




Woodcote CORRESPONDENT

Vol 35 No 5
May 2023

Delivered free to homes in Woodcote, Exlade Street and Crays Pond

AN EGG-CELLENT SURPRISE!

There was much egg-citement at Cabin preschool recently as ten chicks hatched in their incubator. The children had been watching and monitoring the eggs with bated breath and they were finally rewarded when hatching started a day early! Preschool manager, Jayne Cole, wasn't too sure who was more excited - the children or the adults. Read more on the story inside (including some of the names chosen for the chicks!)







COMMENT FROM THE VICARAGE

There are now definitely strong signs of spring with us. As I look out of the window typing this, our red camellia bush is in full bloom and there is a wonderful display of white blossom on our neighbour's tree.

That's the red and white; the only blue I can offer is our garage door that desperately needs painting. When I bought the paint recently and saw the price, it reminded me that I haven't bought any for some time!

With the joy of spring and the promise of summer, it puts us in mind of celebrations, celebrating the return of the warmer weather, although hopefully not quite as hot as last year.

When I wrote last month's article, I was just too early to tell you that we have now appointed a new vicar for Woodcote. As time has elapsed since the appointment you may already have picked up on this. The new vicar will be the Revd David Benskin who comes to us from Watlington. He's married with a young family and comes with much experience in youth work. I can't tell you when he will start; we await information from the Bishop as to when David can be licensed to the Langtree Team. We are looking forward very much to him starting at Woodcote.

I am writing this in Easter Week, and this gives us cause for our second celebration when we were able to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We had a small congregation for our Good Friday time of reflection on the Crucifixion, but there was a very good congregation at the mid-morning Easter Sunday service and we were able to sing the traditional Easter hymns with the enthusiasm the occasion justified. The service was led by the Revd Angela Linton. We were very grateful to her for coming to us and also for the Revd James Leach, from Whitchurch, who led the 8.00am communion service.

By the time you read this we will be in another time of celebration when King Charles will be crowned at his coronation. I am old enough to remember the last coronation. We watched it on a television that my father had built using parts from an old radar scanner – it had a 6-inch screen with a magnifying glass that made it look to be 9 inches! Times were very different then. The country hadn't long come out of a world war and everyone was ready for a party. It sounds as though this coronation is likely to be scaled back a little reflecting our current times.

We will be celebrating the coronation at a time when so many are suffering from financial woes and once more there is war in Europe, which reminds us of the constant suffering of people with very little to celebrate.

Brian Turner
Licensed Lay Minister and
PCC Vice-chairman.

Services at St. Leonard's in May

Sunday 7th

8.00am Holy Communion

9.45am Parish Communion

Sunday 14th

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am SLOW church in the Village Hall with refreshments

Sunday 21st

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am Open Door followed by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 28th - Pentecost

8.00 am Holy Communion

9.45 am Parish Communion

Woodcote church is usually open for private prayer each day between 10am and 4pm.

Online Services

We continue with our online service of Night Prayer every Tuesday at 8.30 pm on Zoom.

This follows the ancient monastic pattern of Compline and lasts for about 20 minutes.

If you would like to join us, please email me rbrianturner@yahoo.co.uk for the contact details.

VILLAGE GREEN COMMITTEE

We are delighted to announce that the Parish Council has given approval for work to begin on the tarmac surface for the 'Multi-Use Games Area' on the Folly Field. This will provide an all-weather, all-seasons pitch for ball games such as basketball, netball, five-a-side and walking football etc. I'm sure there are many other uses to which the area can be put, so we hope it will be enjoyed and respected by the whole community. We will give regular updates on progress.

Following on from April's front page article, I would like to draw attention to the increasing amounts of dog poo being left on the Green. We have been very successful as a community in reducing this problem to an absolute minimum, but it appears that a reminder is now needed. Please do pick up after your dog! The whole community loves to use the Green and we all know the health hazards of dog poo.

SP

Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information printed in this paper, the Editor and Committee cannot accept responsibility for the contents of advertisements or any errors that may occur. Opinions expressed are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or Committee.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome to the May issue. This month we will officially have a new King! Do you have plans to celebrate the Coronation with family/friends? Perhaps some of you might even be travelling to London to catch a glimpse of the Royals. Whatever your plans, send us your celebration photos and we'll share them with you all next month.

We've had a good response to our request for editorial support. If you are still interested but haven't yet contacted us, do please email us at wood-co@runbox.com. It's not too late! I will sadly be leaving my role very shortly and it would be wonderful to hand over the reins to some new volunteers who can keep the Correspondent going for the community.

Until next month.

Yvette

NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF WOODCOTE VILLAGE

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Parish meeting of Woodcote is to be held on 24th May 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall Function Room. Residents are invited to attend.

PUBLISHER INFORMATION

Editor: Yvette Decmar *[via email]*

Articles for inclusion: to the editor by email to: wood-co@runbox.com, or letters may be handed in at the library. To be received by the 12th of the preceding month.

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Production:	Dan Oldfield	01491 681962
Distribution:	Trevor Back	01491 680617
Printer:	C Z Services	07860 630865
Cover Design:		Rob Spencer

The Woodcote Correspondent is on the Village website at tinyurl.com/Woodcote-Correspondent

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YOUR LETTERS

Dear Editor

What a wonderful community we live in. On Monday evening I had a doctor's appointment at Goring surgery and my prescription was ready for collection at Woodcote surgery at 10 o'clock on Tuesday morning. Woodcote Volunteers delivered it at 11.30 am. Grateful thanks to everyone concerned.

Robert Kidner

PARISH COUNCIL

Traffic and Highways

The 20pmh speed consultation is completed and Oxfordshire County Council are estimating time of approximately July for the changes to be made to 20mph in Woodcote. The Parish Council will keep updating our Facebook page, website, and notice boards as and when information is received.

Regarding the second zebra crossing for Goring Road voted for in the project consultation, the WPC has commissioned a consultant who has already been and carried out the topographical survey. This will enable them to start preparing the design. The consultant will liaise with Oxfordshire County Council Highway Authority on all aspects. There is a process to follow and this is the beginning. The WPC will continue to update progress.

