

Powick Times

A free monthly newspaper for Powick, Callow End and surrounding villages



Issue 12

April 2024

FREE



Malvern Hills from nearby parish of Powick

‘April showers bring May flowers’ is the old saying. Well, I think we have had April showers already this year! Pershore has apparently had twice as much rain in March as last year! We certainly need some dry weather to enable the fields to dry out. Everywhere is so wet and boggy! This time of the year is still lovely in many ways; the hedgerows turning green, the flowers and bushes in bud and some in flower. With summer on its way, we have so much to look forward to with village fetes, carnivals, open gardens. As well as gardening and outdoor sporting events, cricket, golf, bowls, fishing and so it goes on. A great time of the year!

Unfortunately, we got the awful news that His Majesty the King is suffering from cancer. Shortly afterwards the Princess of Wales

announced that she had also been diagnosed with cancer which was a ‘huge shock’ to her. They are receiving

treatment, but it is a major blow to both of them. We join the millions of people from around the world wishing them a full and speedy recovery.

We have published an article in this month’s newspaper, which was written before the Royal family announcements. Susan Catford, one of our editorial contributors, writes about her recent experience with cancer. This is written with the specific intention of helping people diagnosed with this disease. Medical science has made incredible progress and you will see that these days all is not lost!

Late News!

Many congratulations to Harriet Baldwin MP who has been made a Dame in the Easter Honours.

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News from Powick Parish Hall

The Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday 12th March. It was disappointing that only committee members and trustees were present. At the AGM it was reported that the high level of use continued throughout the year. Whilst some user groups decided not to continue there have been some new users and still there are some 25 regular user groups/organisations. The high standard of the facilities in the Hall and its grounds for parking continue to attract new enquiries. Ongoing and annual maintenance of the building and its facilities, and the grounds, continued during the year. Thanks are due to Charlotte McLean for her work in keeping the premises in good condition. The one major improvement was the refurbishment of the Ladies cloakroom, at a cost of some £23,000, with the help of a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery. This has been well received.

A successful Harvest Supper was held in October, with some 80 people attending. This time there was a two course meal, rather than a buffet being served. Thanks were due to Emma Pushman for the food and to Roy Snook and friends for music during the evening. £203 was raised in the raffle and this was donated to the Malvern Food Bank, in memory of Jim Allsopp, a long serving member of the Committee. The Hall finances are almost back to the pre Covid level, but to take account of the increased cost of services and utilities, the charge for hiring is being increased from 1st April. The Committee is also in the process of setting up an online booking system for the Hall. Finally thanks were given to all the helpers, supporters and users of the Hall during 2023 and the Committee hope this will continue in 2024.

Roger Gurney

Top month for Marriage Allowance claims

As the tax year draws to a close, couples who are married or in civil partnerships could be due a financial boost by sharing unused tax allowances. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has revealed. March is the most popular month for Marriage Allowance applications, with almost 70,000 couples applying in March last year. And with the option to backdate their claim for the previous four tax years, eligible couples could receive a lump-sum payment worth more than £1,000, in addition to reducing their tax bill for the 2023 to 2024 tax year by up to £252. People can find out in 30 seconds if they are eligible by using the

online Marriage Allowance Calculator. Marriage Allowance saves couples money by allowing the lower or non-earner to reduce the amount of tax their partner pays by transferring up to £1,260 of their Personal Allowance to their husband, wife or civil partner.

The easiest way to claim Marriage Allowance is online via GOV.UK



Powick Times

Collection Points:

Hughes & Co, Pershore - Link Nurseries, Powick
Petrol Station, Powick - St Peter's Church, Powick
The Bank House Hotel - The Bear and Ragged Staff, Bransford
The Blue Bell, Callow End - The Fold Cafe, Bransford
Stanbrook Abbey Hotel - The Crown Inn, Powick
The Old Bush, Callow End - The Swan Inn, Newland



Callow End WI

Another great speaker this month. Judy Hulland JP is a local magistrate and gave us a lively, informative talk. She's led a very interesting life, leading to her volunteering in the Magistracy. She explained all the qualities required of a magistrate and the extensive

interviews she had to undertake before selection. There are always three of them on the bench, so that they can reach a majority decision. They are often in court at the weekend, when required. She also gives talks to school children. A very entertaining lady.

Change of Date - Armed Forces Day

Due to the number of participants, the MHDC have changed the venue and date of the Armed Forces Day in June by bringing forward one day to **Saturday 29th June** and with a new Venue of Victoria Park - Malvern Link, from 12.30 - 16.30



Sail away for the holiday of your dreams

Whether you're a solo traveller, a couple, a family with children or a group of friends, there's a cruise out there for you. From adults-only sailings, to ships where you can go-kart or rock climb on-board; the choices are endless. But what are the benefits of this type of holiday? Firstly, they can offer great value because most fares include everything – food, accommodation, entertainment, tips and sometimes excursions too. Many ships boast a variety of onboard activities, amazing spas and impressive dining options... some of the largest ships are like floating cities! Secondly, you get to discover multiple destinations but only need to unpack your suitcase once!

This means you get to relax more, and some cruises even offer overnight docks at destinations or private island visits. Thirdly, there are many cruises to choose from, depending on what type of holiday you wish for. You can have peace and quiet on a river cruise, or family excitement on the world's largest ocean cruise ship. You can also choose from many grades of cabins and suites, from economy to luxury (with a butler service on some ships too!) With so much to choose from, it can be a bit daunting finding the best cruise for you, even if you've been on a few before! This is where Sarah at Travel Counsellors can help, from finding your perfect cruise to booking it.

Ready for a holiday?

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A few words from... Dame Harriett Baldwin MP



Harriett Baldwin MP (left) is briefed on the Midlands Rail Hub strategy by Midlands Connect's chief executive Maria Machancoses in August 2023

£123 million Midlands rail investment boost

Harriett Baldwin MP has welcomed a commitment to boosting rail services across the Midlands through a £123 million investment programme adding extra train services for Malvern. The Midlands Rail Hub project will improve services across the region adding one extra service each hour service for Malvern and Worcester train stations as well as reducing journey times. Harriett was briefed on the scheme last summer by Midlands Connect chief executive Maria Machancoses and following the Prime Minister's decision to abandon the extension of the High Speed 2 project, the Midlands project was approved to move forward. The rail project will add more stops and more trains at stations across the West Midlands meaning an estimated 14 million more seats for rail passengers. Over recent months Harriett has urged both the Government and the rail

regulator to assess the performance of West Midland Trains, which currently operates the Midlands rail franchise. Harriett said: "The Midlands Rail Hub has an ambition to add significant extra train services and I was pleased to see that the project will add at least one extra train service an hour to Malvern. We all want to see faster, more reliable and more frequent train services and I hope that this will unlock significant extra capacity for local rail users. The current franchise holder is not doing a great job for my constituents and needs to train more drivers and I hope that a formal review will form part of this proposal. I'm also keen to see how this project links into the ambition to improve stretches of the North Cotswold Line. I welcome this significant investment in our local rail provision, which offers a direct benefit from saving money on HS2 and I look forward to seeing the detailed plans as they are published."

The Holdings RSPCA Re-homing Centre

Richard Catford



The RSPCA Worcester and Mid Worcester Branch was originally founded in 1911. A century later the charity acquired The Holdings (a five acre farmstead) in Holdings Lane, Kempsey. This was purchased to create a new animal rescue centre.

The Holding's manager, Steve Davis explained, "We take in badly treated, injured, sick, unwanted or abandoned pets whose owners had died, or whose circumstances had changed so they were unable to care for their pet. We have a small, dedicated staff who are assisted by a wonderful team of volunteers in the daily care of our animals. This may include cleaning, feeding, exercise and providing extra human contact with each animal, so essential in animal care.

Ruth Emblem, the Holdings Administrator, added, "It's not just the practical help our volunteers provide, we have to ensure funds are available to continue the day to day running of the centre. The care of our animals include vaccinations, neutering, identity and micro chipping. Caring also means paying for expensive and extensive veterinary treatment, as well as the overheads and running cost of maintaining the buildings. The volunteers who raise funds are essential to our work"

The Holdings site was acquired by The RSPCA in 2011 and with the help of volunteers, refurbished the farmhouse and outbuildings. The cattery opened in 2016, the small animals unit in 2018 and a new 20 kennel dog unit has recently been completed. The centre now includes a reception area,

a shop and toilet facilities for visitors. The development of a wild flower meadow and a pond is currently underway. Steve Davies said, "We are very proud of our achievements so far. All those who have made it possible have our enduring gratitude."

Visitors to the Holdings are welcome between 11am and 4 pm, but it is best to phone first to organise a guide. The shop and plant stall are open between 11am and 4pm daily.

The website is regularly refreshed and details of dogs, cats and small animals available for rehoming are on view.

www.rspca-worcester.org
An audit of the achievements for 2023 on The Holdings' web site records nearly 500 animals finding a new home, or being reunited with their owners, 330 animals neutered, 335 micro-chipped and 57 grants to people on low incomes for help with their veterinary bills.

A reasonable assumption and prediction is the audit for 2024 will, unfortunately, have higher totals than last year, but thank goodness the RSPCA exists.

Without this wonderful organisation so many more animals would be destined for a dreadful fate. The Holdings, its staff, volunteers and donors deserve our support.

Useful telephone numbers:
Re-homing centre: 01905 821272
Lost and Found Register:
animalcentrestaff@rspcaworcester.org
Branch Funding shop:
25 Old Street, Upton on Severn. WR80HN Tel: 01684 757724

To report any animal in distress, or an alleged case of cruelty. Tel: 0300 1234 999

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Malvern Festival of Ideas 2024

The Festival of Ideas, that was so brilliantly programmed over the last year, is now over.

Each year, at the beginning of March, Andrew Webb and the Festival team organise a wide range of stimulating talks and activities by excellent, well informed speakers, based on an overall theme.

Those of us who attend the Festivals are never disappointed and always come away with thoughts and new perspectives that keep us thinking - and looking forward to the next one. The 2024 Festival was no different! It is strange, then, that many people are still not aware of the three day event that takes place right on their doorsteps.

The theme this year was "Telling Tales", exploring the power of story and storytelling. Chris Packham's sell out keynote speech on Friday evening at Malvern St James' Girls school, focussed on the start and development of life on earth. What an extraordinary

story it is and how special we are to be part of that. And what a responsibility we have for protecting it.

