

Upton St Leonards Life
incorporating Church News

Issue 102

February 2023



See page 5
for the plot
synopsis

The UpStagers Amateur Dramatic
Society proudly presents



COLD FRONT

A Comedy by: Alan Robinson
Directed by: Davyd Hunt and Sam Perkins

Live at
Upton St Leonards Village Hall
10 Bondend Road, GL4 8AG

Thursday 2nd – Saturday 4th
March 2023

Doors open 7pm – Show start: 7:30pm

Adults £11 (Refreshments Available)
Under 16's £8

BOOK TICKETS AT:
WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/THEUPSTAGERS



Letters to the Editor



On 5th February, we will be celebrating being at Upton Post Office for seven years!

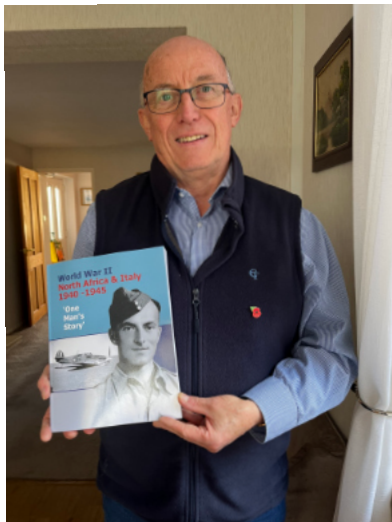
Thank you for being so welcoming and supporting us from day one. It is lovely to hear so many people know us on a first name basis and we really appreciate your continued custom.

Seeta and Rahul
USL Village Store and Post Office



Local Author

It is always exciting when a new author appears in our midst and we are pleased to promote **Philip Lamb's** first book entitled 'World War II North Africa & Italy 1940 - 1945, **'One Man's Story'**. It was published through Author House Publishing on 24 October 2022.



"I live in the St Leonards Park area and my wife and I have been members of the BMI Club for a good number of years. The book tells of my father's exploits from signing on in May 1940, through his initial training, to his posting to RAF 73 Squadron (Hurricanes), deployment to North Africa and what happened on his journey there".

I have attached a photo of me holding my book, also I emailed Damien Lewis - Author [a renowned reporter during wars and other conflicts for some of the world's major broadcasters and a Number 1 bestselling author among others], to ask if he would consent to me using his name and endorsement in the advert. He swiftly replied, '**Great Philip, no problem - please do, v best Damien**'.

The following is an extract from my book.

Book Endorsement

As an author myself I am aware of the time, work, effort and research that goes into producing a manuscript on any given subject in preparing the work for publishing. '**One Man's Story**' is one such manuscript that uses the World War II memorabilia, which had been collected through 1940 to 1946 by Leo Bernard Lamb – RAF 1012281, along with Official Military Records from that time.

It's a story that follows him from signing up in May 1940, through the many battles across North Africa, including 1941 and 1942. The crucial battle at El Alamein 1942 and then on to Italy – September/October 1943, landing at Salerno. Finally, his Orders for Home Embarkation (ASAP) in March/April 1944 (due to injuries sustained).

As an author I'm always intrigued to witness new authors coming forward with stories that relate to their family. Stories which otherwise would be lost in time. I am very happy to endorse the book as I have witnessed the book's development and a story which should be told.

Endorsement by: Damien Lewis - Author

Philip's book can be purchased direct from himself. His publishers have priced the book at £26.95

What's been happening in Upton

Events at the BMI

The BMI was extremely busy during the Christmas season, with approximately 80 members celebrating Christmas Eve dancing and enjoying the music of "Buck and the Tasty Tones".

Similarly on New Year's Eve, 100 members welcomed in the New Year and were entertained by the ever popular "Ian Oliver".

Saturday 7th January saw the first quiz for 2023. There were 17 teams with a total of 94 quizzers. As usual Andy managed to tax our brains with some interesting questions!!!! Thanks Andy, it certainly gets the brain cells working! There were joint winners on the night, each with a score of 118, the Georgians and the Woodentops, so very well done to both teams.



A total of £240 was made on the night which will be added to the BMI Charity, "The CT Scanner" at Cheltenham Hospital. The next quiz will be on Saturday March 18th.

Paula Quinn

USL Ladies Probos

January saw the return of members to the BMI for the annual Bring & Buy Charity event with proceeds intended for Crohn's & Colitis UK, as nominated by our outgoing President.

Spotting
snowdrops
at
Painswick Rococo
Garden



The February meeting will begin with coffee in the BMI before our outing to Painswick's Rococo Gardens to view the display of Spring snowdrops there. Car sharing will be available for those who need it and there might also be the option to stay for lunch at the Rococo cafe.

Please meet for coffee first of all at 10.15am at the BMI on Wednesday, 22 February 2023. Everyone is welcome so please come and join us.

Janet Carr

Upton WI - January 2023

Our President Angela Harris welcomed us all for the first meeting of the new year. Condolences were given to ladies who have been unwell, Josie and sadly Sylvia Overthrow had a fall and broke her humerus. Also, sadly we heard that Lady Caroline Elwes had died. A staunch and very loyal supporter of WI and many charities; a multi-talented lady who opened her gardens every Spring, with her husband, Sir Henry Elwes of 'Colesbourne Park' in Cirencester, for a fine display of snowdrops.



An invite from Twyver WI on Monday, 13th February has been extended to all for a talk on 'Big Cat Sightings'. Tickets cost £3.

February is the month for celebrating our Centenary; so ladies, dress up for this 'Special' occasion on 6th February for afternoon tea, followed later by our 'Celebration Dinner' at Bowden Hall on Thursday, 23rd February. Invitations have been sent to past

presidents and the County Chair, Janice Cole.

Our afternoon ended with a quiz. Pam Ridgell was thanked for setting the questions and we all look forward to a happier and more peaceful New Year. We meet again on Monday, 6th February at 2pm in the Pavilion for our Centenary afternoon.



Cathy Quant

What's been happening in Upton (continued)

Twyver WI January 2023

First meeting of the year! Where has the time gone?



We decided at the last meeting to change our way of organising the evening and begin with the Speaker, and so we welcomed Adele Owen from GARAS – Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers – who began by talking about the inception of the movement. GARAS was set up to promote the welfare of people entering the country looking for a safe haven and the centre provides a safe space to support all their clients, delivering Resettlement Schemes in Gloucestershire, liaising with other agencies who encounter those in need, and raising awareness of their situation with the public and decision makers.

At the beginning, they relied on the generosity of people emptying their store cupboards and bringing food to the centre for refugees, which in turn became thought provoking for those who got involved. Where do these people come from? What languages do they speak? And most importantly have they experienced or suffered trauma?

