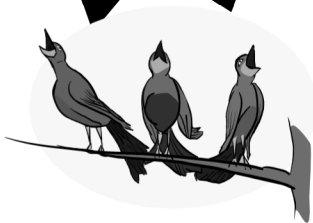


BIRDSONG

**February and March
2015**



**BIRDINGBURY
NEWS**

No 66



**January lambs at Malvern Hall Farm -
an illusion of spring?**

Parish Council Report

The first Parish Council meeting of the New Year was, as is often the case, largely devoted to highways and footpath issues. We councillors were particularly surprised to hear, as residents, that the County Council (WCC) is planning to renovate the footpath in Main Street at the end of January. This is not in line with our own expressed priorities: on several occasions we have met with WCC officers to establish which work would be most urgent – we believe the footpaths in Marton Road and the Jitty between Back Lane and Main Street are in most need of repair. We are, of course, pursuing this with WCC.

We were however relieved to hear that the drainage problems in Bourton – on the corner opposite the entrance to Bourton Hall – are to be sorted. By the time you receive this report we hope there will no longer be a lake narrowing the road there! We do not have such good news on the problem of surface water at the top of Back Lane. We have been in regular communication with both WCC and Severn-Trent Water about this: it appears that the cause is probably a spring – a difficult issue to solve but we shall continue to seek a solution.

Our meeting took place as it was snowing quite hard outside – a timely reminder that our roads are not all gritted. The recently replaced and filled grit bins around Main Street and Back Lane are there for us to use when the roads are icy. Please feel free to make good use of them.

Following the Safety Inspection of the Recreation Field last year, we applied for a grant to help cover the cost of renewing the (very expensive) soft surface under the climbing frame, and we were very pleased to receive confirmation that we had been awarded £535 towards the cost from the WCC Councillors Fund, for which we thank Cllr Howard Roberts.

The current Parish Council will come to an end in May 2015. Parish Council elections will take place on Thursday 7 May – the same day as the General Election. Please see page 2 for further information about the process of nominating candidates for the role of Parish Councillor. It is open to any elector registered on the Birdingbury Electoral Roll. Please do think about whether **you** would be interested in this voluntary activity. You can talk to any of the current councillors about what is involved if you would like to know more.

Best wishes

Diana Turner,

2

Chair, Birdingbury Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council

will be at 7.30pm on

Tuesday 24 February 2015 in the Birbury.

(This is not the usual third Tuesday)

All are welcome to attend.

BIRDSONBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Parish Council Elections

7 May 2015

The process starts with the publication of a Notice of Election on 16 March.

Completed Nomination Papers must be received by RBC no later than

4pm on 9 April.

Elections will take place on Thursday 7 May from 7am to 10pm.

If there are more candidates than vacancies, counting will take place -

probably on Saturday 9 May.

The current Councillors cease to hold office on 11 May, and the new councillors take office on that day.

The first meeting of the new Council will take place at

7.30pm on Tuesday 19 May.

BIRDSONBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Pancake Day Races

Warm up the frying pans and start tossing the pancakes! Our annual pancake race is at 2.30 on Saturday 21 February from the phone box to the Birbury.

There will be prizes available, edible of course, and photographs will be taken. This year pancakes will have to be tossed during the race, one, two or three times depending on age, and there must be some pancake left in the pan when you reach the finish line!

Home made refreshments will be available afterwards in the Birbury where the prizes will be presented. Please come and join us for an exciting afternoon, either as a contestant or a spectator - be ready to cheer on those taking part in the races. Look forward to seeing you there.....

Birdingbury Country Show

Birdingbury Country Show will take place on the weekend of 11 and 12 July 2015. The Committee (including three new members) have met to start organising the event. More land has been made available for this year's Show and it is hoped to put on some special events for the 25th Anniversary.

The proposed charities to receive a donation from any profits made are:-

DEBRA - support for individuals and families affected by epidermolysis bullosa - a painful genetic skin condition.

HELEN LEY CARE CENTRE - specialising in multiple sclerosis care.

ILEAP - providing leisure activities for sufferers of disabilities.

PAWPRINTS - rescuing abandoned dogs from death's row and rehoming them .

Other charities will be invited to attend the Show and will be given a free pitch to promote the work they do.

Help and ideas would be most welcome - the Committee will next meet at the beginning of March.

Barbara Munro, Show Secretary

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The Birbury

The smell of warm mince pies - homemade of course - sweeties and sherry greeted visitors to the Birbury on the afternoon of Saturday 20 December. It was lovely to sit down and rest from the preparations for Christmas and enjoy a cuppa with fellow villagers.