Recreation

A new set of two swings was installed on Folly Field in April for younger children. The Parish Council trust these will be enjoyed.

Regarding the basketball court at Folly Field, SODC has finally approved the planning application to enlarge the court and extend the surfacing so the entire court will be a hard surface, enabling games to be played. WPC finalised and agreed the costings for the work and a date for starting is awaited. It will likely be in the coming months.

Parish Council

With elections for parish councillors on 4th May 2023, existing councillors have put their papers in to stand again. **However, WPC still need more councillors**. There should be ten parish councillors and currently there are seven.

You can make a real difference to the village by becoming a parish councillor and help make changes, bring new ideas to Woodcote creating an even greater place to live. For more information contact Parish Clerk.

The Parish Office at Woodcote Village Hall is open to the public Monday mornings 9am to 12 noon. Alternatively, you can telephone 01491 681861 or email: clerk@woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk

GORING HEATH BEAVERS



Well, "HUSSAR!" for The 'Eef, which ex-Scouts now in their twenties will remember is the correct battle-cry at County events (one needs to imagine the terribly refined, cut-glass accent and the studiously dead-pan expression). Our Beavers did not hike nine miles; a select group of five entered the North Leigh Challenge, along with hundreds of Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers from across Oxfordshire, and walked 10.6 miles. What is more, despite some being very young, they came in first in the Beaver category and were only eight minutes slower than the last-placed Cub pack. They are rightly proud of their achievements, not the least of which was cheerily walking at the pace of the slowest. Dipper had packed home-made cookies which she think acted as rocket fuel.



On 16th March, by way of a complete change of pace, Dormouse set the Beavers to making Mothering Sunday cards and boxes of chocolates, including

some for absent Dragonfly and Midge. Of course, the now sadly departed Dot got a card and chocs. Though so ill she could barely speak, her beatific expression when the last chocolate was popped into her mouth said it all. Well done, Beavers! On a lighter note, Jane was invested as a section assistant and, oddly, spurned the still-available name of 'Slug' in favour of 'Kingfisher.'

Perhaps fired with post-investiture enthusiasm, the following week Kingfisher launched into Action (with a capital A) with an Easter-themed problem-solving session, thus completing the Skills Challenge. Obviously, this involved Lent-busting quantities of chocolate. The Beavers used junk to make a boat capable of floating several small eggs; alas eggs cannot swim and suffer if they get wet, thus any that went for a swim had to be put out of their misery. Such is the duty of any scout. The next challenge was an homage to the Milk Tray advert: the Beavers had to construct a zip-wire and harness, then zoom a Crème Egg across the Hut. This was followed by code-cracking (see what she did there?) and hook-an-Easter-duckling. The Chief Scout's Bronze Award, the highest award available to Beavers, was presented to Martha (who has been coming to Beavers almost since birth so has become something of a fixture) and William (youngest of another long-term Beaver family). Both then 'swam up' to Cubs. Reuben was, alas, absent, but no doubt will come back next term to get his well-deserved CSBA.



GOOD NEWS FOR BUS USERS!

From Monday 16th April, you will be able to catch an X40 bus to Reading or Oxford from Woodcote every half an hour!

COFFEE SHOP IS BACK!

On Saturday 18th June 10am -12:30pm, St Leonard's are hosting a Community Coffee Shop in the Community Centre. Please pop down for a slice of cake and a coffee or tea to support us. We're hosting a craft morning upstairs for the little ones and there will be a raffle. We hope to see you there! Please note we are cash only for this event.

WOODCOTE FOOTBALL CLUB

Toby Nowell's Triple Hat-Trick
Attendance Record Broken at Woodcote

The past month has seen two major highlights for the club. First, is the phenomenal goalscoring in the first team by Toby Nowell, who scored hat-tricks in three consecutive matches. He scored all four goals on Friday 10th March against Didcot Town Development in a 4-2 win, a further four against Hazlemere at home in the next match on March 25th which Woodcote won 5-1, and three more against Mortimer on Tuesday April 4th, won by 5-2. All told, Toby has scored 36 goals for the club this season and should pass the forty mark with six games still to play.

The second highlight came on Saturday 8th April when we played hosts to over 200 Groundhoppers as part of the Hellenic League's Groundhop weekend. Groundhoppers are people who are passionate about visiting and exploring non-league football grounds and the League staged twelve games over the four days of the Eater weekend in conjunction with the Groundhop UK organisation.

The match at Woodcote was the third match of the day, kicking off at 5.30 and attracting an official attendance of 243, almost certainly a club record attendance. Our team really rose to the occasion, defeating FC Beaconsfield by 4-0 with goals from Joe Webber 2, Chris Downes and, you've guessed it, Toby Nowell! The event was also a good money-raiser for the club as we produced a printed programme and sold refreshments. All told it was a great day for Woodcote FC and a good advert for the village. Thanks are due to our committee members who worked very hard to organise the day and to Langtree School for the use of their car park.

The rest of April is going to be very busy as we play catch-up after a number of postponements caused by bad weather. If all goes well, we could finish as runners-up in the Hellenic and North Berks leagues and reach the final of the Hellenic Chairman's Cup.

SP



Toby Nowell in action



Record attendance!

WOODCOTE CRICKET CLUB



Our indoor net practices at the Oratory Sports Centre are now underway and we are pleased with the attendances as we look forward to another season, our 143rd. We are pleased that a number of teenagers are coming forward to show an interest and we hope that they will become regular players in our 2nd XI. From the beginning of April, we hope to be holding outdoor nets. We have a brand new mobile net which will be in regular use on the Green and we also hope to hold weekly sessions at the Oratory Prep School as we did last season. We still hope to attract new players to the club and I would like to hear from anyone who might be interested. When you read this report, the season will be less than a month away. We have two away pre-season friendlies: on Sunday 23rd April v Peppard (a) 1.00pm; on Sunday 30th April v Ewelme (a) 1.00pm.