They work with women who have suffered rape as a weapon of war, domestic abuse as a result of immigration status used against them, health problems such as scabies due to poor diet and sanitation. Traumatic events have a profound effect on the children and can end up with many being trafficked into Europe and beyond. Many arrive at airports in this country with the same address as a reference and the border controls are always on alert.

Fortunately a lot of the children do settle in pretty quickly and pick up the language but it's not so easy for adults, especially women who are not used to being out in the community.

The main arrivals into the UK until very recently were from Eritrea, Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan and Iran but since Putin's war of aggression in Ukraine the need for more shelter and support has grown exponentially.

Some hosting of families is not perfect they admit, but generally speaking after 6 months they have settled down and want to make a life for themselves, albeit with mindfulness of their home country.

We have always welcomed those in need and now more than ever we need to open our doors and our hearts to humanity.

To share a couple of stories with you: A young father arrived at the centre with only a coffee pot which had been his father's and the first thing he did was to make himself a cup with coffee he had brought as he had heard ours was 'rubbish' - fortunately that myth was soon dispelled! But he felt his father would always be with him as long as he had his pot.



A young girl from Aleppo and her father were rescued and brought to the UK and the first thing she did was show Adele a

drawing of a Union Jack in a heart shape to show her gratitude and emotional thanks – something Adele has to this day as a prized possession.

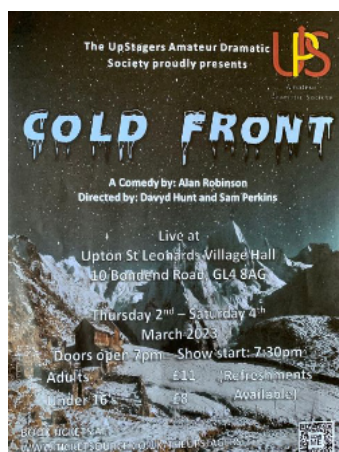
Currently, there are no safe routes into the country and there will always be those who want to take advantage but every day more and more help is being given including therapy with mental health and well being but there is lots still to do.

Janine gave the vote of thanks for the incredible work that these volunteers do. GARAS are situated at the Trust Centre in Falkner Street, and you can check out more information if you want to help on their website www.garas.org.uk.

We concluded the evening with usual business. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, 13th February. All welcome and remember our event from January on Big Cat Sightings has been rescheduled and will be going ahead at this meeting.

Linda Munnoch

What's coming up in Upton



When Mike whisks Karen away to a remote cottage in the Scottish Highlands, he thinks he's planned the perfect birthday surprise. But things soon turn sour when the cottage turns out to be nothing more than a rusty tin shack and the so called 'friends' Mike has invited are people Karen can't stand.

To make matters worse Mike's best friend James arrives with a surprise of his own, his new and very attractive girlfriend, Christina. As tensions rise and temperatures plummet, the party find themselves entombed in a blizzard, leading to frosty exchanges and those of a more amorous nature."

Don't miss out; book your tickets today!!
www.ticketsource.co.uk/theupstagers

Thursday, 2nd - Saturday, 4th March
Adults £11 - Under 16's £8

SATURDAY 25th February

**ENTERTAINMENT AT
THE BMI**

8.00p.m. – Late

With

"OVER THE HILL"

**Open to members and
signed in guests**

RACE NIGHT AT THE BMI

SATURDAY 11TH FEBRUARY

With Mike Long's Famous
Wooden Horses



Come along and join us for a fun night
First Race @ 8.00p.m

**All profit on the night will be donated to
the BMI Charity for 2022-23**

CT Scanner at Cheltenham Hospital

OPEN TO MEMBERS AND SIGNED IN GUESTS



B M I

**SUNDAY LUNCHTIME JAZZ
WITH**

J G JAZZ AND SWING TRIO

SUNDAY 5th March 2023

1.00-3.00P.M.

**Open to members and signed
in guests**

Lenten Lunches

St Augustine's Church, Matson Lane

**Every Friday 12.00 to 2.00
beginning 24 February until 31 March.**

All very welcome. £4 for Homemade Soup, roll,
cheese and crackers, tea or coffee.



Saturday March 25th 2023

Spring Show at the Village Hall

The photography classes for the show are:

King of the Castle
Street Life
Fruits of my Labour
Summer Loving
Hills and Dales
Brrr! (black and white only)
Hello (children only)



There are 2 Charity Classes this year:

1. 'Fill a shoebox with toiletries suitable for a man or woman'. These boxes will be donated to The Gloucester City Mission - and will make a welcome Easter present for someone who is homeless.
2. The WI charity class is 'Fill a shoebox size container with no more than 6 items for a cat or dog.' The boxes will be donated to Teckels Animal Shelter and New Start cattery.

Abbeydale Gardening Club



Members and visitors alike enjoyed our Christmas meeting with lots of delicious savoury and sweet delights to tempt us all, accompanied of course by mulled wine and other beverages. Games were played, quizzes were won (or lost!) and there was a good number of entries for the best Christmas hat competition. Pictured on the left were the winners – all made by themselves.

Our AGM was held in January and members were all in agreement that a £2 increase on the subscriptions represented excellent value at £20 for the year. Chair, Andrew Nichols, regrettably stepped down from his role as he had been a founder member since 1985. Having moved house last year and now living on the Herefordshire border, a round trip of 100 miles was proving to be 'beyond the call of duty'. Vice-President, Doug Monkton duly thanked him for all his years of dedicated service and that of his wife, Helen. We will miss them a great deal but look forward to seeing them at certain functions throughout the year. There was a full turnout for this first, frosty meeting of the new year and we welcomed four new visitors.

Our February meeting will be held on the third Monday in the month; **20th February at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.** We look forward to welcoming both existing members and visitors alike once again. In the meantime, **see page 7 for Jobs to be doing in February.**

Andrea Dawson

Craft Club (formerly known as Craft & Chatter)

A successful Coffee and Craft Sale morning was held towards the end of 2022. In our final meeting of the year the ladies were introduced to crotchet and making small baskets.

A new year brings about a new name for us - we are now simply to be known as **Craft Club**. Further new ideas will be announced at the February meeting on the 23rd in the School Room from 10-12pm. We are looking forward to meeting up with all our regular ladies again and of course any new ladies are most welcome.

Anita Owen and Diana Rosewell

Garden Maintenance - February

Spring is a good time to consider garden projects like paving, fence building, pond digging and installing water butts.