There were so many others telling of their own experiences - charity workers, journalists, campaigners, filmmakers, authors, refugees, storytellers. All had tales to tell. All gave us ideas to ponder. In addition were creative activities and workshops, a bookshop, information about local groups, - and food. A wonderfully satisfying weekend.

So, if you attended the 2024 Festival sometime, you will no doubt be anticipating the next one. If you were unaware of it, make a note in your diaries for March 2025. It is one not to be missed!



Calls to stay safe through spring farming season



A rural insurance expert is urging the public to help ease the burdens faced by farmers across the region during the busy lambing and calving season. Anderson Fossett, of rural insurance broker Lycetts, has called on walkers, rambles and families visiting the countryside to be mindful of the additional pressures that livestock farmers face at this time of year.

"The desire to pet or feed cute young animals is natural, yet overlooking the consequences of such actions can be hazardous," he said. "Approaching these animals is ill-advised as their protective parents might perceive it as a threat, potentially leading to aggressive responses. A cow may look placid, but there is no way of knowing its temperament. It's prudent to avoid any actions that could lead to distress or pose a risk of injury just for a moment's photo opportunity." He stressed the importance of using public right of way and marked paths only, and of planning walking routes in advance to avoid the temptation

to cut across fields if lost. "Walkers should also be aware that farmers may have deliberately left gates open - or closed - to control livestock movement, so the public should leave them as they find them.

"There have been a number of incidents where dogs have triggered cattle to attack and so it is vital that walkers ensure their pets are on a lead whenever in the presence of livestock. It can be a very stressful period for farmers, many of whom work 18-hour days tending pregnant cows and sheep and newborns. Through increased awareness and responsible actions, the public can significantly contribute to a safe and productive season for both the agricultural community and countryside enthusiasts alike."



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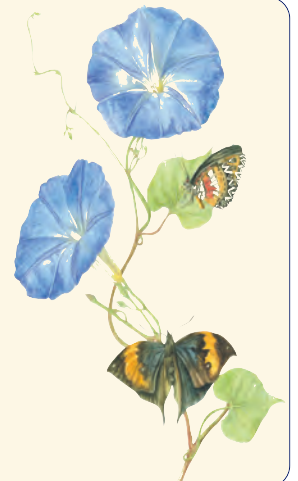
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Sunday 14th April

The Third Sunday of Easter

9.30am Easter Communion at CALLOW END
11.00am Easter Communion at MADRESFIELD

Sunday 21st April

The Fourth Sunday of Easter

8.00am BCP Holy Communion at POWICK
9.30am BCP Holy Communion at GUARLFORD
11.00am Morning Praise at POWICK
5.30pm BCP Evening Prayer via ZOOM

Sunday 28th April

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

9.30am Easter Communion at CALLOW END
11.00am Easter Communion at MADRESFIELD

Midweek Communion at The Orchard Room in Colletts Green
Thursdays 11th & 25th April from 10.30-11.30am

01905 830270 www.oldhillsmalvern.co.uk

For Zoom Access codes and links, please contact us via
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Healthy Heart Tip: *Hydration & heart health*



Hydration is an essential part of nutrition and can benefit or impact your heart's ability to work effectively. Studies have found that having adequate hydration is associated with reduced long-term risks for heart diseases. Did you know that over 66% of the UK population doesn't drink enough water? With Nutrition and Hydration Week coming up from 11th to 18th March, we are sharing some information on the importance of hydration and your cardiovascular system.

Importance of being hydrated
Water makes up over half (60%) of your body weight and fluids are critical for good health and heart health. Hydration is when you drink more fluids than your body loses. Being hydrated helps your heart pump blood more easily through the blood vessels and to your muscles. This means that your muscles, including your heart, don't have to work as hard to achieve the same results.

Risks of being dehydrated
Dehydration occurs when the body loses more water than it takes in. Fluids can be lost through sweat, urination,

vomiting or diarrhoea. When these are not replaced your body may feel tired, you might feel thirsty, have a dry mouth, have dark-coloured urine and suffer from headaches. Being dehydrated means that your heart needs to beat faster to pump your blood around the body. This is because your blood reduces in volume and thickens which will impact your circulation, as well as increase your heart rate and blood pressure. This increases your risk of heart diseases.

Sources of hydration
On average an adult needs six to eight glasses or 1.5 to 2 litres of fluid a day. If it is a hot temperature or you carry out physical activity, you'll need more. Drinking water is the best way to remain hydrated however, other non-alcoholic drinks such as milk, juice and herbal teas can also hydrate you. Food such as fruits and vegetables can also help to hydrate you, with around 20% of your body's water intake per day coming from foods like these.



"There is a forgotten, nay almost forbidden word, which means more to me than any other. That word is England"
Winston Churchill

Plans revealed to support UK's fishing industry

Following extensive consultation with the industry, the Government has listened and will waive the requirement for routine medical checks for fishermen on vessels measuring ten metres and under. This decision will ease financial burden and provide support to the UK's fishing communities. While the safety of fishermen remains the top priority, the Government is delivering this pragmatic change so that small-scale fishing businesses aren't unduly forced ashore and financially burdened by the cost of medical assessments, allowing them to continue fishing without restriction. This decision underscores the Government's commitment to supporting the livelihoods of small-scale fishing businesses, who represent over 80% of UK registered fishing vessels. Unlike larger fishing operations, operators of vessels measuring 10 meters and under are often self-employed and frequently require additional support.

In November 2023, regulations came into effect requiring fishermen working on small UK flagged vessels to have a certificate of medical fitness. While exemptions were initially granted for eyesight, BMI, diabetes, and seasonal fishermen, the recent decision extends this to all existing small-scale fishermen. With this landmark decision, the Government has also widened the eligibility criteria. Initially, during the consultation phase, the Government proposed that fishermen on vessels of 10 metres and under must have worked for a minimum of four weeks in the year before the regulations took effect. However, recognising the potential for exclusion due to factors such as illness, the Government has extended the time limit to two years.



Where can I obtain a Powick Times magazine?
The free Powick Times magazine is available at these venues:
In Callow End the Bluebell and the Old Bush pubs, the Premier village shop, plus 'The shop at the Top' café and Farm shop have all agreed to stock Powick Times. Stanbrook Abbey also has copies available for residents, customers and staff. The Crown in the Centre of Powick, The Swan at Newlands, the Bear and Rugged Staff at Bransford also make them available to customers along with the Bank House and the Fold Cafe. The busy petrol/filling station in Powick village (near the A449 and B4424 junction and one way system) also has free copies for customers.

St George versus Shakespeare

Who would give better mental health advice?



Your starter for ten: did Shakespeare ever come to Persnore? There's no hard evidence, but we do know he raced in 1582 from Stratford to the Bishop's Court in Worcester for an emergency licence to marry Ann Hathaway. (He was young, she was pregnant, there may have been a shotgun at the wedding.) So it's at least possible he passed close by.

Seeing his portrait on every Avon Way signpost along the river here, it's tempting to imagine him wandering the leafy banks, quill in hand, a discarded sonnet drifting downstream in our direction. What about St George? Given his status as the nation's patron saint, you'd like to think he made the effort to canter as far as Persnore Bridge – but martyrdom in 4th century Cappadocia sadly got in the way.

By happy coincidence, 23rd of April is Shakespeare's birthday and St George's Day. Both of these icons may seem unlikely recruits to the world of wellbeing and mental health. But, which do you think might be better at helping us cope with the stresses of life?

As a Roman soldier, George is an icon of courage. Best known for rescuing a princess from a dragon, selflessness and support for others can also be added to his CV. Wander into any art gallery and you're

likely to see images of St George Killing the Dragon: some are seriously terrifying whilst others, like the one I saw in Berlin recently, are winsomely kittenish. Dragons didn't exist in the 4th century (they still don't, by the way) – so should we see the dragon as a metaphor? We all have our own mental health dragons: low self-esteem, money troubles, relationships. Can the model of George donning his armour and dealing with his dragon be useful to us? St George Killing the Metaphor doesn't have quite the same ring – but you get the picture.

And how helpful is Shakespeare with our mental health? Psychology students read Hamlet to understand post-traumatic stress disorder. Macbeth's troubled mind robbed him of sleep, the "balm of hurt minds". Matthew Walker's recent bestseller *Why We Sleep* expounds the link between proper rest and mental wellbeing. It's revealing that

many of the problems characters face in his plays arise from not talking and not sharing thoughts with others. Is there a lesson in there somewhere?

So who will best help nurture our mental health: St George or Shakespeare? Both have their role – and happily there are other options. The Persnore Wellbeing Hub website (below) has a range of links to mental health organisations: counselling, support groups and community projects. Men, in particular, can find it hard to talk about feelings and there are groups aimed at helping with this. Or come in for a cup of tea and a chat with us any time. Dragons are welcome too.

Paul Morris

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Funds to provide lunches in Malvern



Volunteers Neil Andrews and Ruth Smith helping out at Zest4Life's lunch club

Residents in a Worcestershire town look set to benefit from lunch gatherings, thanks to funds awarded to purchase new kitchen equipment. Malvern based volunteer group Zest4Life Conversation and Laughter has been awarded a grant to purchase a new catering trolley and catering workbench as well as food supplies.

The group – which has been running since 2014 – regularly attracts more than 30 people each week for lunch at its base in The Octagon Community Centre, but with ageing equipment, the group's founder Martin Lawrence applied to Platform's Community Chest, a funding pot for Platform customers and local charities,

clubs and other not-for-profit organisations to apply for if their work or project directly benefits Platform customers; all applications are assessed against specific eligibility criteria by customers who sit on its Customer Experience Panel. Marion Duffy, Chief Operations Officer at Platform Housing Group said : "Zest4Life is such a worthwhile cause and we are so glad we have been able to support it with much needed funds to continue its invaluable work within the local community. Bringing people together to enjoy a hearty meal and a good conversation is so beneficial." Zest4Life is open to everyone and there is no need to book.