Home Fixtures May

Saturday 6th May – 2nd XI v Twyford 2nd XI 1.00pm

Saturday 13th May – 1st XI v Peppard 2nd XI, 1.00pm

Wednesday 17th May – Midweek XI v Dorchester, 6.00pm

Saturday 20th May – 2nd XI v Reading United 4th XI, 1.00pm

Wednesday 24th May – Midweek XI v Watlington, 6.00pm

Saturday 27th May – 1st XI v Crowthorne & Crown Wood 2nd XI, 1.00pm.

To find out more or express interest in playing, please contact sampeates@gmail.com or call: 07710 858366.

Our Saturday morning 'Fun Cricket' sessions for Primary age children will begin on Saturday May 13th at 9.00 am. All are welcome. Parents are asked to bring their children along and stay to watch or help with the session. Cost is £10 per session

SP

THE CASE OF THE COVID SUFFERER *PART 2*

You may remember that our hero was last heard of in the February issue convincing himself that he was suffering from long Covid. I am aware that one's state of health, while of passionate interest to oneself, tends to be a good deal less interesting to other people, but I thought I might indulge in this one update. The good news was that the acute pains in my legs largely receded; the bad news is that they took up even more acute residence in my neck, arms and shoulders, rapidly reducing me to a shambling wreck reminiscent of something out of 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame'. It was extraordinarily incapacitating. It being too painful to lie down, I spent most of the day and night slumped in an armchair, which I could get out of only by wriggling my bottom to the edge, falling on to my knees and crawling across the room to lever myself up on the back of the studio couch, while stranded whales have been launched back out to sea with less trouble than we had getting me out of the bath when I was unwise enough to attempt one.

An initial phone consultation with my GP resulted in a cocktail of painkillers and sedatives that did little to alleviate the pain but left me totally zonked all day, dreaming as I drowsed of happier times that seemed far off, but in fact were only three months ago, when I could still do thirty push-ups and run a decent 5K.

After a week of this my patient wife decided that enough was enough and despite my protests that I was far too ill to go back to the doctor, dragged me to the health centre, dumped me in his office and said





'Do something about him!'. Things then moved fairly rapidly: blood test the next morning, which seemed to get processed in record time because the next thing was a phone call to say that I was suffering from a severe case of something called polymyalgia rheumatica and needed an immediate course of corticosteroids. And I must say that these, in the form of small tablets, worked wonders: within a couple of days, I was, if not actually frisking about, functioning more or less normally – well, as normally as I ever do.

I am aware that on the scale of things there are much worse conditions to be endured, and I guess I must be grateful that for seventy-eight years I have managed to stay remarkably fit. If this is a wake-up call I'm not sure what to make of it: the root cause of polymyalgia seems to be basically unknown, but essentially it happens when your own auto-immune system turns on you, and what I have ever done to my auto-immune system that it should turn on me I have no idea. Don't suppose thirty push-ups and a decent 5K have anything to do with it... nah, perish the thought, but maybe I will try to be a bit more sensible and try a gentler approach to exercise. But then, as my wife points out, she has known me for over sixty years, and 'sensible' has never been a word that could be remotely associated with me when it comes to exercise. Well, we'll see – I believe there is a thing called walking; maybe it's time to give it a go.

David Sutton

WOODCOTE VOLUNTEERS

Did you know that Woodcote Volunteers do so much more than just take clients to medical appointments?

We drive people to the hairdresser, dentist, optician, library, shops, a day centre, a friend in hospital, a recreational activity such as bowls, a social activity such as the board games afternoon at Woodcote Library, collect a prescription – the list goes on….

But it doesn't stop there! Our drivers are not just a taxi service; they will help you in to your appointment, make sure you are in the right place, offer an arm, carry your belongings, push a wheelchair, pass on useful information and most importantly have a chat with you as well.

We take anyone who does not have access to their own transport and cannot manage public transport. We have Blue Badges in case of disabilities.

Volunteer drivers benefit as well. As a driver, you will have the satisfaction of knowing you are offering a true lifeline to someone in need. It's an activity you can tailor exactly to your own living pattern. You make yourself available as often as you feel you can - once a month, once a week or whatever. And the lifts are usually local. Quite simply, someone in the office will ring you from time to time and, giving a few days' notice, ask if you can make a specific trip. You are free to say yes or no - there's absolutely no pressure to accept.

Whitchurch Hill Fete

We are pleased to be present from 2-4pm on Saturday 27th May this year, so please do come and speak to us, whether you are a potential client, volunteer or just want to say hello.

New Volunteer Driver

We would like to say thank you to Emma who is joining us from May. We welcome you to our team and are sure you will enjoy your interesting and rewarding role.

To finish..

As usual, if you need a driver, please don't hesitate to give us a call on 01491 681171. We collect from Woodcote and immediately surrounding villages.

Please give us as much notice as possible before the date you need us. One of our friendly office workers will answer the phone between 9.30 and 11am on weekdays (excluding public holidays) and you can leave a message on the answerphone at other times.

Find out more about us by looking at our website: www.woodcotevolunteers.org.uk

Or visit our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/woodcotevolunteers

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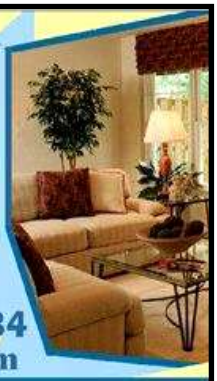
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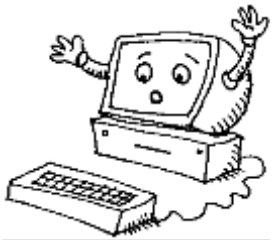
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NICEIC DOMESTIC INSTALLER

WOODCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

As the Easter break comes to an end and the summer term begins, we can be proud of the work the children have done across the year but also in the past few weeks in support of others across the world. As part of our curriculum, we encourage the children to support and think of others who we may not know or even ever meet. One of the ways in which we can help others is through awareness of charities and how they support so many people. These last few weeks we have been fundraising for a variety of good causes. In total we have raised almost £685 this month. Well done Woodcote children!

How have the children done this? Our Pupil School Council organised supporting Comic Relief. We all had a lot of fun wearing red noses and fun outfits. We raised the great sum of £407.05.