Top jobs

1. Prune shrubs that have finished flowering and finish pruning deciduous trees.
 - Prune hardy evergreen hedges and renovate deciduous hedges
 - Cut back deciduous grasses left uncut over the winter.
 - Put a top dressing around plants after pruning, planting etc such as bark or gravel around alpines. This helps to improve the soil, suppress weeds, insulate roots and retain moisture during the summer.
 - Apply a general fertiliser to all plants. Apply the fertiliser where the roots are - roughly a similar area to the spread of the branches.
 - Regularly deadhead plants and sweep up fallen debris, to prevent disease spreading.
 - Prune climbers.
2. One of the most economical ways to ensure your tubs and baskets are full of cascading colour as soon as possible this coming summer, is to grow your own bedding plants from young plants, potted up into small pots to grow on in a warm frost-free greenhouse, conservatory or windowsill until all risk of frost is passed.
3. Winter flowering shrubs that have finished flowering can be pruned now. Cut stems of Cornus and Salix back hard to encourage strong new stems of vibrant colour for next winter's display.
4. Deciduous grasses left alone to protect overwintering beneficial insects can be cut down now to make

way for fresh new seasons growth. Brush or rake growth of evergreen grasses to remove dead foliage.

5. Continue to plant new hedges, trees and shrubs, beneficial to our wildlife and wider environment, to allow them time to establish before the summer, top-dressing borders with a layer of mulch of Bloomin Amazing or farmyard manure, to help prevent weeds as well as to give your plants a welcome spring boost.

6. Clumps of Snowdrops that have finished flowering can be lifted at the end of the month while they are still in leaf, carefully split into smaller clumps, each then replanted to the same depth in their newly chosen positions, naturalising in time into spectacular drifts.

7. Prune Wisteria to encourage strong flower buds by cutting side shoots back hard to just two or three buds.



8. Easy to grow hardy annuals such as our much-loved Love-in-the-Mist or English Marigold can be sown now, sprinkled straight into borders where they are intended to flower.

9. Cut back stems of late summer and autumn flowering Clematis to the lowest pair of strong buds to encourage strong new stems bearing this year's display.

10. Now is a great time to plant new roses.

11. Cut spent canes of autumn fruiting raspberries to the floor to encourage new stems to grow in their place, planting new freshly potted raspberry canes for a succession of ready to pick berries from early summer to autumn.

Top Tip: Reduce the need for weeding by stopping them from

growing in the first place!

When to Apply Mulch

Mulching is ideally done after planting and before plants awake from their winter dormancy to be most effective.

However, it would be better to do it late than not at all.

How to Mulch

Applying the mulch correctly is important. Thoroughly soak the soil, then apply the mulch on the moist soil.

The mulch should be between 5 and 10cm thick, and then renewed to this depth on an annual basis as it will rot down in time.

The mulch should not be piled against the trunk but as near as possible to it.

Mulching around trees should extend from the trunk to between 0.5 and 3 metres (depending on the size of the tree) or possibly to the edge of the drip line of the leaves.

Did you know?

Mole activity increases in February as it is the mating season and they are building nests.



Flowers

- Divide clumps of herbaceous perennials that have either become too large, that you want to propagate, are flowering poorly or have lost their shape.
- Deadhead winter pansies and other winter bedding to prolong the display.
- Top up pots and tubs with fresh compost.
- Plant lily bulbs.

Advertising

If you use any of the services provided by our advertisers, please mention that you saw them in USL Life. They can then understand the impact of their advertising. Thank you

Get in touch today:
 ☎ 01452 447090
 ☎ 07437 536764
 ✉ sales@churchfieldautos.co.uk
 📱 @churchfieldautostd

CHURCHFIELD AUTOS LTD

Quality Used car Sales In Gloucester
 WWW.CHURCHFIELDAUTOS.CO.UK



7CA FCA Registered Finance Available

We also buy cars! Get in touch if you have a car to sell.



35 Oxstalls Lane, Gloucester. CL2 9HN

N.T. Boothroyd Plumbing & Heating

Est. 1986

All Plumbing & Heating Work Undertaken & No Job too small !

**Boiler & Fire Servicing
 Central Heating Systems
 Landlord Certificates, etc.**

Glos: 01452 552192
 Chelt: 01242 250497
 Mob: 07816 103709
 ntboothroyd@hotmail.co.uk



B.A. Electrical Services



Domestic & Commercial
 Insured & Registered

For all your Electrical Needs

A Professional and Friendly Service
 Quality Work at Competitive Prices
 For a Free Estimate call Bernie

01594 368607 / 07881 981352

USL Village Store

POST OFFICE
 Mon-Fri 7am-7pm
 Sat 7am-6pm
 Sun 7am-12pm

Your Village Store and Post Office

SHOP LOCAL

We stock local fruit, veg, meat, milk, bread, lardys and cakes. Groceries, toiletries, snacks, sandwiches, drinks, cards and stationery and many other surprising items.

SUPPORT LOCAL!
 Rahul and Seeta
 Churchfield Road 01452 618189




Rachel Harris
 Dip CFHP MPSPract

Foot Health Practitioner
 Home visits for all your footcare needs

Professional and courteous service
 in the Gloucester area

07791 901 220
 rachelh391@googlemail.com

DAVEY LAW Solicitors

ALWAYS HERE...
For You, Your Family & Your Business

HOW CAN WE HELP?

- Residential Property
- Wills & Probate
- Medical Negligence
- Personal Injury
- Landlord & Tenant
- Dispute Resolution
- Family & Divorce
- Lasting Powers of Attorney
- Employment Law
- Commercial Property

Call 01452 508800
 Email enquiries@daveylaw.co.uk

Visit 4 Pullman Court Great Western Rd Gloucester GL1 3ND
 www.daveylaw.co.uk

Davey Law is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority No 557291

PROFESSIONAL WINDOW & EXTERIOR CLEANING



- Window cleaning using extendable water-fed pole (suitable for delicate windows)
- Solar Panels
- Conservatories/Orangeries
- Soffit, Fascia & Gutters
- Glass Verandas & more
- Fully Insured



Locally known husband & wife team - Dan & Lois

07552 398638
 www.claricoexteriorcleaning.co.uk



PORTWAY FARM SHOP

Upton St Leonards GL4 8DP
 01452 613255

Our family owned business can supply you with fresh home produced and local Meat, home made Sausages & Burgers, Veg, Fruit, local Eggs, Cheese, Organic Milk, Cream, Yoghurt, Flour, Coffee, Rapeseed Oil, Dressings, Mayonnaise, Preserves, Pizzas, Gloucestershire Fruit Juice, Cordials, Bread, home made Cakes, Pies, Quiche, Ice Cream.

Visit the new coffee shop!

