



Issue Number 173
January/February 2023

The village magazine of the
Bartons, Sandford, Ledwell and
Over with Nether Worton

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**HAPPY NEW YEAR TO
ONE AND ALL!**





The Dorn Free Press is published bi-monthly and distributed free of charge to some 850 households in The Bartons, Sandford St. Martin, Ledwell and Over with Nether Worton. If you would like extra copies of the Dorn Free Press, please contact

Morag Thomson at distribution@dornfreepress.com

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Copy may be emailed, or delivered, to any of the DFP team.

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Do you have something for the next (March/April 2023)

DFP?

Please send it to editor@dornfreepress.com

by 30th January 2023

Thank You!



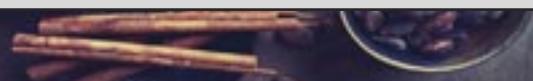
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Louise Barnes FCIMSPA, Senior Activity & Health Practitioner, Personal Trainer, Fellow Member of The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sports and Physical Activity.

DFP CLOSURE

Sadly, we have had to make the difficult decision to close the **Dorn Free Press**.

We have always been an independent magazine, supported entirely by our wonderful local businesses and volunteers. However, a combination of spiralling printing costs and a number of unfilled vacancies arising on the team mean that, regrettably, the **DFP** is no longer viable in its present format.

After much discussion among the **DFP** team we have agreed we must cease production after the March/April 2023 edition.

The Dorn Free Press team



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Pre-School Update

Elle Frost writes:

Happy New to you all! We hope that you enjoyed exceedingly fabulous festive celebrations! But before we sweep 2022 under the rug completely, we should like to let you in on how we finished up the year.

Our themes for the last term included Traditional Fairy Tales. Here we focused upon one traditional tale a week and incorporated crafts and activities to really bring the tale to life. With Little Red Riding Hood, the children enjoyed a spot of sewing as they stitched a border around a Red Riding Hood picture. With the Gingerbread Man we had them mixing and baking again to create their own personalised tasty treat!



With all of the delicious treats available in the run up to Christmas and beyond, we felt it prudent to discuss the topic of good dental hygiene with the little ones. They have been learning about good brushing technique, and the difference between good healthy foods, and treat time not-so-good foods.



We had a wonderfully busy December supplying mulled wine, hot dogs, and more at the main Village tree lighting, the Social Club tree lighting, and

accompanying Santa on his merry sleigh trail around the village. Many thanks indeed to all who attended. It was a pleasure to share in the festive cheer with you all.

Last year was the first since Covid struck, that we were able to let parents in to attend the Pre-School Christmas assembly. It was such a joy to be able to see the children singing again, and we hope that the parents and children enjoyed it as much as we did.

With the years closure, we bid an emotional goodbye to Linda and Karen. Enormous thanks for their tireless dedication, and best wishes to them

both. Rising up to fill the void, Sally has become the new Manager, and Keryl the new Deputy. In addition, as 2023 dawns, we are also thrilled to have Wendy join our little family. We have enjoyed welcoming her and our delightful new starters this January.

Save the date: Saturday the 28th of January - Jacket Potato night is back! In the darkest midst of a gloomy shivery January evening, we shall be delivering steaming hot jacket potatoes to your door in celebration of Burns Night. Details for ordering will appear around the village nearer the time "*Do dheagh shlaite!*"

If you would like to register your child for pre-school, then do please contact us so that we can send you a registration form.



Registering your child in advance helps us navigate staffing requirements throughout the year.

We take children from the age of 2, and accept government funding for 15-30 hours (if eligible).

Tel: 01869 347968

Email: middlebartonpreschool@gmail.com

Web: www.middlebartonpreschool.co.uk



Recipe for a favourite treat - Lebanons

Rebecca White writes:

These are really good to make and take on a long walk, or cycle ride.

You will need:

225g (1/2 lb) butter or marger

1 cup sugar

1 egg

225g (1/2 lb) dates

225g (1/2 lb) shredded/desiccated coconut

1 small packet of plain tea biscuits

Melt the butter and sugar in a large pan. Add the chopped dates and boil for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat.

In a bowl, add crushed biscuits, half the coconut and the egg (beaten), mix them together well.

Put the date mixture into a big bowl and add the biscuit mixture to that - don't put too much biscuit in there or they will be dry.

