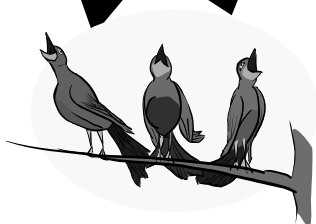


# **BIRDSONG**

June and July  
2013



**BIRDINGBURY  
NEWS**

No 56



**Please  
colour  
me in  
and I'll  
see you  
at the  
Birdingbury  
Summer  
Scarecrow  
Spectacular**

## Parish Council Report

Things have again been quiet in the Parish Council since my last report. Despite some work on the speed signs at the entrances to the village, it is very disappointing to have to report that this project has still not been completed. We are, of course, pursuing this vigorously with the County Council, and our new Councillor has promised to continue the work of his predecessor in supporting our complaint. We live in hope that the work will be finalised very soon!

Villagers will have followed with interest the completion work on our lovely new bus shelter. I should like to record here the Council's sincere gratitude to David Harrison of Main Street for his amazing dedication to the project. He has spent many, many hours and great care on the construction – all unpaid. We are fortunate indeed to have such a generous and skilled craftsman in our community. The bus shelter working party consisting of Cllrs Gaynor Davy and Terry Healey, together with Jackie Westcott and Chris Barney, as well as David, have been working for a year on the project, helped on occasion by Lance Hudson, Gary Marshall and Bob Munro. At the 'Grand Opening' at midday on 1st June we can all celebrate this phoenix rising from the ashes of the old shelter. Do come along and share in the celebrations.

The Annual Village Meeting on 23 April provided an opportunity for villagers to hear about the work of the numerous groups contributing to the life of the village. The Parish council also consulted on the question of commissioning a formal Housing Needs Survey, and it was agreed that it would be sensible to pursue this, not least because it could help to ensure that any future housing development could reflect community views. This is being done.

The village archive is now in place in the church and work is being done to ensure that everything is properly catalogued. A group of villagers took part in a 'litter pick' at the end of April and there is a report on this elsewhere in this edition. These activities are further proof of the community spirit alive in the village.

Our next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 18 June in the Birbury.

Diana Turner  
Chair, Birdingbury Parish Council

**Stop Press** Friday 24 May The speed signs have ben erected—at last!

URGENT REMINDER

## **SATURDAY 1st JUNE**

### **Summer Scarecrow Spectacular**

Bring along your family's or organisation's Scarecrow to  
The Birbury at 11am

Cake Stall   Raffle   Refreshments

**"Grand Opening" of the new Bus Shelter**  
at 12 noon

### **Summer Evening Village Picnic + Entertainment**

Gates of the Old Rectory Meadow open from 6.30pm

Bring your picnic, drinks, etc and a bag to take away your rubbish.

There will be some tables and chairs available but you are welcome to  
bring your own.

In keeping with the country scarecrow theme of the day, feel free to dig  
out those checked shirts, boots and cowboy hats!!

You do not know who may be sitting at your table.....

**See you there!!!!**

\*\*\*\*\*



## Litter Litter Litter



You might think that the photo that accompanies this article is one of the most uninteresting you've seen but when I tell you that the bags hold 14 bottles of wine, 5 half-litre bottles of vodka (regrettably empty? - Ed) and numerous beer cans, it gets a little more interesting. It appears our litterlouts enjoy a nice Australian red! This was collected by Hugh, Evie and myself on the Long Itchington road as far as the village sign.

Those who carried out litter picks on the other roads out of the village reported similar hauls. A few weeks ago Gaynor and Simon collected three bin bags of litter from the railway path and a couple of weeks later Hugh collected a shopping bag full! It appears to be a real problem and does spoil the enjoyment of the countryside. There are two ways to keep it down i) individual efforts as outlined above and ii) a collective effort as suggested by Jackie Wescott and carried out on 27 April. It only took a short time to do, so next time a collective litter pick is organized consider joining in and help keep our environment beautiful.....or occasionally take a bag along on your walks!

Thanks to Jackie W. for the suggestion and to Gaynor, Leslie, Cheryl, Jackie and others for turning up and out! And thanks for the cake, Kate!