Changes to car park times and charges

Malvern Hills District Council is proposing to make changes to car park times and charges in the first change for most of these tariffs in twelve years. As part of a public consultation, there are a number of changes to council-owned car parks which include stay-time increases, as well as a cost increase for some. The proposals are being made to ensure that at times of high inflation the council can continue to provide essential services, such as, waste and recycling collections, planning services, support to businesses, housing, parks, public toilets and more. Amongst the suggestions, which have been asked for by traders are to increase the maximum waiting period from two to three hours in Malvern town centre car parks at Belle Vue Terrace, Edith Walk, Grange Road North and South. As well as this, there will be an increase to three hours for vehicles displaying a valid disabled person's blue badge across all

sites. Other changes could include a cost increase of a 24-hour stay car park from £3 to £4 at the Council House, Victoria Road, Hanley Road, New Street, Priory Road North, Priory Road South, and Teme Street car parks. Also, an increase in the cost of the evening operating hours tariff (4pm to 8am) from £1.50 to £2 at all car parks and an increase in the cost of the Resident Annual Two Hour Permits from £25 to £30 per year. Malvern Hills District Council however will continue to freeze the costs of the most popular tickets- the 50p one hour and £1 two-hour tickets. These will remain some of the lowest parking rates charged in the county.

For full details of the proposed changes and to have a say, please visit www.malvernhills.gov.uk/consultations



Managing your fuel bills

For many the rising costs of Utilities are increasingly a challenge on household budgets. Moving forward into the spring Ofgem have announced the energy price cap for next period - 1 April to 30 June 2024. This means that from 1 April 2024 a household with a typical consumption on dual electricity and gas will pay:

- £1,690 a year if they pay by direct debit
 - £1,796 if they pay by standard credit (on receipt of bill)
 - £1,643 if they have a prepayment meter
- Prices are worked out per unit

of energy used. If consumers use more they will pay more. The exact rate and standing charge will depend on the region where the consumer lives. From 1 April the Energy Price Guarantee will no longer apply to households with a prepayment meter. Ofgem have announced that standing charges will be the same for prepayment and direct debit. This is known as 'levelisation'. If you are struggling to pay your bills at any time of year, there are a number of things you can do to improve your situation : Are you on the right energy tariff and could you change to a different one to save money -or

could you switch to another cheaper provider? Check if there are any ways to improve the energy efficiency of your home - depending on your circumstances, grants and schemes are available to do this Are there any ways you can increase your income for instance by claiming additional benefits? Lastly, talk to your provider about ways to pay and check whether they offer schemes or grants to clear arrears you might have built up.

For more help call our consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133 lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Lines are closed on bank

holidays. For further information and advice, please contact your local Citizens Advice South Worcestershire office on 01684 563611 or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk



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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN YOUR COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Powick Parish Neighbourhood Plan will serve our community by influencing development and delivering your priorities. To make sure the Plan sets out what you want, it is important that as many individual residents as possible tell us what they think about the future of the area.

Complete it online at:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/PowickNDP



For further information on the Neighbourhood Plan and Community Survey, plus where to get a hard copy, please refer to the latest Powick Parish Newsletter.

CLOSING DATE FOR RESPONSES: 29TH FEBRUARY 2024



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CAR CLUB CURIOUS?

Car clubs are a great way for a community
to pool resources to reduce vehicle
numbers¹ and boost active travel²

For car club members, they offer a great
way to lower household expenditure³ by
reducing vehicles sat on the drive.



If you think a car club could
be for you, get in touch!

carclub@powickclimateaction.org

1 Car club vehicles are shown to each replace ~20 privately owned vehicles
2 Car club users are more likely to walk and cycle for short journeys
3 UK privately owned vehicles have an average running cost of over £3000pa

Health Hub - April



We, Pershore Medical Practice and Abbottswood Surgery, thought it might be useful to provide a 'Health' article for the Pershore Times so we can keep you updated on current health concerns and areas of interest. Once again, we have started our COVID-19 Spring Booster vaccine programme. Our teams will start offering the vaccinations to those over the age of 75 and those who are severely immunosuppressed. Appointments are available from 22 April and those eligible

will be contacted either by letter or text message. As the nights are getting lighter and the hedges, trees and flowers are bursting into life, we may all start to awaken from our winter slumber but for some of you, this will mean the arrival of hay fever. Usually worse when the weather is warm, humid, and windy and when the pollen count is at its highest. Symptoms can include sneezing, coughing, runny or blocked nose, itchy eyes, itchy throat, loss of smell, headache, earache and feeling tired.

There are things you can do to ease the symptoms of hay fever but if you feel medication is required, please speak to a pharmacist. They can give advice and suggest the best treatments such as antihistamine drops, tablets and sprays which can help with itchy and watery eyes, sneezing and a blocked nose. April is Stress Awareness month. Stress and poor mental health are one of the biggest public health challenges that we're facing. Sadly, even though that is the case, we are still not taking its impact seriously enough. We continue to separate mental health from physical health and vice versa. The reality is they cannot be separate – they are two sides of the same coin. There is no health without mental health and stress can lead to numerous health problems. From physical problems, like heart disease, insomnia, digestive issues, immune system challenges, etc to more serious mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression. Stress Awareness Month has been held every April since

1992 to raise awareness of the causes and cures for our modern-day stress epidemic. It is the time when we have an opportunity for an open conversation on the impact of stress. Dedicated time to removing the guilt, shame, and stigma around mental health. To talk about stress, and its effects and open up about our mental and emotional state with friends, families, colleagues, and professionals. If you are feeling low, anxious or depressed, Pershore Wellbeing Hub runs a weekly mental health peer support group. *The group meets in Pershore Wellbeing Hub and is facilitated by trained volunteers. Please call or text them on 07596 593837 for further details.* Or for more information go to <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-healthissues/stress/> We hope that, if possible, you will follow Pershore Medical Practice and Abbottswood Surgery on Facebook and Instagram for more frequent messaging and sign up to our regular Newsletters which you will find on our websites.

Museum unveils new Industrial Quarter



The latest phase of the Black Country Living Museum's multi-million pound capital development offers visitors a journey through the industrial history of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. The Industrial Quarter, delves into the vibrant stories of industries and individuals that shaped the Black Country's heritage, showcasing three iconic businesses, each with a rich historical narrative. *J.H. Lavender Aluminium Foundry (1959):*

- Established in 1917 by John Herbert Lavender, post-World War Two, this foundry played a pivotal role in producing engine components for all the British motorcycle manufacturers, as well as companies like British Seagull outboard motors, Rover and Reliant cars, and Black & Decker power tools. - Employing up to 300 staff, Lavender's inclusive workforce included individuals from across the Commonwealth, with the Museum introducing a new costumed character,

'Fitzroy Barrett', who boarded HMT Empire Windrush hoping to find work and build a new life, supporting the 'Mother Country' in its 'hour of need'. - The foundry's enduring legacy continues to this day, making it the oldest family-owned aluminium foundry in Britain. *Joe H. Smith & Sons (Oldbury) Ltd. (1953):* - Founded in 1895 by Joseph H. Smith, this family-run business specialised in crafting high-quality hand tools, particularly sledgehammers. - Known for their skilled hand forging techniques and commitment to quality, the company thrived on export orders and government contracts. - The Museum recreates this thriving business environment as it was in 1953, highlighting the legacy of craftsmanship and dedication to excellence. *Crickfield Brickworks (1955):* - Owned by J. T. Price & Co., this brickworks was a

cornerstone of the Black Country's brickmaking industry, specialising in various types of bricks and fire-clay goods. - The recreation at the Museum captures the essence of brickmaking processes and pays homage to the generations of women who played a vital role in this industry. - Black Country brick maker Sarah Pratt will be remembered through a new costumed character, informed by the memories of her grandson and great grandson. Visitors can explore themes of booming industry, expertise in new technologies and migration stories that shaped the Black Country's industrial landscape during this transformative period by exploring the buildings, meeting new costumed characters and watching demonstrations. *For more information and to plan your visit to: Black Country Living Museum, please visit www.bclm.com*

Women's Hour! A Journey



Last year, 2023, began as most years do with the year stretching ahead, full of possibilities- some holidays planned, some celebrations and a lot of things needing to be done. Then February came and I began an unexpected journey. Out of the blue, I became unwell and needed an emergency operation. I had seemingly been as fit as a fiddle until two weeks prior to my operation. My first question was, when would I be able to get back to normal. Three months I was told but this was before it was discovered that I had Stage 3 cancer of the colon. Six months of chemotherapy- eight cycles- would be necessary to treat the cancer. Suddenly my life changed; all my plans for the months ahead were cancelled. Strangely enough I was not afraid of the diagnosis, just rather disappointed that my body had let me down. A new journey had begun. The following months were dominated by chemotherapy

cycles and their side effects. In some ways it was not as bad as I had expected and my treatment was carried out by experienced, caring nursing staff and doctors. I was able to carry on with many aspects of my life to begin with, supported by my family and friends. I was overwhelmed by the kindness of everyone and my house was like a florists! Post operation, my body took longer to recover than suggested. I had always been very active, unable to sit still but now I was very limited as to what I could do. I became increasingly tired as the cycles progressed and had to look on while others did the things I normally did. It was strange to be suddenly dependent on others. Fortunately, I caught up with reading books that I had meant to read and was soon back to writing for the paper which kept my brain active. Mainly though I went from cycle to cycle, like jumping hurdles, counting down as each one passed. Spring became Summer

Susan Catford



but I was not even able to enjoy the sun (not that we had so much last year!) and my energy levels dropped even more. We had to cancel holidays but in a spirit of optimism, I booked one for April this year. As Autumn approached, the end was in sight. October was the end of my treatment but there would be no knowing if it was successful until a CT scan at the end. However, in September I managed to fall down the stairs, injuring my back and forcing me to rest (even more!) and do nothing for six weeks. How cross I was with myself!!! Just when I thought I would begin to get my fitness back, I was restricted even more than before. Family and friends continued to be wonderfully supportive, making it all more tolerable.

October came and with it my CT scan. To my huge relief I was given the all-clear; my cancer had gone. I could now concentrate on retrieving my life but the journey had not ended. After virtually ten months of inactivity, I was weak and still unable to do much physically. Even climbing stairs required great effort – I used to run up and down them! The fit, restless, never-tired me, was no more, but I was determined to get back to doing things. It was and is a slow process. But I am still here and I no longer have cancer. That chapter of my life is now behind me and there is so much to live for and enjoy.