Do not grease the tray. Sprinkle half the remaining coconut at the bottom of a square baking tray, and then spread the mixture 3/4 inch thick. Cover with the rest of the coconut. Set in the fridge and then cut into fingers.



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Spot the difference



We hope that during the festive season you are managing to find some time to put your feet up and do some puzzles and crosswords. Here is a pretty tricky spot the difference to test you. Can you find 10 differences between these two pictures?

Middle Barton School

Be Curious – Believe – Challenge – Achieve

Kim Griffin writes:



MIDDLE BARTON SCHOOL UPDATE:

We have certainly been busy at Middle Barton School. All classes have been continuing with their curriculum lessons but there has also been a

huge number of events happening outside of or in addition to the school day.

We have recently had an Ofsted inspection. The children were fantastic and they always make us so proud. All outcomes are confidential at the moment but we should receive the final report very soon, I can then share it with all of the staff and parents and it will be published on the Ofsted website as well as our school one.

Building work in school

As you may have noticed we have had a number of building projects taking place in school recently. Firstly, we had part of the flat roof replaced and a number of toilets were refurbished. We still have one project which is on-going - The Old School House. Unfortunately, the building has been neglected for many years and come into substantial disrepair, so it is now having a full overhaul. They have come across many issues along the way but once complete it will create a fantastic usable space. The works are due to be completed by the end of February and we hope to show everyone the finished product. All of these projects only happen as we are part of the River Learning Trust, who have fully funded them all.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Thank you to all of those that came or donated to the charity. It is always a pleasure to hold such worthwhile events at school and get the children involved in charity work. Willow class were absolutely brilliant and I think they are now prepared for their first jobs. We raised just over £200 and it was so lovely to have members of the community visiting school too.

Under 11s Football Tournament

Both girls and boys from Year 4 and 5 represented the school. They played with determination and showed great integrity and sportsmanship.

Swimming

So far this year all of Key Stage 2 (Year 3-6) have attended swimming lessons. They have learnt or are learning to become confident swimmers in a range of strokes and to develop a good understanding of water safety.

Open Afternoon

We held a successful 'Open Afternoon' for parents and carers in October where the children were able to share all the things they have learnt. It was very well attended and the children were so proud to share all of the knowledge and skills they have learnt from their lessons.

Under 11 Hockey Tournament at Chipping Norton

This event was attended by a team of boys and girls from Year 5 and 6. They played with great enthusiasm and showed all the school's values of 'Compassion, Integrity and Respect'.

Halloween School Disco

All the children from Preschool age to Year 7 were invited to a Halloween disco organised by FOMBS. It was a very well attended event and enjoyed by all.

Christmas Tree Village Poster Competition

We had a huge amount of entries this year and some amazing designs. Well done to Phoebe for winning and having her poster created into a banner advertising the Village Christmas Tree light switch on.

Firework Display

Yet again FOMBS did an amazing job of organising the firework display this year. The display itself was fantastic and it was so lovely to have the whole school and community at the event.

Boccia event at Chipping Norton School

Theo, Jane and Archie had a lovely time playing Boccia against other schools in the Chipping Norton Partnership. It was great fun!

Here is a report from Theo,

During PE Mrs Griffin told me I needed to go to Chipping Norton school to do bowling skills. We travelled in Mrs Griffin's car and when we got there

we needed to have a drink of water. Then we practiced bowling with bean bags. We needed to throw the bean bags to land in hoops. After our practice, we got 2 big balls which we had to roll and see if we could get it to touch the white ball (target ball). I went with Jane and Archie and we played against 5 different schools. After that we sat down, had some water, then shook the other team's hands and got our medal.

Sports Hall Athletics at Chipping Norton School

Percy, Harrie, Riley, Lily and Poppy all attended the Sport Hall Athletics event at Chipping Norton School. It was enjoyed by all and I have never seen such amazing determination on their faces as they tackled the obstacle courses.

Children in Need

The whole school supported Children in Need this year. The children and staff were allowed to wear their own clothes for the day. We raised over £230, which is such a great amount for the charity.



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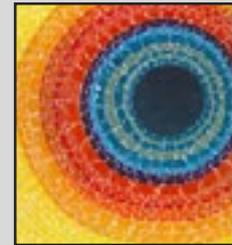
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At Middle Barton School

Acorn class

The class has learnt about Dame Floella Benjamin and Alma Thomas. They explored Floella Benjamin's journey to England and recreated some amazing artwork based on Alma Thomas.



