as follows:

- Holy Communion on 7th April 11:00 – Rev'd Dan Richards
- Holy Communion on 14th April at 9:30 - Rev'd Jonathan Evans
- Morning Prayer on 21st April at 11:00 - Preb. Mark Ellis
- Evening Prayer on 28th April at 6:00pm - Rev'd Jonathan Evans

Note that, now we are in the springtime, the clocks go forward on 31st March and the church will be open from 10:00am to 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Also, our Evensong service is at the later time of 6pm.

We held a spring cleaning day on one of the Saturdays in March, and it is good to see the church looking so spick and span. Thank you to all those who helped with the cleaning, it was a good community effort with teas and coffees provided for the workers!

I am pleased to say that we now own the small piece of land that allows us to extend the graveyard and all the necessary permissions have been obtained. You will see the fencing erected around the graveyard in the near future. I would like to thank those who have spent so much of their time moving this project forward.

Finally, it's now spring and I hope that we are all able to see some sunshine after such a wet winter.

Philip Pidsley, Churchwarden

RECTOR'S BIT

When I was a young child, my father used to tell me off if I left the tap running while cleaning my teeth, saying that it was a waste of clean water. He was right, of course. I thought then that clean water was free and plentiful; it never occurred to me that it was something that was precious and should not be wasted. Although I have sometimes, for very short periods of time, been in situations where clean water is scarce, I have never lived in those conditions. Although I turn the tap off when cleaning my teeth, I do still take clean water for granted.

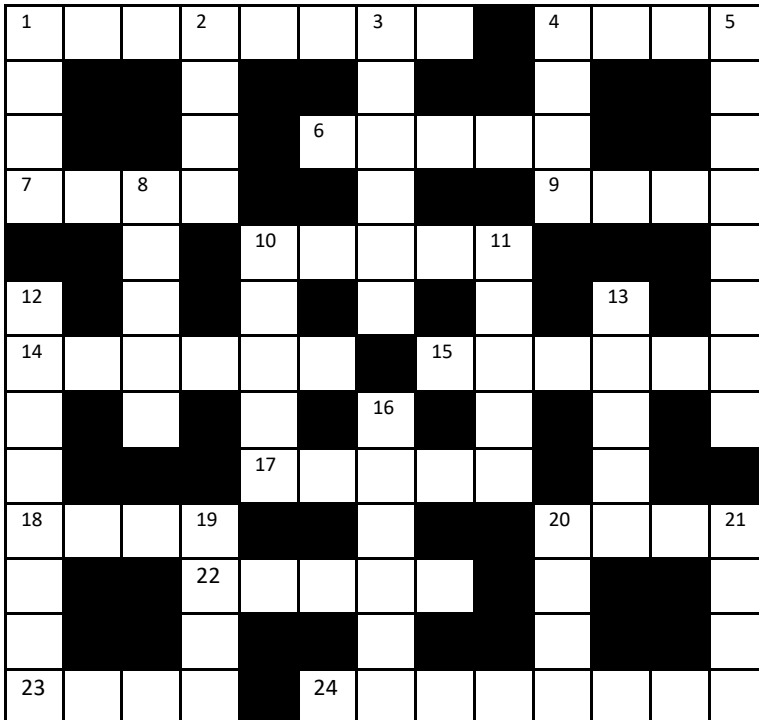
The Easter season is a time when the Church celebrates and gives thanks. We use the word Alleluia liberally, expressing our thanks and praise to God for all that is good in life. This is a response to the resurrection of Jesus and the gift of life we find in him.

This thankfulness should pervade our lives and should be a check on our taking things for granted, from clean water to the joy of a Spring day. We live well when we regard things not as a right, but as a gift.