I couldn't have got through this without the fantastic support of all those around me. My husband acquired new skills and became chief cook and bottle-washer (as well as coping with all the other tasks required). I have had a little trouble locating things in my kitchen and shopping lists it seems are rarely adhered to –

we now have lots of fabric conditioner!

My sisters too were there to help and give me moral support, one sister travelling down from Manchester to stay and help with my care. My sons and their wives, who had been shocked by their normally healthy Mum being struck down, gave me love, cuddles and moral support. Friends gave me encouragement and coped with my lack of strength and stamina, making me laugh and feel nearly normal. The team at Hughes & Co. enabled me to take part in the production of their brilliant newspapers, keeping me mentally stimulated and feeling valued. I have been very lucky indeed to have had all those who have accompanied me on my unexpected journey. Most of all, of course, my thanks go to all those in the NHS who do their jobs so well and have brought me to the other side of my cancer treatment. I have shown my appreciation in a previous article but I can never thank them enough. Now it is up to me to get my fitness back and get on with my life. I will get there, believe me!

There is so much to look forward to and that holiday I booked optimistically is now only a few weeks away!

Since writing this article, the Princess of Wales has also been diagnosed with cancer. I wish her all the best and I am sure her journey will also have a successful outcome.

Awaiting Spring

When Spring is round the corner

We have to wait and see

For flowers to appear again

And leaves on every tree.

We've had the dark and dreary days

And Winter months have passed.

Now green shoots hold a promise.

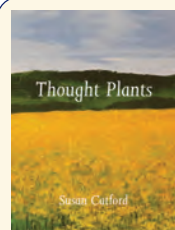
Colour will come at last.

For Spring raises the spirits.

New life returns once more.

Blue skies and days of sunshine

Are what we're waiting for.



'Thought Plants' is Susan's first book and is a new collection of writing and poems exploring ideas, events and everyday life.

At times serious and thoughtful, at others enjoying the whimsical, lighter side of things.

It has grown surprisingly well from early seeds and a fertile imagination.

120 pages A5 full colour illustrated by Susan Catford

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Farming *Mike Page*



At the time I am writing this, we are approaching April and I had expected by now we would be starting to experience something that resembled spring weather and spring soil conditions when crops can be planted. But the way in which the weather has been exceptionally difficult, at least as far as farming goes, continues. The problems facing farmers throughout late autumn 2023, and the winter and the effects on food production here in the

UK have even featured on popular radio programmes like Any Questions. It has been estimated that the collapse in weather conditions last October, before the end of the usual autumn cereal planting season and the loss of many crop areas resulting from flooding preventing germination or survival of germinated crops, will mean a loss of perhaps 20% of final 2024 harvest yield. This might have been compensated for to

some extent by good spring weather allowing the planting of spring crops capable of giving of their best. But spring crops are usually, even at best, likely to yield less grain than autumn planted varieties, and that is assuming they can be planted by March or early April at the latest, to deliver of something approaching their full potential. Current soil conditions, and continuing rain suggest it will be well into April or even May before many (if any) crops can be planted, with likely low yields or even fields left bare. And to deliver their potential, late planted spring crops (with their relatively shallow, poorly-developed root systems) need above average rainfall in June and July. And who wants a wet summer?? As I said before, the UK is not, except in a particularly good cropping season, able to grow all of its grain needs for both food and feed, but international grain trading is such that much UK grain is exported because it suits the quality requirements of other users, and an even

greater quantity is imported, again because it suits the quality requirements of the end user. The quality requirements of grain here in the UK to manufacture bread is considerably different to that throughout most of the rest of Europe, because here we like our bread to come as a sliced loaf and to remain 'fresh' for several days. I am hoping that weather and soil conditions, particularly on the heavy clay soils that dominate across wide (but certainly not all) areas around here will have improved by the time it comes to write for the May version of Powick Times. We can prepare for a good harvest and it is possible to take a more optimistic view of matters. Farmers are by their nature inclined to be optimists, but many years ago I was told [and I assume (hope!) it was meant as a joke]: "It is better in life to be a pessimist; at least that way you are never going to be disappointed in the way things turn out." But, I remain an optimist and wait for improved weather.

Country Watch



March came in like a lion with lots of heavy rain and blustery winds. It continued to be very changeable with temperatures varying from freezing to above average for the time of year. We have yet to see if it will depart like a lamb! Many fields are still water-logged and the farmers are unable to plant crops yet. Fortunately the lambing

season carries on regardless, though grazing is difficult and conditions in fields not good for newborns. Extra feed and shelter is needed to ensure the well-being of ewes and lambs. The hedgerows have been cut back in the lanes and although they look quite stark, new shoots are already appearing. In the woods, bright

green honeysuckle leaves are amongst the first to appear. Catkins wave their feathery tails against bare branches. Primroses, cowslips and celandines provide splashes of yellow and bluebells are sending up their spiky leaves, promising a wonderful purple/blue display in the weeks to come. Bushes and shrubs are the first to

show the return of Spring with their tight buds and small, tender leaves. Hawthorn blossom brightens the hedgerows with delicate sprays of white but it is early yet for the fruit blossoms. Most of the trees still have their wintry appearance but new foliage will not be far away. The grass is loving the wet weather and bright green fields can be seen on the hillsides on sunny days. In the bare tree tops, crows can be seen guarding their nests, dark silhouettes against the sky. Smaller birds flit hither and thither seeking food and nesting materials. High up the buzzards catch the winds, gliding gracefully with their huge wings spread wide, calling to each other with their distinctive cry. Kites, too, can be seen in lesser numbers but it is a delight to watch them displaying their aerobatics. An early Easter means that there may not be so many spring flower displays yet, but at least the grass verges are bright with daffodils and primroses. April will bring Spring and, we hope, some brighter, warmer weather. 'April may bring showers But Nature will restore the trees and flowers.'

Cooking for fun! *Ailsa Craddock*

I've just had a potting shed put up in the garden - I was ridiculously excited about it coming! Also bought myself a little rotavator to dig over the vegetable patches and fruit patch. We've had some lovely days recently after all the winter rain so I was out there digging and raking and planting! I've put in spinach, carrots, parsnips, beetroot, broad beans, dwarf beans and peas in the ground with cucumber and courgette seeds (hopefully) sprouting in pots on the shelf in front of the shed window. Rhubarb is going well with black and redcurrants, raspberries and gooseberries leafing up nicely! You can almost hear everything growing. All this got me to think about vegetarians and how I haven't really posted much for them.

Goulash with Horseradish

Dumplings

1 onion
1 carrot, 1 large potato (ordinary or sweet) 1 stick of celery
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 teaspoon fresh thyme
1 teaspoon paprika (I like the smoked one but it's up to you) 1 tin tomatoes - whole or chopped
1 vegetable stock cube
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 teaspoon chilli sauce 1 bay leaf
1 red pepper

Chop all the vegetables. Heat some oil in a saucepan and add the onions, garlic, thyme and paprika and fry gently for five minutes. Add the carrot, potato and celery and fry for another five minutes. Add the tomatoes, stock cube, tomato paste and chilli sauce and bay leaf. Bring to the boil and simmer till the vegetables are soft. Halve, deseed and slice the pepper and fry in another pan for 6 - 8 minutes till soft and charred. Add to the goulash.

Dumplings

100 grams Self raising flour
50 grams vegetable suet
1 large dessertspoon horseradish sauce (or more to taste)

1 teaspoon tarragon (optional)
Combine all above in a bowl, adding enough water to form a soft dough and shape into small balls You can now either add the dumplings, cover and simmer gently for about 25 minutes for soft dumplings or transfer the goulash to an oven dish, add the dumplings and put in the oven at 180°C uncovered for about 20 minutes if you like your dumplings crispy on the top (I do!). To serve a spoonful of sour cream if you have any and some shredded spring onion to decorate
Sometimes, I add some spinach, shredded kale or cabbage to the goulash with the peppers to give it a little more colour and taste. You could also vary the vegetables to add parsnip, swede, leek - whatever is lurking in the bottom of your fridge! PS My husband, a



true carnivore, loves this so even non vegetarians should enjoy this! And, if you have any left over, you can whizz it all up in a blender with a little more stock and have some lovely vegetable soup for another day!

Roasted Cauliflower with Punjabi Seasonings

1 cauliflower, florets separated
2 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
2 teaspoon grated ginger
1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, 1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 tablespoon chopped coriander leaves
3 tablespoon olive or rapeseed oil
1 teaspoon whole cumin seeds

Put the cauliflower florets in a large bowl. Combine the lemon juice, turmeric and ginger and pour over the cauliflower. Add salt, cayenne, ground spices and coriander and mix well. Set aside for 2 hours or more tossing now and then. Preheat the oven to 220°C. Put the oil in a small frying pan and set over a medium heat. When hot, add the cumin seed and let them sizzle for a few seconds. Pour the spiced oil over the cauliflower and toss well. Spread out the florets in a roasting tin and put in the oven for 25 minutes, turning half way through. Serve alongside any meat of your choice, any curry - or just on its own with some chutneys to dip into!

Thoughts from the Snug . . .

What is it to be British?

Being British is about driving a German car to an Irish pub for a Belgian beer then driving home grabbing a curry or a Turkish kebab on the way, to then sit on Swedish furniture and watch American shows on a Japanese or Korean TV. And the most British thing of all? Suspicion of all things foreign!

Only in Britain can a pizza get to your house faster than an ambulance.

Only in Britain do supermarkets make sick people walk all the way to the back of the shop to get their prescriptions while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.

Only in Britain do people order double cheeseburgers, large fries and a diet coke.

Only in Britain do banks leave both doors open, but chain the pens to the counters.

Only in Britain do we leave cars worth thousands of pounds on the drive and lock our junk and cheap lawnmower in the garage.

Only in Britain do we use answering machines to screen call and then have 'Call waiting' so we won't miss a call from someone we don't want to talk to in the first place.

Only in Britain are there disabled parking places in front of the skating rink.

Buddy Bach

Do you have a cherished book that is in need of restoration or repair?



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Are Irises the perfect perennial?