Sycamore class

The class has learnt about Catherine Johnson, the famous Mathematician. They heard all about the fact she wasn't allowed to attend her local Secondary school and that she was famous for figuring out the paths for the spacecraft to orbit (go around) Earth and to land on the Moon. They all said 'she was very good at hard maths!'



Maple class

The class has written a biography about the life of Mary Seacole. They have learnt about how determined she was to help others.



Willow class

The class has learnt all about Benjamin Zephaniah. They have completed artwork and written poems based on Benjamin's work. They have used Benjamin's poems; 'Poetics' and 'For Words' to inspire their own work.



Oak class

The children have been learning about David Adjaye. He has an OBE and is an award winning Ghanaian-British architect.

BVMHF - Sports & Social Club

Trevor Payne writes:

Lighting Up Ceremony For The Playing Fields Live Christmas Tree



The lighting up ceremony, which was well attended, took place on Friday 2nd December. Although cold, it did remain dry. There was a fairground organ, children's fair ride, Christmas Carols, the 'Christmas' tractor, festive stalls, and miniature traction engine rides. There were a lot of happy children there

and the rides behind the traction engine seemed to be a particular favourite. Santa Claus used the



traction engine for his arrival and after carols had been sung, he performed the formal switch on. We would like to thank Jane and the choir for the carols, the stall holders, everyone who contributed to the evening, and of course, Santa. A very big thank you is also due to Chris Raworth who was the main organiser of the event. After the formal switch on there was live entertainment in the Jubilee Room by Sapphire Duo.

Childrens Playground

Thanks are due to Steeple Barton Parish Council for their contribution of £2000 to the cost of the replacement bonded surfacing under the swings and zip wire.

Damage On The Playing Fields Car Park

Significant damage has been done to the wall of the Bowls Club Building by a vehicle, or several vehicles, reversing into it. A claim has been made on the Funds insurance policy but there will be a £500 excess to pay and we will need to erect barriers to prevent a reoccurrence. This is expenditure that the Fund could well do without.

Residents are reminded that, with the exception of one nights parking after attending the Club or an event in the Jubilee Room, overnight parking is only permitted for permit holders (for which there is a charge). A penalty charge applies to all other cases.

The Bartons Memorial Sports And Social Club

The club has had a very difficult year financially and at the time of writing, especially considering the current rate of inflation, its future looks very uncertain. If the Club were to fold then the functioning of the Jubilee Room, the availability of the changing rooms and the operation of the public toilets would all be in jeopardy. Two things are needed: a) volunteers to organise profitable events and help run the club thus reducing wages and b) much more support from residents.

The Jubilee Room

When not in use for events this is available to hire with or without a bar, it has seating for up to 120, a dance floor, stage and a large kitchen. Enquiries to Helen Pauling: hpauling@live.co.uk.

Forthcoming Events At The War Memorial Playing Fields

At the time of writing the pop-up café was still running every Tuesday and Thursday mornings in the Jubilee Room.

- Bingo in the Jubilee Room: Wednesdays January 4th and February 1st.
- Quiz Night in the lounge: Tuesdays January 17th and February 21st.
- Country and Western in the Jubilee Room: Saturdays January 21st and February 18th.
- Football: over 50's matches on Sundays January 22nd and February 19th, Easington Clans play home matches on Saturdays.

Up to date information on events is generally displayed on the boards by the pedestrian entrance to the Playing Fields.

FINALLY, on behalf of the Trustees and Management Committee I would like to wish all the residents of the Bartons a very Happy New Year.

Trevor Payne, Secretary BVMHF

(bvmhfsec@gmail.com)

Karen Brown writes:

As I write this, in late November, we are still finalising details of our first meeting/play-reading in our new club format. This will have been on December 8th at 91 Holliers Crescent.

By the time you read this, we will have had that meeting (hope it was fun!), read a few scenes from plays, and are eagerly awaiting our next one. We have provisionally decided on January 12th for this next meeting. So, you are cordially invited to an informal evening of playreading. We'll read extracts from a variety of plays, comedic and dramatic, in a convivial and relaxed atmosphere, with no commitment to perform, learn lines etc.