Along with the students from Year 9 at Langtree, we held a dress-down day, Easter cake decorating competition, activity morning and a cake sale at the end of term, for Brain Research UK. We raised the great sum of £162.64. It was lovely to see the older children, some of whom had themselves been to Woodcote Primary School, working with our young ones. There was a great sense of community throughout the events.

We also raised money for Great Ormand Street Hospital through drama and song: Years 3 and 4 ended the term for us with a beautiful performance of Peter Pan. The whole show was almost an hour and half long, which should seem like a long time but the performance was so enthralling, it flew past! Well done to them all. The acting was tremendous, beautiful solos and the narration was so well delivered. We have some stars of stage and screen in the making. What a treat! Keeping the spirit that J.M. Barrie had hoped for his play, the children held a collection at the end to raise money for Great Ormand Street Hospital. We are delighted to be sending them £115. Thank you to everyone who donated.

Sports this month have been very successful. On a very windy and muddy morning, our KS2 qualifiers went to Horspath to compete in the Oxfordshire Cross Country Finals. Everyone enjoyed themselves and ran incredibly well with such pride in representing Woodcote. Martha came third in Oxfordshire for the year 3 and 4 girls – well done Martha! Our year 5 and 6 boys team got the silver medals – huge congratulations and Matthew S (year 6) was crowned the Oxfordshire Boys' Champion! Well done! Wonderful results from the whole team.

Our Netball team went across to the district finals in Wallingford playing some really strong teams. We are delighted that they received the bronze medal! We are very proud of them and hope their achievements will inspire the younger children to take up Netball too.

Our year 5 and 6 Footballers played in a Langtree Partnership event with our B team winning their division. Well done to all that played. They had a great time and played so well as teams. Their sportsmanship is something to be incredibly proud of.

May is now here and this means SATS for year 2 and 6 but it also means summer, outdoors, year 6 residential and hopefully plenty of sunshine. We are looking forward to the summer term and all the opportunities it brings, including more sports and more drama and song! Do come and visit if you would like. We would always love to see you.

Mrs L. Hunt









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WOODCOTE PRESCHOOL

We hope everyone had a lovely Easter and enjoyed the end of term break. We have welcomed some new children and families in the last term so would like to say welcome to Zuva, Beatrix and Maeve.

We celebrated St Patrick's Day with a rainbow fruit selection for morning snack. We talked about St Patrick, rainbows and leprechauns. The children had a yummy Irish stew for lunch.

Mother's Day morning was a special morning as our Mummies & Grannies came in for hot cross buns, cakes, tea and coffee and to spend some time playing with their children in Preschool. Thank you all for coming, the children were so excited especially as they could also eat cakes!

We had our Easter bonnet parade and the children made some really spectacular ones with their parents at home and then sang all the Easter songs they have been learning this term.

Next term is also going to be a busy and exciting term as we will be getting ready to celebrate the King's Coronation. Check out our Facebook Page for pictures and post of our activities.

Just a reminder that we will be closed on Thursday 4th May due to the village hall be used as a Polling Station.

Easter Holiday Club was a really big success again this year. We were very busy with lots of new children. The children all seemed to have a fantastic time. There were lots of crafts, games, science activities, sports, easter egg hunts and outings out and about in the village. We enjoyed going to the park and the Preschool allotments. We followed the FOWPS Easter gnome trail in Dean Woods and the children were all really excited, looking for the clues and working out the answers. The feedback from the parents was that they all had a fantastic time and were so tired that they slept well at night.

Summer Holiday Club bookings are now being taken. We will be running from Monday 24th July until Friday 11th August. You can find booking forms on our website: https://woodcotepreschool.co.uk our Facebook page, Woodcote Preschool CIO or you can email or phone us.

We still have spaces available if you would like your child to join us and take children from 18 months to school age. Please contact Wendy Powell on 01491 682300 or email woodcote.pre-school@hotmail.co.uk if you would like more information or a visit.








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CHECKENDON PRESCHOOL

The children have been busy little bees, working hard on creating some lovely art for Mother's Day. They have been drawing some wonderful pictures and thinking hard about what their mummies like best and incorporating this into their artwork. We were all really pleased to welcome our mummies in for the afternoon to join us for our Mother's Day Diddi Dance.

We have been enjoying watching the changes of season, exploring all the new life that has been popping up in our local environment. The children have been delighted to see all our bulbs that were planted start to appear and have enjoyed learning how to look after these.

At Easter the children were busy with Easter craft, creating Easter baskets and making Easter nest treats in our Little Chefs sessions as well as having fun with some Easter egg hunts through the woods, park and local area. The children were also very lucky to receive a visit from the Easter Bunny!

To find out more about Checkendon Preschool, do visit our website www.checkendonpreschool.co.uk, call us on 01491 682589, e-mail preschoolcheckendon@gmail.com or just pop in – we always look forward to welcoming you!

CABIN PRESCHOOL

Welcome to Felicity and Raphael who will be joining us this term. Spring sprung early for us this year as we were delighted to be able to watch ten little eggs all hatch in front of our eyes.

On Monday the children were so excited, they gathered around the incubator to watch the eggs. They kept popping back frequently to see if anything had arrived. We did not expect any arrivals until Wednesday.

On Tuesday I was delighted to see the children running across the playground in anticipation of a little chick and they were not disappointed. Later that morning our first crack appeared, and the chicks started pipping. Just as they were leaving for the day, our very first chick arrived.

On Wednesday I was surprised to see five sets of eyes looking at me and lots of chirping as I arrived at work. Many of the children popped in even though it was not their day closely followed by the parents. We're not sure who was most excited!

On Thursday, we had a complete set. And how noisy it was! The children loved watching them walking around and suddenly fall asleep standing up.

On Friday, we started holding them and decided on names: Pecky, Brownie, Golden, Sleepy, and Chick Chick. We certainly enjoyed learning how to hold, clean and feed the chicks.

We spent the next week all gently caring for the little chicks. All the children were so careful and gentle as they each took it in turn to hold a chick. By the end of the week the chicks were deciding upon who to sit. They liked shoes and knees the best! The children learnt that sitting still and quiet was the best way for the chicks to investigate us. What fun!