Jan Seenan

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

## Birdingbury Country Show

**Reminder** - the Show will take place on 13 and 14 July, and the beneficiaries of any profits made will be the Air Ambulance, Cystic Fibrosis, and Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research. The Youth Club will be launching a balloon race from the Show Ring on Sunday afternoon for their selected charity - Guide Dogs for the Blind.

## **TEARFUND Plant Sale**

As we set out from Stretton to Birdingbury the rain began to fall, but this failed to dampen the spirits of those outside the Birbury. Hoods went up and there was a hurried cover up of the raffle tickets and prizes. Keep calm and carry on summed up the spirit of Birdingbury's Tearfund plant sale.

The wide array of plants were quickly snapped up by a growing crowd, along with the luscious looking rhubarb and new laid eggs. I managed to acquire a couple of interesting perennials and a buddleia which I hope will attract more butterflies to my garden. Inside the Birbury were coffee, tea and excellent cake - and plenty of good company. What a lovely way to spend a Saturday morning - I even won a bottle of wine in the raffle!

Amanda Ross (Stretton)

Many thanks to all of you who helped with the organisation and those who supported this event. As a result £240 was raised for Tearfund.

Dick Withington

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

## **The Birbury**

The St. George's Lunch on 21 April was a very big hit: we had our largest turnout for a very long time, so much so that we nearly ran out of food – as if Jackie Westcott and her team would ever allow that to happen! As it was, the event yielded £75 for us to put towards the running costs of the Birbury. Good food, good company – and a smiley Treasurer.

On Saturday 18 May a select few met in the Birbury for the serious business of playing whist competitively. Younger members of the community and some more experienced players were directed through their paces by Jackie Wescott. A good time and, more importantly, a good laugh was had by all.

The competitors recovered by sharing a cuppa and some fantastic home made cakes.

### **Future Events**

We have not organised any separate events for June as the Youth Club is having its Summer Scarecrow Spectacular on Saturday 1st June.

In July we will be having our Coffee Shop in the Birbury throughout Saturday and Sunday 13 and 14 during the Birdingbury Country Show. Everyone is welcome to join us for a cuppa and home made refreshments.

Jenny Hawes

## **Swap shop**

We have regularly seen around 15 people attending swap shop for coffee and a cake, and we hope to see more now that the garden is beginning to grow and we should have something to swap! Please do pop in to the Birbury between 10.30 and 12 on any Saturday and we'll be there, with coffee, cake and any produce, flowers, plants, books and any other items that people are happy to put into the middle of the table and take whatever they like! Don't forget - there is no money exchange, but we always welcome any home made cakes, biscuits, jams and chutneys, and if you are walking down the coffee aisle in the supermarket and wish to donate some ground coffee, it's always very welcome!

This shop has become a lovely way for villagers to have a weekly catch up and as a result, we are able to look out for each other more, and share much more than the produce we bring. We are all very grateful to Jenny Hawes for opening and closing the shop each week, and for everyone who plays their part in attending, washing up, making coffee and sharing their lives, one with another.

Thank you all - and if you haven't been recently to swap shop, please do come and share a bit of the magic!!

Cheryl 632461

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

## **Sponsoring a puppy for Guide Dogs**

I hope by now that everyone is aware of the Youth Club's aim to raise enough money to sponsor a guide dog puppy, 20 years on from the last time the village did the very same thing.

Our next effort is to sell 500 tickets for a balloon race to be launched on 14 July at the Birdingbury Country Show. Tickets are for sale from me, Cheryl, at Linden, on Main Street for £1.50 and if we manage to sell 500, we will make £500 profit! The prize is £50 cash to the person who buys a ticket that goes the furthest and is sent back to me, and the event is sponsored by the Friendly at Frankton.

Could you sell 10 tickets to friends and family - please let me know if you can and I will drop them round to you....

Many thanks.