It would be lovely if you could join us. We are not sure of the venue yet, but I will post it on the Middle Barton Local Facebook site nearer the time. If you would like me to message you with details, please text or email me (07872 012615/brown@jpandkbrown.plus.com), or collar any member of the group for details.

Meanwhile, we wish everybody a happy, prosperous and healthy New Year. I think we all need a bit of that!

POSTSCRIPT – Our first play-reading meeting was a happy, sociable affair. We read 'Murder can be Deadly' by our own Ken Lusted (as zany as it sounds!) and an excerpt from *Hi de Hi*. All are welcome to join our next meeting, on 12th January, probably at the same venue, 91 Holliers Crescent. We are aiming for the 2nd Thursday of every month, but will post on the village Facebook site if any different.

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Congratulations to Middle Barton School!

Rebecca White writes:

At the beginning of November Middle Barton School had their Ofsted inspection. It has felt like a long wait to hear of the results, but they finally came through in the second week of December - and the school has done so well, being rated 'good'.

Mrs Griffin, Head Teacher, writes,
"I am so proud of the children and the staff and it makes me so thankful to be the Headteacher of Middle Barton School."

Here are a few quotes from the report: 'This is the best school in the world.' Adults have high expectations for behaviour and pupils rise to these. At this school pupils are free to choose who they want to be. One pupil who recently joined the school told an inspector, 'I feel so welcomed here.'



Pupils told inspectors how much they enjoy the practical elements of learning as this brings the curriculum alive for them. They especially enjoy learning in the outdoor classroom and their walks around the village to learn about road safety, or to spot a waterfall or a Victorian house.

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Church News

Clare Harper writes:

Happy New Year!

There will be a short New Year's Eve service in Westcote Barton Church at 4pm on 31st December, followed by refreshments at the Rectory. All are welcome.

On New Year's Day, our service is on zoom at 11am. The website (www.bartonbenefice.org.uk) has login details and the service sheet.

A Christmas Thank You

Before looking ahead to what lies in store for 2023, we'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone involved in the Christmas services and events, and



how good it was to see all those who attended. Thank you too for the generosity shown in supporting our various charitable collections over this period.

Sunday Services

As a New Year begins, here is a reminder of the usual pattern of services in our churches. These may change at special seasons like Easter

and Christmas, but the website has updated details. When there is no service in your own parish, we hope you enjoy attending elsewhere in the benefice. If transport is a problem, email frances@bartonbenefice.org.uk or ring Jane 01869 340510 so we can help with lift sharing.

We aim to livestream two services a month. Login details for these and service sheets will be posted on the website, or you can request them by emailing zoom@bartonbenefice.org.uk.

Family@Church continues on the first Sunday of the Month in Westcote Barton and the fourth Sunday in Duns Tew. Both services start at 9.30 with a breakfast and activity at 9.00.

Barton Benefice Services Overview

Week 1

9.30 WB Family@Church + Eucharist
11.00 NW Eucharist
5.00 SSM Evening prayer

Week 2

9.30 SB Eucharist
11.00 DT Eucharist +on zoom

Week 3

9.30 OW Eucharist
11.00 SSM Eucharist
5.00 Benefice Alice Marshall Hall hosted by Bartons Churches Together + on zoom

Week 4

9.30 DT Family@Church
11.00 SB Eucharist
5.00 WB Evening prayer

Week 5

11.00 Benefice: round the parishes Live streamed if possible

Special Services

On 29 January, a Benefice Service with choir celebrates Candlemas at 11am in Westcote Barton.

On Ash Wednesday, 22 February, there will be a benefice service in Duns Tew at 12noon.



Making Music!

If you are interested in joining our choir please email choir@bartonbenefice.org.uk.

Adults and children of ALL musical abilities welcome. Rehearsals are in Ardley on alternate Fridays at 7.30pm as follows:

- Cantate Domino - four part anthem choir - 1st Friday in each month
- Dorn Chorus - worship & children's choir + instruments - 3rd Friday in each month

Lift sharing available!

Events in January and February

"Call My Bluff" Wine Tasting: Enjoy a fun filled evening pitting your wits against our "resident" team on Saturday, 14 January. Tickets will be available from Clare Burgess 347382 or email dunstewpcc@gmail.com.

As part of the Warm Hub scheme: During the colder months every Wednesday, The Wednesday Lunch Club, 11am-4pm, Alice Marshall Hall. A two-course meal for £6, open to all.