Nikki Hollier



My Mum received a little Iris in a pot – so beautiful and delicate but had no plant tag to identify the variety. I went online and saw a myriad of plants, so of course, I had to find out more. Apparently, they're one of the easiest perennials to plant and grow in a sunny garden! Is it a bulb or a rhizome? Both – but depends on the variety! I'm going to talk about two varieties which are the most common and simple to grow – Iris reticulata and Iris germanica. Please note, the whole plant is toxic, so do NOT eat them. Iris reticulata are bulbs and come in many colours, from icy pale blues to vibrant purples. The best time to sow them is in the Autumn (from September to

mid-November) in the front of a border or a pot. They grow to around 15cm tall and flower early in the year – January-February timeframe. They're one of the first flowers of the year, so planting them in a pot where you see them everyday is a great tonic on a grey day! I've potted mine with some wood anemones. Iris germanica are often called Bearded Irises and are easy to grow and maintain. They're rhizomes (rather than bulbs) and are called bearded iris because of their distinctive flowers which have upright petals called "standards" and cascading petals called "falls". Running down the centre of each fall is a "beard" that resembles a furry caterpillar. The best time to plant the rhizome is in late summer. They can grow between 60-90cm tall depending on the variety. Plant shallowly with the upper part of the rhizome sitting on the surface of the soil in a sunny position in moist but well drained soil. After planting remove the uppermost third of the leaves to protect against wind-rock. Remove the stems after flowering from the base as

this will concentrate the plant's energy into producing new rhizomes.

It's important to plant the rhizome in full sun (at least 6-8 hours a day) to ensure they stay dry (and don't rot) plus they need enough light to encourage the flowers to bloom. So, if your rhizomes aren't getting baked by the sun, this could be the reason why they're not blooming.

What flowers go well with irises?

If you're wondering what to grow with your Irises, it really depends on your colour scheme. For a complimentary colour scheme (colours on the opposite side of the colour wheel.) try Euphorbia with its acid green flowers. It packs quite a punch! For a harmonious colour



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scheme (colours that sit beside each other on the colour wheel) plant with alliums, bronze fennel and and nepeta, which is a much softer and calmer vibe.



April gardening tips *Reg Moule* BBC Hereford & Worcester

Early in the Month

Sow annual climbers e.g. Asarina, Ecchreocarpus, Cobaea, Ipomoea, Tropaeolum and Rhodochiton.

Dead head daffodils and narcissi – feed them but DO NOT cut off the foliage.

Keep an eye out for slugs and take steps to control them.

Prune out any frost damaged shoots on less hardy shrubs such as Pittosporum.

Plant summer flowering bulbs outdoors e.g. Gladioli and Nerine bowdenii, if you already have overcrowded clumps of Nerines in your garden, lift and divide them now.

For trouble free roses, spray with one of the safer rose combined pest and disease treatments, like Rose Clear 3 in 1 Action or Uncle Tom's Plant Tonic for an organic solution to rose diseases.

Prune Forsythias and winter Jasmine after flowering. Finish dividing overcrowded herbaceous perennial plants.

Plant summer flowering bulbs eg. Gladioli, Dahlias etc. Straggly silver foliage plants can be cut back now e.g.

Saintolina. (but not down into old wood - that is risky).

Lift and divide pond plants. This is also a good time to introduce new plants too. Plant Asparagus crowns and Jerusalem artichokes. Divide overcrowded clumps of Nerines and Siberian Iris.

Treat potted ornamental plants with Bug Clear Vine Weevil Killer, as it acts as both a control measure and an insurance policy. One treatment lasts three months.

Organically, place a half inch layer of horticultural grit on top of the compost to prevent successful egg laying.

Cover some established strawberry plants with cloches to get an early crop.

Plant new conifer hedges and trim established ones.

Mid April

Tackle pernicious weeds, like bindweed, with a systemic weed killer containing glyphosate; it is best to use an "extra strong" version.

Hardy annuals can still be sown in situ outdoors.

Plant dormant dahlia tubers 10cm (4in) deep outdoors at the foot of support stakes.

Undertake lawn renovations by repairing damaged edges and removing bumps and hollows. Watch out for whitefly appearing in your greenhouse, hang up some yellow sticky traps to monitor them. Plant some French marigolds or Coleus cannina near your tomatoes to deter the pests. Take conifer cuttings.

Pull off 7.5 – 10 cm (3-4in) side shoots. Trim up the base.

Dip in hormone and insert in free draining compost. Watch out for attacks of gooseberry mildew and gooseberry sawfly, these devastate bushes.

Plant out cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprout and celery plants. Finish planting sprouted maincrop potatoes.

Sow tomato seeds now for outdoor planting in June.

Begin planting up hanging baskets, keep them inside until frost risk is minimal.

Check your greenhouse regularly, as watering, shading and ventilation are important.

Sow Basil indoors, but do not plant outside until there is no risk of frost.

Start successional sowings of salad crops eg. Lettuce, carrots



and radishes.

Late April

Sow tender veg. indoors for planting out next month e.g. courgettes, French and Runner beans. Sow marrow, courgette and squash seed on its side and soak Sweet Corn seed in water for 4 hours before sowing.

Prune early flowered Clematis after blooming e.g. C. alpina and C. macropetala. This is only necessary where space is limited. This is a good time to re-pot any houseplants that are pot bound.

Store unused seeds left in open packets in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Treat your lawn to an application of lawn food. Miracle Gro Thick and Green is my favourite as its food is released according to the weather conditions.

Guide to accountant speak for Balance Sheets

Last month I looked at terms commonly used in Profit and Loss statements. The other major financial statement and the one that baffles many people is the Balance Sheet. Where the profit and loss statement details income and expenditure for a period, the balance sheet reflects the overall financial health of the business at a specific date. The balance sheet shows the value of what a business owns, the assets, and the value of what a business owes to others, the liabilities.

Fixed Assets –

These are items of equipment and machinery, vehicles, land and buildings that are owned and used by a business over more than one year. The cost of fixed assets are written off over time by means of depreciation.

Current Assets –

These are defined as items which a business owns, and which can readily be converted into cash. Current assets include cash - both in the bank and in the petty cash tin, stock and debtors.

Stock and Work in Progress - Stock is goods that have been purchased for resale or the raw materials that will make items for sale. Work in progress is the value of work that has been done on a job, which has not yet been invoiced.

Trade debtors –

This is the value of sales made and invoices issued to customers but not yet paid.



Other debtors – Money owed to the business by people other than trade customers.

Current Liabilities –

This is money the business owes to others that is due to be paid in a year and includes money owed to suppliers (known as trade creditors) for goods purchased, money owed for VAT, employment taxes and Corporation Tax, bank loans and Hire Purchase agreements.

Long Term liabilities -

Generally include loans that are due to be paid back longer than one year.

Balance sheets can be confusing, but they are a vital indicator of whether your business could be in financial difficulties and should not be ignored. If you don't understand the terms used or where the figures come from ask for an explanation from your accountant.

Carol Draper FCCA
Clifton-Crick Sharp & Co Ltd

Angels and Devils

Angela Johns



I looked across and saw a distressed lady with tears and panic all over her face. I could not leave her to suffer alone. "Are you OK?" seems such a ridiculous question, why do we often start with that? But I did. I suppose it's because it's the gentle way in, taking away the presumption that someone can't figure it out for themselves. She had lost her passport, the bus that had dropped her off was already far in the distance and their offices had closed for the day. Her explanation prompted another search through her tiny handbag and all her pockets, one of those panicky searches where your eyes don't see that much – blind panic. Check, disbelief, recheck. What now? I led her to a quieter spot and ran through some basic questions, such as when did you last see it. If she had dropped it, someone would pick it up and hand it in. "Look at these people all around us," I said, "all travellers who would look after each other." We would all understand the horror of a lost passport just as we were about to embark on our special journey. And hers must have been special, with her carefully chosen outfit, beautifully styled hair and several large pieces of luggage. She saw in my eyes solutions, guidance, someone to either confirm or resolve the conundrum. She was able to take a deep breath and calm her nervous system just enough to feel safe in someone's company to search for the lost. It's not that I found her passport for her, she did that for herself. Her eyes could now see, she could recount her last moves and she could make an ordered plan for the search. As she removed each piece of luggage from the trolley her passport fell free, the Spanish sunshine glinting off the sparkly cover. Hoorah! "You are my angel," she said. If only she knew!

It seems that there is a devil inside us that throws a spanner in the workings of our brains just as we need all our faculties to deal with something. Or it sits on our shoulder shouting criticisms or whispering doubts. The fact is, we need this so called devil to alert us to danger and keep us safe, help us make informed reasoned judgements and decisions, even to recognise important traits in others. But we don't want it to run the show. When it takes over the angel inside us has no voice and cannot use the many skills it has that also keep us safe, make helpful decisions and recognise important traits in others. Therapy can help us find this balance so we don't remain our own worst enemy.

Currently training as an Emotional Therapeutic Counsellor with the AETC, Angela is a qualified Reflexologist, Aromareflex Practitioner and Reiki Teacher/Practitioner. She is passionate about her therapies and spends quality time with her clients to facilitate their wellbeing.
You can find her at angelajohns.co.uk

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Pandering to stereotypes

Karen Harris

How does the body cope with the ageing process? A good question isn't it? MY answer is, it depends what you do with it.

I've seen, and taught, enough people in the last 30+ years to know that age IS definitely just a number and it has no bearing, at all, on what happens to your body. It's down to you, your mind-set, and how you treat it. What you do, and, have done, with it.

Do you remember that 'Rightmove' advert where the husband is constantly being called up the stairs by his wife, he climbs the stairs with a resigned look on his face, to see what she wants. The ad sees them moving to a bungalow, intimating that as he's getting on a bit his poor old knees won't be able to cope!

I know it's just an advert, but subliminally it sends out a message. You shouldn't be doing that at your age!

It panders to stereotypes that people should be buying bungalows as they get older; but those stairs are providing an important functional movement for hip/leg strength and stability and doing away with some important exercise. That is not the 'right move' in my opinion!

I'm sure gravel companies must be raking it in (excuse the pun) with all the 'low-maintenance' gardens that now seem to have spread into back, as well as, front gardens.

Again, gardening uses muscles and creates movements that stimulate the body - and mind - it's a win-win situation and a great recreational activity that

has so many benefits - for us, the environment and wild life. If you don't use it, you REALLY DO lose it.

Your body adapts to the stimulus you give it. When you are young, you're not thinking about the future effects of your diet, activity (or inactivity), your driving/desk job, how much you are looking down at your phone/tablet, it's not important, and why should it be? Youth is on your side!