Cheryl

Chair, Youth Club 632461

## Birdingbury Youth Club

At a recent meeting the local PCSO, Helena, paid a visit to the Birdingbury Youth Club informing members on safety inside and outside the village. All the Youth Club really enjoyed her visit, discussing child safety policies and how the police operate, not to mention 'playing' with the riot shields and 'locking up' friends in the police van.



The Youth Club runs every Friday evening from 6:30 to 8:00. Regular activities include fun games at the club, regular friendly competitions and going to the park for a game of rounders or football. Any new members who wish to join Youth Club please contact Gaynor or Jan and are always welcome.

Marcus Coles

This is our programme for the summer:

Saturday 1 June	The Scarecrow Spectacular (including a raffle and cakes) at 11am will be followed by a picnic in the meadow at 6:30. Both events are aiming to raise money to name a new guide dog, celebrating twenty years since Birdingbury's last major sponsorship.
Friday 31 May	May holiday - No Youth Club this week
Friday 7 June	Kate's Garden – a lesson in gardening involving digging, planting and sewing both vegetables and flowers.
Friday 21 June	Club Night and activities and games at the park (depending on the weather!)
Friday 28 June	Fun Fishing involving a trial session with the angling club.
Friday 5 July	Last Youth Club inviting parents and children for a barbecue.
Sunday 14 July	Balloon launch at the Birdingbury Festival from the grand ring.
Friday 13 September	Youth Club starts up again after the summer break.

## A Chapel in Main Street?

I remember being told, many years ago, that when the row of cottages which used to stand in Main Street between Harbottle House and the crossroads were demolished, just before the Second World War, they found that the upstairs rooms in two adjacent cottages had no dividing wall. The story went that this used to be a secret meeting room for a religious group. It didn't sound very likely.

However, amongst the papers that John Stevinson, our former rector, recently sent to the History Group was a copy of a document in the diocesan library at Lichfield dated 22 September 1824. It was an application to register '*a certain dwelling house in the parish of Birdingbury and in the occupation of Edward Whitehead to be used as a place of worship by an assembly of Protestant dissenters of the denomination of Particular Baptists*'. There was also a copy of a sale poster from November 1856 which showed Lot 3 to be '*....seven cottages and room used as a chapel with outoffices and a large garden well planted with fruit trees as now staked out in the occupation of ....*' So it was true after all even if it wasn't actually 'secret'.

Apparently by an Act of 1812 it became permissible to hold public worship in private houses and other places but they had to be registered with the bishop.

[ I understand that the distinction between General Baptists and Particular Baptists was that the former believed that when Christ died on the cross he died for everyone in general whereas Particular Baptists followed the Calvinist tradition of believing that Christ died for a particular group or elect, a form of predestination. These two groups came together in 1813 (even though the Birdingbury registration dates from 1824) to form a General Union, which became the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland in the late nineteenth century. Baptists reject infant baptism, thinking instead that baptism is for believers only - those who can personally declare Jesus as Lord. They also practise baptism by total immersion.]



The photo shows the cottages in Main Street sometime in the 1920s. They were originally built in the eighteenth century but some of them had had a second storey added. Harbottle House is just to the right of the tree.

Recordsworm



## London Marathon 2013

At times during our bleak mid-winter, I did begin to wonder why I said 'yes' to the 'will you run the London Marathon with Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research' question. But I did say 'yes' and after months of preparation, Sunday 21 April was upon me. I travelled down with my support team (Gaynor) on the Saturday for registration at the Excel in Docklands; a heaving mass of excitement and nervous tension. We stayed overnight in the Victory Services Club and then it was time...

It seems a long time ago now that I got on the tube at Marble Arch to travel to Blackheath. I changed at Bank on to the Dockland Light Railway, which will always be known now as the 'Lycra Special'. There are runners everywhere and even at 7.30am the trains are packed. There is a great sense of camaraderie and lots of knowing looks and nods as you acknowledge your fellow competitors. Small talk covers amongst other things: your charity, how fit you feel, what injuries you are carrying and the obvious... what time are you looking at? At the Red Start in Greenwich Park I enjoy the views across to Canary Wharf – the thought of actually running around there in a few hours seems slightly surreal – and I just try to pass the time without using up too much nervous energy. Could I really be here?! It is an incredible sight – runners of all shapes and sizes: serious runners, the charity runners, the ex paras carrying the stretcher, a guy carrying an 80 pound Aga, two guys carrying a full size cider press (complete with apples), the diver, the turtles and a whole herd of rhinos! I would like to say I was composed and relaxed - after all the training is done and dusted – now I can only do my best. Last banana and third loo stop.