Email: portwayfarmshop@btinternet.com
 www.portwayfarmshop.com

OPEN
 Tuesday to Friday 9am to 5.30pm
 Saturday 8am to 3pm
 Closed Sunday & Monday

 For the latest offers, specials and news see Facebook @PortwayFarmShop



CHORLEY'S

GLOUCESTERSHIRE'S FINE ART AUCTIONEERS

Free auction valuations
 Regular fine art & antiques sales
 Insurance & probate valuations
 01452 344499
 enquiries@chorleys.com
www.chorleys.com
 PRINKNASH ABBEY PARK GL4 8EU



St Leonard's Church

Monthly News Letter

Website

www.uptonstleonardschurch.co.uk

Services for February

5 th Feb	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	10.00 am	Morning Worship - Candlemas
12 th Feb	10.00 am	Holy Communion
		We welcome Rev Richard Inglesby
19 th Feb	10.00 am	Holy Communion
		We welcome Canon John Webster
26 th Feb	10.00am	Holy Communion.

Feb 12th Rev Philippa will be away from the parish and Rev Richard Inglesby will be taking the 10.00am service.

Feb 19th We welcome Canon John Webster to preach at our 10.00am service. John is a lay reader at St Lawrence, Barnwood, and the chaplain at King's School for many years, before his retirement last summer. He and his wife Erica are old friends of Rev Philippa and Ian.

Neil Owen

It was with much sadness that we learned that Neil Owen had died on January 10th. Our thoughts and prayers are with Penny and her family at this time.

Neil was a much loved and well respected member of the church community and will be missed by all.

Interim Minister:

Rev Philippa Donald



Philippa's parish days are Tuesday, Wednesday and Sunday. Please feel free to leave a message for her on other days and she will respond when she is next in the parish

Churchwarden: Gill Howell

**Church Administrator:
Jenny Cunningham**

If you are unable to come to church and you would like to receive Holy Communion at home at any time, please contact Rev Philippa



January 500 Club Winners

1 st Prize	£30.00	No. 19
2 nd Prize	£20.00	No. 39

Tower light dedications

Please note the deadline for the Church pages is the 8th of the preceding month

In an effort to conserve resources the church lights will only be lit between the hours of 5pm and 9 pm during the winter

On the 25th February, the Tower Lights are lit in remembrance of Derek Brinkley, whose birthday it would have been on this date. Kindly sponsored by his son, Alan.

If you or your family wish to have the lights sponsored in celebration of a birthday, an anniversary, for a loved one's life or any other reason, please contact Jenny Cunningham for more details.

Christmas Card Recycling

Thank you to everyone who kindly allowed their homes and premises to be used as a depositing point for Christmas cards to be recycled on behalf of the Cobalt Unit in Cheltenham.

Five car loads of cards awaiting a new lease of life went to Cheltenham, and will hopefully help raise money again this year, and maybe exceed the £25000 they made last year.

The unit recycles all greetings cards throughout the year, so please save your everyday cards ready to donate. The recycling can be left with Jenny Cunningham, please email her or ring her mobile number (details on front page) The drop off points which were available for Christmas are now closed so please do not use any of the addresses.

Mothers Union

On December 14th 2022, some of our members braved the snow and joined the St Oswald's, Coney Hill congregation in their Lady Chapel for an Advent communion service followed by festive refreshments in the Church Hall.

The next Branch meeting will be on Thursday 16 February when Mrs Margaret Edwards, a past Diocesan President, will speak on her "Visit to Tanzania" and this will be held at St Oswald's Church Hall, Coney Hill at 2.30pm

Kate Gale - Branch Leader



Our beautiful church desperately needs a new roof. Time is ticking and water is dripping.

Maureen Freshney has generously donated the £500 she won at the 500 Club Christmas Draw to kick start the thousands we need to raise.

If you have any ideas, expertise or time to offer to get moving on this massive project please contact me. Thank you.

sheila.thomas1@btinternet.com



Thank you to Darren Bourne for kindly giving permission for us to use his lovely aerial photograph of Saint Leonard's church



Rev. Philippa



Dear friends in Upton St Leonards,

I've still got my Nativity set up on the hall table as I write this – in mid January. There is a church tradition that you can keep nativity sets up – and trees actually, though I don't think any tree would last that long! – until February 2nd, when the church celebrates Candlemas – the time when Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to the temple when he was just a few days old, and Simeon and Anna both 'very advanced in years' (as the Bible gently puts it) saw him and prayed for him. They had both been waiting many years to meet the Messiah, because God had told them they would not die until they had. It was a joyful occasion for them!

I imagine it must have been hard sometimes for them, as the years passed, waiting to hear from God about when Jesus would come. They were both very faithful worshippers – Anna was 84 and had been a widow for many years, and spent most of her time in the temple, worshipping and praising God. Simeon was a godly man who had followed God all his life. But nevertheless there must have been moments when they wondered if it would actually happen, and if God really was going to show them his Son.

It's not always an easy thing, waiting. We can get impatient and want to know NOW what is going to happen. I'm sure we can all remember times when the waiting seemed as if it would go on for ever – when I was waiting to hear whether I would be accepted for ordination training, it was about 10 days, but it felt like much longer! When I was waiting for the birth of my children, when I was waiting to hear where God was going to send me for my curacy, when I was waiting to hear the news of my husband's mum, as she lay unconscious in hospital over a period of weeks. Sometimes waiting for something which in the big scheme of things, would be counted as something trivial, can seem just as hard as waiting for something that might be life-changing. Waiting to see the doctor, with that notice which says 'Be a patient patient!' on the wall beside you, is bound to put your blood pressure up! Waiting for a bus for ages, then seeing 2 coming. Waiting for a reply to an email – we want it NOW. The age we live in is so instant – a click of the mouse and it (whatever 'it' is) has happened. Amazon sometimes deliver things to your home within hours of you ordering them - how does that work?

These days we're not very good at waiting. Though we do know about it – we know how the seasons move round through the year, and we can't really influence that – we have to 'wait' for summer, or Autumn. We

know that it takes time for relationships to grow and flourish and we have to 'wait' for that to happen.

Sometimes in the 'waiting' amazing things happen – like when a snowdrop bulb pushes through the hard, cold ground and the delicate white flower appears. Or when after 9 months of silent growth, a unique and beautiful new baby is born.