But it is here, at this point in life, whilst the body is building its reserves for later life that these adaptations start to set in. In fact, the effects of creating detrimental habits at an early age should be taught in schools because good habits formed early are better than bad habits formed without 'the knowledge.'

Body adaptations, if they become habitual, become compensations. Muscles stop working because your regular body position is asking other muscles to work for them (because they have adapted to your stimulus) so they compensate. But in doing so the body loses it's dynamic balance and tension; this is where dysfunction sets in. Dysfunction is a horrible word, but if you have pain and discomfort, have to wear braces or supports, use aids or have regular medical interventions, then whatever age you are, the body no longer functions as it should. Is that because you have stopped doing something, or something stopped you doing it? Let me tell you, it wasn't your age!

The Power of Dreams

Emily Papirnik

Martin Luther King Jr.'s iconic speech about his dream for a better future serves as a testament to the transformative power of dreams. Beyond being mere figments of our imagination, dreams are catalysts for change, driving us to pursue our passions and aspirations. They provide us with direction, motivation and a sense of purpose propelling us towards a future that we envision for ourselves.

Dreams ignite a fire within us, urging us to break free from the shackles of doubt and complacency. Through dreaming, we dare to envision a reality that transcends the limitations imposed upon us by circumstance or society. Whether it's achieving personal goals, making a difference in the world, or simply finding contentment and happiness, dreams serve as the guiding light illuminating our path forward.

The significance of dreams extends beyond individual aspirations; they have the power to inspire collective action and social change. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream of racial equality and justice galvanised a movement that reverberated across the globe, speaking hope and igniting the flames of activism in the hearts of millions. His words resonated deeply because they tapped into a shared longing for a more just and equitable world.

Dreams not only compel us to pursue our own aspirations but also inspire others to do the same. When we dare to dream boldly and unapologetically, we become beacons of inspiration for those around us, encouraging them to envision a brighter future for themselves. Our dreams have

the potential to ripple outward, igniting a chain reaction of empowerment and transformation within our communities and beyond.

One powerful tool for harnessing the power of dreams is journaling. By putting pen to paper and articulating our deepest desires and aspirations, we not only clarify our goals but also set in motion the process of manifesting them into reality. Sarah Morgan's "Manifesting Dream Day Journal" is a prime example of how the simple act of writing can unlock our imagination and reveal the possibilities that lie dormant within us. Through journaling, we gain clarity about what truly matters to us and cultivate the courage to pursue our dreams wholeheartedly. I used this tool years ago and it was a hugely impactful process.

It's important to acknowledge that pursuing our dreams is not always easy. Along the way, we may encounter obstacles, setbacks and moments of doubt. Yet, it is precisely in these moments that the power of our dreams shines brightest. They remind us of our resilience, our capacity for growth, and our unwavering commitment to the vision we hold dear.

Dreams are not merely flights of fancy, they are the lifeblood of our existence, propelling us forward towards a future with purpose and possibility. Whether grand or humble, personal or collective, our dreams have the power to shape our lives and the world around us. So, dare to dream boldly, pursue your aspirations with unwavering determination and watch as the world transforms in response to the power of your vision.

YES or NO?

Do you want to take control of your aches and pains?
Do you want to stop having to take pain killers?
Do you want the knowledge to be able to help yourself?
Do you want to feel how empowering that feels?
Do you want to feel that weight lifted from your shoulders?

YES, of course!

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Karen Harris, Posture Alignment Specialist, Fitness Trainer
07954 544595

The app to Feel better

Romy's Uni Life *Romy Kemp Liverpool University*

Easter Break: Coming home for the holidays seems like a well deserved break after assessment deadlines this month. Semester two is flying by, yet is so much more enjoyable than semester one. This is because the basics have been covered and so it's easier to relax, and become used to your surroundings and friends. For me, work has been more difficult in the second semester, but I have enjoyed studying it so much more. I have three weeks off for the Easter break, which is going to be an extremely busy time - filled with meet ups, university work, and days out. I have quite a few assessments due in after

the break, however this is also a time for rest.

The Trip Home: The train ride home was magnificent. The sun was out for the first time in what felt like forever, and there was no rain on the way home - which was a relief! I arrived at the train station an hour early, due to the unreliable and slow accommodation bus (so I definitely didn't want to be late), then waited for my train to arrive. The last time I was at the train station, there were police dogs being trained - I got sniffed three times! It's not at all what I imagined for dog training, there were tennis balls being thrown around and dogs sniffing

everyone - it was quite amusing. My train change was at Birmingham New Street, where I had a thirty minute wait time. Looking out of the window on the way home was beautiful. The wildlife on the other side of the glass was so joyful. I saw two herons flying away from a lake, a few buzzards along the journey were circling for their lunch, cows and horses were full of energy, and I even saw a family of foxes playing in a field. It was a wonderful sight! When I arrived at Great Malvern station, my dad was waiting by the gate; it was lovely to see him after an exhausting trip. My family and I all ended



our day with a meal out. Coming home to the countryside after adapting to city life is rather reassuring. Although I do already miss the public transport, and the street lights when it gets dark, I am able to see the stars more clearly from my own garden. The chirping is so much clearer, and there are so many more fields to walk in and admire.

Evie's Teenage Focus *Evie Aubin*

I feel, at this time, my entire life revolves around my A-levels. Whilst this isn't necessarily a bad thing, considering that my exams are in a few months (six weeks and two days to be exact), despite all the revision I do, I can't shake this feeling of foreboding. My art exam is the first and longest exam to take place. The exam unit - which we started last month - concludes in a glorious three day long exam...fifteen hours to create an outstanding artwork that the likes of Van-Gogh, Frida Kahlo and Monet would all swoon over. whilst also keeping up to date with our sketchbooks at the same time. I'll be the first to say that during our personal investigation I was terrible at this. I would spend weeks perfecting my sketchbook whilst procrastinating doing the art work. And not to get too existential, but, I think it mainly stems from the idea that the artwork itself wouldn't live up to my expectations, and therefore in order to side-step this later disappointment, I would end up not doing it until the last minute. Luckily though, I'm somehow more excited to complete this section of the exam than I was the previous one. This is odd to me, firstly because I got to choose and dictate the topics and style of my previous personal investigation whereas this time we were given topics and we had to decide from those which we would do and, secondly, because the time we have to do

this unit is so much shorter. Last time my focus was on how different cultures celebrated death, whilst this time I'm doing the complete opposite. From the topics we were given I chose to focus on the mundane. However, if you're interested, some of the others were: light in the landscape, decorative, time, mirrors, fauna and one more which I cannot remember. Whilst focusing on this topic, I've chosen to depict the idea of girlhood. I've found some amazing artists such as Kelly Grace and Katie Butler as well as others who I will draw inspiration from. My art teacher, however, gave me the motivation saying that they are some of the most technically challenging artists he has seen (so please keep your fingers crossed for me).

Another aspect of my coursework which seems to be holding me hostage, is my English NEA. I don't think I've talked about it before here, so in case you don't know, I'll give you a little rundown of what it is. Almost a year ago, we started our NEA (keep in mind the "year ago" bit), a section of coursework where we write an essay, around 2500 words, about two books on a question of our choosing. By the time our internal deadline came around I had finished my NEA. However, something was gnawing at me telling me it wasn't good enough, and so I had the amazing idea that two days before it was due, I would completely rewrite it! The essay that took me almost a

year to write and perfect, I was doing again in the space of two days, and if that wasn't good enough, I also chose to change one of the books from Macbeth to Romeo and Juliet, therefore making most of my previous work invalid. Luckily, I did write it in time and now it just needs some minor tweaking which I've been given an extension to do, which reminds me that I should probably go work on that. Anyway, please



keep your fingers crossed for me. I have a feeling these next few weeks are going to be interesting to say the least.



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SCAN FOR
MORE INFO

Gregory's World!

We're Halfway There

Come on inside, fellow reader! Make yourself comfy, grab a cushion or a cuppa or a custard cream (all three, if you like) and put your feet up for ten minutes. Spring is expected any minute now, I spotted my first bee of the year and heard at least two lawnmowers outside a few days ago and, when I stood in a ray of sunshine, closed my eyes and thought really hard, I almost felt warm!

The Easter holidays (also known in Ox-speech as a 'vac' – short for 'vacation') have begun and with them, I successfully put a lid on my fifth term. I've started to collect quite a few of them by now, in fact I crossed the halfway mark of my course back on 10th February. Best of all, it doesn't feel as though time has flown by without me grabbing hold of it and doing something with it. Quite the opposite – a quick scroll through my camera roll of wonky selfies and air-fried food photos is enough to reboot my memory and remind me of how much I've done, how far I've come since September 2022,

seventeen articles ago. I hadn't been away from home for longer than a week, I hadn't arrived at a place where I didn't already know someone, and I used to be overcome with fiery rage after struggling for twenty minutes to put a duvet cover on ... but look at me now! Getting halfway through your course is celebrated at a formal dinner called 'halfway hall'. Several colleges actually held theirs closer to the halfway threshold. If Exeter College had done that, it would've been called: 'halfway marquee' (I'm not a slave to alliteration, but it doesn't quite have the same ring to it, does it?) due to repair works in the hall at the time. So, at last, on the eighth and final week of term, repairs completed, tuxedo donned, bring-your-own-booze brought, I headed over to college to celebrate 'halfway hall' with good friends I would have never made without Oxford. Most of them were also there to celebrate, although for the medicine students (their course being six years long – *at least*) it was technically their 'quarter-

Gregory Sidaway Exeter College, Oxford

way hall'. Speeches were given by our JCR (Junior Common Room) organisers and the results for student awards were announced, with categories ranging from 'biggest academic weapon' and 'most likely to become rector of Exeter College', to 'most underrated hottie' and 'rear of the year'. Some genius thought they were being hilarious by nominating me in 'fastest to down a pint' category. I was scheduled to compete with seasoned members of the rowing team (whose *carpe diem* social events would've trained them well for that sort of thing), only for the college bar to discourage such a tournament at the eleventh hour – hmm, maybe for the best. Fittingly, it feels to me as though wheels are turning, things are moving forward and gaining momentum as I look ahead to Uni: Part Two and the wide open future beyond. It's



been a time of preparation for me. As well as volunteering at the Oxford Literary Festival (gathering some experience points for a potential career in journalism or publishing), I will also be sitting my third driving test (please, please, please) and – considering that my examiner last time had to tell a shaky, brain-numbed me that 'You know, Greg, green does mean go' – I can confidently say I've come a long way since then! Have a Happy Easter, fellow readers. To the future!