The 30 second silence for Boston is incredibly emotional and perfectly observed.

The countdown begins and the hooter sounds. It takes me around 20 minutes to actually cross the start line and we're off! The first mile is quite funny – people cheering and waving. Quite a surge of runners trying to get ahead of the masses. I take it quite steady initially as some of the early sprinters normally struggle later. I tag along to the '4 hour 58 minute pacer' who already has a large following, but I think this is a good tactic to maintain a steady pace - a 4.58 pace is 11.22 minutes per mile and he is pacing it almost to the second. I really enjoy the first 5-6 miles. They just fly by; we're all chatting (the pacer is from Oxford and can text and talk on the phone while running). The crowds are cheering and, with my name on my shirt, everyone appears to be shouting for me! Greenwich is wonderful but I hardly notice the Cutty Sark as I'm too busy chatting to two very tall young ladies from the London Gospel Community Choir and yes - they did keep singing too. As halfway approaches I'm starting to feel the pace a little, but the highlight of the race for me is just around the corner as Tower

Bridge comes into view. Truly spectacular, the crowds cheering on both sides of the bridge and, as I pass Denise Lewis interviewing some runners, I make a brief appearance on live TV. The pacing is good, but as I pass 13 miles I decide to slow a little to conserve some energy. Half way is tough because as much as you can celebrate the fact that you've made it this far, you still have the same distance to do again. I am also entering unknown territory and the finish was my only goal.



At around 17 miles, Canary Wharf looms large and it's at this distance that that you begin to question why you're here. Everyone has a reason why they do this - whether it's the serious runner who yearns for a new PB, for a personal challenge, to carry the name of a loved one or to raise money for a favourite charity. It could be all of those things. It's now that you start to think about those long runs on freezing cold weekend mornings since November, two, three, maybe four times around Draycote Water. This part of the marathon

can be lonely and filled with self-doubt, but there is always inspiration to lift your spirit, be it a total stranger that encourages you or the fact that you have just been overtaken by an elderly lady dressed as Superwoman. There was a time when I was literally running to a standstill. Somewhere around Billingsgate Market with maybe, 21 miles done, you find strength from somewhere, to keep going to the end. As I meander through the man-made valleys of Canary Wharf, I feel glad to be alive. To be able to run with all those people on that beautiful day - running to help others - with a charity.

An inspiring experience! At around 23 miles I'm rewarded by the sight of my charity stand. Staff and supporters of Leukaemia & Lymphoma Research - a group of people dressed with shirts the same as mine, waving furiously and shouting for me and only me. The crowd support is fantastic. I think it's the humiliation of people seeing you in such pain, so red and sweaty that urges you to keep going. The crowd boost is at its best as you run through the City and past Fleet Street towards the last few miles of the race, just when all you want to do is rest! There's only one thing to do and that's run. My aching limbs and very sore feet have to be ignored as I can almost smell the finishing line. Twenty four hours before we'd stepped off a River Bus at the Embankment and strolled up towards the Palace of Westminster pointing out familiar landmarks. At this stage of the marathon, there is no time and certainly no inclination to look at the sights. All I want to see is the next mile marker – everything else is a blur. Through Parliament Square and the noise is akin to a football crowd, seriously uplifting and I'm now starting to lift my knees and run in a true distance runner style! I'm also thinking about that cup of tea and cake that I'm going to devour. The last mile goes on forever, but you can't buckle and you must retain some style! I'm concentrating so hard on looking dignified in The Mall that I miss Gaynor's screams of encouragement from underneath Queen Victoria's statue. On crossing the line, the elation is palpable. The sheer joy is soon tempered by breaking into a walk – it still hurts! A medal goes around my neck and a goody bag is thrust into my hand as I hobble towards Horse Guards Parade. The charity is holding a 'meet & greet' in the Central Hall Westminster. It's a chance to meet up with the other 30 or so runners who have represented the charity. Each runner gets a huge ovation as they enter the room and you realise that you are also part of this team; not just one of 37,000. It's also a chance for family, friends and supporters to share that special atmosphere. It also makes you appreciate why you're doing it, surrounded by some of the people who have inspired others to run: families who have been affected by Leukaemia or Lymphoma or other life threatening conditions, runners inspired to do something positive for others.

