

Upton St Leonards Life

incorporating Church News

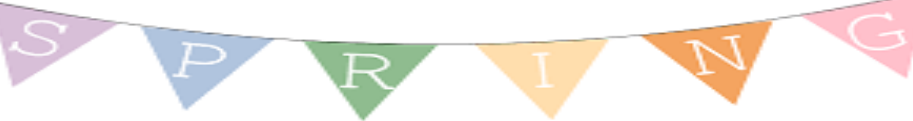
Issue 103

March 2023



See Page 5 for more information

Upton St Leonards



Spring Show

with craft stalls

Saturday 25th March 2023
2 pm. to 4 pm.

Admission

Adult £1

Children 50p



For show details contact

Marilyn Bannister

www.uptonstleonards-pc.gov.uk

Show Schedules are also available from Upton Post Office

Keep Upton Tidy

Please see the article
from the Parish
Council on Page 7

Village Litter Pick

Saturday 11 March
10-11.30 am

Come to the Pavilion:
we can supply rubbish
bags, litter pickers,
gloves and hi-viz
jackets, or bring your
own



Clocks go forward
one hour at 1.00am
on Sunday 26 March

Name Our Village Owl - see page 7

What's Been Happening in Upton?

BMI Entertainment Events

Comedy Night



On Sunday 15th January over 100 BMI members enjoyed an evening of comedy. This was the first time an event of this sort had been held at the club and it proved to be extremely successful.

The MC on the night was Nik Hill who does stand up in his own right together with 3 further acts, all of which have performed at various places including the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Another comedy night is planned for Sunday 28th May.

Race Night



A fun race night took place on Saturday 11th February with Mike Long and his "wooden horses". This is always a light-hearted fun evening with all the profit going to the BMI charity, "CT Scanner" at Cheltenham Hospital. It was a very busy evening and a total of over £600 was raised on the night.

USL Ladies Probus

January's Charity event of a Bring & Buy morning resulted in raising a magnificent donation of £230 for Crohn's & Colitis UK, which was the charity nominated by our outgoing President Margaret Buckley.

February's meeting is planned for a visit to see the snowdrops at the Rococo Gardens, with the option of lunch afterwards.

Our speaker for March will be Mr Alan Parker, who will tell us about 'A Day in the Life of a Durham Miner'. Please come along & join us on Wednesday March 22nd at 10.15am in the BMI.

Upton St Leonards WI celebrates its centenary

Upton WI was formed in February 1923, one hundred years ago. The February meeting took the form of a festive tea. Kathy Quant writes:

"There was, as one would expect, a full gathering of members. President Angela Harris greeted us and past Presidents were welcomed. Fittingly, "Jerusalem" was sung lustily. Angela described, briefly, how, in 1923, a large group of over 70 ladies met. There were 27 nominations for a new committee, whittled down to a manageable 12 by election. Would that we had numbers like this today! Angela has delved into news and photos from collections and the county archives, and has compiled a beautiful booklet for us all as a keepsake.

With the room and tables beautifully decorated by today's committee, the scene was set for our tea party with sandwiches, scones & jam, delicious meringues. Pride of place was a large iced sponge cake, which was cut ceremoniously by past Presidents Diane, Judy, Lynn and Nan. John Beckingham played background music from past eras. Happy birthday was sung and a toast was raised to our WI and its future.

On reaching this milestone, we need to remember our founder members who took the WI motto "Inspiring Women" to heart, giving a firm foundation to build on.

Our thanks go to all on our committee and friends who helped on the day – Myra and Sheila, John on the piano and Pauline, the photographer."

To mark the centenary further, the next issue of USL Life will have Upton WI as its "guest editor". It will certainly feature items from Angela's booklet, and pictures of the celebration.

The next meeting is on Monday 6 March for a talk and demonstration of Flower Arranging, by Sue Teesdale. All are welcome to attend.

What's Coming Up in Upton?

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



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
OR CALL ANN ON 01452 617 349



BMI Spring Quiz

For members and signed in guests
Saturday 8th April @ 8pm

£1.50 per person for teams up to 6 persons
Minimum £6 for teams up to 4 persons

All profit on the night to be donated to the
BMI charity for 2022/23 which is
The CT Scanner @ Cheltenham Hospital

PLEASE ADD YOUR NAME TO THE BOOKING SHEET BY THURSDAY 6th APRIL TO ENSURE THAT THERE ARE SUFFICIENT COPIES OF QUIZ SHEETS AVAILABLE TOGETHER WITH TABLES ON THE NIGHT



SATURDAY 25th MARCH

ENTERTAINMENT AT THE BMI

8.00p.m. – Late

With

“BITS & SPLITS”



Open to members and signed in guests

What's Coming Up in Upton?