Another thing I take for granted is a clean and reliable sanitation system. I expect to have a loo and to be able to flush it. Not everyone lives like that. There is an excellent charity that works to bring good sanitation to areas where it is not common. The charity is called 'Toilet Twinning' - you may have noticed their publicity. As the name suggests, in return for a donation, you can 'twin' a loo with a project to build a basic loo in a place that needs one. Simple, affordable, transformational. If you have not already done so, why not twin your toilet? Their website is <https://toilettwinning.org/>

Rev'd Jonathan Evans

April Crossword



(cryptic clues in *italics* – see guidance below)

Across

- 1. *Publicity given to orders or forecasts?* (8)
- 4. Unsurpassed (4)
- 6. A short, simple song (5)
- 7. To be involved you must be in the _ (4)
- 9. Ethnic group from northern Scandinavia (4)
- 10. *Republic of Ireland keeps one quiet leader* (5)

14. Colour of Free State? (6)
15. *Fix scripture with father of one monarch* (6)
17. Sum (5)
18. Beige (4)
20. Religious song (4)
22. *Plot for grand artist to visit the pub* (5)
23. *Odds on the railway will be lively* (4)
24. How the sun shines? (8)

Down

1. Field to choose from (4)
2. *Doctor's work is to let fall* (4)
3. Need a drink (6)
4. Lads (4)
5. Uncommunicative (8)
8. Body part (5)
10. The correct type of whale? (5)
11. Unsurpassed (5)
12. Puts 10 down (8)
13. *Artist in unknown showers* (5)
16. State of insensibility (6)
19. Not pretty! (4)
20. A brown mess (4)
21. Mr Parker was prying (4)



Somerset's wildlife

needs you

Can you spare a few minutes to tell us how nature matters to you?

Somerset Council is working on a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Somerset. It will map the locations of our most precious habitats and wildlife and identify the priorities and places most suitable for nature restoration. This work is fully funded by Defra.

Take part in our survey to help shape the strategy.



Scan the QR code to take part in the survey or find out more at www.somerset.gov.uk/lhrs



Bruton Flower Club

Twenty-one of us enjoyed a craft evening at our March meeting. Ellen Styles, who is one of our members, does a craft-themed evening each year. This year we made Dream catchers. There were lots of different ideas and the finished catchers were gorgeous.

Our next meeting on 8th April is a Demonstration by Jo Jacobs entitled "Just for you" at Hadspen Village Hall starting at 7.30 pm. Visitors are welcome at a cost of £5.00 each, and don't forget the flower arrangements are raffled at the end of the evening. On 13 May we have a practice evening making bouquets. If you are new to flower arranging there are always people on hand to offer advice. Or just come for tea and biscuits and see what we do. For practice evenings the visitor charge is £3.00.

If you are able to support our coffee morning at Bruton Community Hall on 18th May from 9.30am it would be lovely to see you.

If you would like any information about Bruton Flower Club do contact me 07788311191 or paws4judy@gmail.com Judy Hayter.

Village Hall News



The Quiz Night went off with a crack and a bang, as a packed Hall of enthusiastic quizzers gathered to test their knowledge. The competitive edge was there, with teams of six vying with each other for the highest scores.

Stee Bruce-Jones, a quiz master of note, had put together a programme of broadly-based questions, touching on local interests as well as sometimes challenging general knowledge. Scores were posted on a screen after every round to spur each team to greater heights.

A really delicious chilli con carne was served at the half-way mark, cooked and served by Sarah Waller and her team of culinary experts. Bar service, provided by Helen Spratling, was slick and lively and the evening was rounded off by totalling up the scores to reveal the highest total, which was achieved by Caroline Donald and her table, and the lowest score to Ant Hodges's cohort, which naturally spurred a steward's inquiry.

Our thanks go to the whole Village Hall Committee, which put in a fine joint effort in encouraging interest in the event and putting teams together.

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THE HAPPY COOKER



Rhubarb Fool

Quick and easy, this seasonal special bursts with zingy flavours. Delicious served with wafer-thin homemade shortbread!

Ingredients

400g rhubarb, cut into 1cm chunks.

150g golden caster sugar.

1 orange zested and juiced.

1 tsp vanilla paste.