"True strength lies not in physical might, but in the purity of one's heart"

Saint George and the Dragon



VETERINARY ADVICE ESPECIALLY FOR YOU!



The Importance of Vaccination

Vaccinations are an important part of our pets' healthcare requirements. They are there to protect our pets from potentially deadly diseases, such as canine parvovirus, feline enteritis and rabbit haemorrhagic disease. As well as stopping the potential spread of diseases like leptospirosis to humans.

Unfortunately, there has been a worrying trend of a reduction in the numbers of both pets and humans being vaccinated in recent years. This has led to regional outbreaks of serious diseases that have not been seen in large numbers for some time. Up to a third of pets are not kept up to date with their routine vaccinations. Vaccination, in part, works by 'herd immunity' – the more animals that are vaccinated the less likely those vulnerable to the disease will become infected. With fewer animals being vaccinated the more at risk our animals are, even those that are routinely vaccinated.

Recommended vaccinations:

Dogs

- Core vaccinations (those recommended for any domestic dog worldwide) are for **canine parvovirus**, **canine adenovirus (hepatitis)** and **distemper**, after the initial vaccination course these are needed every 3 years.
- In the UK countryside leptospirosis is not only a potentially fatal condition but can also be spread to humans, this vaccine is needed every 12 months.
- **kennel cough** can lead to a debilitating cough and is very contagious, it is recommended for dogs in any setting where there are multiple dogs present e.g. kennelling or training classes, or for dogs that are particularly sociable and enjoy greeting every dog. It is a 12 monthly vaccine usually given up the nose.

Cats

- Core vaccinations are for **feline enteritis**, **feline herpesvirus** and **feline calicivirus (cat flu)**. Enteritis is given 3 yearly and the flu viruses are needed yearly.
- **Feline leukaemia virus vaccine** is given 3 yearly and is recommended for any outdoor cats.

Rabbits

- Rabbits have a single combined vaccination yearly which covers for **rabbit haemorrhagic disease 1 and 2** and **myxomatosis**.

Most vaccination appointments will include a general health check to catch other conditions early, such as dental disease and heart disease. Contact your vet to make sure your pet is up to date with their vaccinations.

Best wishes *Eliza*



info@martinandcarrvets.co.uk
martinandcarrvets.co.uk

A mixture of Myth and Legend

Brian Johnson-Thomas



Just after the end of the first Gulf War, I hitched a lift on a freighter aircraft returning to Europe from Habbaniyah, the air base outside Baghdad. We then made what's called a technical stop – for fuel and crew rest – at Antalya in Turkey. That's where I found Father Christmas. In the museum there lies the sarcophagus of one St. Nicholas, who was Bishop of those parts a long while ago, and whose legend mutated into that of our Father Christmas. And he's not alone because allegedly, England's St. George may well have been a Turkish knight.....

It so happens that St. George's Day was also the birthday of one William Shakespeare, a fact which our neighbours up the road in Stratford upon Avon are unlikely to forget. Indeed, this year, as ever, they have a whole variety of events taking place around that date, many of which are actually free.

Free events include performances of Parade-the Giant Wheel – a choreographed procession through the town featuring a twelve foot high giant wheel, plus family friendly workshops on several themes and storytelling sessions based on the play 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', giving the opportunity to explore Shakespeare's characters and themes. The Royal Shakespeare Company is also reopening 'The Play's the Thing', a permanent exhibition of theatre items including costumes and props, whilst there is also the chance to see the current production of 'Love's Labour's Lost' in the main theatre or 'The Buddah of Suburbia' in the Swan Theatre. Next month – May – will see The Other

Place hosting the prizewinning play 'English' which is set in a classroom in Iran as four adult classmates grapple with learning English as a foreign language.

For full details see the RSC website www.rsc.org.uk Finally, on St George's Day we're all invited to take part in the launch of the British Asparagus Festival, which starts at the Fleece Inn at Bretforton with a gathering of Morgans and other classic cars at 9.30am. After music and dancing the cars will escort a full 'round of gras' (100 sticks) to Broadway where it will be placed on the Asparagus Express steam train which will depart at 11.35am bound for Cheltenham Racecourse. Gus the Asparagus Man and the legendary St. George himself will personally accompany the asparagus until it's handed over to disability charity, National Star where it will be turned into a delicious soup for their clients. Train tickets are available for advance purchase, with a 5% discount, from www.gwsr.com

For more about the Festival see www.britishasparagusfestival.co.uk Tickets are already on sale for the other must-see event next month, the RHS Malvern Spring Festival at the Three Counties Showground. As well as picking up the very best plants, visitors can take home bags full of inspiration and gardening advice from a whole host of gardening luminaries whilst also celebrating the journey of food from plot to plate with cookery demonstrations by a plethora of talented chefs.

For details see www.threecounties.co.uk A really interesting opportunity popped up on my laptop screen

the other day from Discover Newmarket, the official tourist board for that part of the country. On Thursday 2nd May, Royal Trainer William Haggas is giving exclusive access to a small group of visitors to go behind the scenes of Sommerville Lodge Yard where HM King Charles III and HM Queen Camilla have horses in training. It's going to be a long day, starting at 8am and including a brunch in a local Hotel plus a visit to the National Stud, including a Stallion Parade, and ending in the National Horseracing Museum and a cream tea. The cost for the Royal yard Tour is £165 available from www.discovernewmarket.co.uk The other 'fun' email I had recently was from a firm called LoveRaw who make plant-based vegan chocolate bars. Since we have a good friend who is always lecturing me about the evils of palm oil, I'm quite receptive to such things as their chocolate nutty balls and white chocolate cream wafer bars – and, indeed, we tried the

latter with enjoyment.

For details see www.eatloveraw.com Finally, from the other side of the world, news of a tour that combines superb gardens with superb wines. An antipodean outfit, Botanica World Discoveries, are offering several interesting opportunities for those of us who are perhaps celebrating a special milestone or completing a lifetime's ambition. Indeed if my numbers come up on the Lotto, then I fancy their 16th October tour of the Barossa and Clare Valleys exploring the gardens and great wines of those regions, which you can extend into the Outback and see the landscapes of the Flinders ranges or go to the Murray River and see the large colony of sea lions.

Remember that they're a few time zones ahead of us, but to contact them use their email: info@botanica.travel

But wherever you go – enjoy the Spring !



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Pub Games

Tim Hickson



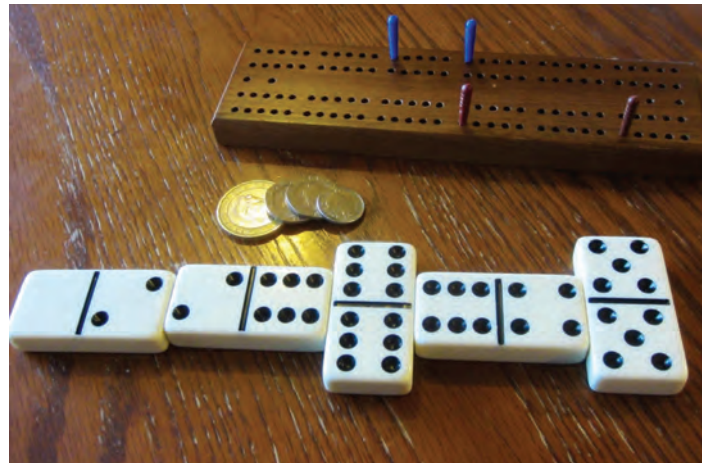
dartboard

I try to support local small businesses and so I am a regular user of local pubs. Recently, thinking back over the years I have been doing this, I recalled my time as a lad in Gloucester when a pint of bitter cost 1s/6d (equivalent to just over £2 now) and the same money could buy a pint of elvers which are baby eels that come up the River Severn in vast numbers and some were fished out by men on the banks using poles with a scoop net on their ends. These were available each Spring and were delicious, fried in bacon fat with a touch of malt vinegar and then made into an omelette with a beaten egg. At other times, cooked garden snails were on sale. So pub food has changed!

It also struck me that another more, major change, has been the disappearance of pub games. We still see dart boards in a few pubs but I cannot remember when last I saw one being used. Back in the 60s it was normal to set off for the pub with your own darts. I also remember going to Martley Village Hall with a darts team and seeing others firing .22 rifles at a target, in the same room, for a similar competition. It was all done very responsibly; most had learnt to handle firearms safely either in the War or during National Service after it. No doubt today's Health and Safety enthusiasts would have got their knickers in a twist. I used to enjoy games of



Cribbage board



Dominoes

Cribbage with playing cards and pegging boards to keep the scores. Some people played for money but many just for fun. At home it is a good family game to involve the young and develop their numeracy skills - as, of course, is darts (more difficult at home!) Dominoes were played competitively in many pubs, usually by the older customers. I am not sure why that was. Another game I enjoyed was Shove Ha'penny. Here a specially made, about A4-sized, slate board was placed on the edge of a table. (Posh boards were made of mahogany.) The half-pennies we used were about the same size as modern 2p pieces and the board had lines parallel to the edge of the table spaced a bit more than the diameter of the coin. The idea was to get your coins inside the lines. These polished ha'pennies were placed on the edge of the board, slightly overlapping, and we used the palm of our hand to give it a shove.

There were some pubs that offered Bar Billiards, a game vaguely like normal billiards but played on a much smaller table and with holes in the middle in front of which were objects which, if you hit them, would then block that hole. Similarly, whilst there were pubs which had adjacent skittle alleys, some had a game on a small table called Bar Skittles. Here a ball, usually on the end of a thin chain attached to the top of a small pole, was swung at small skittles which you attempted to knock over.

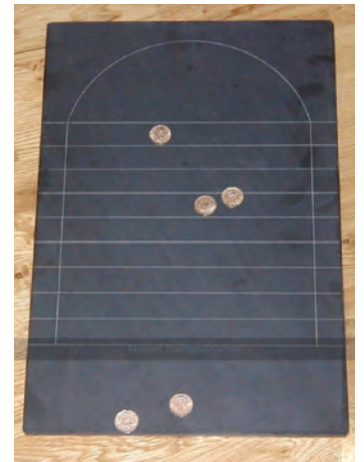
Another table game, which I am pretty sure I remember at The Queens in Elmley Castle, is Quoits, a simple bit of fun.