Upton Spring Show - schedule

Class **SECTION A – FLOWERS, PLANTS & BULBS**

- 1 A bunch of 6 Spring flowers, any variety cut from your garden
- 2 1 House plant – in flower.
- 3 1 House plant – for foliage.
- 4 1 Succulent or Cactus.
- 5 Bulbs in any type of container.

SECTION B – FLOWER ARRANGING

Max spaces

- 6 'AN EASTER ARRANGEMENT' - in a basket 18"/46cms w & d
- 7 'A TABLE CENTRE TO COMMEMORATE KING CHARLES' CORONATION' - any container 18"/46cms w & d
- 8 'AN ARRANGEMENT IN A CANDLE STICK' - size not restricted
- 9 'AN ARRANGEMENT IN A CUP AND SAUCER' - size not restricted

SECTION C – HOME PRODUCE, COOKERY

- 10 LEMON VICTORIA SPONGE - to given recipe found on entry form.
- 11 BANANA LOAF – to given recipe found on entry form.
- 12 QUICK BOILED FRUIT CAKE - to given recipe found on entry form.
- 13 FAMILY FAVOURITE – any sweet or savoury – use your own recipe.
- 14 SWEET VEGETABLE BAKE -a sweet bake to include a VEGETABLE. - use your own recipe & display either a Full cake OR 6 individual small cakes/portions of a tray bake.
- 15 **MEN ONLY** – BUTTER TARTLETS – display 6 to given recipe found on entry form

SECTION XA – OPEN CHARITY CLASSES

XA1 GLOUCESTER CITY MISSION

Fill a shoebox with toiletries suitable for a man or woman. Boxes will be donated to the charity for someone who is homeless.

XA2 UPTON WI

Fill a shoebox size container with no more than 6 items for a cat or dog. Boxes will be donated to TECKELS ANIMAL SHELTER & NEW START CATTERY

XA3 TWYVER WI

Make a Coronation congratulations card for King Charles.
Use any media. ENTRIES TO BE DONATED

AGE 7 YEARS & UNDER

- Class 45 DRAW, COLOUR AND NAME A DINOSAUR – A4 size
- 46 MAKE A BIRD FEEDER – out of recycled materials/items.
- 47 MAKE A CROWN FIT FOR A KING. - use any media

AGE 8 - 16 YEARS

- Class 48 DESIGN AN INVITATION TO KING CHARLES' CORONATION - by hand or using the computer – A4 size
- 49 WRITE A ROYAL RAP - maximum of 3 verses – A4 size

ANY AGE GROUP

- Class 50 SOMETHING I HAVE MADE - any media
- 51 FLAPJACKS - display 6 to given recipe found on entry form

UP TO AGE 16 YEARS

- Class 52 A PHOTOGRAPH I HAVE TAKEN – 'HELLO!'

SECTION D – PRESERVES, PICKLES

- 16 One jar of MARMALADE
- 17 One jar of LEMON CURD
- 18 One jar of JELLY
- 19 One jar of JAM – ANY FLAVOUR
- 20 One jar of CHUTNEY

SECTION E – ARTS & HANDICRAFTS

- 21 A HAND KNITTED ITEM up to 4 ply*
- 22 A HAND KNITTED ITEM in double knitting*
- 23 A HAND KNITTED ITEM in fancy wool/yarn*
- 24 A CROCHETED ITEM in any yarn*
- 25 SHOW US YOUR HIDDEN TALENTS*. Let us see what you have made.
- 26 A PICTURE (HANDICRAFT)* - Max size 18"/46cms square, excluding frame.
- 27 A PICTURE (ART)* - Max size 18"/46cms square, excluding frame.
- 28 DECORATE ANY GLASS ITEM* - Use any media to decorate
- 29 A QUILTED ITEM*

*These items should not have been exhibited in any previous show.

SECTION F – PHOTOGRAPHY

Max size of photograph 12"x8" (30x20cms)
Photographs should not have been exhibited in any previous show and **MUST BE EXHIBITOR'S OWN WORK**. Photographs may be reproduced digitally or conventionally.

- 30 'KING OF THE CASTLE'
- 31 'STREET LIFE'
- 32 'FRUITS OF MY LABOUR'
- 33 'SUMMER LOVING'
- 34 'HILLS AND DALES'
- 35 'BRRR!' **BLACK & WHITE PRINTS ONLY for this class.**

As a reminder, schedules are available from the Post Office and Parish Council/Village Hall websites.



We still need more cakes to sell on the tea stall so if you are able to bake a cake for us, please bring to the Village Hall on the Saturday morning before 11am.