Every Saturday: The Destiny Breakfast Café 9.30am-12, Alice Marshall Hall. Drop in for food and chat at this breakfast cafe offering a warm, friendly space for all.

Seasonal Feature - Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday: Will you have pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, 21st February? Many of us enjoy these before Lent begins on Ash Wednesday. ('Ash' because last year's palm crosses are burnt and the ash used to make the sign of the cross on those attending services.) The word 'shrove' broadly means forgiven. Traditionally, Christians would make their confession before Lent and once "shriven", begin a fast for the weeks leading up to Easter, giving up meat or sugary foods. Pancakes on Shrove Tuesday provided a last chance to indulge, and to use up household supplies.

Nowadays, for Lent we still give up something we like, such as sweets or favourite drinks. Alternatively, we may do something extra to help other people. Will you do something different this Lent?

Stay up to date with news of services and events - if you would like to be added to our Notice Sheet email list please contact: enquiries@bartonbenefice.org.uk

Please get in touch at any time if we can be of help. Wishing you a Happy New Year.

The Rev'd Jane Wright, Rector of the Barton Benefice

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Scouts, Beavers and Cubs

1st Bartons Scout Group



Beavers

Jill Elliot writes:

The Beavers joined the Cubs for the sleepover at Youlbury and all those who attended for the day or night

gained their Explore Badge and had a go at crate stacking. This term they have visited Sandford St Martin church and had a go at bellringing and decorated a tree as part of the Steeple Barton Tree Festival.

If you would like to find out more about joining Beavers please contact Sarah Elliot on . We do have spaces for boys and girls aged 6 years old

Cubs

Anne Barras writes,

As usual the cubs have been working towards a number of badges this term. Thanks to Matt for teaching us all some plumbing skills and wiring an electric plug. We had a joint sleepover at Youlbury with the Beavers on the weekend of 5/6 November which was brilliant. On the evening of the 5th, after a damp campfire (but spirits were not dampened by the rain), we went on a night hike and were treated to magnificent firework displays. Part way round we also came across the "legendary" Jaffa cake tree. The theme for the weekend for the cubs was the chef's badge, everyone was involved and the cubs even made

bread to accompany the vegetable soup - declared by some cubs as the best ever!

Sunday 13th November saw the scout group return to church for the Remembrance Sunday service and it was so good for us all to be together and take part in the service. The behaviour of all the group was exemplary and well done to all those who took part in the service.

Finally the scout group once again cleared the leaves from the Westcote Barton church, thank you to all our volunteers.

Once again if you would like to get involved please get in touch email

anne.scouts@gmail.com



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Julia and the Shark Book Review

Rose Dale, age 9, writes:

I like Julia and the Shark - by Kiran Millwood Hargrave - because, it's a story about a lonely girl who makes a friend and saves a loved one. It's easy to like because it has a message that if you dream something hard enough you can always make it come true.

Julia and her family move to Shetland for her Mum's marine work on the Greenland Shark and how they live so long. I think Julia is a great character because she brings a bully to have a heart and to realise the worth of kindness.

I think that this book is for those aged 7+ as it is upsetting at some points and may distress younger ones. Kiran Millwood Hargrave has also written The Girl of Ink and Stars, and also Leila and the Blue Fox.



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District Councilor Update

Dave Jackson writes,



In May a new administration comprising an alliance of three different parties took control of WODC. I am very proud to be a member of the largest group, the Liberal Democrats, even though it has increased my workload somewhat!

It was my intention, in this article, to mention some of the changes (and hopefully improvements) that have happened in the first six months of this alliance.

However, I have recently been told that the future of the DFP is in some doubt, so I have decided instead to express my thoughts about the contribution that this magnificent publication has given our community.

Ever since Jenny and I moved into Middle Barton in 2010, I have always looked forward to reading the DFP. Not only did it publicise some of the activities that I enjoy like Beavers and the Drama Group, but it also brought to my attention things I was completely unaware of, like The Sustainable Bartons, that I joined.

The DFP has also been a vital outlet to publicise appeals for projects in the villages. The wonderful refurbishment of the Alice Marshall Hall is a good example. On a fundraising point, I am making enquires about a possible WODC Community grant to help the playing field committee replace the grotty bark chippings under the play equipment with a more permanent rubberised surface (similar to the school running track). They have already been promised a couple of significant donations, but more is needed, so extra contributions would be appreciated.