Thank you so much to all the parents who contributed to this experience and for our amazing committee to fundraise to top up the finances.

To end the term, we held our annual Easter bonnet parade. Most of our children with parents/grandparents were able to join us. The children paraded in their gorgeous hats that had all been made at home. It was far too difficult to judge, so I asked Mrs Snowden and three of her handsome young boys to judge. They were great and not a bit biased. We then had an Easter egg hunt and inside for a quick game of sleeping bunnies/ chicks before we had party food and the last reading of Little Rabbit Foo Foo.

We do have some spaces available this term. September might seem a long way away, but we are having an increased number of enquiries. Should you want a place for September it is never too early to register. Call 01491 680854 to make an appointment to look around or email info@thecabinpreschool.co.uk for more information.









A SELECTION OF PICTURES OF SPRING FLOWERS IN WOODCOTE

Photos courtesy of local residents Jackie Comrie, Laura Bilbe, Martin Fowmes and Kerry Compton.





























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WOODCOTE WI NEWS

Ann Larden welcomed the members, visitors and guests to our Annual Meeting. Patricia Solomons has been our President for four years ably assisted by our Vice President Ann Larden, they have steered us through the covid lockdown when we couldn't meet and we thank them for all the committee for their hard work.

We had a fun time playing skittles at Hithercroft Sports Centre and a lovely lunch thank you to Matt and Ann.

Celebrating their birthdays this month are Debbie Black and Ann Rossiter.

The lunch club this month will go to the Coach and Horses in Wallingford thank you to Sally Lambert for organising this.

Sally Lambert was elected as our new President and Betty Thomas gave a vote of thanks to Patricia Solomons.

This was followed by a Beetle Drive which everyone enjoyed, Doreen Knox won the Easter egg and Wendy won the egg for the lowest points!

This was followed by a lovely tea thank you to Pat Hunt and Kathy Brewer.

In May we will have our Resolutions meeting, followed by a quiz.

Come and join us for a 2.30pm start on the 3rd Wednesday of the month in the Village Hall, we look forward to seeing you!

Judy Williams

WOODCOTE'S 2023 TOAD PATROL

Woodcote's toad patrol operates at Greenmoor Ponds between Valentine's Day and the night the clocks go forward. A big thank you to everyone who helped out on mild, wet evenings and also to the drivers who slowed down giving us a chance to get out of your way.

Before the toad patrol started, we were unsure what impact last year's devasting pollution incident in the Lower Pond would have on this spring's amphibian migration. Hundreds of toads, frogs and newts, their spawn and eggs, as well as all the fish and aquatic invertebrates were killed by the pollution. There was then an algal bloom after the summer heatwave. To establish the current state of the ponds, the Parish Council (the landowner) generously funded water testing earlier this year. Everyone was delighted to learn the independent laboratory analysis revealed the pond water quality is once again good.

In typical English fashion, this year's weather was the biggest surprise – 23 of the 39 nights were too chilly concentrating the majority of amphibian movement into the last fortnight of toad patrol. Overall, the number of amphibians the volunteers assisted across the road to the safety of the ponds was very similar to last year: 769 toads, 74 frogs and 98 newts. These animals will either have been breeding for the first time this year or, if older, must

have already left the ponds, or had chosen not to breed, last spring – male toads reach sexual maturity when they are two years old, females when they are three and females do not breed every year.

Amphibians are long-lived considering they are such small animals and there is natural fluctuation in the size of every local population. For example, periods of dry weather can cause ponds to become shallow making tadpoles vulnerable to predation by birds, or for ponds to dry out before young have left. It therefore remains to be seen how the lack of recruitment of juveniles in 2022 will have detrimentally affected the Greenmoor Ponds population.

After mating, adult amphibians leave the pond and head back to the territory they have established on land. By now, tadpoles have developed from the toad and frog spawn and the tadpoles are beginning to resemble something close to tiny toads and frogs. Newt eggs are starting to hatch into larvae rather than tadpoles. The larvae have gills and will live underwater for now, growing into newts over around 90 days. Under cover of darkness on wet summer nights the young amphibians will leave the pond to find a damp place to live in the woods, hedge bottoms and our gardens.

We will never know the size of the population at Greenmoor Ponds because the amphibians approach from all directions, moving between dusk and dawn when the weather is mild and damp. However, toad patrollers tend to walk between the two T-junctions at Greenmore/Whitehouse Road and Pot Kiln Lane/Long Toll around dusk when it's peak rush hour, going home when the roads quieten. The numbers above therefore reflect the number of amphibians moving across the road when patrollers were around.

This is completely different from the Henley to Marlow Road toad patrol which may be familiar to readers of The Henley Standard. That is one of the largest assisted amphibian migrations in England with numbers fluctuating annually between 2,500 and 10,500. There, the volunteers erect plastic sheeting to form a temporary barrier every spring, trapping the animals moving from the wood to the pond. Every dusk, the Henley toad patrollers pick up toads which reached the barrier the night before and take them across the road to the pond. The barrier is very effective, stopping animals in their migration and reducing road mortality so the number of amphibians the volunteers record provides a good estimate of the total size of the local population unlike in Woodcote.

If you'd like to lend a hand next year, Woodcote's toad patrollers will be back on duty next February so email info@woodcotecg.org.uk to find out how to get involved.

Woodcote Conservation Group







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CORONATION FUN



Remember the Coronation Chicken dish invented in 1953 to celebrate the Queen's Coronation? Well to celebrate the King's Coronation, there will be three new dishes for people to serve up at parties on the day: Coronation Roast Rack of Lamb with Asian-style Marinade, Coronation Aubergine, and Strawberry and Ginger Trifle. They sound quite interesting, don't they? If you end up making them, let us know how they turn out!

In the meantime, here are some fun facts about the Royal Family which you may or may not know…

Coronations have been held at Westminster Abbey for over 900 years.

The Queen's Coronation was the first to be televised, watched by 27 million people in the UK alone.

The Queen and Prince Philip were third cousins, sharing the same great, great grandmother (Queen Victoria)

At Buckingham Palace, the Queen practised for her Coronation by using sheets tied together to represent her robes.