The London Marathon of 2013 will stay with me forever. The personal achievement, the noise of the crowd, the support of my community, the money raised and friends made. Fully recovered – I'd like to take the opportunity to thank all of you for your support, messages of goodwill and sponsorship.

Simon Davy (ex marathon runner)

Thank you and well done from all of us for this very moving piece. - Ed.

**Welcome to**

Ian and Karin Lowe and their two sons who have moved into Sundial House.

**Farewell to**

Geoffrey and Jennifer who have done so much for the village and have moved to live in Leamington.

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

**Leamington Hastings Infant School,**

**Rose Queen Day**

**Saturday 15 June 1.30-3.30pm**

All welcome! Please come and watch the children at our school perform traditional maypole dancing, plus the coronation of our new Rose King and Queen! Followed by a summer fair to raise funds for our village school, including face painting, bouncy castle, BBQ, bottle and chocolate tombola, bake sale and much more! There is a small admission charge of £1 per adult and 50p per child (4-15) to watch the dancing. Your support would be much appreciated for this family fun event.

For more information contact Liz Wooldridge on 07976 806 803

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

**Birdingbury Annual Egg Roll**

There was a very good turnout for the Easter egg roll on Saturday 30 March at the Recreation Field.

Competition was fierce and excitement mounted as the children unleashed their eggs down the specially designed course.

Egg roll winners were:

Conner Bates, Robert Hayes and Richard Hayes.

Best decorated prizes went to:

Anna & Jessica Markham, Jacob Cutts and Connor Bates

Many thanks to all those who took part. Thanks also to The Birbury and the Swap Shoppers for refreshments.

Gaynor Davy

## **'Cuckoo, cuckoo'**

Where have they all gone?

I didn't hear a cuckoo in or around Birdingbury last year. I haven't heard its distinctive sound this year in the village, although I know Peter and Sue have heard one near their donkey field. Gary has been keeping a record, for many years, of the first time he has heard a cuckoo. The average tends to be around the middle of April but it was as late as early May in 2012. Has anyone else heard one this year?



Recently I have been walking in South Shropshire and the Chilterns, but no cuckoos there either! We had a tipoff from a friend that there was one in the Brandon Marsh area, so we went and luckily heard it for ourselves.

The number of cuckoos in the England has declined by 50% in the past 25 years. (For some reason the decrease is less marked in Scotland). Last summer, as you will remember, was a washout in the UK and many bird species were badly affected. By contrast parts of Spain suffered from severe drought. I have read on line that, through tagging, ornithologists now know a lot more about routes taken and where losses occur. Migration is a bit like a game of snakes and ladders.

Maybe the greatest losses occur in Africa. The cuckoo is, in essence, an African bird, some males spending as little as six weeks in the U K. Changes to the seasonal availability of insects in West Africa could be having a disastrous effect on numbers.

For me, hearing the first cuckoo is an important spring time moment. I hope that Birdingbury children, at present and in the future, are not going to grow up in a village without the background sound of a cuckoo.

Dick Withington 632644 [dickwithington@hotmail.com](mailto:dickwithington@hotmail.com)

**SUNDAY 9 JUNE  
BOURTON OPEN GARDENS**

## **Forthcoming Events at Birdingbury Village Club**

### **Saturday 15 June      'Skyfall'**

Presented by 'Live & Local' Skyfall the Oscar nominated latest James Bond movie. Large screen with 'surround sound' all in your local village club.

Book your tickets early at £5 adults £2.50 concessions.