While we were relaxing, we were serenaded by our friend Bryan who had volunteered to play the keyboard and chosen a medley of Christmas songs. After we had caught up on all the local news and our plans for Christmas we joined together to sing some carols and traditional yuletide songs.

Many thanks to all our helpers and Bryan for his lovely accompaniment to our Christmas get together.

Jenny Hawes

Congratulations—Simon Davy MSM

Simon has been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) in the 2015 New Year's Honours List. He is one of only two recipients of the MSM in the Royal Air Force on this year's list.

The MSM is awarded to those individuals who make a significant contribution to their Service and the country.

This award also recognises his voluntary work with various charitable organisations during his career, his fundraising through distance running in addition to promoting and representing the RAF in his local community and beyond.

Simon recently passed 30 years' Service in the RAF. He has completed tours at Cosford, Wittering (x3), Benson, Stafford, West Moors (Dorset) and Abbey Wood (Bristol). His overseas tours include Germany, Cyprus, Falkland Islands (x5) and Afghanistan.

The MSM will be presented to Simon by the Chief of the Air Staff in February.

BIRDSONBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Coffee and Chat

We started a monthly get together in November 2014 and have enjoyed them so much we're continuing this year. Our Coffee and Chat sessions are held on the last Thursday of the month - same day as the Chip Shop van - at 10.30 am in the Birbury. No membership fees needed, just come along, bring a friend if possible, and enjoy homemade refreshments, coffee or tea and a chat.

Our next sessions are on Thursday 26 February and Thursday 26 March

Hope to see you at one or both sessions.

Karen, Mel and Jenny

BIRDSONBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Birdingbury Village Family Quiz

In May the History Group, in conjunction with Birdingbury Club, is planning a family Quiz. This will involve a saunter around the village to see who can answer most questions about what can be seen. There will be a small prize for the winners and refreshments afterwards. More details will be in the next issue of *Birdsong*.

Calling all petrolheads!

Silverstone Classic 24 to 26 July



Last year we had such a great time at the Silverstone Classic meeting that we are planning to go again this year.

The Silverstone Classic is probably the biggest classic car racing and exhibition meeting in the UK, with racing from 1930s sports and grand prix cars to 1980s super saloons. Within the circuit are huge displays of classic and sports cars from all the major clubs and a

market area with all kinds of motoring goods and memorabilia on sale. This year is their silver jubilee so there are a number of special events, including *Status Quo* headlining the evening concert on Saturday.

As last year, we have registered as a club, so have a two-for-one offer on tickets and a display pitch inside the circuit for anyone who would like to display their classic or sports car. It is a three day event with caravan and camping facilities available, so several of us are planning to attend all three days and stay in caravans, but it is an easy journey for just a day trip. The offer on tickets expires at the end of March so don't delay if you want to join us. www.silverstoneclassic.com for more information.

Cholmondeley Pageant of Power 12 to 14 June

The Cholmondeley (pronounced Chomley) Pageant of Power is held in the grounds of Cholmondeley Castle in Cheshire and is a celebration of powerful transport in all forms, but particularly cars. It is a bit like a less formal version of the Goodwood Festival of Speed. Featuring displays, track action by all sorts of vehicles, air displays, shopping and food in the trader village, it promises to be an exciting day out for any petrolhead. A group of us are planning to go on Saturday 13 June and will be able to get discounted tickets if we can book as a group of ten or more, so please get in touch if you would like to join us.

If you are interested, please contact me (01926 634321 ian.palmer@mail.com) or Dawn Powers (01926 632419 brooklands@orange.com) for more details.

6
Ian Palmer

Another great New Year

New Year's Eve dawned and there were several people in the village waking up to start a long day working hard to sprinkle some 1920s sparkle and magic over the club for the evening event. By the time everyone started to arrive the club had been transformed into a sophisticated rendezvous for gangsters and their molls, dressed in their finery, feathers and pearls - the men looked quite handsome too.

What a lovely surprise to arrive to the offer of a 'Long Island Tea' to start the night off. They may have looked innocent served in nice little brown teacups but they packed a punch and several cuppas were had by many, (especially me!).

Once all the ladies had finished admiring each others' fabulous dresses and feathery headbands it was time to eat. We were invited to the Curry House (aka the Birbury) for starters, served up with all the trimmings of salad, poppadoms, sauces etc. Then three types of curries were served, with rice and naan bread - including a delicious veggie one which was much appreciated. There was great music and lovely old black and white film in the background while we ate.



Photo Lewis Cutts

Several amazing home made puds were available - it was hard to choose just one, followed by coffee, chocs & a wee dram of brandy, all absolutely fab.