Many Thanks

Show Committee

Arts Page - Contributed by Ted Gardner of the High St

Hello Upton. I have been asked by one of our magazine Feature Writers to avail you readers on a subject of my choosing – a pageful I was told! After much soul searching and brain wracking I have come up with the subject – **Nostalgia** which the Collins Dictionary defines as a Sentimental Yearning for the Past.

*This subject of nostalgia is very close to my heart
So much has happened in our village
I don't know where to start.*

*Before the coming of the Motorway
And the bridge by The King's Head Pub
Back then we had no street lights
In our friendly village hub.*

*Everyone knew everyone, our community was "close
knit"
But now with all the new estates there's not so much of
it!!*

*I suppose you can call it progress
But I don't think that's so
The village has none of the characters
That we had so long ago.*

*The meadows where we used to roam
So long ago have all gone
It's all new estates with no field gates
For kids to swing upon.*

*No child picks wild flowers or sticky buds
To take home to their mum.
No one gathers bluebells when the springtime comes.
Oh to go back to my childhood, just for a single day
And live the life we used to in the good old-fashioned
way.*

Having spent some 80 years in our beautiful village I consider myself qualified to speak to you with nostalgia about Upton St Leonards. I well remember the time when there was no Six Acres, no Perry Orchard, no St Leonards Close, no Woodland Green, no Ash Grove, no Staites Orchard. All those new estates have been developed during the last 50 or so years.

The Rec was much larger and where the Tennis Courts and Pavilion now stand was the Pounders Field. Some folk won't believe that a person was employed to collect and retain stray animals and house them in that field. A fee was paid by the owner when the animal was collected.

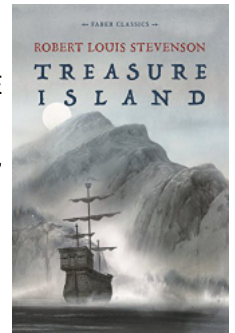
On Saturdays in summer a Cricket Match was a local event, with tea and sandwiches at half-time for the visiting team. Local team wives provided the hospitality. The Village Flower Show was held in the field that is now Six Acres, with a Gymkhana, A Dog Show and a Tug of War (Upton Team was second to none!). There were many other events for children and entrance was 1 shilling for adults and 6d for kids. (10p and 5p in modern currency)

Whist Drives and Dances at the Village Hall were regular events with a Raffle and a Spot Prize. Everyone dressed in their Sunday Best and there was strict tempo dancing of course.

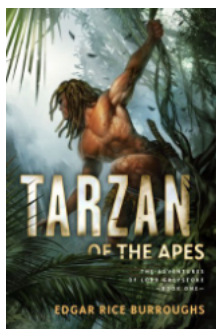
School Holidays were spent helping with Hay Making, Fruit Picking and Blackberrying for Jam. Many hours were spent 'dipping' in the local ponds, which have all gone now, for frogs, newts and tadpoles. Most kids had a collection of something and I look back on my growing up and think that, with my friends, we had the best times. GOOD OLD UPTON.

BOOK REVIEW by Ted Gardner

I had two favourites - TREASURE ISLAND by Robert Louis Stevenson published in 1882 and TARZAN OF THE APES by Edgar Rice Burroughs published in 1914. The stories of both, although fiction, to a young lad were real adventures. I read them both about half a dozen times. In Treasure Island the cabin boy, Jim Hawkins, was my hero. Characters like Ben Gunn, Israel Hands, Long John Silver and Squire Trelawney became well known to me. The Treasure Island story of buccaneers and buried gold is full of atmosphere and action.



The story of Tarzan of the Apes tells of an ape-man, Tarzan, raised in the wild by the great ape Kala. Tarzan learns to survive in the jungle – to talk to the animals, swing through the trees and fight the predators. I remember the film entitled Tarzan the Ape Man starring Johnny Weismuller, Maureen O'Sullivan and Alexander Skarsgard Senior. I have happy memories of plaiting baler twine for ropes and swinging from them over the brook that runs through the bottom of the Rec field. We swung from one bough to another, running branch to branch to the far bank and back. No one does this now but we did! Enjoy the books.



Name our Village Owl

We have had our lovely Owl on the village green for a few months now and the Parish Council thought it would be a good idea to ask residents to give it a name.

If you have any ideas for names, please send to the Parish Clerk using address uslclerk@btinternet.com (or hardcopy via the village hall postbox) by the 31st March and a decision on the final name will be made at the April Parish council Meeting. This will be communicated in the May edition of USL Life.



Parish Council



KEEP UPTON TIDY!