Since I became your councillor in 2018, the DFP has been a godsend in terms of letting you know what WODC has to offer, and what I have been up to. This was emphasised when I was canvassing for my re-election in May. I called at every house in The Bartons Ward to introduce myself, and in some of the outlying areas like Ledwell and Over Worton a few folk said words like, "Oh I know who you are. I have seen you in the DFP". It is not unreasonable to surmise that my significantly increased majority was assisted by this publication, for which I am most grateful.

I do hope that anyone reading this article who has more time than I have to help the DFP will offer their services. It's demise will be a huge loss.

Dave Jackson

07407 443944 or skellgilldave@yahoo.co.uk

Congratulations!

Excellent news for Kevin McRobie (left in picture below), founder and Director of McRobieAdams, and inhabitant of South Street, Middle Barton. His firm - a mortgage, protection and insurance advice firm - received the *Gold* award in the *Mortgage Adviser Awards* at the prestigious ESTAS Customer Service Awards for 2022. These are the biggest awards in the UK property industry.



The awards are powered by ESTAS' customer review platform, and recognise the mortgage brokers for customer service based on ratings from clients who have been through the whole moving experience. This year's results were calculated from over 200,000 customer review ratings.

Kevin McRobie said "We are absolutely thrilled to be recognised in this year's ESTAS. It means so much to us as we know it's our customers who have judged our performance. We take our levels of customer service very seriously because we know clients have a choice. We have always been very proud of the personal service and this proves we are delivering what we promise."

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From the Bartons History Group

Many people, who have lived in the Bartons for some time, will remember Audrey Martin as she cycled around the village that she was so involved in, it was partly her inspiration that began the Dorn Free Press! And one of her principle lasting legacies is the huge collection of local historical documents and photographs which form the bulk of the Bartons' History Group archive. This store is the bedrock of the Bartons' History Group which Audrey founded some 40 or so years ago, and which recently had its first meeting since the end of Covid restrictions, keen as it is not to become history!



The group has produced a number of publications over the years, many by Audrey herself, and which are still available, though some are now in short supply. "Bygones Bartons" is a periodical produced by the group which began in 2011 and has so far published 9 booklets in the series. All copies of Bygone Bartons are available for free by digital download from the Bartons' History Group website at this address

<https://bartonshistorygroup.org.uk/bygone-bartons-and-the-dorn-freen-press>.

At the last meeting we commissioned work to begin for our next issue - volume 9 - and which we hope will be posted through every household in the Bartons sometime in the first half of 2023.



If you are interested in local history and would like to become involved, we are a friendly and informal group, who would welcome you to come along and get involved. Please get in contact via

enquiries@bartonshistorygroup.org.uk and our website is: www.bartonshistorygroup.org.uk.





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WI Update

Ali Mawer writes:

We started our Autumn calendar with a visually interesting talk on miniatures which I think inspired some members to have a go!



We crafted and made cards together in October and in November Ken Lusted spoke on his 'experience' of 'The Iranian Embassy', a fascinating account leaving us with some emotional feelings.

WI also hosted a group meeting inviting neighbouring WI's, food, music, and entertainment filled an enjoyable evening.



Our festive crafting started in November with an open evening of Christmas creations with some excellent skills being shared and some productive pieces being taken home. We also enjoyed mince pies and mulled wine as we crafted!



In December we are looking forward to our WI Christmas evening, including a three-course dinner, some festive fun and celebrations!

It has been a busy year, and we welcome newcomers!

Contact for membership is Jenny Jackson (President)

Email skellgill_jenny@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 01869 340759

Dates for the diary

10/1/23 – Curling

14/2/23 – Community Constable Ben Hallam

14/3/23 – AGM and supper

11/4/23 – Hedgehogs Hugh Warwick

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Chess Problem 45

Trevor Daniels writes

What should White play in this position?



Answers on Page 19!

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Garden Update

Darren Bullock writes:

With our yuletide festivities well and truly over and with the Christmas tree being either packed away or put out for recycling, and the smell of brussel sprouts finally being eradicated from our homes, there may be just one reminder of festive merriment left inside. How many of us are still clinging onto that Christmas favourite pot plant the good old Poinsettia?



It may be looking very sad now, missing a lot of leaves but is it's life destined for the great compost bin in the sky or is a Poinsettia for life and not just for Christmas?