The Queen owned over 30 dogs during her lifetime.

King Charles is the first Royal Heir to have gained a university degree (from Cambridge).

King Charles drives a 38-year-old Aston Martin that runs on wine (wine-derived bioethanol, to be precise…)

WHITCHURCH & GORING HEATH HISTORY SOCIETY

Our last lecture this spring is a different take on the history of the two World Wars of the twentieth century. Sue Smith will be telling us about the humanitarian relief work across Europe of the Friends' Ambulance Unit, a little-known service of non-combatants.

All are welcome to join us at the Goring Heath Parish Hall on Thursday May 20th at 7.00pm for coffee and a talk at 7.30pm. Non-members fee is £3, to include coffee and biscuits.

We shall have a stall at the fete at Whitchurch Hill at the end of May, and in June and July there are members' only outings, usually involving a pub lunch. After a break in August our meetings return on 21st September with a lecture by Mike Cooper.

It costs only £12 to be a member, why not come along and join us? Contact Vicky Jordan vickyjordan5@hotmail.com

WHAT'S ON AT THE CORN EXCHANGE, WALLINGFORD IN MAY 2023

All regular performances normally start at 7:30pm unless stated otherwise. The bar and auditorium will open from 7pm so there's plenty of time to collect drinks beforehand. We are also showing films on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons at 2:30pm. Please look at the website for updates.

Tickets £10 for adults and £5 for under 15s unless otherwise stated.

Cinema

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry

Monday, 1st May, 7:30pm

Tuesday, 2nd May, 7:30pm

Wednesday, 3rd May, 2:30pm

Wednesday, 3rd May, 7:30pm

Thursday, 4th May, 7:30pm

Friday, 5th May, 7:30pm

Love According to Dalva (15)

Tuesday, 9th May, 7:30pm

Wednesday, 10th May, 2:30pm

Wednesday, 10th May, 7:30pm

Brainwashed: Sex-Camera-Power

Sunday, May 28th May, 7:30pm

Monday, May 29th May, 7:30pm

Live Screenings

Sleeping Beauty from the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Tuesday, 30th May, 7:15pm

The Sleeping Beauty holds a very special place in The Royal Ballet's heart and history. It was the first performance given by the Company when the Royal Opera House reopened at Covent Garden in 1946 after World War II. In 2006, this original staging was revived and has been delighting audiences ever since. Frederick Ashton famously cited the pure classicism of Marius Petipa's 19th-century ballet as a private lesson in the atmospheric art and craft of choreography. Be swept away by Tchaikovsky's ravishing music and Oliver Messel's sumptuous fairytale designs with this true gem from the classical ballet repertory.

Tickets: £15 (adults), £12.50 (seniors), £10 (under 18s)

Best of Enemies (15) filmed live at the Noel Coward Theatre, London

Thursday, 1st June, 7pm

David Harewood (Homeland) and Zachary Quinto (Star Trek) play feuding political rivals in James Graham's (Sherwood) multiple award-winning new drama. In 1968 America, as two men fight to become the next president, all eyes are on the battle between two others: the cunningly conservative William F. Buckley Jr., and the unruly liberal Gore Vidal. During a new nightly television format, they debate the moral landscape of a shattered nation. As beliefs are challenged and slurs slung, a new frontier in American politics is opening and television news is about to be transformed forever. Jeremy Herrin (All My Sons) directs this blistering political thriller.

Tickets: £18 (adults), £15 (seniors), £10 (under 18s)

Live on Stage

Sheila's Island performed by the Sinodun Players

Tuesday, 24th May to Saturday, 27th May, 7:45pm

Imagine you are sitting at work and an email comes into your inbox: "You have been selected to take part in a team building exercise in the Lake District in November …" How might you react? "Oh no!" or "What a lovely opportunity to get to know my colleagues". The above would be the prelude to what takes place in *Sheila's Island*. Four women are put in a team and they somehow end up on an island in the middle of Lake Windermere.

The play shows us how these characters react to this less-than-ideal situation and what transpires is both funny and moving. Tim Firth gives us a script full of dark humour and well-observed insights into how we all might react to impending disaster. A comedy in thick fog. Four women from different parts of the country are brought together for probably one of the worst team building exercises ever. They are stranded on a small island in the Lake District after one incident and the elected team captain struggles to keep her team morale up as the group face a variety of issues such as hunger, cold weather, and a possible killer, as well as their own interpersonal issues.

Tickets: £12, £9 (Tuesday night)

Coming Soon

Il Trovatore Live from the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Tuesday, 13th June, 7:15pm

A co-production with Opernhaus Zurich. Passions run high as Manrico and the Count di Luna compete for the affections of Leonora. Little do they know, Manrico's mother Azucena has been keeping a terrible secret for decades. Soon a curse from the past will rise up from the ashes with devastating implications for them all. Antonio Pappano conducts Verdi's dramatic score, which features the famous 'Anvil' chorus. Sung in Italian with English subtitles.

Tickets: £18 (adults), £15 (seniors), £10 (under 18s)

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TULIPS: A BRIEF HISTORY

There are plenty of tulips to enjoy at this time of year. But what is the origin of the tulip? It was originally a wild flower growing in Central Asia. It was cultivated by the Turks and the name 'tulip' comes from the Turkish word for turban.

In the early 18th century, the Tulip Era began with tulip festivals popping up and a widespread ban on buying or selling tulips outside of the Turkish capital.

In the 1590s, a Turkish friend of Carolus Clusius, an Austrian biologist, gifted him with a few tulips. They were planted in the Botanical Garden in Leiden, Holland; this was the start of the bulb explosion in the Netherlands that can be seen today.

By the 17th century, the flower's popularity was huge and bulbs were selling for unbelievably high prices. Hybrids of the flower were being developed and owning unusual specimens became a sign of high status.

Tulipomania took off in the Netherlands with some varieties costing more than the price of a house! Then the inevitable crash came in 1637 when people came to their senses again regarding prices but tulips remained an ever-popular flower.

