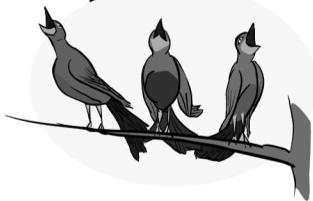


BIRDSONG

April and May 2016



**BIRDINGBURY
NEWS**

No 73



Photo Michael Coles

**Concentration while braving the weather under a
watchful eye**

2016 Pancake Day

Birdingbury Parish Council

Diana asked me to chair the meeting on 15 March as she continues to recover from illness and we were all really pleased that she was able to attend for an hour or so.

I was able to welcome our newly appointed clerk Jackie Chapman who hit the ground running and was able to update us on various issues throughout the meeting. She had received confirmation from the County Council's highways officer Ben Hill that all the storm drains have been jetted and cleaned, but further work identified for new gullies etc, although allocated, has yet to be scheduled. We believe the village escaped unscathed from the dreadful floods on 9 March and Ben Hill should be congratulated for instigating the work so far, which may well have prevented some properties from being flooded.

Gaynor spoke about the Queen's Birthday Celebrations. First, we are holding a litter pick on Saturday 2 April to 'Clean for the Queen' and will be meeting at the Birbury at 10.30am where equipment will be handed out. It's an opportunity to tidy up all the verges in and around the village so do try to make it if you're able. You are also all invited to a meeting in the Birbury at 7.30 on Wednesday 20 April to discuss how the village might want to celebrate the Queen's birthday in June. There will be entertainment in the 'old rectory meadow' on the 11th and perhaps there could be a street party on Sunday 12th?

Finally, the Village Meeting will be held at 7.30 in the Birbury on Tuesday 26 April and as usual we will be asking the various groups and organisations for updates so hopefully you will be able to attend.

Ian Tipton, Deputy Chairman

Birdingbury Village Meeting

7.30 Tuesday 26 April in the Birbury

St. George's Day Lunch

Our celebration of St. George, and his Dragon of course, takes place on Sunday 24 April at 12.00 in the Birbury. Please join us for cheese, salads, pickles, fresh bread and a selection of home-made puds followed by tea or coffee. All this for a £2.50 donation to cover our costs. Come and relax and celebrate with your fellow villagers.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Jenny Hawes

Queen's 90th Birthday Weekend Celebrations

11 and 12 June

An organising meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 20 April, 7.30 in the Birbury.

If you are involved or would like to be involved in helping with this weekend, please come along.

Gaynor Davy 632 041

Mel Palmer 634 321

Birdingbury Singers - Our first singing practice will be on Wednesday 27 April at 7.30 in the Birbury.

Please come along if you would like to be part of the singing group for the Saturday evening picnic and entertainment.

If you would like to do a solo or small group act, please contact Gaynor or myself, we'd love to hear from you.

Mel Palmer 634 321 mel.palmer@mail.com

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Coffee and Chat

Our next two sessions of Coffee and Chat will take place on Thursday 28 April and Thursday 26 May. We meet in the Birbury at 10.30 for a refreshing cuppa, a slice of cake and a friendly chat. Everyone is welcome to come along and join us and put the world to rights.

Karen, Mel, Brenda, Jan, Dick and Jenny

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

A Big Thank You

When we decided to try to build a retirement bungalow in our back garden to allow us to stay in this very supportive community, we had no idea how much we would come to be grateful for that decision. Since Diana became ill last October, (spending most of the next four months in hospital), the care, love and thoughtfulness shown to us by our friends and neighbours in Birdingbury have been overwhelming. Flowers, cakes, curries, biscuits, cards, plants and many good wishes have come our way, and we are enormously touched by it all. We have tried to thank people personally, but we would also like to express our gratitude to you all here in *Birdsong*.

So thanks to all of you for supporting us during a very difficult period in our lives.

Leslie and Diana Turner Glebe Rise



PROGRESSIVE SUPPER

Saturday 7 May 2016

Here we go again!!

Jackie Morton (633493) jackie@elliam.org

Simon Whitfield (634761) simon_whitfield@hotmail.com

The next Birdingbury Progressive Supper is on Saturday 7 May. Last year we had 66 villagers "progressing" and raised £955 split between The Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Air Ambulance and Alzheimers Society. This year our chosen charity is the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

If you are a newcomer to the village or haven't taken part in the past then please consider joining us - it is great fun and a brilliant way to get to meet other villagers. If you want to know more about the evening then give either of us a call and we can explain the arrangements to you. As in previous years we will request a donation of £20 from starter and dessert hosts, and £15 from main course hosts. Just to clarify — this is per couple so a bargain evening's entertainment!