In the UK we buy an estimated eight million plants every festive period in shades of red, pink and cream.

So how do we keep these plants growing from year to year. Here are just a few tips for this very difficult plant:

1: Ideal temperature 16-28c they hate the cold and drafts.

2: Keep the compost damp but never wet.

3: As soon as the coloured bracts fade reduce all branches by half their length. Be careful of the sap as it can - like all other members of the Euphorbia family - cause irritation.

4: Keep the plant on the dry side now, this is it's dormant period.

5: Repot in your preferred potting compost in June, avoid over potting.

6: When growth restarts select five shoots to retain, the remainder can be removed and used for cuttings

7: Place plants outside in a sheltered area from August and bring back inside in mid September. Avoid extreme sunny spots.

8: From August onwards feed with a liquid feed. Tomato feed is perfect.

9: Bract formation is the tricky part. Poinsettias require short days and long nights to initiate bract formation (photoperiodism) and a slight drop in temperature (vernillisation).

10: If you have a spare warm room (who does these days!!) put your plant in there and restrict day light after eight hours. Avoid switching the light on as one minute of light will reset the plant's internal clock.

11: Another alternative is to cover it with a large cardboard box after eight hours of light. Do not use a plastic bag.

12: Once your plant has hopefully developed it's bracts, just care for it in the same way.

It is a lengthy process but even if you just repeat steps one to eight you will be rewarded with a very nice foliage pot plant which is helping Poinsettias to become a more sustainable crop.

Wishing you all a very happy New year and here's to a great gardening year.

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Middle Barton

Answer to Chess Puzzle:

White can mate in two moves with a Rook sacrifice:

1. Re5+ dxe (d Pawn takes the Rook - the only move)

2. f5# (f Pawn on, check, and the Black King can't move - mate!)

A little harder than usual. Well done if you saw this!

Save your postage stamps!

Carol and Kay would like to thank you all for saving your used postage stamps that raise much needed funds for our local Hospice Katherine House in Adderbury.

Please continue to save and ask your friends and neighbours to chip in too. Please hand them to Diane in Middle Barton shop for collection.

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Dates for the Diary



January 2023

- 5th Thurs.** **Middle Barton School**
Start of term for Children
- 10th Tues.** **W.I Duns Tew Village Hall, 7.30pm**
Event: Curling
Contact: Jenny Jackson:
01869 340759
- 12th Thurs.** **The Barton's and Woodstock Walking Group**
Meet at 10am. Various venues
Contact: David Wharton:
david@thistledome.net
- 14th Sat.** **Abilene Country Music Club -**
featuring: Dave Anderson
Sports and Social Club, 8.00pm
- 14th Sat.** **Call by bluff wine tasting -**
Clare Burgess 347382 or email
dunstewpcc@gmail.com.
- 16th Mon.** **Steeple Barton Parish Council**
Meeting. Alice Marshall Hall, 8.00pm
- 28th Sat.** **Jacket Potato Night - Pre-School**
Fundraiser

Farm Shops

Some Pick Your Own Farms remain open even though their picking fields are now closed because they sell a range of seasonal stock and lots of other treats in their shops. Please check on each farm's website for their opening times.

Medley Manor Farm: Binsey Lane, OX2 0NJ
Millets Farm Centre: Frilford, Abingdon OX13 5HB
Rectory Farm: Stanton St. John, OX33 1HF
Wykham Park Farm, Banbury OX16 9UP

February 2023

- 9th Thurs.** **The Barton's and Woodstock Walking Group** Meet at 10am.
Various venues
Contact: David Wharton:
david@thistledome.net
- 14th Tues.** **W.I.**
Duns Tew Village Hall, 7.30pm
Event: A Community Constable - Ben Hallam.
Contact:
Jenny Jackson: 01869 340759
- 18th Sat.** **Abilene Country Music Club -**
featuring: Daniel Beard
Sports and Social Club, 8.00pm
- 20th Mon.** **Steeple Barton Parish Council**
Meeting. Alice Marshall Hall, 8.00pm



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Chipping Norton: 3rd Sat of the month, 8.30–1.30pm
Deddington: 4th Sat of the month, 9:00–12.30pm
Kidlington: every Fri and Sat, 9.00–4.30pm
Summertown: every Sun, 10.00–2.00pm
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