.....and then the gambling started - horse racing. There were some familiar names for all the horses, not sure who made them up?! Chris and I chose our horses carefully, studying the form (well, we just chose the silliest name) and we won 10 on the first race but lost on the rest. However, it was great fun with everyone shouting up for their horse to get past the winning post first.

Suddenly it was almost midnight - where does the time go on New Year's Eve? We all welcomed in 2015 and some 'Dad' dancing commenced shortly afterwards.

In time we sauntered home - happy to have enjoyed a wonderful evening in 1920s Birdingbury. A 'well done' and huge thanks must be given to those who put in all the hard work to make the evening go with a swing and to Val and Sue (who looked very glam in their 1920s dresses) for working straight through from 2014 to 2015.

Happy New Year to all.



PROGRESSIVE SUPPER

Saturday 25th April 2015

Here we go again!!

Jackie Morton (633493) jackie@elliam.org

Simon Whitfield (634761) simon_whitfield@hotmail.com

We have agreed to organise the next Birdingbury Progressive Supper, and as you might have seen in previous Birdsong issues the date is set for 25 April so that we have a 'spring' event this year. Following last year's supper which saw a record 68 villagers 'progressing' and raised just short of £1,000 for St Leonard's Church and The Friends of Leamington Hastings School, we have decided to this year to support the Alzheimers Society and the Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance. These are both close to the hearts of many villagers so we hope you agree they are a good choice.

If you are a newcomer to the village or haven't taken part in the past then please consider joining us on 25 April. It is great fun and a brilliant way to get to meet other villagers - and if you want to know more about the evening then give either of us a call. As last year, 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, and this year 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

Welcome

to **Craig and Jo** who have moved into 7 Back Lane.

A few memories

Two recent news items have prompted me to look once again into our family history – viz. events in the Ukraine and the coming of HS2.

We have a photograph of my great-great grandfather on a glass plate which is inscribed ‘Winter in the Crimea’. Photography was in its infancy in the 1850s and the Crimean War was the first war to be recorded by photography. Another portrait photograph in a similar frame is of a younger Munro (his son?). A census shows two William Munros billeted in Liverpool and a record of one William Munro is on the manifest of the *SS Great Britain* on a journey to the Crimea.

We do know for certain that our family set up in business in Birdingbury in 1847.

The railway came to the village in 1851. It is hard to imagine the impact the arrival of this new form of transport would have had on the local community. It would have impressed a few people when the River Leam was crossed by those magnificent semi-elliptical arches – no graffiti allowed then! It would certainly have made the start of the journey to the Crimea much easier.

I guess it also inspired W. Munro & Son to tender for the new road bridge over the river which they built in 1873. Use was, no doubt, made of the railway as the Staffordshire blue bricks came from the Albion Brickworks in West Bromwich.

It was with great satisfaction that a few years ago I was able to replace five of those beautiful coping stones with some of the originals which had also been used on a wall at Master’s Yard.

Eventually the family business erected a small warehouse on the original Bourton Road which is now the approach to Draycote Hill Farm. It was situated to the right-hand side of the present entrance gates. After my grandfather died in 1955, the building was used as a hay store by Jack Williams (the farmer at Draycote Hill) until the late 1960s.

Exciting times! *Bob Munro*

BIRDSONBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Thank you

We hope you had a lovely Christmas and would like to thank you so much for all our lovely gifts and very kind messages which help to keep us going on these very dark, cold mornings!

We would also like to wish you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. 9

Your weekday paper girls, *Jo and Jacky*

Leamington Spa Station and the Railway Heritage Trust

Britain's railway heritage is the world's richest. Along with churches and government departments, the railway industry is one of the most significant owners of historic



premises and structures. Of particular interest is the extent to which the industry's infrastructure is still in use for its original purpose.

The Railway Heritage Trust's objectives were set in 1985: assisting the opera-

tional railway companies in the preservation and upkeep of listed buildings and structures, in particular where expenditure could not be justified for purely commercial reasons and in the transfer of non-operational premises and structures to outside bodies willing to undertake their preservation.

The Trust achieves its objectives by giving both advice and grants to train operating companies and tenants of railway-owned premises

Since 1985, the Trust has awarded over 1,100 grants, to a total value of £36.1m, to projects in England, Scotland and Wales. The Trust has played a part in attracting to those projects further contributions of £44.3m from bodies such as the European Regional Development Fund and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

In 2013/14, the Trust awarded 54 grants totalling £2m, the largest was £265,000 for Nottingham station and the smallest £500 for a Roll of Honour at Stratford.