To get your name on the list please email or call either of us (contact details above) and don't forget to let us know any special dietary requirements you might have - we will let you know nearer the time which course you have been allocated.

We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible – and thank you to all those who have already got their names down on the list!

Jackie & Simon

THIS YEAR, to make sure we have got you on the list we will send you an email confirmation as soon as you let us know. If you haven't/don't get this then please contact us. We can't assume that because you have taken part in the past you automatically wish to do so again !

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

The Birbury A.G.M.

Our Annual General Meeting takes place on Tuesday 5 April at 7.45 in the Birbury. All are welcome to attend.

Jenny Hawes

It's the Egg Roll again!



Photos Jo and Lewis Cutts

Thanks as always to Jackie Westcott. Then Rhondda had the task of choosing the best decorated eggs; in the younger section Frankie Kerry won with her fabulous Aliens and Billy Flint won the older section with his Hillary and Minion! Well done to all.

Jo Cutts

Well, a great turn out considering the weather for our annual egg roll and you know it's important because the local press were here. We did boys and girls winners this year. After some eggcellent rolling Frankie Kerry won for the girls and Jacob Cutts for the boys. We then had tea and hot cross buns in the Birbury.



BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Well done

Congratulations to the Leamington Hastings School Archery Club who took part in an inter-school competition on 16 March. They came 2nd out of 7 teams, just one bullseye behind the winners.



Wasps v Tigers

Saturday 12 March dawned warm and sunny, which was good news, as it meant that we only had to put on six layers of clothes for the annual Birdingbury pilgrimage to the Wasps v Tigers match at the Ricoh Stadium. Indeed, the sunny weather put us all in great spirits (the odd half in the club helped too) as we boarded the bus. Confident of a resounding win for the Tigers, red and green predominated the scene. We were later to unearth one Wasps fan but more of that later.

(At this point I have to warn you that I know absolutely nothing about rugby other than it involves a lot of big blokes running around and leaping on top of each other, so please do not expect an insightful commentary on the game.)

We all arrived and headed off to another bar. Those gate crashing the Land Rover owners' hospitality stand hoping for free burgers were dismayed to find out that John Bradshaw had snaffled the last one and had to put up with a chocolate donut.



Now, on to the match. Pressure was maintained throughout at the Birdingbury end with the beer being passed smoothly through to the forward line and robust tackling at the hot dog stand demonstrated a steely determination to maintain possession. Meanwhile, Wasps took an early lead, Tigers had two tries disallowed and Wasps won by quite a lot in the end.

So, Pete Darby (yes, it was he with the yellow and black flag) was vindicated, but he had to buy as all a drink as a consolation. We returned to the club in time for more beer – no, sorry - the second half of the England game. This seemed to be more of the same (big blokes running around and leaping on top of each other) with the exception that our side won this time (Sorry Eira - Wales did try very hard and did a sterling job towards the end).

The evening was rounded off with a curry (thanks to Lewis) and we all staggered home, excited by the prospect of spending Sunday watching the Scotland / France game (big blokes running around and leaping on top of each other) and nursing a hangover.

Big thank you to John Starley for organising it all for us again.

Lesley Fleming

Flipping Weather - Pancake Race 2016

The weather was not kind to us this year and the rain refused to leave the race track. However, this did not deter our keen competitors who had been pestering their parents all morning asking when the races were due to start!



We managed to run several races and Frankie, Sophie and Erin all came in first - and tossed their pancakes while they were running. Billy bravely took on several adults, as he was the only one in his age group to turn up, and managed to beat them all. Our final race, with everyone joining in, was again won by Billy - what do you feed him on?

Tea, squash and pancakes of the buttered variety were waiting in the Birbury and we beat a hasty retreat to escape from the rain. Prizes were distributed to the winners and chocolates were enjoyed by all. Many thanks to all our race officials, helpers, supporters and, of course, our competitors.

Maybe next year the weather will be kinder.....

Jenny Hawes

There was 36mm of rain in Birdingbury on 9 March. No wonder the river rose and covered the fields though not to the extent that it did at Easter 1998.



Photos Michael Coles

Mes amis,

Ici en Oiseau-en-Terre nous sommes trez concerned – apres tout le trouble getting you in now you are ‘aving a referendum to get out. Is this because you are so offended at our wanting to twin wiv you? We ‘ope not an to that ond we ‘ave written this verse to the tune of our national anthem, la mayonnaise (I think that is the translation n’est-ce pas?)