200 ml double cream.

2 tbsp icing sugar.

200 g natural yoghurt.

Method

1. Tip first 4 ingredients into a saucepan over gentle heat and cook stirring often until rhubarb has completely broken down.
2. Transfer into a bowl, cool completely and then chill until needed - will keep for up to 3 days.

Whisk cream and sugar together and then fold in the yoghurt and most of the rhubarb compote. Divide the rest of the compote between 4 glasses or bowls, top with fool and any remaining compote.

Hey presto - pud done!

SARAH DYKE MP COFFEE FORUM



Thursday 11th April
2pm to 4pm
Bruton

Hear about Somerton & Frome MP Sarah Dyke's work in Westminster and the constituency and talk to her about issues of concern.

Refreshments available. Wheelchair accessible.

Space is limited, so book your place early by emailing: sarah.dyke.mp@parliament.uk

Parish Council

Chairman	Richard Waller	01749 812754 rjtwall@hotmai.com
Parish Clerk	Anne Tuck	07538 502812 clerk@pitcombepc.org.uk

St Leonard's Church

The Rector	Rev'd Jonathan Evans	01749 812775 mobile 07305 736042 rector@stmarysbruton.org
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Benefice Office		01749 813080 benefice@stmarysbruton.org
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Bell-ringing	Thelma Hartley	01749 812996 thartnell19@gmail.com
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Church Flowers roster	Jean Constantine	01749 813103 wicon@talktalk.net
------------------------------	------------------	--

Church Wardens	Philip Pidsley	01749 813842. philip.pidsley@btinternet.com
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PPC Secretary	Carole Wyatt	01963 350222 carolewyatt@btinternet.com
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Friends of St Leonards

Secretary	Cathie Brook	01963 351492 catherinebrook@aol.com
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Hadspen Village Hall

Co- Chairs	Anthony Hodges	01963 351429 anthonyhodges48@outlook.com
-------------------	----------------	--

	Carolyn Bruce-Jones	07780 934831 carolynbj@icloud.com
--	---------------------	--

Bookings Secretaries	Annette Hobhouse	07775 602950 bookings@hall.pitcombepc.org.uk
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	Jan James	01963 350464 janet.james945@btinternet.com
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Secretary	Maureen Pidsley	01749 813842 maureen.pidsley@btinternet.com
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Secretary	Carole Wyatt	01963 350222 carolewyatt@btinternet.com	
<u>U3A</u>			
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Sally Ridout	Bruton Art Society	01963 370020 s.ridout18@btinternet.com	
History	Bruce Bower	01747 840335 bowersxb@btinternet.com	
<u>Paul Parsons</u>	Ballroom Dancing Lessons	07805 571590 paulparsons7@googlemail.com	
<u>Claire Meek</u>	Pilates	cm75.pilates@gmail.com	

Avon and Somerset Police

Emergencies	999
Non Emergencies	101

Healthcare

Bruton Surgery	01749 812 310
Wincanton Health Centre	01963 435700
Shepton Mallet Treatment Centre	01749 333600

Local Government

County Councillors	Lucy Trimmel	Lucy.trimnell@somerset.gov.uk
	Tom Power	Tom.power@somerset.gov.uk
Roads and Transport		someset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/report-a-problem-on-the-road/

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(2023/180 minutes/15)

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Starring Cillian Murphy, Emily Blunt and Matt Damon.

in St Peter's Church, Shepton Montague

Thursday 11th April

at 7.30pm

Doors open 6.45pm for drinks & snacks

Tickets: £7.00 (or 5 for £30)

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or at the bar with cash

All proceeds go towards St Peter's Church

***For more information please contact Camilla Wood on
07717 396635***

Pitcombe Parish Council

There was a slender representation of the public but a good turn-out by Parish Councillors at our March meeting and we were delighted to welcome a community liaison person from the Newt who hopes to build on the existing good relationship with our council. The agenda covered the usual selection of updates on ongoing matters and consideration of planning applications.