There are often times in our lives when we wish things would move along a little more quickly. Here in Upton St Leonard's we are in a 'waiting' season at the moment, as we wait to hear about the future of the church family here. Though it is natural to be a bit impatient, perhaps we run the risk of missing the things God wants us to see at this time. Perhaps there are things we will learn that will help us in the future. Hindsight is great gift, but because of its name, it comes afterwards. How often have you hear someone say 'With the benefit of hindsight, I think...' ? But time is never meaningless for God and if we try to jump ahead, we may not learn the very lessons that will so benefit us in the season to come. He is not ignoring us when time seems to go so slowly, but rather keeping us in the present so we may prepare for the coming season, whatever that may be.

So in these early days of the year, when it's often cold and wet and we 'wait' for the Spring, and to hear what the Diocese plans are, let's remember that in the 'waiting' we may learn things that we perhaps might not have learnt if we hadn't had to wait, and at the end of the 'waiting' good things are to come.

'Trust in God's timing. It's better to wait a while and have things fall into place than to rush and have things fall apart.'

Quotes from the internet can have their uses!

With my love and prayers

Rev Philippa

PS If you're wondering how I got on with my Advent plans :

- I read Luke's gospel – a chapter a day.
- I didn't quite get to the foodbank before Christmas, but that was OK because after the Christmas rush, food was still needed.
- I didn't manage to write a note to someone every day of Advent, though I did send some extra Christmas cards.

Thank you to the person who challenged me in mid December and asked me how I was getting on – it encouraged me to continue. We all need encouragement and in 'waiting' too.



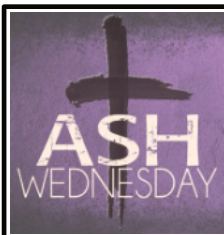
During Lent (the weeks leading up to Easter) we will be holding 'Lent lunches' in the schoolroom.

These will take place on Thursday lunchtimes, beginning on Thursday February 23rd at noon, and finishing on Thursday March 30th.

Between 12pm and 2pm home made soup and bread followed by cheese and biscuits with fruit and tea or coffee, will be available in the schoolroom, so you are welcome at whatever time suits you.

At 1pm we hope to have a short talk on the subject of 'Faith in the workplace' - a guest speaker will share a little of how following Jesus helps them in their place of work, and we will be able to talk to them and ask questions, if we so wish.

The charge for the lunch will be £6.00, which will go to the church roof fund.



On Ash Wednesday (22nd February) evening there will be a service of the Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion at 7pm in the church, and all are welcome.

World Day of Prayer - Friday 3 March

The local service will take place at St Oswalds, Coney Hill at 10.30am. The service this year has been written by women in Taiwan.

All are welcome at the service



Answers to the New Year's Quiz 2023

1. What is the famous song everyone sings on New Year's Eve?
A: Auld Lang Syne
2. Who wrote the words?
A: Robert Burns
3. When exactly, is Twelfth Night?
A: January 6th
4. What did my true love send me on the '12th day of Christmas'
A: 12 drummers drumming
5. How many gifts does the lady receive in total ?
A: 78
6. What do the Scots call New Year ?
A: Hogmanay
7. Name a country that does not celebrate New Year
A: Korea, India, Sri Lanka,
8. What were the names of the 3 wise men?
A: Caspar, Melchior, Balthazar
9. What gifts did the wise men bring?
A: Gold, frankincense, myrrh
10. What did those gifts represent ?
A: Gold for a king, frankincense to represent prayer and myrrh to prepare for Jesus's burial
11. What day of the week was New Year's Day 2020, the year of the pandemic?
A: Wednesday
12. What name was given to the predicted computer meltdown on New Year's Day 2000?
A: Millennium Bug

Rev Philippa

Advertising

If you use any of the services provided by our advertisers, please mention that you saw them in USL Life. They can then understand the impact of their advertising. Thank you

CEDAR MOTOR HOUSE LTD



Vehicle Servicing & Repairs  Est 1968

MOT Testing for Petrol & Diesel Vehicles
01452 617240 Mob: 07976 322735

Grove Court, Upton Hill,
 Gloucester GL4 8DA

- We use the latest techniques and diagnostic equipment to service any make of car to dealership standards.
- Tyres, batteries and exhausts fitted. Clutch and timing belt replacement.
- Insurance & Accident repairs, welding service.

Your Local Garage
*We pride ourselves on our friendly, honest and reliable service.
 We can collect your vehicle from your home.*

J.BIRD
CHIMNEY SWEEP

Traditional and Power Chimney Sweeping from £50
 Open Fires, Boilers, Cookers and Stoves Serviced

Chimney Pots, Cows and Bird Guards Fitted
 Flue Liners and Stoves Installed to Latest Regulations

Cctv Chimney Camera Surveys

PHONE ME TODAY FOR AN APPOINTMENT
01452 521732
07973 905151
sootybloke@blueyonder.co.uk




A1 Windows
"for all your window needs"

A local friendly company with over 35 years experience

- Replacement uPVC & aluminium windows, doors and conservatories made to measure
- Replacing misted glass
- Locks
- Hinges
- Handles
- Patio rollers
- Coloured Composite Doors made to measure

Free no obligation quotations
 www.a1windows-gloucester.com

Simon Green
 01452 535811
 07989 891227




Rhys James Fencing

All types of fencing and gates supplied & fitted. From minor repairs to complete new fence, I offer a fast & friendly service.

Local contractor, fully insured, established over 20 years.

Garden work undertaken. Trees removed, stumps ground, hedges cut. All waste responsibly disposed of.

The Lodge
 Rance Pitch
 Upton St
 Leonards

07931 380463 / 01452 372051
rhysjames64@outlook.com
 and on 

Approved Contractor to Local social housing Association and the Diocese of Gloucester

HICKS ELECTRICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

Local approved electrician with 18 years' experience.

Honest, friendly and professional with very high standards.

All work considered – inspection and testing, upgrades, extensions, repairs.

Fully insured.

Call or email for a free consultation & quotation
ben@hickselectricalsolutions.co.uk

Phone: 01452 538969
Mobile: 07981 797894




The BMI Club
 (Est 1898)
 Bondend Road
 Upton St Leonards

Members Club, new members welcome.

Two bars, wide screen TV with Sky/BT Sports. Snooker /Pool Tables. Skittle Alley. Regular entertainment nights. Function room hire.