12 certificate so children to be accompanied by an adult.

Opens 6.45pm with 7pm start.

### **Saturday 22 June      Patrick Unwin**

Birdingbury's very own talented resident has kindly agreed to entertain us. From 8pm.

### **Thursdays 30 May and 27 June      Fish and Chip van approx. 8pm**

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Saturday 13 April saw the third **Birdingbury Baking Competition**. We had an excellent total of 64 entries from 15 entrants spread over 15 categories, the judge having a hard choice to pick out the winners. Thanks go to Mrs Leslie Wilkins (The boss's wife) who stood in (was dragged along) at short notice when the original judge had to pull out owing to other commitments (busy with lambing).

The evening saw all the exhibits auctioned off, with some of the items attracting fierce bidding, especially that excellent lemon meringue pie cooked up by Chris Powers which fetched a princely sum.

The auction was overseen as usual by Gary Laverick.

The final result -

Third place: - Jenny and Esmee Barr

Second place: - Val Elliot-Smith

First place: - Jackie Westcott

A total of £200 was raised, which will be split between Guidepost ( the carers who have helped Mum looking after Dad) and Air Ambulance.

Thanks to all,

Andy Westcott

## Ladies Circle

April 2013

**Birdingbury Memorabilia** - an interesting meeting with Jackie Westcott providing some 'historic' footage of the Birdingbury Fete of 1967. This had originally been filmed on a cine camera but Jackie had been able to get it transferred to a dvd. Members were active in spotting some well-known faces at the event which took place in the Hall Field (now Rectory Field). Along with the usual attractions, the Fete included a six-a-side football tournament which attracted teams from far and wide. The pitch was created on the flat part of the field alongside the river so spectators could sit and watch from the area which rose steeply to the top of the field where the marquee was placed. With the position of the pitch, it was inevitable that the ball had to be retrieved from the water on many occasions. There was also a tug-of-war across the river which resulted in the losers being pulled into the water. The children enjoyed rides sitting on straw bales on a trailer being pulled by John Truslove's tractor. (This was obviously before 'health and safety' had been invented!!!).

Thank you Jackie for once again providing the viewing equipment and provoking some great memories.

May 2013

We created '**Dolly**' - the Ladies Circle's scarecrow to join in with the Youth Club's event being held on 1 June. We had a couple of attempts to dress the ready-made frame before we finished up with a very sophisticated young lady. At one point, it was decided that the arms were too long, so after Diana had braved the weather to fetch a saw, Gail performed a very professional operation!

We also said 'goodbye' to Jennifer Johnstone, who has been a member for many years, as she moves to a new home in Leamington Spa. Wine and nibbles were provided by Maggie to make the meeting special to Jennifer - and, possibly, to give the inspiration for the creation of Dolly!

The next meeting will be **The Garden Party** at Diana's on the 11 June - starting at 8.00pm - don't forget your hat!.

Barbara Munro

### Thanks

Many thanks to those who came along to my book stall. I was able to hand in a cheque for £50 to Leamington Hastings C of E Infant school. I understand that the money will be used to improve library facilities at the school.

Peter Owen

## Birdingbury Calendar

<b>June</b>					See page
Saturday	1	Scarecrow Spectacular, 'Grand Opening' of the new Bus Shelter and Village Picnic		11.00 & 6.30	3
Sunday	9	Bourton Open Gardens			13
Tuesday	11	Ladies Circle	Glebe Rise	8.00	15
Thursday	13	Library Van	Main Street	2.35	
Saturday	15	Rose Queen Day	LH School	1.30	12
Saturday	15	'Skyfall'	Club	6.45	14
Tuesday	18	Parish Council	Birbury	7.30	
Saturday	22	Patrick Unwin	Club	8.00	14
<b>July</b>					
Thursday	4	Library Van	Main Street	2.35	
Friday	5	Mobile Police Station	Club car park	10-11.30	
Sat/Sun	13/14	Country Show			4
		Coffee Shop	Birbury		
Tuesday	16	Parish Council	Birbury	7.30	
Thursday	25	Library Van	Main Street	2.35	



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