There is continuing uncertainty over the services which will be provided by Somerset council. There has not yet been a definitive answer to questions around the future provision of drain maintenance, hedge-cutting, gullies and footpaths etc. Of great concern is the continued availability of recycling at Dimmer. Although we have discussed the possibility of making local provision, until we have clarity about what we will still receive and how much replacing those services would cost we are not able to plan. We hope that greater clarity will emerge in April or May.

There was confirmation that the intention to erect an agricultural building for storage of hay, straw and farm machinery on Green Lane, Pitcombe does not require permission. There was a new application for an extension/replacement of existing buildings at Hillside on Sunny Lane (otherwise known as the old Railway Hotel). The council saw no reason to oppose this application.

Footpaths are another regular feature on our agenda and the fallen gate into the field at the top of Wyke Lane has been reported and the landowner will be approached to encourage him to undertake the repairs. The Bridleway immediately behind Gants Mill has been closed due to a landslip and a temporary diversion instigated.

There was an update on the former Bruton School for Girls site. There has been no further progress with the sale until the charitable objects have been settled and this is currently in the hands of the Charity Commission. The council had received alarming reports of an invasion of the site by so-called Urban Explorers who had posted a very irritating video of themselves trespassing on the site. The Trustees were contacted, and we have been assured that this was an old video which has been fully reported to police along with supporting evidence...whether anything results from that report remains to be seen. The Trustees are also aware of local concerns about the potential increased flood risk arising from overdevelopment of the site by any future developer. (Continues over the page)

There were ongoing discussions about flood prevention and mitigation in Pitcombe and Hadspen and the anxiety about the structure of the bridge over the River Pitt. We had received a further disappointing response to our queries from the Highways department responsible for bridges in the county. We decided to explore installing a monitoring device on the bridge so that we can identify any movement as part of our campaign to get proper maintenance works carried out.

On the subject of bridges, there is currently work being undertaken to install the bridge over the A359 at Galhampton Hill enabling the Newt vehicles and animals to cross this busy route and will also provide a safe option for walkers to cross as a short diversion from the existing footpath.


Many of our regular concerns arise from the effectiveness of our county council and the funding of services which to a degree have been mandated by central government. To that end I would urge residents to engage with our county representatives and our MP who is advertising an opportunity to meet with her in Bruton on April 11th. Contact sarah.dyke.mp@parliament.uk.

Richard Waller



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Solution to March Crossword

P	I	T	C	O	M	B	E		B	A	R	N	
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E			E			Z			W				E
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Apologies to all our crossworders that three down clues were omitted from the March puzzle.

Jobs in the Garden

Edible Crops

- Sow quick-growing, half-hardy annuals: pumpkins, squash, sweetcorn, basil and French and runner beans.
- Direct sow hardy annuals: salad leaves, lettuce, carrot, beetroot peas chard and spinach.
- Plant early and maincrop potatoes.
- Continue to sow cucumbers - under cover for later crops.

pot on earlier tomatoes and cucumbers ready for planting under cover.

Flowers

- Direct sow hardy annuals, eg. marigolds, poppies, nigella, dill, cerinthe and nigella.
- Start planting out half-hardy plants eg. cosmos in sheltered spots at the end of the month.
- Plant out semi tender perennials, taken from last year's cuttings.

April Fools Day 1st April

April Fool's Day is celebrated on April 1st each year with pranks, tricks and cries of 'April Fool'!

Ben Johnson

"Whence proceeds the custom of making April Fools?"

This was the question asked of the wonderfully-entitled publication 'British Apollo or Curious Amusements for the Ingenious' in 1708.

Unfortunately the origin of the 'custom of making April Fools' is uncertain. One theory is that April Fools' Day was purely the result of its timing at the end of winter and the coming of spring. This time of renewal and rebirth was marked with fun and jollity, not dissimilar to the Roman festival of Hilaria in late March which was celebrated with the wearing of disguises, rejoicing and merrymaking.