Leamington station was rebuilt in 1939 by the Great Western Railway and acclaimed as a fine example of the style later known as Art Deco. Recently the station was in need of a 'birthday' and the Railway Heritage Trust has been able to help. A very active group known as The Friends of Leamington Station (who created the lovely garden on platform 1) have sponsored a series of projects which greatly enhance the buildings.

The first project was the refurbishment of the waiting room on platform 3; more recently the Trust has financed two more minor projects as well as, within the subway but out of the main circulation area, an isolated signwritten advertisement for a well known alcoholic drink which had been in place for a considerable number of years. It is a rare survivor of this type of advertising panel on a main line station, specifically

produced to fill the recessed poster position. At some time the adjacent room had required mechanical ventilation and a grille for a fan had been rather unceremoniously punched through part of the panel. The Friends arranged for a signwriter to reinstate the missing portion of the poster, once the redundant grille had been removed.

The Trust gave a further grant to the Friends of Leamington Station to enable a pattern to be made from an original GWR octagonal, cast-iron gate post, from the fencing at the front of the station. The gate post appears to be of a design which may be unique to Leamington Spa and dates from the 1930s station development. The pattern is being used to recreate three columns as part of the introduction of a mobility access ramp for the front entry to the station from Warwick Road, but will also enable authentic replica columns to be made as part of a future proposal to refurbish the GWR fencing along the same road.

Later Network Rail introduced new canopy glazing which brightened the platform areas considerably and also painted the canopy structure in GWR light and dark stone. One element which remained untouched was the platform canopy lighting which consisted of long fluorescent batten fittings on a heavy trunking system. An historical photograph was produced which showed that the original lighting units were hexagonal-framed lanterns with a skirt of frosted glass panels, very much in what is now described as a 'Tiffany' style. The Trust has supported the project to ensure that suitably authentic items were installed.

Recordsworm



BIRDSONBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Help Macmillan Cancer Support

In September I will be taking part in the Great North Run 2015 raising money in support of Macmillan Cancer Support.

If you feel able to help me raise money for those who support others during the most difficult of times, please visit - justgiving.com/mattmarkham

Best wishes

Matt Markham

Justly deserved

Dunchurch Boughton C of E Primary School received an accolade from a surprising source recently. The Tatler, described as an up market lifestyle and gossip magazine, listed the school as amongst the top 12 primary schools in the country.

The school's head teacher, Andrew Wardle, said it was good to see state schools being recognised for their quality and service to the community. "We are very pleased that people like what they see. It's nice to be selected but we are very similar to the great majority of state schools and provide a similar standards of education and opportunities for children."

He added: "I think it shows the system is in good health and I'm very pleased with the quality of teaching, services and opportunities we offer here. The staff do a fantastic job."

[The Tatler was originally published by Richard Steele in 1709 and was refounded in 1901. Now published by Condé Nast, it has the wealthiest readership of all their titles with an average income of over £100,000!]

BIRDSONBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Bourton and District Garden Club

On Thursday 26 February Philip Aubury will talk on

'No Plot no Problem' - growing veg in small places, pots etc

Village Hall, Bourton on Dunsmore - 7 for 7.30pm

Members and Visitors welcome

For more information contact Carol - 632033 or Frank and Francine - 632595

(We meet on the last Thursday of each month)

BIRDSONBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Operation Christmas Child

I'm delighted to report that Birdingbury folk wrapped over 300 boxes and also contributed very generously with cash, toys, pens, paper, soaps, toothpaste etc. The filled shoeboxes were sent to Azerbaijan. Thank you all for your continued support.

¹²
Pam Hopwood (Operation Christmas Child Co-Ordinator at Stretton)

Following the moving event at the War Memorial in August and the exhibition in the Club and later in the Church showing records and individual stories of those Birdingbury men who served in World War I, the Birdingbury History group will hold a

Cheese and Wine Evening

In the **Birbury** on

Wednesday 25 March from 7 to 8.30 pm.

To launch their booklet

Birdingbury Men at War 1914—1918

The booklet will be a permanent record of the research displayed at the exhibition and it will be on sale on the night at a modest price.

Don't let them in

Please be aware that bogus callers/distraction burglars are currently targeting elderly residents in Rugby.

Recently there were two incidents where men called at the homes of elderly residents, claiming to be from the 'Water Board'. The men then asked the residents to turn off their stop cocks and, while the residents were distracted, they entered their homes and stole items.

This type of rogue trader/distraction burglary activity usually starts in spring but it is believed that the unseasonably mild weather has brought the activity forward.