Those of mature years will remember the 1960s/1970s campaigns to “Keep Britain Tidy”. The campaign continues to this day but is less well publicised. Surely, we can all do our bit for our local environment by **Keeping Upton Tidy!**

Writing this on a sunny day in February more people – and dogs – are out and about and the level of litter in our beautiful village is much more evident. Last week, in a 150 yard stretch from the Upton Lane bridge (to Gloucester) to the cross at Staites Orchard/Bondend Road/Churchfield Road, I collected two full black bin liners of rubbish which contained beer bottles, soft drinks cartons, crisp packets, sweet packets and dog poo bags! Stroud District Council’s street cleaners regularly visit our village so let’s make their job a whole lot easier by taking litter home or putting it in the bins provided.

If you see a build up of litter in the village, you can report problem areas to SDC via the website address www.stroud.gov.uk/report/report-dirty-street

**Would you like to help?
See Front Page for details of
the next village litter pick**

Thank you. Roy Roberts - Parish Councillor

February Meeting issues

- Stroud District Council (SDC) are looking to raise Council Tax and with the increase for the Police Commissioner element included is likely to exceed 3%
- A formal complaint regarding noise from the M5 that was sent to the Office for Environmental Protection has been dismissed. As a result, and ably supported by Tony Pryce, a formal complaint to the Environment Ombudsman will be made via our MP
- SDC have applied for a grant of £1.8m to help fund the purchase of 16 houses across the Stroud Council area. These will initially be used to house Ukrainian refugees and eventually become part of the council tenant stock.
- The Parish Council are currently pursuing possible funding for vehicle activation system devices (VAS) to support reduced speeding in the village and are now asking our County Councillor to get involved due to delays.
- The Council are still in the process of obtaining quotes for repairing/cladding the exterior of The Pavilion
- The Trees which were planted in The Glebe Field are still looking healthy with many buds waiting to burst as Spring approaches

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



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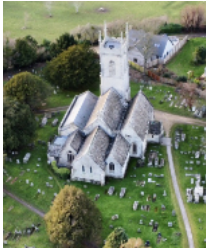
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St Leonard's Church Monthly News Letter

Website

www.uptonstleonardschurch.co.uk

Photograph: Darren Bourne

Services for March

| | | |
|------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 5 th March | 8.00 am | Holy Communion |
| | 10.00 am | Morning Worship |
| 12 th March | 10.00 am | Holy Communion |
| 19 th March | 10.00 am | Mothering Sunday |
| | | Holy Communion |
| 26 th March | 10.00am | Holy Communion |
| | 12.00 noon | Baptism |



Don't forget to change your clocks!

Sunday 26th



Lent lunches

These will take place on Thursday lunchtimes

on 2nd, 9th 16th, 23rd & 30th March

between 12.00 & 2.00 pm

Home made soup and bread followed by cheese and biscuits with fruit and tea or coffee, available in the schoolroom, so you are welcome at whatever time suits you.

Each week at 1pm we invite a speaker to come and talk about their faith and how faith influences them at work. Among our speakers are John Thompson, chaplain at GRH, Adrian Partington, organist and choirmaster at Gloucester cathedral and Teresa Piertroni, a local GP who worked abroad for some years. Don't miss these events!

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

Lenten Lunches

St Augustine's Church, Matson Lane

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

All very welcome. £5 for Homemade Soup, roll, cheese and crackers, tea or coffee.

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



February 500 Club Winners

1st Prize £30.00 76

Kindly donated to the roof fund

2nd Prize £20.00 35



Stations of the Cross

During Lent there will be an exhibition in St Mary de Crypt church, in the city centre, called 'Stations of the Cross.' This is a set of 21 drawings, following Jesus's journey to the cross, and the crucifixion and then to the resurrection. These are charcoal drawings on white canvas, some of which will be hung up around the church and some will be on boards, more at eye level. The difference in this exhibition is that instead of us looking up at pictures of Jesus, we are seeing the scenes as if from Jesus's viewpoint. The exhibition is called 'Stations of the Cross, as from the eyes of Jesus.'

These drawings have been created by Jonathon Brown, an artist living and working in France, and a lifelong friend of Rev Philippa and her husband Ian.

There is an accompanying booklet, describing each picture, with a Bible verse and reflection for the viewer. The exhibition is free.

Do take the opportunity to view these drawings, and let them draw you into the Easter story this year.

The exhibition will run until Sunday April 16th from Wednesdays to Sundays 11.00 - 3.00pm.

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 9th March, the Church Tower will be lit in memory of my daughter Lynette on her birthday. With love and happy memories from Mum, brother Mark, family and friends

The Tower Lights were sponsored on the 4th February in memory of John, a loving Husband, Dad and Grampy on his birthday, with love from all the family

Remembering my dear Dad John, a loving Husband, Father and Grampy, with love and happy memories from Jenny and all the family (24.03.1981)

On the 26th March, her birthday, the Tower Lights are lit in loving memory of Glenda Buck. Kindly sponsored by Gerald and family

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.