Nowadays there are many tulip varieties, including frilled petal versions. Did you know that the frilly petals were originally the result of a virus infection, transmitted by a louse that lived on potatoes and peaches? The frilled versions we buy now are a genetically stable, hybrid version of these so there is no cause for concern. Long live the tulip!



WHITCHURCH ON THAMES PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



We meet on alternate Wednesday evenings from 8pm at Whitchurch Village Hall, Manor Road, Whitchurch. RG8 7EU. On the other alternate Wednesdays, we have Zoom meetings where we feature top level speakers from the world of photography. On the 'Live' evenings in the hall, we also have our own members giving talks on a wide range of subjects. Have a look at our website- www.wotphoto.co.uk

On Wednesday 3rd May, we have a Zoom meeting entitled JUDGES AND COMPOSITION presented by Peter Warner ARPS.

On Wednesday 10th May we have our PICTURE OF THE YEAR competition which will be judged by Micki Aston CPAGB McloJ.

On Wednesday 17th May we have another Zoom meeting entitled AN ORGAN BUIDER AND HIS CAMERA and this will be presented by Charles Hall.

On Wednesday 24th May we have our annual MONOCHROME DIGITAL competition and the judge will be Steven Galvin LRPS.

The May programmes finishes on 31st May with another Zoom meeting titled WEIRD AND WONDERFUL… ISH and will be presented by Phil Cooling.

During the season we have battles against other clubs, and internal competitions where there are trophies to be won in the six rounds of ladder competitions for digital images which consist of both open and set subjects, also there are the Natural History and Monochrome trophies up for grabs! Come and visit us to see what we have to offer; you will receive a warm welcome.



READING RSPB GROUP ACTIVITIES

Back in March twelve of us met up for a morning walk round Otmoor RSPB reserve to the north-east of Oxford and we once again beat the forecast and had sunny intervals instead of the threatened rain. This is a large reserve of water meadows, pools and reedbeds so attracts a good selection of birds. Soon after arriving we saw a massive flock of Golden Plover flying high, attracting a Peregrine which tried unsuccessfully to catch one of them. Then a Marsh Harrier appeared but decided hunting over the marshes was easier and gave us good views as it went back and forth. Good numbers of Wigeon, Shoveler and Teal were feeding in the marshes and there was one pair of Pintails. A distant white blob was a lovely Great White Egret who is the same size as a Grey Heron but completely white with a yellow bill. By the hide we enjoyed a rare sight of lots of Reed Buntings feeding on seed scattered on the ground with Linnets, Chaffinches, Goldfinches and Yellowhammers. A very enjoyable morning and we recorded 47 species of bird.

In April our programme continued with a talk on 11th by Rob Sheldon on the Conservation of Globally Threatened Birds and then on 9th May RSPB Otmoor Site Manager David Wilding will give a talk entitled "The Otmoor Story".

On 7th May early risers can meet at Clayfield Copse at 5am for a dawn chorus walk and on 16th May there will be a trip by car to Pamber Forest near Tadley.

All indoor meetings are held in Pangbourne Village Hall starting at 8pm. Visitors are very welcome. There is an entrance fee of £5 for non-members, juniors half price. New members are always welcome with annual membership set at a modest £15 (£10 for juniors).

For more information visit https://group.rspb.org.uk/reading



Male Goosander by Marilyn Hockey

CHOLSEY CONCERTS

John Kirkpatrick is one of the most enduring favourites of the folk music world, regularly wowing audiences with his consummate skill and verve as a squeezebox player, singer and composer. Whether he's on concertina, melodeon or his huge button accordion, reports tell that John is playing better than ever and you can see him at The Cholsey Pavilion on Saturday 13th May, courtesy of Concerts@Cholsey. Doors open at 7pm for 7.45pm start. There will be a moderately priced real-ale bar and support by the additional voices and squeezeboxes of Three Pressed Men.

Tickets are just £10 in advance from concerts@cholsey.com or 01491 652295, or £12 at the door - if not sold out as expected.

HENLEY AND DISTRICT STAMP CLUB

As the King's Coronation takes place on the 6th May, the new stamps with the King's profile will be issued. We will now be losing the use of the stamps with the Queen's head.



The Henley stamp club is a friendly group and we would be delighted to see new visitors or members.

To learn more about stamps and postal history why not visit us at Bix one Wednesday evening? You can then meet people who find postal history and the story of stamps fascinating too.

On Wednesday 10th May, we will have a guest speaker, Paul Watkins, to give a talk about what was happening in WWII-France.

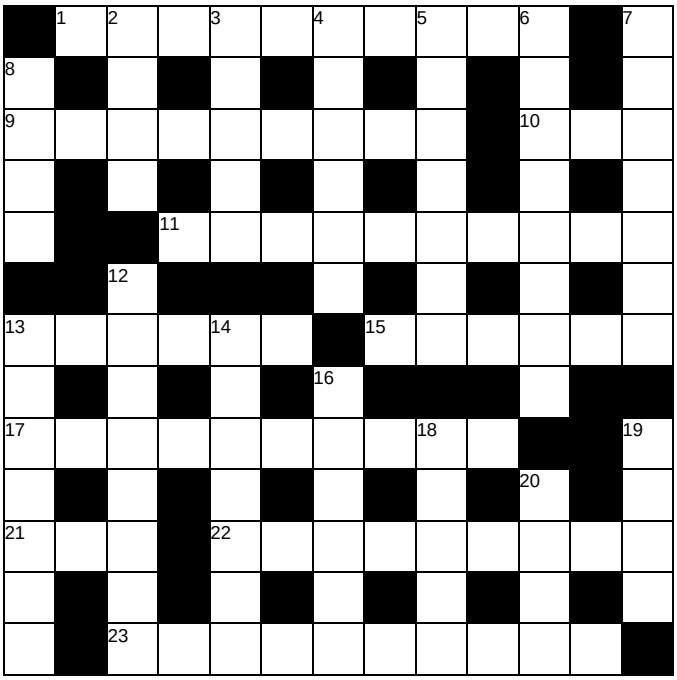
On Wednesday 24th May, we will have our annual AGM followed by displays with the subject North America.

Meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month in Bix Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Further details can be obtained by phoning Brian on 01491 681739 or on our website: -

www.henleyphilatelic.org.uk

MAY CROSSWORD



Across

1 Crowning endorsement (10)
9 Deliveries before last lap I'll run off (9)
10 Cut back is past (3)
11 Snake has one share of ambition (10)
13 Celebs need one way up (6)
15 Show a little red meat (6)
17 Mum joins botanic garden crew as top up (10)
21 A pair leads the work overseas (3)
22 Nice storm destroyed internal links (9)
23 Might develop into spring display (3,7)

Down

2 Nothing to write inside (4)
3 None take a smaller sister to watering hole (5)
4 Sharp US spies return to arrest detectives (6)
5 Me? I fall out of notoriety (3,4)
6 Fresh location making opening bulletin (4,4)
7 Byways artist turns into for club (7)
8 Reserve work (4)
12 Support space behind the scenes (8)
13 Problem with a craft going round island (7)
14 Noisily seethe about War department? Initially yes! (7)
16 Papa is to start loading weapon (6)
18 Ruth's surgery stings (5)
19 Shove backup quietly (4)
20 Strongbox even found here (4)

APRIL CROSSWORD SOLUTION

S	T	G	E	O	R	G	E	S	D	A	Y	■
H	■	A	■	P	■	A	■	P	■	N	■	B
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MAY CORONATION QUIZ

1. Who was crowned at Westminster Abbey on Christmas Day 1066?
2. Who was the first ruler to be crowned at Westminster Abbey?
3. When was Westminster Abbey consecrated?
4. Why was Westminster Abbey so named?
5. Who were the only joint monarchs to be crowned at the Abbey?
6. Who spent so little money on his Coronation that it was called the 'penny coronation'?
7. Who crowns the monarch?
8. What object did the Coronation Chair enclose?
9. What does the eagle shaped ampulla hold?
10. Whose crown is placed on the monarch's head during the crowning.

ANSWERS

1. William I (the Conqueror)
2. William I (the Conqueror)
3. 1065 CE
4. To distinguish it from St Paul's Cathedral (the east minster) in the City of London
5. William III and Mary II
6. William IV
7. The Archbishop of Canterbury
8. The Stone of Scone
9. The consecrated oil with which the monarch is anointed
10. St Edward the Confessor (St Edward's Crown)

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Regular Weekly Events

Every Sunday

** Holy Communion 8.00am

** For other church services see page 2

Every Monday

** Youth Club – Juniors (year 7's). Woodcote Village Hall. 7.15pm-8.45pm

Every Tuesday

** Youth Club – Seniors (years 8, 9 & 10) Woodcote Village Hall 7.15pm-8.45pm

Every Thursday

** Rhymetime for pre-schoolers. Woodcote Library 10.15am-10.45am

** Chance To Chat. Community Centre Lion's Den 2.30pm-4pm

MAY DATES

Mon 1st	*	South Stoke May Fayre. South Stoke. 12pm
Tues 2nd	*	BMMHS Zoom Talk: 'Battle of the Bulge'. Email zoom@bmmhs.org. 7.30pm
Wed 3rd	*	Wallingford U3A meeting. Crowmarsh Village Hall. 2pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: 'Judges and Composition'. 8pm
Thur 4th	*	Wallingford Photographic Club end of season competition. Crowmarsh Pavilion. 7.30pm
Tues 9th	*	Board Games Club for adults. Woodcote Library. 3pm-4.30pm
Wed 10th	*	Henley & District Stamp Club talk: 'World War II France'. Bix Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	BMMHS Talk: 'Lawrence of Arabia - Man, Movie and Myth'. Woodcote Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society: Picture of the Year Competition. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Thur 11th	*	Wallingford Photographic Club AGM. Crowmarsh Pavilion. 7.30pm
Sat 13th	*	Coffee Shop in aid of St. Leonard's Church. Woodcote Community Centre. 10am-12.30pm
	*	Concerts@Cholsey present: John Kirkpatrick in concert. Cholsey Pavilion. 7.45pm
Tues 16th	*	Wallingford & District Art Club demonstration: 'Urban Landscape, Acrylic ink/watercolour'. Centre 70, Wallingford. 7.30pm
Wed 17th	*	Woodcote WI meeting. Woodcote Village Hall. 2.30pm

SMALL ADS

LOCAL HANDYMAN :: No job too small. DIY jobs in and around the home. Kitchen and bathroom renovations undertaken. Call James 07961 882281

MAY DATES *(Continued)*

Wed 17th	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: 'An Organ Builder and His Camera'. 8pm
Thur 18th	*	Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society talk: 'The Friends Ambulance Unit'. Goring Heath Parish Hall. 7.30pm
Sat 20th	*	Coffee Shop in aid of FOWPS. Woodcote Community Centre. 10am-12.30pm
	*	Cholsey Repair Café. Cholsey Pavilion. 11am-1.45pm
Wed 24th	*	Henley & District Stamp Club AGM. Bix Village Hall. 7.30pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society: Monochrome Digital Competition. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Sat 27th	*	Saturday Crafts: Elmer Day Colourful Fun! Woodcote Library. 10.30am-11.30am
	*	Whitchurch Hill Fete. Whitchurch Hill village green. 2pm-4pm
Wed 31st	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society Zoom meeting: 'Weird and Wonderful.....ish'. 8pm

FORTHCOMING DATES IN JUNE

Tues 6th	*	BMMHS Zoom Talk: 'They Shoot Spies - the untold story of a remarkable female agent'. Email zoom@bmmhs.org. 7.30pm
Wed 7th	*	Wallingford U3A meeting. Crowmarsh Village Hall. 2pm
	*	Whitchurch Photographic Society AGM. Whitchurch Village Hall. 8pm
Sat 10th	*	Coffee Shop in aid of St. Leonard's Flower Team. Woodcote Community Centre. 10am-12.30pm
	*	Stoke Row Steam Rally. Hill Bottom, Whitchurch Hill.
Sun 11th	*	Stoke Row Steam Rally. Hill Bottom, Whitchurch Hill.

CLOSING THOUGHT

Isn't it funny how day by day nothing changes but when you look back, everything is different.

(C.S.Lewis)