Annual Fee £10 plus £5 joining fee. Senior Citizens half price

To join just call in and see Brian our Steward for details.
 Open ALL DAY, noon - 11pm
 Every day
 http://www.bmiclub.co.uk/
Tel. 01452 616384



Brothertons
 Accountants & Tax Advisors

Personalised, friendly service to local business owners and individuals

All Aspects of Accountancy:
 • Self Assessment Tax Returns
 • Sole Trader Accounts
 • Limited Companies *Local family firm*
 • VAT *Established 1998*
 • Payroll *Free initial meeting*
 • Bookkeeping *Fixed quotes*

2 Abbeymead Avenue, Gloucester GL4 5ER
 01452 311711
 www.brothertons.co.uk
 email info@brothertons.co.uk

David Cridland Contracting

Fencing, Ground maintenance and groundwork contractor

3 Ton mini-digger with driver available

All types of fencing supplied and erected. Hedges cut. Trees pruned. Ground cleared. From small gardens to farms, no job too small. Service and reliability guaranteed

Fully insured 20 years experience

01452 311215 or 07836 279974
 COMMELINES MILL FARM
 UPTON ST LEONARDS GL4 8EG



Little Court Cottages

Self-catering accommodation for holidays and short breaks, in Upton St Leonards, perfect for visiting friends and family.
 Email: info@littlecourtcottages.co.uk
Tel: 01452 615150
 www.littlecourtcottages.co.uk



ARTS PAGE

In early Spring our thoughts may turn to thoughts of love as we celebrate St Valentine's Day on February 14th. Many legends surround the celebration of St Valentine's Day but it is certainly a day of celebration of romance and love in many regions of the world.

PHILLIDA FLOUTS ME by Anon

Of what a plague is love,
 How shall I bear it?
She will unconstant prove,
 I greatly fear it.
It so torments my mind,
 That my strength faileth,
She wavers with the wind,
 As the ship saileth.
Please her the best you may,
 She looks another way.
Alas and well a day!
 Phillida flouts me.

Fair maid, be not so coy,
 Do not disdain me.
I am my mother's joy,
 Sweet, entertain me.
She'll give me when she dies,
 All things that's fitting,
Her poultry and her bees
 And her geese sitting;
A pair of mallard's beds,
And barrel full of shreds;
And yet, for all these goods,
 Phillida flouts me.

**(Perhaps the anonymous poet did not realise that
Phillida was not impressed by poultry and geese?)**

Love Without Hope by Robert Graves 1895 - 1985

Love without hope, as when the young bird-catcher
Swept off his tall hat to the Squire's own daughter,
So let the imprisoned larks escape and fly
Singing about her head, as she rode by.



Ruth by Thomas Hood 1799 – 1845

She stood, breast-high amid the corn,
Clasped by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest, none could tell,
But long lashes veiled a light,
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim; -
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks:-

Sure, I said, heav'n did not mean,
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean;
Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

BOOK REVIEW

The Pursuit of Love by Nancy Mitford 1904 - 1973



Published in 1945 this novel was an immediate best-seller. It is the first in a trilogy about an upper-class English family in the interwar period. It follows the romantic life of Linda Radlett, narrated by her cousin, Fanny Logan. It is a comedy but has tragic overtones.

The early chapters recount the Radlett children's bizarre upbringing and the activities of their secret society, the Hons. As Linda grows up she is increasingly consumed by a desire for romantic love and marriage.

Nancy Mitford wrote two sequels to this novel – Love in a Cold Climate in 1949 and Don't Tell Alfred in 1960. There have been adaptations of the trilogy for television, under the title of Love in a Cold Climate, on both ITV and BBC.

February Feature Article

James Witcomb – another Village Benefactor

Most people will know of Lady Downe as a village benefactor, and after her, the Birchall family. This is the story of a further benefactor, James Witcomb. James lived from 1830 to 1899, and his grave, pictured on this page, is in the churchyard alongside the track that goes round the top.



There were quite a few members of the Witcomb family living in the village in the 1840's and earlier. They owned land in the Saintbridge area, which was then part of the parish and village. In the census of 1841 James' father Robert is described as a farmer. James was baptised in St Leonard's Church, and on James' baptism certificate his father is described as a miller. There was a mill in Saintbridge, located just above and to the north of where the Saintbridge ponds now are, so it is a fair guess to assume that that was where James lived as a boy.

It looks as if James moved away from the village in about 1850, and started to farm and own land in Barnwood and Churchdown, and further afield. By the time of his death, in 1899, he was "a gentleman" living in Wellsprings House, Longlevens. That house no longer exists, but there is a Wellsprings Road very close to Longlevens church. His estate, at probate, was worth nearly £28,000. In 1899 that meant he was very well off!

He clearly maintained his connection with the village, because that's where his burial took place. In his will, he left £100 for the benefit of St Leonard's Church Sunday School.

The land opposite the old school, where the bungalows and the Old School Room are now, was a small field, which belonged to an estate (the Blissett estate) of absentee landholders. The land came up for sale in 1907 and the estate's agents were prepared to sell it at 50% of its value if bought to the benefit of the church. So James Witcomb's legacy was used to buy the field.

A charity, the Sunday School Charity, was set up, and still exists today, to manage the field, its use and any money arising from its use. The school used the land for space for the children to plant flowers and vegetables. In 1916 the school was allowed to build the room we now call the Old School Room, where carpentry classes for the boys were held, and later sewing classes for the girls. In 1946 the room was converted into a dining room for the school, and a kitchen was added.



A further development came in the late 1960's when the lower half of the land was sold to Stroud District Council in order that 8 retirement homes could be built, Witcomb Close. The name, of course, commemorates the original gift. The money raised from this sale was invested for the Sunday School Charity, and the investment has provided income for running the Church's Sunday School, when it had one, the church's work with children, and for the maintenance of the building, once it was no longer needed as a school dining room.

Andy Russell

Advertising

If you use any of the services provided by our advertisers, please mention that you saw them in USL Life. They can then understand the impact of their advertising. Thank you

Do you need help around your home?

"Being local, I'm a very Handy Man!"

With over 30 years experience, here are just some of the jobs that I can do to help you improve and maintain your home.





Tiling
SPECIALIST



Bathroom installations



Hall, stairs & landing



Painting & decorating

Friendly, Caring, Trustworthy Service from a Friendly, Caring Person at Really Friendly Prices.

For a FREE quotation please ring me, David Holder on
Tel: 01452 611866 Mobile: 07977 099996 or Email: holdermaxine@aol.com
DJH Home Services, Gloucester Established 1984

Guest Suite to rent in USL



Newly available: Delightful ground floor Guest Suite. Central to the village. Lovely views. Private parking. Perfect for visitors whatever their needs. No dogs. For details call 01452 621741 or 07815 197375.



View from the french windows



We are a new local team of two with skills, experience and qualifications in House and Garden maintenance.

Ashley & Luke
Fully insured

Property Maintenance:
Bathrooms & kitchens
All plumbing needs
General maintenance

Garden Maintenance:
Grass cuts
Patios & fencing
Garden landscaping
Hedge trimming

Contact us by email: 2ndchancemaintenanceglos@gmail.com
Or by phone: 07305 270039

Your qualified village electrician



MJ Boon
Electrical Ltd.