St. Leonard's Church

APCM

The meeting will take place on

Sunday 22rd April

after the 10.00 am Holy Communion Service

In the Old School Room

PCC

We are still looking for someone who would be willing to take on the role of PCC Secretary.

Another Churchwarden to work alongside Gill as we move into times of uncertainty again when Rev. Philippa leaves

Also a Treasurer

PLEASE if you are interested or would like to find out more about these roles contact Rev Philippa, Gill or any member of the PCC



Rev. Philippa

Dear friends in Upton St Leonard's,

As you turn to these pages from the church in this month's magazine, you'll find that we are in the season of Lent – those 40 days leading up to Easter, which this year is on April 9th.

Pancake Day and Ash Wednesday were about 10 days ago, so we're on that journey towards Good Friday and through to Easter Sunday. Christians believe that the death and resurrection of Jesus is the central point on which our faith is founded, and Easter the pinnacle of the Christian year.

So what are you 'giving up' for Lent?

This can seem a strange question if you're not used to it. There is a church tradition of 'giving up something' during these 40 days. When I was at boarding school we had to choose something we liked, to 'give up' during Lent, as a sort of self-discipline. One year I gave up taking sugar in my tea, which meant that to me, at that time, it tasted pretty disgusting for a while. Another year I gave up cake and biscuits, which we bought at the village shop with our pocket money sometimes, to have with our tea when we had spent all afternoon on the sports field. But I'm not really sure if I understood the point of all that, at the time, because looking back at it now – isn't hindsight a wonderful gift?! – I see that the 'giving up' was only one half of a sentence, and I hadn't known the other half, which was that you gave up something in order to give something to someone else - so the money that I might have saved by not buying cake or biscuits would be given to a charity of my choosing. Or, if you were thinking more spiritually, the time you would have spent sitting around drinking tea and eating cake might have been spent reading your Bible, or in prayer.

Of course, as teenage girls we didn't spend our teatimes reading our Bibles or praying! But as I have grown older in years and deeper in faith, each year I put some time aside each day in Lent to read and to

pray. To ponder the Christian faith, to try and learn more about it and more about Jesus, whom I follow and base my life upon – don't ever think that the clergy know it all, they don't!

Of course, we could turn the 'giving up something' idea round the other way. Lent can also be a time for 'taking up something.' This could be practical – helping your neighbour or member of your family a bit more than usual – or spiritual – for example, reading a Psalm every day – there are 150 in the Bible, so you won't run out. There's always more you can read and learn.

This Lent we are holding our Lent lunches in the schoolroom as usual, but on Thursdays this year. When you read this, the first one will already have happened, but there are 5 more you could join. Each week alongside your soup, bread and cheese and fruit lunch, there will be a speaker coming to share a little of their work and their faith and how those two things work together. We have a variety of people coming – John Thompson, who is one of our hospital chaplains, Adrian Partington, who is the organist and choirmaster at the cathedral, Gareth Moseley, a local undertaker, Teresa Pietroni, a local GP, and a couple of others.

Why not 'take up' coming to our Lent lunches this year? 'Take up' coming to listen to others talk about their faith and work. 'Take up' listening to friends and see how you could help them. 'Give up' your usual lunch and enjoy a simple meal together. 'Give up' £6 to go towards the church roof. Every little helps – as one of our leading supermarkets says.

My prayer for you this Lent is that in thinking about giving up and taking up you will be drawn to think more about Jesus, who in taking up his cross, and in giving up his life for us- which we think about on Good Friday - gave the gift of the offer of eternal life, to those who choose to follow him.

With my love and prayers

Rev Philippa x



Mothers Union

The first meeting of 2023 was the AGM with 15 members attending and 4 tendering their apologies. After the opening act of worship, the minutes of the 2022 were read & accepted. Then the Treasurer, Jenny Cunningham, gave her report which was adopted, and various donations were made to Mothers' Union projects. A donation was also agreed for the use of St Oswald's Church Hall during the previous year. It was also decided that the meeting fee should be increased to £2 or whatever a member felt they could afford as several speakers for the coming year have understandably requested their travelling expenses.

The Branch Leader, Kate Gale, then gave her report on the activities during 2022 and thanked everyone for their support. Tokens of her appreciation were given to 4 members for their assistance during the year. It was proposed that the officers continued for another year and all those present agreed. Two other members, Pam Kelly & Sarah Cripps agreed to join them to form a small committee to assist with the running of the Branch, to which the meeting readily agreed. Members then enjoyed a "Chocolate Quiz" with Judy Jackson and Barry Gale winning boxes of Thorntons and Bendicks chocolates. Afterwards tea and cake were served.