Please remember that you do not have to answer the door to anyone you do not know or are not expecting. Staff from the water companies never refer to themselves as being from the Water Board and would never call at your door to ask you to turn off your water. If anyone calls at your home claiming to be from the Water or Gas or Electricity Boards, do not answer the door, engage in conversation with them or let them into your home. Please report their visit to Police, on 101, immediately.

Thank you

Birdingbury Club

Happy New Year.

Following another popular New Year celebration the club is again trying to put together a range of events and entertainments that will coax you from your armchair. Birdingbury Cinema will be showing **Million Dollar Arm** on Saturday 31 January followed by another excellent **Cheese and Wine Tasting** on Saturday 14 February. That will be followed by a **Family Bingo Night** on 21 February

March should see the club host its first professional **Comedy Night** with well known comedians and we hope to start a **Keep Fit Club** and a **Ramblers Group** in the spring so keep an eye out for information.

Finally, we were all deeply shocked to learn of the sudden death of club stalwart Graham Facer over Christmas. He was a good friend to me and many others and his humour and straight talking will be greatly missed in the club. Our thoughts are with Annette and the family at this very sad time.

Ian Tipton, President

BIRDSONBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Birdingbury Angling Club

Did you know such a Club exists in the village? Well it does and has done for more than 60 years. It is an adjunct to Birdingbury Club and is open to all members and villagers young, middle-aged, old, male and female, experienced anglers or beginners. Our numbers are small but new recruits are always welcome. It costs only £5 per year plus an Environment Agency licence to fish – available from the Post Office.

Thanks to a local landowner we are allowed to fish the River Leam here in the village. While the catches are not tremendous it is the most delightful place to spend a quiet few hours along with the wildlife of the riverbank. Matches take place every Wednesday evening in the summer and once a month on the second Sunday - some at home and others at away venues.

The fishing season on the river begins again on 16 June. Why not come and be a part of this Club. Help will be given to youngsters who would like to have a go.

So how about it? Get in touch with me or Andy.

Jackie Westcott 632494

Ladies Circle

Firstly on behalf of Ladies Circle I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year for 2015.

December 2014

We held a Pamper Evening with Louise being our Therapist. The event was very well attended with members and visitors enjoying a relaxed evening and having a selection of treatments from gel nails to eyebrow shaping, along with nibbles and wine. For those who didn't want treatments the evening provided a relaxing atmosphere to chat and catch up with friends and neighbours.

January 2015

The New Year got off to a wonderful start with our annual New Year meal in the Birbury and I would like to say a very big Thank You to Barbara and Jackie who worked so hard in providing delicious soups, meats, salads and desserts and decorating the Birbury. Also a big Thank You to all those who brought along delicious dishes to go alongside those provided by Barbara and Jackie. With the cold and potentially snowy weather setting in outside, it added to the cosy atmosphere and gave us all a chance to meet up with friends and neighbours after all the hustle and bustle of Christmas.

February 2015

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 10 February 7.45pm in the Birbury. Gaynor and Maggie are hosting this gathering when Sue Whiston will speak to us about the Birdingbury POW camp. This promises to be a very interesting evening. Sue has said she will bring extracts of Felicity's filming and on-set photographs, so please come along. Non-members are welcome.

March 2015

For our March meeting we are planning to go to Rimo Growers Shop and Plant Nursery at Thurlaston. Come along and buy your Spring plants! Further details to follow.

We get together on the second Tuesday of each month, most of the time at the Birbury but as the weather improves we venture further afield!

Lee Hayden

Would you like an Allotment?

Ring Gary Laverick on 632539

Birdingbury Calendar

February					page
Tuesday	10	Ladies Circle	Birbury	7.45	15
Friday	13	Library Van	Main Street	11.40	
Saturday	14	Cheese and Wine Tasting	Club		14
Saturday	21	Pancake Day Races	Birbury	2.30	3
		Family Bingo Night	Club		14
Tuesday	24	Parish Council	Birbury	7.30	2
Thursday	26	Coffee and Chat	Birbury	10.30	5
		Chip van	Club		
		Bourton Garden Club	Bourton Village Hall	7.00	12

March					
Friday	6	Library Van	Main Street	11.40	
Tuesday	10	Ladies Circle	Birbury	7.45	15
Tuesday	17	Parish Council	Birbury	7.30	2
Wednesday	25	Booklet launch with cheese and wine	Birbury	7.00	13
Thursday	26	Coffee and Chat	Birbury	10.30	5
		Chip Van	Club		
Friday	27	Library Van	Main Street	11.40	

Swap Shop every Saturday at 10.30 in the Birbury



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