07773 626241
matt@mjboonelectrical.co.uk
www.mjboonelectrical.co.uk

- Free estimates and advice
- All aspects of electrical work undertaken





MICHAEL TUCK

The Property Channel

SOLD IT!

40

4.91 out of 5
533 Reviews

REVIEWS



01452 612020

www.michaeltuck.co.uk

FEBRUARY

1	Wed	Wednesday Probus	BMI	10.00a.m.
1	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
1	Wed	Bell Ringing Practice	Church	7.30p.m.
1	Wed	Bingo	BMI	8.00p.m.
2	Thu	Tea and Chat	Old School Room	2.00-4.00p.m.
5	Sun	Tennis Club Members Morning	Tennis Courts	10.00a.m.
6	Mon	Coffee Club	BMI	10.00a.m.
6	Mon	Upton WI	Pavilion	2.00p.m.
6	Mon	Parish Council Meeting	Pavilion	7.30p.m.
7	Tue	Needles & Pins	Village Hall Annex	9.45a.m.
7	Tue	Tuesday Probus	BMI	10.00a.m.
7	Tue	Rubbish and food waste week		
7	Tue	Badminton	Village Hall	8.00-10.00p.m.
8	Wed	Bell Ringing Practice	Church	7.30p.m.
8	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
8	Wed	Bingo	BMI	8.00p.m.
9	Thu	Tea and Chat	Old School Room	2.00-4.00p.m.
10	Fri	Copy date for March issue of USL Life		
11	Sat	Fun Horse Racing Night	BMI	8.00p.m.
12	Sun	Tennis Club Members Morning	Tennis Courts	10.00a.m.
13	Mon	Coffee Club	BMI	10.00a.m.
13	Mon	Twyver WI	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
14	Tue	Recycle and food waste week		
14	Tue	Needles & Pins	Village Hall Annex	9.45a.m.
14	Tue	Badminton	Village Hall	8.00-10.00p.m.
15	Wed	Wednesday Probus	BMI	10.00a.m.
15	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
15	Wed	Bell Ringing Practice	Church	7.30p.m.
15	Wed	Bingo	BMI	8.00p.m.
16	Thu	Tea and Chat	Old School Room	2.00-4.00p.m.
19	Sun	Tennis Club Members Morning	Tennis Courts	10.00a.m.
20	Mon	Coffee Club	BMI	10.00a.m.
20	Mon	Abbeydale Garden Club	Village Hall	7.30-9.30p.m.
21	Tue	Rubbish and food waste week		
21	Tue	Needles & Pins	Village Hall Annex	9.45a.m.
21	Tue	Tuesday Probus	BMI	10.00a.m.
21	Tue	Badminton	Village Hall	8.00-10.00p.m.
22	Wed	Ladies Probus	BMI	10.00a.m.
22	Wed	Upstagers Amateur Dramatics	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
22	Wed	Bell Ringing Practice	Church	7.30p.m.
22	Wed	Bingo	BMI	8.00p.m.
23	Thu	Craft Club	Old School Room	10.00-12.00p.m.
23	Thu	Tea and Chat	Old School Room	2.00-4.00p.m.
25	Sat	Entertainment Night	BMI	8.00p.m.
26	Sun	Tennis Club Members Morning	Tennis Courts	10.00a.m.
27	Mon	Coffee Club	BMI	10.00a.m.
28	Tue	Recycling and food waste week		
28	Tue	Needles & Pins	Village Hall Annex	9.45a.m.
28	Tue	Badminton	Village Hall	8.00-10.00p.m.

MARCH

2	Thu	Upstagers Production	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
3	Fri	Upstagers Production	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
4	Sat	Upstagers production	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
5	Sun	Sunday Lunchtime Jazz	BMI	1.00-3.00p.m.
6	Mon	Upton WI	Pavilion	2.00p.m.
6	Mon	Parish Council Meeting	Pavilion	7.30p.m.
10	Fri	Copy date for April issue of USL Life		
13	Mon	Twyver WI	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
16	Thu	History Group – Llanthony Priory – Liz Griffiths	Village Hall	7.45-9.15p.m.
20	Mon	Abbeydale Garden Club	Village Hall	7.30-9.30p.m.
22	Wed	Ladies Probus	BMI	10.30a.m.
23	Thu	Craft Club	Old School Room	10.00-12.00p.m.
25	Sat	Upton Spring Show	Village Hall	Time tba
25	Sat	Entertainment Night	BMI	8.00p.m.

APRIL

3	Mon	Parish Council Meeting	Pavilion	7.30p.m.
3	Mon	Upton WI	Pavilion	2.00p.m.
7	Fri	Good Friday		
9	Sun	Easter Sunday		
10	Mon	Easter Monday		
10	Mon	Twyver WI	Village Hall	7.30p.m.
10	Mon	Copy date for May issue of USL Life		
17	Mon	Abbeydale Garden Club	Village Hall	7.30-9.30p.m.
19	Wed	Ladies Probus	BMI	10.30a.m.
22	Sat	Entertainment Night	BMI	8.00p.m.

Weekly courses This section lists the courses that run every week

Activity	Day	Venue	Contact	
Yoga	Mondays 10am	Village Hall Annex	Lara Bricknell	07876 764425
Pilates	Thursdays 1pm	Village Hall Annex	Philippa Barker	07861 727198
Pilates	Fridays 9.30am	Village Hall Annex	Philippa Barker	07861 727198
Chair-based Pilates	Wednesdays 1.30pm	Pavilion	Angela Harris	
Dance Workout	Tuesdays 7pm	Pavilion	Debra Law	07505 761420
Art Class	Tuesdays 2pm	Village Hall Annex	Christine Hughes	01452 614227

Please note the Wednesday Pilates class is no longer available.

Valentine's Day

The theory goes that as the Romans turned away from their pagan beliefs and embraced Christianity the holiday evolved. St Valentine has been associated with many legends over 1,500 years. In many countries the saint is associated with the start of spring and new beginnings.

The custom of sending cards, flowers and other gifts originated in the the UK. The day is connected to various regional customs in England, although I cannot find any special ones connected with Gloucestershire. In Norfolk a character called Jack Valentine knocks on the back doors of houses leaving presents for children. In other countries Valentine is one of

the saints of Spring, the saint of good health and the patron saint of beekeepers.

In the past Valentine cards were made of lace and ribbons. Ladies in Victorian times made their own cards at home. In 1835 60,000 Valentines were sent by post despite postage being expensive.