The next meeting is on Thursday 16th March when the speaker will be the Rev Pat Philips on "Plants of the Bible", she has visited the Holy Land so should be able to give an interesting insight into the flora of the area. We meet at St Oswald's Church Hall, Coney Hill at 2.30pm. To answer a question I had after a recent "Flourish" service, you don't need to be married, have children or even female, everyone is welcome to come along

The Gloucester City Deanery of Mothers' Union (of which the Upton Branch is a member) is holding a Coffee Morning on Saturday 18th March at St Phillip & St James Church, Hucclecote at 10am. Please do come along and support if you can. There is plenty of easy parking next to the church

Kate Gale

Branch Leader



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Knife Angel

Gloucester Cathedral played host to the Knife Angel again this year and it was in place until the end of February.

Some of the members of the congregation were able to visit this thought provoking monument.

Completed in 2018, the structure of the angel stands at 27 ft (8.2 m) tall. In order to create the sculpture, 200 knife banks were produced by the Ironworks and amnesties held for individuals to anonymously donate their knives. Knives seized by police were also included, some of which arrived in evidence tubes.



The sculpture was created in order to highlight knife crime in the United Kingdom and educate young people on the harmful effect violent behaviour can have on their communities.

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View from the french windows

Spring Watch In Upton

Spring watch in Upton, no not the TV programme but a look forward to longer days and the start of new growth both in plants and wild life.

From an amateur point of view, what wild life you might see or might have seen in the village in the past amongst the 22 miles of public footpaths in Upton Parish, so a chance to get out and see many things.



One animal you are sure to see is the rabbit and they have been with us since Roman times. Said to have been introduced by the Romans and used as food for hundreds of years. Not on menus for some time, not since the spread of myxomatosis which reduced the wild rabbit population. Now more likely to be kept as pets rather than for food, as many people in Upton used to do. Did you know rabbits can turn their ears almost 180 degrees so their hearing is highly developed. They have almost 360 degree vision except for a blind spot at the end of their nose. They are all born with their eyes shut and can live from between 8 to 12 years. You are more likely to see active wild rabbits at dusk or dawn.

There are superstitions connected with rabbits. One is invoking a rabbit's name will bring good luck. Saying rabbit out loud upon waking on the first day of each month will ensure good fortune for the rest of that month.

A rabbit's foot was often carried as an amulet believed to be protection and good luck. This has been recorded in history since 600BC.

The main enemy of rabbits is the fox. Foxes have adapted to visiting the centre of the Village in the hunt for food. Normally patrolling at night you can see tracks in the fields where they use the same route every night. As they travel up a road they will trigger all the house security lights.



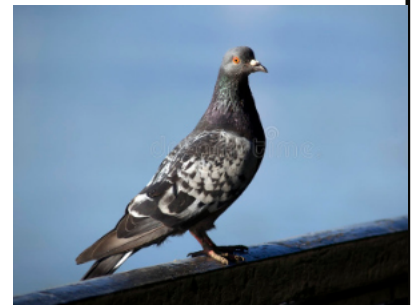
You may encounter deer on your walk. They won't hang around long once they see or hear you. Of the wild deer in the UK only red deer and roe deer are truly indigenous. Fallow deer were introduced by the Normans while muntjac arrived in the late 19th century.

Around Upton you are more likely to see muntjac deer with their white backside. In the Tudor times you might have seen wild boar. This was one reason why Henry VIII visited Upton with Anne Boleyn to hunt deer and boar. He hunted in Cranham woods and stopped briefly at Prinknash.

Of the many variety of birds you will see around Upton you will be bound to see pigeons. They may be in pairs or flying around in large groups, these are probably homing pigeons which are kept in special lofts. Pigeons have been kept as pets for a very long time, records show them as far back as 4500BC. They may have been the first birds humans ever domesticated or used as food. In many towns they are treated as pests and gardeners are not always happy to see them.

Pigeons have helped man in many ways: In wartime carrying messages across enemy lines back to their home loft. In the First and Second World Wars people were banned from keeping pigeons in case you were a spy. German anti aircraft guns would target pigeons in case they were carrying messages.

Several pigeons have been awarded the animal VC, the Dicken Medal for their actions in continuing to get their messages through even after receiving bullet wounds.



No one knows how they find their way home some from great distances of 1,500 miles. They have built in navigational aids, some say they use the position of the sun. They are intelligent and can be trained to perform basic tasks. Because of their speed in the air they can be bred as racing pigeons. These can be very valuable and the record for a pigeon in the USA is nearly one million dollars. You are very unlikely to see baby pigeons as they stay in the nest for up to six weeks.

This was a very quick look at some aspects of wild life around Upton. Watch out for the new shoots of Spring which we hope won't be too far away.