Then, taking up quite a bit of space and generating a lot of noise, there was Table Football. The Monkey House, at Woodmancote, where all the customers sat or stood outside, had a simple game in its garden. A short pole had a wooden ball in a little cup on its top. Children then threw a short, stout wooden cylinder to try to knock it off. It kept them amused whilst their parents drank their cider.

One other entertainment, that still occurs, is Spoofing to decide who, amongst a small group of friends, will buy the next round. For this, all one needs are some of your own coins. Out of sight of the others, each person selects 0,1,2 or 3 coins and holds these in a closed fist. In turn, the others have to guess the total



Bar Skittles



Shove Ha'penny slate board

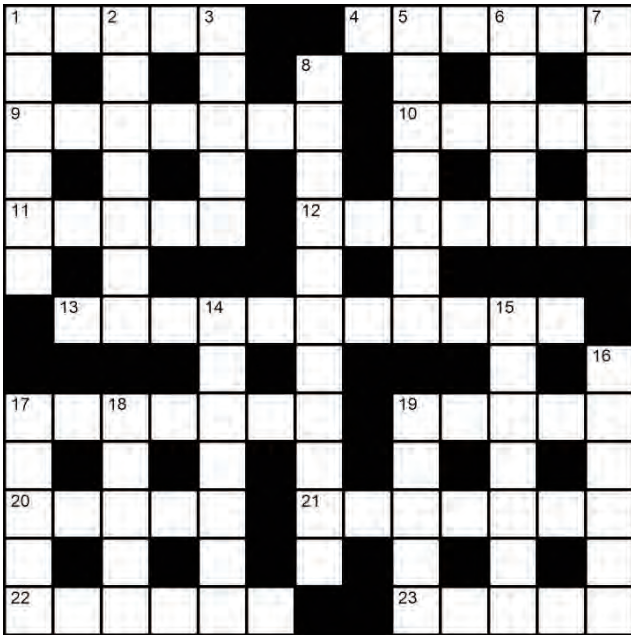
numbers of coins being held. Here it is an advantage to go last as the calls made by others tends to reveal what they have in their own hands. The correct guesser leaves the game which is repeated until one unfortunate person is left. Difficult to play with plastic. Long live coins!



The Monkey House

Coffee Break

Crossword



Across

- 1 Superior of a monastery (5)
- 4 Type of gum (6)
- 9 Waterproof fabric (7)
- 10 Chocolate ingredient (5)
- 11 Yellowish citrus fruit (5)
- 12 Mysterious (7)
- 13 French national holiday (8,3)
- 17 Begin (4,3)
- 19 Brother of Moses (5)
- 20 Precipitous (5)
- 21 Blow up (7)
- 22 Go back (6)
- 23 Intestine (5)

Down

- 1 Ancient Greek sun god (6)
- 2 Eating disturbance (7)
- 3 Kidnapped (5)
- 5 Adapt for new use (7)
- 6 Cured pig meat (5)
- 7 Insane (5)
- 8 Unentitled (11)
- 14 Cavalry soldier (7)
- 15 Flight personnel (7)
- 16 Imaginary (6)
- 17 Intense light beam (5)
- 18 Proficient (5)
- 19 Unscripted (2,3)

Sudoku

Each row and column must contain the numbers from one to nine, without repetitions.

8			3					
6	7	5	9		1			
	3		6	4	8			
	8							
6	4	9	3	7	5		2	
					4			
	9	7	1		6			
	1		4	6	9	5		
		3				4		

		5						
		5		4		7	2	
		7				4	1	
5			4	8		3		
	4		2		1			
	2		9	3			6	
1	5				8			
2	6		3	1				
						2		

Crosswords

Sudoku

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Wordsearch

R	B	J	N	E	Z	A	M	M	H	G
B	F	R	O	W	N	M	O	T	K	K
I	V	C	W	T	M	E	L	L	E	Z
N	T	I	O	Z	T	D	D	N	A	L
G	N	N	D	E	R	E	C	C	L	R
E	E	A	M	I	D	O	H	A	R	A
F	O	O	P	S	M	E	R	G	P	T
C	S	S	E	S	B	O	T	H	E	R
T	N	A	I	G	M	A	W	S	A	O
B	U	N	E	E	H	V	L	T	U	S
A	B	L	E	Y	Z	E	S	T	Y	H

- ACHE
- APR
- BINGE
- BOTHER
- CNN
- DRIP
- ELBA
- ELSE
- EVA
- FROWN
- GEL
- GHETTO
- GIANT
- ISM
- LAN
- LET
- MHZ
- MOLD
- OBSESS
- OCT
- OEDEMA
- O'HARA
- OPS
- ORAL
- RATS
- SNUB
- SOME
- SORT
- SPAN
- SPOOF
- SWAM
- STONE
- WMD
- WINE
- ZESTY

March Answers



Poets' Corner

A Shropshire Lad

XXVI

Along the fields as we came by
 A year ago, my love and I,
 The aspen over stile and stone
 Was talking to itself alone.
 "Oh who are these that kiss and pass?
 A country lover and his lass;
 Two lovers looking to be wed;
 And time shall put them both to bed,
 But she shall lie with earth above,
 And he beside another love."

And sure enough beneath the tree
 There walks another love with me,
 And overhead the aspen heaves
 Its rainy-sounding silver leaves;
 And I spell nothing in their stir,
 But now perhaps they speak to her,
 And plain for her to understand
 They talk about a time at hand
 When I shall sleep with clover clad,
 And she beside another lad.

A. E. Housman 1859-1936

'A Shropshire Lad'

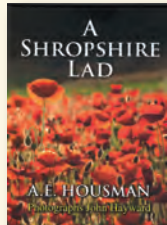
Author: John Hayward

This is the first photographically illustrated edition of 'The Shropshire Lad', timed to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of the A E Housman Society, recently launched by the BBC television presenter, Nick Owen. Photographer John Hayward follows the different locations mentioned in the poem with stunning, full-colour plates.

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Spot & Shop - March Winners

- 1) Nigel Hudson
- 2) Jayne Fuller
- 3) Alison Townend
- 4) J Phelps

Last month's answer:
Border in a Box

Fun Quiz!



1. If you are watching cricket at the Oval, in which county cricket club are you sat?
2. Which British explorer was murdered by the natives in Hawaii?
3. Which Beatle has the real name of Richard Starkey?
4. Who recorded the song 'Think' in 1968 and also performed it in the Blues Brothers movie from the '80s?
5. Which Archduke was assassinated in Sarajevo in June 1914 and caused the outbreak of WW1?
6. Pigs are used to sniff out which delicacy in some parts of France?
7. In nature, how many arms (or legs) does a starfish have?
8. In which sport do teams compete for the Stanley Cup?
9. In Roman Numerals, how many players are there in a rugby union team?
10. Who had a hit in the '60s with 'The House Of The Rising Sun'?
11. Who famously stated that '... an army marches on its stomach'?
12. Which former jockey became a best selling author of thrillers about horse racing?
13. What type of goat produces mohair?
14. If the Hammers are playing the Gunners, in which city would you be?
15. What is the term given to a word that can be spelt the same both backwards and forwards? e.g. ABBA, TOOT
16. In which town did the Pied Piper play?
17. What is the last word in the New Testament?
18. What TV show, produced by Peter Fluck and Roger Law, poked fun at politicians and celebrities in the '80s?
19. In Monopoly, what colour are Bow Street, Marlborough Street and Vine Street properties?
20. What was the name of the dog carried into space aboard Sputnik 2?

Answers: 1. Surrey 2. Captain James Cook 3. Ringo Starr 4. Archibald Rankin 5. Franz Ferdinand 6. Truffles 7. Five 8. Ice Hockey 9. XV (15) 10. The Animals 11. Napoleon Bonaparte 12. Dick Francis 13. Angora 14. London 15. Pallindrome 16. Hamelin 17. Armen 18. Spicing Image 19. Orange 20. Leka

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Take a look at the anagram
The answer is the name of a business that is advertising in the Powick Times this month



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Grand National Sisters

It's that time of year again when the thoughts of the racing fraternity turn to the Grand National, the world-famous steeplechase run at Aintree. In its history only thirteen mares have won the race and of them only two were full sisters and they were both owned and trained locally. They were owned by the 9th Earl of Coventry, George William Coventry (1838-1930), whose family seat was Croome Court and trained by Edwin Weever (1833-1895) at his stables in Bourton-on-the-Hill. The sisters were Emblem born in 1856 and Emblematic born in 1858, their father was Teddington and their mother Miss Batty. Emblem was an indifferent performer on the flat winning only one of thirteen races but the Earl thought she might make a good steeplechaser and in 1860, paid £300 for her.

The following year he bought her sister Emblematic who was being trained at Defford and sent the pair to Bourton-on-the-Hill to be trained by Edwin Weever. In 1863 Emblem was entered into and won three steeplechases at Birmingham, Derby and culminating in the Grand National at Liverpool. Carrying a weight of 10st 10lb and with odds of 10/1. The following year, 1864, the Earl entered her sister Emblematic in the Grand National. A complete unknown her odds were 100/1, but she cantered across the line to win having made no mistakes. Encouraged by the success of the sisters, the next year he entered both of them into the race. Emblem was leading but being ridden by a Jockey weighing over 12st (only four horses have ever won this race carrying such a heavy weight) she soon tired and finished 6th. Emblematic started



Emblem by Harry Hall (1813-1882) painted in 1863

as favourite but finished 3rd, the winner Alcibiade was ridden by Henry Coventry a cousin of the Earl. On display at Croome Court is a painting by Harry Hall (1813-1882) the leading equestrian painter of his time, showing Emblem, her trainer Edwin Weever and her Jockey George Stevens (1831-1871) who also triumphed. Sadly, George

Stevens died in 1871 whilst riding his horse back to his cottage on Cleeve Hill. The horse stumbled and George was thrown suffering a fractured skull. George still holds the record for the most wins in the Grand National having won five times, twice back-to-back. Winning in 1856, 1863, 1864, 1869 and 1870.

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