Allons enfants de Birdingbury!

Le jour de choix est arrive

Time to cast your vote in the boite noire

The choice of the people is ‘ere

The choice of the people is ‘ere!

Do you ‘ear the campaigns?

The whispering eurocrats

The Brexiteers

will scare you too.

Defend the River Leam!

March down Main Street!

Common Market

Was what we voted for

In soixante treize!

If you want to sing it then ‘ere is a lien to le toile pour la musique:

marseillaise.org/english/audio

There is one other matter I need to bring to your attention and that is to hapologise. We ‘ave learned that a precision military operation which we ‘ave conducted to find out more about your village may ‘ave upset some of your pequenauds (yokels I think) – last week we ‘ad an elicoptere doing an arial survey of the village. We miscalculated. We thought that like ‘ere in france the village would be asleep from le midi jusqu’a plus tard and we thought that a big (en fait ‘uge!) helicopter ‘overing 20 of your English feet over a field away from the building site but over the river, wiv a man dangling off a rope would not be, ‘ow you say conspicuous. We got a good snap of the river and the damage apres le deluge but Jean de Couvercle-Plat, the irresponsible pilote ‘as been disciplined and will not be allowed to wear dark sunglasses for 3 more weeks. Il a de bonne chance because he is stationed in England.

We will renew our twinning request sometime but we wish you would overcome your English reserve (I wish you ‘ad some) and repli to us.

Jean de l’Etoile Jachere -- Maire de Oiseau-en-terre.

Bees

Before moving to the village last August Rachel and I were keen beekeepers. Since moving we have been looking to restart our apiary. Having now identified a potential location to site our hives we just need some bees to populate them. One way of repopulating a hive is to catch a swarm.



In the months of April, May and June the population of a hive of bees grows rapidly, with the queen bee laying over 1,000 eggs per day. At peak population a hive can be upwards of 50,000 – made up of a mixture of female worker bees, male drone bees and a single queen.

When space is limited a colony of honeybees will swarm; this allows the population of bees to grow. In a swarm the queen will leave the nest, with half of the worker bees, to find a new home.

The queen is not the strongest of flyers, and so inevitably will need to rest at some point – perhaps on a branch, post or fence. A swarm looks like a clump of bees, because all of the workers are following the queen. Unless disturbed, a swarm of bees is not a problem. However, if you wish to

have them removed we would be pleased to come and take them away.

To capture a swarm we would either snip the branch the bees are on and shake them into a cardboard box, or brush them directly into a box with the aim of ‘capturing’ the queen. We would then lay the box on a large white sheet and if the queen is in the box her pheromones will attract any remaining bees. Once all of the bees are in the box then the sheet will be used to wrap the box and we would take them away to our hives.

Sam and Rachel McGauley, 32 Main Street, 07793210734/07954322019

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

I would like to give a special thank you to my neighbours and friends for all your concern during my recent illness. I am very grateful for all your offers of help too which have enabled me to get back on the road to recovery.

Bill Cowley

Blue Lias

As most villagers will know, Blue Lias is not just the name of the pub at the bottom of Stockton Locks but is the name of the mixture of clay and limestone which underlies our village. It is also the raw material used in the manufacture of cement. Today only the vast quarry at Southam is still being worked and from there the material is taken in the jolly pink lorries through Marton to Rugby. This will probably continue for many years to come.

In 1874 it was said of Stockton that 'The Blue Lias limestone abounds in this Parish and is considered to be the best in England'. By this time it was not only lime that was being produced but 'Portland Cement', so called because when set it was said to represent Portland stone. The cement from Stockton had the particular ability of setting under water and was much sought after. The Warwick and Napton Canal had been opened in 1800 which greatly encouraged the lime businesses as boats could easily bring the coal to fire their kilns from North Warwickshire and take away the manufactured products, some of which were even exported to the Americas from London Docks. In 1901 most of the young men in Birdingbury worked in the industry.

There was a brief period after the Rugby to Leamington railway opened when the cement was brought from Stockton through Birdingbury by road and then loaded on to trains at 'The Sidings' on the Marton Road but this ceased when the railway from Weedon to Leamington opened in 1895.



Nelson's works in 1937 - canal bottom left - quarries top right
Countrywide Stores (ex corn mill) top left

All the small quarries in the Stockton and Long

Itchington are now worked out but in the nineteenth century there were ten different sites in operation. One of the best known was Nelson's at Stockton.