Certainly April Fool's Day has all the characteristics of such a renewal festival, pushing the boundaries of everyday behaviour yet with the resultant disorder set within a strict time frame. For example, traditionally on April Fool's Day all pranks are supposed to stop at 12 noon sharp, with anyone playing a joke after midday then considered the 'April Fool'.

Another theory has April Fool's Day originating in 16th century France, where the beginning of the New Year was originally observed on April 1st. After the introduction of the Gregorian calendar, New Year was moved to January 1st, a change that was not universally popular. Those who adopted the new calendar played tricks on those who had not and referred to their victims as 'April Fools'

Castle Cary Gardens Association

Our last speaker was as knowledgeable as we had hoped. He was also an amazing photographer. Did you know that the difference between a moth and a butterfly is that butterfly antennae had knobs on their ends? His photos showed this difference so clearly. And the bottom line for making sure there are food sources for these disappearing insects is to grow indigenous plants. Early nectar sources are really important, especially as our winters are becoming less wintery. Violets, primroses, snowdrops, celandines and single flowers rather than doubles. And, vitally, grow nettles!

Our next talk is on **Wednesday April 3rd**, 7pm for 7.30pm at Caryford Hall. The speaker is Julie Haylock of Sandhurst Design, with a talk called **'Planning your Garden Borders'**. This looks most promising and comes recommended by another garden club. As this is the time of year when we feel more inclined to get out and muddy in our gardens, it should be the perfect time for such help and advice.

Another important date for the diary is **Saturday May 11th** for our **Plant Sale**, at the Market House in Castle Cary until midday. Our members provide plants they have growing experience of themselves, a lot divided from interesting plants from their gardens. This means you get proper information and know they are happy with our local environment. It is also the day we launch our Show Schedule so you can collect your copy and get ready for August 3rd. The wonderful local branch of TFSR, Tools for Self-Reliance, will have a stall where you can buy lovingly restored hand tools. We will also have a raffle and, of course, refreshments. What a wonderful start to the weekend!

For much more about our club, go to www.castlecarygardening.com

Erica Holt, Chairman

Castle Cary Repair Café

Bring your broken items every 4th Saturday of the month. The repair Café offers a free service.

Enjoy coffee with cakes and meet friends while volunteers help you repair electrical, mechanical, wooden items, clothing, and bicycles!

Future dates – all Repair Café sessions are held in The School Room of the Methodist Chapel from 10am to 12noon.

Saturday April 27th

Saturday May 25th



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Bruton & District Horti Soc

Magnolias, at the time of writing are bursting with buds, like glorious candelabra bringing with them the promise of seasons to come and gardeners everywhere busily clearing and weeding and preparing beds for planting.... The perfect antidote to the endless 'wettery' of the past few months.

Bruton Horti Soc. has provided terrific entertainment with their line-up of winter talks. Angie Blackwell's inspirational demonstration of seasonal flower arrangements in March will certainly give a boost to the Floral Art entries at our Annual Show in August.

Another March highlight was the annual Castle Gardens Gold Club shopping visit, accompanied by a short talk. Members made the most of the 25% discount offer on purchases, judging by the trolley loads of plants that left Sherborne that evening!

This month, on Monday 15th April, Jonathan Lovie will be giving a talk on English Garden Makers on the Riviera. This promises to be a fascinating talk – Jonathan is a garden and landscape historian, having worked as a researcher with many organisations including the National Trust and English Heritage. Look out for his book 'Georgian Garden Buildings.'

An important date for diaries is Saturday May 4th 9.30am, when our excellent Plant Sale and Coffee Morning takes place in Bruton Community Hall. A fund-raiser, you will find a wide selection of plants, seedlings, expert advice, produce and cakes, including a delicious cup of coffee and chat with friendly faces.

Details of our interesting array of garden visits and much else is to be found on our website: www.brutonhorticultural.org.uk

Jane Hodges, Hon Sec.



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