Mike Stratford

More Information

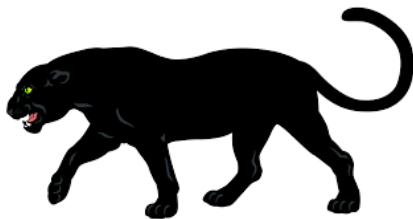
TWYVER WI FEBRUARY 2023

We arrived at our February meeting to an air of excitement and a larger contingent than usual. Word had spread that this was an open invitation evening and that Speakers - Frank Tunbridge, Big Cat Tracker/Investigator, accompanied by Alan English, Tracker of pumas in the Forest of Dean - were to be our entertainment for the gathering. We were not disappointed! We began once again with our Speakers at the start of the proceedings, who had set up equipment for us to view their film and video of various sightings accompanied by their continuous and interesting dialogue.

To begin, most public never see one but if you do, it's life changing. The sudden appearance of one of these elusive animals can be quite terrifying as they are predatory. Frank has been studying this phenomenon for over 50 years. To those who say there is no conclusive proof of existence – Frank says 'rubbish'! We watched a video of a panther-like cat – footage never shown before - how lucky were we to view this?!

The animal was shy and elusive, silent and stealthy. Frank assured us that if you were to suddenly come upon one of these incredible creatures you would be rooted to the spot as they are not frightened of human contact and they are BREEDING! There are currently no reports of attacks. There are apparently two types of 'black cat' identified in the sightings – puma and leopard. We were shown pictures of both, which, from a distance are indistinguishable, however, on close scrutiny you can see the 'rosettes' or spots on the black leopard.

USL Life AGM
For members of our village newsletter, we will be holding our annual AGM on Monday 17 April 2023 at The Old School Room at 7.30pm



During their tracking exploits they have come across deer kills among other animals, and scratch marks on trees along with 'poo' and by this they can tell what the animal has been eating and also where they are hunting. We viewed various animal kills found in various states of decomposition, which again gives clues as to their hunting patterns. The cats have extremely rough tongues which they use to 'scrape' off fur and skin in order to get to the 'juice'. Those of you with a common house moggy will know from experience how a cat lick feels! In the winter months you would be most likely to come across a large 'kill' whereas in summer they can feast on the smaller creatures that are out of hibernation. Many sightings have been alluded to be dogs by the authorities who have taken the stance of not putting up signs in order not to encourage hunters and possibly disavow any stories.



BIG CATS IN THE UK
www.bigcatsintheuk.co.uk

These elusive predatory wild cats, often sighted throughout the UK, are now part of our British Wildlife, living off the abundant prey species we have here in the UK, i.e. deer, rabbits, small mammals and birds.

EYE WITNESS REPORTS OF BIG CATS IN THE UK

- A jet black cat looking like a 'stretched' Labrador glided over the road, as soft and silent as a barn owl's flight.
Spily morning in October - Stone, Allie Galt
- The big black cat walked out of the dense thicket, stopped and beautifully coiled up at the man in the trees. Then took off up the footpath in huge bounds like an effortless wave.
Three The Sunjacks - Clutch from Galt
- The collie caught up with the big black cat and a running fight ensued. With the dog and cat rolling around growling and screaming. Eventually the cat leapt over a 7ft hedge and was gone.
Sheep farm - Anghem, Galt
- It turned, walked back to the car and stared at me through the passenger window.
Walsley - Tania Galt
- A large black cat with 2 cubs tagging along behind crossed the field by the flooded area heading for the wood.
Chatterbox - Sweeney Galt
- When I skinned the deer I found very large claw marks in the flesh of its rump.
Whitewoods - Whittaker Galt

Frank Tunbridge
Big Cat Tracker/Investigator
07711 476715

Many of these animals including other species, such as wolf, 'the beast of bodmin', racoons and skunks among others, have been sighted and pooh poohed (pun intended) by various nay-sayers over the years but Frank and Alan know from experience these are not figments of their imaginations but very, very real. They know that many people have kept their own private menageries over the years, for example, a well-known pop star in the Bisley area we were told, and these animals have been released into the wild when they become too expensive to keep and feed. Circuses too have been known to 'lose' an animal or three. Most of the sightings are brushed under the carpet and hushed up – and spoken of in folklore and myth but those in the know, know different! So, if you go down in the woods today you'd better not go alone!!! But remember you're more likely to be in danger of being trampled by cows ..

These animals can live up to 10 years in the wild- roughly half the time they would in captivity, but who would want to be locked in a cage? Frank welcomes calls from anyone who has had experience of a sighting or close contact with any Big Cats especially in the Forest of Dean. Frank Tunbridge, 07711 476715.

Vote of thanks was given and we all agreed it had been a great insight into the lives of these 'ghosts'.