Today the internet enables Valentine messages to be sent on e-cards. The Anglican Church has a service for St Valentine's Day which includes the optional rite of the renewal of marriage vows.

In the UK £1.3 billion is spent yearly on cards, flowers, chocolate and

other gifts, with an estimated 25 million cards being sent. This is not the case in all countries. The celebration of Valentine's Day is banned in Pakistan, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

On a darker side, the so called St Valentine's Day Massacre took place in Chicago on 14th February in 1929, where seven members of 'Bugs' Moran's gang were shot and killed by members of Al Capone's gang.

Don't worry if you do not receive a Valentine, I am sure someone, somewhere, loves you.

Mike Stratford

Congratulations



Congratulations to Millie and John Barnes, High Street, for becoming grandparents, twice over, a grand-daughter Ivy, sister to Amelia born on 20.12.22 and grandson, Zach born on 25.12.22.

Happy 90th Birthday



Congratulations to Nigel Murrell of Six Acres, who celebrated his 90th birthday in January.



OBITUARY



Paul Rosewell 1939-2022

Paul was born in Cardiff near the docks and was one of three children, having two younger sisters. Due to the war his father was away, and Paul did not meet him until he was 8 years old. He passed his 11+ and studied at Cardiff Grammar school. He left school and joined Cardiff County Council as a junior clerk, but the way forward was to study accountancy in which he became qualified. He then moved to Gloucester working for the Council. He progressed in his career and joined a District Council in Wiltshire rising to be assistant treasurer. Always challenged, Paul accepted the post of Financial Director of a Housing Association formed to take over the Council's housing stock. He often talked of going to London to sign the documents giving the association a loan of £130m to set up the business. It was a very successful operation and when Paul retired, he became a respected adviser to other councils on how to set up similar organisations.

Away from his career, Paul became a founder member of the Rotary Club of Gloucester Severn in 1983 and he began the club newsletter in the same year. Paul retained his strong community values and when a lot of men might have been slowing down, he became a Governor and Chair of Barnwood Park School. In more recent years he became a Director of the USL Life newsletter where his input was invaluable.

Paul loved rugby and was a great supporter of Wales as well as enjoying watching Gloucester play. He was married to Diana for 38 years and is also survived by 4 children and 12 grandchildren.

Paul had a full life and he will be greatly missed by all his family and friends.



Wendy Susanne Veronica Stephenson

23 May 1943 - 13 Dec 2022

Passed away peacefully in Gloucester Hospital. Forever in our thoughts. Wendy's funeral was held on 11th January 2023 at Upton Church. Thank you to everyone for their support and kindness at such a sad time.

Neil Owen

We are sad to announce the passing of Neil Owen on 10th January, 2023. Sincere condolences go to Neil's wife, Penny and family.

We hope to include an obituary for both Wendy and Neil in next month's edition.

UPTON ST LEONARDS LIFE

Web site: <http://usllife.org.uk>

To contact us, use the website above or the postbox by the Village Hall main door, or use the contact details that appear below:

This month's editor: Barbara Swindin
Editors: Andrea Dawson
Andy Russell
Barbara Swindin
Peter Wilson

Company Secretary: Cliff Alderman
Treasurer: Owen Stinchcombe
Feature writers: Christina Caldwell
Linda Munnoch
Ann Morpew
Jane Reed

Church pages: Rachel Middleton
Clubs / Societies / Organisations: Catherine McLean
Diary: Paula Quinn

Advertising: Contact: Andy Russell

Admin Support: Janine Black
Distribution: Jenny Cunningham

Photography: Jim Browne
Proof Readers: Carol Hardacre
Pam Tickner
Kate Davies

USL Life is published by USL Life CIC, a Limited Company, and is printed at Pip Printing, Nettl of Hereford.

Next month's editor



Peter Wilson

Use the postbox at the Village Hall or the "Contact us" page on our website to get in touch.

DISCLAIMER: USL Life welcomes adverts for goods and services but reminds readers to make their own checks before entering into any contract or other arrangements with advertisers, as USL Life cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of the advertisements.

Spring is on its way - Snowdrops



According to legend, the snowdrop became the symbol of hope when Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden. When Eve was about to give up hope that the cold winters would never end, an angel appeared. She transformed some of the snowflakes into snowdrop flowers, proving that the winters do eventually give way to the spring.

A snowdrop rhyme

"The Snowdrop, in purest white array,
First rears her head on Candlemas Day.

The name snowdrop does not mean 'drop' of snow, it means drop as in eardrop - the old word for earring. Snowdrops are also known as 'Candlemas bells'.

It defies nature that these delicate looking flowers can withstand the frost and heavy snow that we've recently experienced but whilst clearing away the dead leaves in the borders, sure enough, there they were poking through the rock hard soil, ready to show themselves again - bringing with them new hope for the year ahead.

Did you know that snowdrops are old. Really, really old! They stretch back for centuries, with a Greek botanist and philosopher writing about them as early as the 4th century. Back then, they were called 'white violets'. They were first discovered in Europe and the Middle East and were then brought to the UK by the Romans!

In 1753, Carl Linnaeus, a Swedish botanist, reclassified the snowdrop and declared that it wasn't a violet at all, but instead part of the Amaryllidaceae family. He officially named it the *Galanthus nivalis*, which means 'milk flower of the snow', but many across Europe were already calling it the snowdrop by that point. By the 19th century, snowdrops experienced a big boost in popularity, mainly thanks to the Victorians becoming interested in botany and floriography, and they have remained popular ever since.

Year on year people flock to the Rococo Garden, still one of the best places in the Cotswolds to see snowdrops, in early Spring (all 5 million of them). Colesbourne Garden, is open until Sunday 26th February 2023 and has over 300 varieties and Batsford Arboretum, Newark Park, Cerney Gardens and many more are just some of the local locations - the list is long!

There are also limited days to view snowdrops through the National Garden Scheme (NGS) - Downton House, Gloucester Street, Painswick on 6th and 7th February and Trench Hill, Sheepscombe, on 12th and 19th February. I visited the latter a couple of years ago and it was truly delightful. The owner, Celia Hargrave has been on Gardeners' World and has the most wonderful spring garden to wander around.

Andrea Dawson

Needles and Pins Christmas Lunch

We all enjoyed our annual Christmas lunch at the BMI, the food was delicious, so a big thank you to Lorraine and Brian for looking after us so well.

2022 has been a very successful year with all the ladies completing projects that included making dresses, skirts, and using knitted fabric to make into coats, to name but a few.

The photograph below shows the final day at class before Christmas. We worked for most of the morning but then Prosecco and food found its way onto the tables and the ladies had another little "do" to finish off the class.

Lesley Graysmark