Nelson's was a vigorous family business in Warwick producing gelatine for which they needed lime. They were also developing shipping and property in Australia and New Zealand and establishing a meat refrigeration business. Their Stockton operation developed to become one of the major lime and cement manufacturers with their famous 'Cock' brand and they were the firm responsible for the huge tips near the Countrywide Store known locally as the 'Stockton Alps'. Production ceased in 1949,

the short arm leading off the canal where the boats were loaded was filled in, partly with rubble from the works, and the site was abandoned.

Now a firm - Willow Wren Training - have taken on the site and are clearing the rubble and fill from the old canal arm which they are restoring and will use as a base for the training courses they run on canal boat operation. In the course of this work they have revealed some of the old lime kilns which were buried but have survived in remarkable condition.

These can be seen if you visit the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust site which meets the main road just across the canal near the Boat Inn. There is a path from the gate there which can be followed through to the Countrywide Store, crossing Nelson's old canal arm on a new footbridge.

A link with Birdingbury is that a partner in the Nelson's Stockton operation from 1870 and the Managing Director from 1890 was Thomas Phillip Blythe of Southam. He was a tenant of Birdingbury Hall for some years after the Biddulphs left and his family are listed on the 1891 census. The family later built the large house at the Stockton crossroads on the Southam Road (now occupied by the Jesus Army) and TP Blythe's three sons continued to be the principal managers of Charles Nelson and Co until it was acquired by Rugby Portland Cement in the 1940s.

Recordsworm



Newly re-excavated lime kiln



Nelson's works before 1914 with railway bridge crossing the busy canal arm

Serves me right!

Last autumn I was looking for some pure bred, good egg-laying hens for my new chicken pen. I went to a poultry sale at the Sky Blue Connection and I bid for, and bought, a pair young of silver-laced Wyandotte chickens and paid the princely sum of £4.40: a bargain – or so I thought! They looked about 12 weeks old and so ought to begin to lay at around 20 weeks. All well so far and after a while they settled in with my brown egg-laying machine, the hybrid hen.

Around two months later we woke to the sound of crowing! Clearly, one of my bargain duo was never going to lay eggs!

In recent weeks the silver-laced beauties were seen fighting and, guess what, the second one started crowing too! My apparent bargain had backfired; serves me right for going for the cheapest option.

So, how do you get rid of two, admittedly very good looking young cockerels? I decided to try the ‘free to a good home option’ and am pleased to say that one is now happily crowing on a farm near Hunningham and the other at Frankton.

Meantime, we have bought a pullet to keep our brown hen company and it is already being productive. Our grandson Fletcher helped to choose it and insisted on naming it. We now have an attractive grey hen called Elsie.

Dick Withington

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Bourton & District Garden Club

We meet at 7 for 7.30 on the last Thursday of the month in Bourton Village Hall

28 April - Dunchurch Allotments

Jan has four allotments in Dunchurch where she grows her produce to support the Charity 'Go the extra mile'.

Michael then takes the funds to Sierra Leone to help with the building of a school.

26 May - Creating Focal points in the Garden

Talk by Frank Hardy - Retired Vice Principal of Pershore College of Horticulture.

Visitors are welcome for a small charge including refreshments.

For more information call Frank or Francine - 632595

SAT 10 DEC '16

SAVE THE DATE!! THE ANNUAL VILLAGE PANTO TRIP!



**SAT 10 Dec 2016, coach leaving the club at 12
Noon!**

Belgrade
Theatre
Coventry

Join the annual village trip to panto - this year we're going to the Belgrade Theatre's DICK WHITTINGTON in Coventry. A coach will be booked and will leave the Club at 12 noon on 10 Dec in time to make the 1pm show. We will return to the club at around 5pm and food will be available.

Tickets (inc. the coach) will be around £20 per person depending on how many come along and whether we are able to secure funding for the coach. To express your interest in tickets **please email alexrigler@aol.com** stating how many you are likely to want. I will be back in touch before the summer holidays with a confirmed price and will ask for payment at that point in order to secure reduced ticket prices.

Birdingbury Village Club

Hello fellow villagers and Club members, we have some great events over the forthcoming weeks and months so come down and join us for a drink.

Saturday 9 April - **Grand National Race Night**

Doors Open 7:30pm First race 8pm

Saturday 16 April - **Film Night The Martian 7pm**

Starring Matt Damon, Sean Bean, Jessica Chastain and Kristen Wiig

Saturday 14 May - **Village BBQ 7pm**

Saturday 21 May - **Family Bingo 8pm**

Saturday 4 June - **Film Night**

Saturday 18 June - **Car Treasure Hunt & BBQ**

Last Thursday of every month 7.45 **Fish & Chips** (28 April and 26 May)

Plates, condiments and bread and butter available in the Club so pop in for a drink.