The evening proceeded with the usual Business along with refreshments and brought to a close this time with our song. Subs are due on 1st April £46. Remember there is no meeting in April and the meeting for May has been currently pencilled in for the 22nd. Our next meeting is on 13th March – all welcome.

Linda Munnoch

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MARCH

| | | | | |
|----|-----|---|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 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 | 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 | Tennis Club Members Morning..... | Tennis Courts..... | 10.00a.m. |
| 5 | Sun | Sunday lunchtime Jazz..... | BMI..... | 1.00-3.00p.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. Garden waste for those with brown bins | | |
| 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. |
| 10 | Fri | Copy date for April issue of USL Life | | |
| 11 | Sat | Village Litter Pick..... | Pavilion..... | 10.00-11.30p.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 | History Group – “Llantony Priory” – Liz Griffiths.. | Village Hall..... | 7.45-9.15p.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. Garden waste for those with brown bins | | |
| 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 | Upton WI Committee..... | Pavilion..... | 2.00p.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. |
| 25 | Sat | Spring Show..... | Village Hall..... | 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. |

MARCH - CONT'D

| | | | | |
|----|-----|----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 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. |
| 28 | Tue | Tennis Club night..... | Tennis Courts..... | 6p.m. |
| 29 | Wed | Wednesday Probus..... | BMI..... | 10.00a.m. |
| 29 | Wed | Upstagers Amateur Dramatics..... | Village Hall..... | 7.30p.m. |
| 29 | Wed | Bingo..... | BMI..... | 8.00p.m. |
| 29 | Wed | Bell Ringing Practice..... | Church..... | 7.30p.m. |

APRIL

| | | | | |
|----|-----|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 3 | Mon | Parish Council Meeting..... | Pavilion..... | 7.30p.m. |
| 3 | Mon | Upton WI..... | Pavilion..... | 2.00p.m. |
| 7 | Fri | Good Friday | | |
| 8 | Sat | Spring Quiz..... | BMI..... | 8.00p.m. |
| 9 | Sun | Easter Sunday | | |
| 10 | Mon | Easter Monday | | |
| 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. |

MAY

| | | | | |
|----|-----|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Mon | Parish Council Meeting..... | Pavilion..... | 7.30p.m. |
| 1 | Mon | Upton WI..... | Pavilion..... | 2.00p.m. |
| 6 | Sat | King Charles III Coronation | | |
| 8 | Mon | Twyver WI..... | Village Hall..... | 7.30p.m. |
| 10 | Wed | Copy dates for June issue of USL Life | | |
| 15 | Mon | Abbeydale Garden Club..... | Village Hall..... | 7.30-9.30p.m. |
| 17 | Wed | Ladies Probus..... | BMI..... | 10.30a.m. |
| 21 | Sun | Sunday Lunchtime Jazz..... | BMI..... | 1.00-3.00p.m. |
| 22 | Mon | Twyver WI | Village Hall..... | 7.30p.m. |
| 28 | Sun | Comedy Night..... | BMI..... | 8.00p.m. |

To place an entry in the Village Diary, please contact Paula Quinn

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 |
| Kettleball Fitness | Monday 5.30/6pm | Pavilion | Deb Locke | 07738 104404 |

Deb Locke has restarted her fitness classes, using kettleballs, in the Pavilion on Monday evenings

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March 7th and 21st, April 4th and 25th

May 2nd and 16th

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USL Village Store



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<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089273934297>

Our Thanks

To those residents in Upton who are hosting and supporting Ukrainian Families who managed to escape the awful conflict currently taking place in their country

For the donation of £40 from Nan Jones to our Newsletter funds which was very much appreciated.

Next month we have guest editors, members of the Upton St Leonards Women's Institute

Shadowing them and actually assembling the magazine will be Andy Russell

Use the postbox at the Village Hall or via the "Contact Us" box on our web page

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TWYVER WALKERS

Fifteen ladies took part in a lovely Spring walk from Frampton on Severn to Saul Junction on 2nd February. Having consumed various refreshments at 'The Stables,' the group then walked to the Splatt Swing Bridge along the Gloucester Sharpness canal where we found an obliging 'twitcher' to take our photograph, so that, for once, everyone could be in the picture!



Once over the bridge and through the fields, back to our parked cars, it was clear that everyone had really enjoyed the circular walk, the views, the tranquillity and the wonderful sight of swans taking flight was the perfect ending to a delightful morning.

Village Ploughmen Success

David and Martin Franklin, who farm in the village, have both made a name for themselves in ploughing competitions in recent years.

They continue to be successful and qualified for the 72nd British National Ploughing Championships in October 2023 near Taunton.



Around 230 ploughmen and women compete in different tractor and horse drawn categories over two days and the eventual winners going on to represent England at the European and World Championships. Upton's Sporting Farmers