New Opening Hours

Monday - Thursday 8 - 11pm

Friday - 6pm - 11pm

Happy Fridays (6pm - 8 pm) Carlsberg, Trewlany £2.50 a pint & Wine £2.50

Saturday - 12pm - 4pm and 8pm -11pm

Sun 12pm - 4:30pm

Richard Cutts

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Music at Leamington Hastings

The first concert of the season is on **Saturday 7 May** at 7.30 when the **Fibonacci Sequence** (Flute, Harp and Viola) will be playing Diabelli, Glazunov, Bax, Debussy, Mozart and Ravel.

The second concert is on **Saturday 11 June** at 7.30 when

Mary Meilock Wu (Piano)

will be playing Bach, Schubert, Liszt, Beethoven, Ravel and Chopin.

Tickets - £10 or £18. Under 18, first ticket £10, second and more free.

To book, contact David Potts - 07966584328. For more information:

Search — music at leamingtonhastings

Ladies Circle

February

Our get together in February was organised by Valerie who had gone to a lot of effort to make the evening a success. It was lovely to see so many friends and neighbours there. Each of us had to bring an unusual object or photo and then we all had to guess what they were. We had over 40 exhibits and each and everyone of them was unique. It was good fun trying to guess what each of the objects was even if we were usually unsuccessful.

March

The March event was organised by Gaynor and Jan and we had an extremely interesting and informative talk from Simon Thompson of Warwickshire Wildlife Trust about hedgehogs. We had a good turnout and Simon gave an excellent presentation about why hedgehogs numbers are dwindling and what we can all do in our gardens to help and encourage them to return. Interestingly, if an area has a large number of badgers, hedgehogs will not be able to compete with them as they both have a similar diet. Should anyone spot a hedgehog in their garden or in the village, Simon Thompson (email - simon.thompson@wkwt.org.uk) would love to hear from you as the WWLT are recording sightings.

April

Mel and Angela are kindly hosting April's event. Mel and a colleague have agreed to give a talk on the Bowen Technique. This is a remedial, hands-on therapy that involves using gentle pressure. A session can frequently result in a deep sense of relaxation which helps the body recharge and balance itself. There will be an opportunity for some people to have a taster treatment. As this is the centenary of Tom Bowen, a small donation would be very much appreciated to his legacy fund. This is a charity which provides equipment for children with special needs.

All are welcome - there is a £2 fee for non-members.

Lee Hayden Chair

Julie Colledge Secretary

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Thanks

A big thank you to all those who supported our sale of Crafts, Cakes and Cuppas on Sunday 13 March. With a little money previously raised, we were able to give Rugby Multiple Sclerosis Society £170. A great result and thank you once again.

Jackie and Jennie Westcott

Birdingbury Calendar

April					page
Tuesday	5	Birbury AGM	Birbury	7.45	4
Friday	8	Library Van	Main Street	11.40	
Saturday	9	Grand National Race Night	Club	7.30	14
Tuesday	12	Ladies Circle	Birbury	7.45	15
Saturday	16	Birdingbury Big Screen The Martian	Club	7.00	14
Tuesday	19	Parish Council	Birbury	7.30	
Wednesday	20	Queen's Birthday organising meeting	Birbury	7.30	3
Sunday	24	St George's Day Lunch	Birbury	12.00	2
Tuesday	26	Annual Village Meeting	Birbury	7.30	2
Wednesday	27	Birdingury Singers	Birbury	7.30	3
Thursday	28	Coffee and Chat	Birbury	10.30	3
	28	Bourton Garden Club	Bourton Vill. Hall	7.00	12
Friday	29	Library Van	Main Street	11.40	
May					
Saturday	7	Progressive Supper	Club		4
	7	Leamington Hastings Concert	LH Church	7.30	14
Tuesday	10	Ladies Circle	Birbury	7.45	15
Saturday	14	Village BBQ	Club	7.00	14
Tuesday	17	Parish Council AGM	Birbury	7.30	
Friday	20	Library Van	Main Street	11.40	
Saturday	21	Family Bingo	Club	8.00	14
Thursday	26	Coffee and Chat	Birbury	10.30	3
	26	Bourton Garden Club	Bourton Vill. Hall	7.00	12
					
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