

THE BAMPTON BEAM

November 2012

Volume 27, No. 3

The nights are drawing in,

By Louise Timmins-Gray, Editor, The Bampton Beam

Well Christmas is upon us once again. As per usual the Christmas tree lights will be switched on in the Market Square in December and the festivities will begin. I am sure the pubs are looking forward to the season and through the autumn months. With the nights drawing in this time of year, Christmas and New Year tend to bring a smile to most people's faces.

I'd like to welcome our new additions to the Bampton Beam team.

James Wildman has kindly offered to help us to modernise and redesign the Beam for next year.

Jeanie Boyce and Alexandra Miller have kindly volunteered to become sub-editors.

Also thank you to the people who volunteered to help with the website. This is now being looked after by the local council team which gives us the precious time we need to concentrate on the Beam.

For the next edition, I would love to get more information from the sports clubs in Bampton – updates on the season so far. With the Olympics and Para-Olympics ending we have had a terrific summer of sport and I would love to hear of your stories from these events or indeed other events held in the area.

I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The Beam Team will definitely be enjoying the festivities.

Louise

What's in the Beam:

Village life
Arts and Culture
Auntie Beam
Edie Bindweed
Crossword
Stories and poems

And of course
Rouse's Rambling

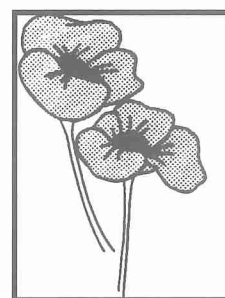
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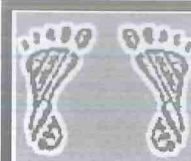
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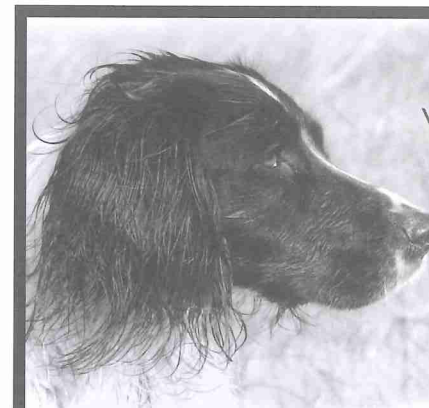


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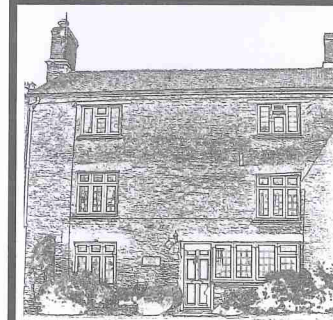
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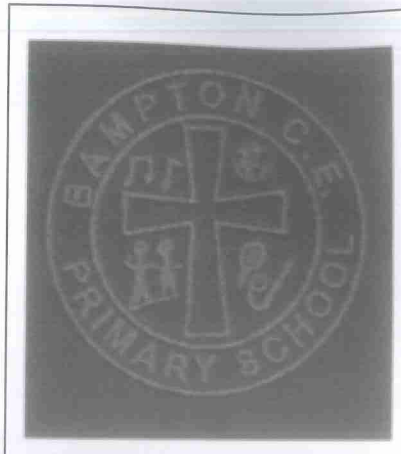
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News from Bampton CE Primary School

The new academic year has started at Bampton CE Primary School and I would like to introduce myself as the new Head Teacher. I have been a teacher for 20 years and taught across the whole primary age phase from Foundation stage to Year 6. I did my Bachelor of Education degree in Devon and have taught in Bedfordshire, Wiltshire and Oxfordshire. The last seven years I have spent working at St. Christopher's CE Primary in Langford. I am therefore familiar with the Burford partnership of schools and look forward to ensuring Bampton School plays an active role in strengthening the fantastic Partnership work that is already happening in our locality.

Our term has started with some exciting events. In the first few weeks we celebrated the 30th birthday of the BFG by basing our work around a Roald Dahl book. The highlight being a day of dressing up, with many children and staff, including myself, being completely unrecognisable as Roald Dahl characters!



Dinners for the Twits

The Roly-Poly Bird

Dress up Day

Bampton School has 6 classes including superb foundation stage provision. We have two playgrounds, a trim trail, large playing field and our own swimming pool. We share our site with Bampton Pre-School and Willow Tree Children's Centre and are developing close working relationships with these other providers. At Bampton School we offer a range of extra-curricular activities, including netball, choir, art club and wildlife club. The children have also enjoyed some taster sessions of football by Mini Dribblers and street surfing, both of which will be offering new clubs this term.

The school already has strong links with the community which I look forward to exploring further. Pre-school joined us on our walk to St. Mary's where Rev. Lloyd led us in a celebration of Harvest. On this, my first visit, I was struck by how beautiful the church was and, being a Downton Abbey fan, it held an additional WOW factor for me personally!

The children of Bampton School have been invited again to visit the residents at Rosebank for a Remembrance Service and Christmas Carol Service. I welcome the opportunity to accompany the children on these occasions and look forward to getting to know some of the Bampton residents.

I would like to extend my thanks to the St. Mary's Ladies Lunch group for inviting me to join them for lunch and welcoming me so warmly to Bampton. Also to the staff at Bampton library, who share my passion for reading and books and agreed to come along to support our Reading Evening for parents. We are very fortunate that Clare Redhall continues to share her passion for books and reading by leading library sessions at school.

I look forward to getting to know Bampton over the coming years.

Carol Phillips
Head Teacher of Bampton CE Primary School

A Concert at Christmas

by the Choir of New College, Oxford

December 13th 2012, New College Chapel, 7:30pm

Chapel seats £25

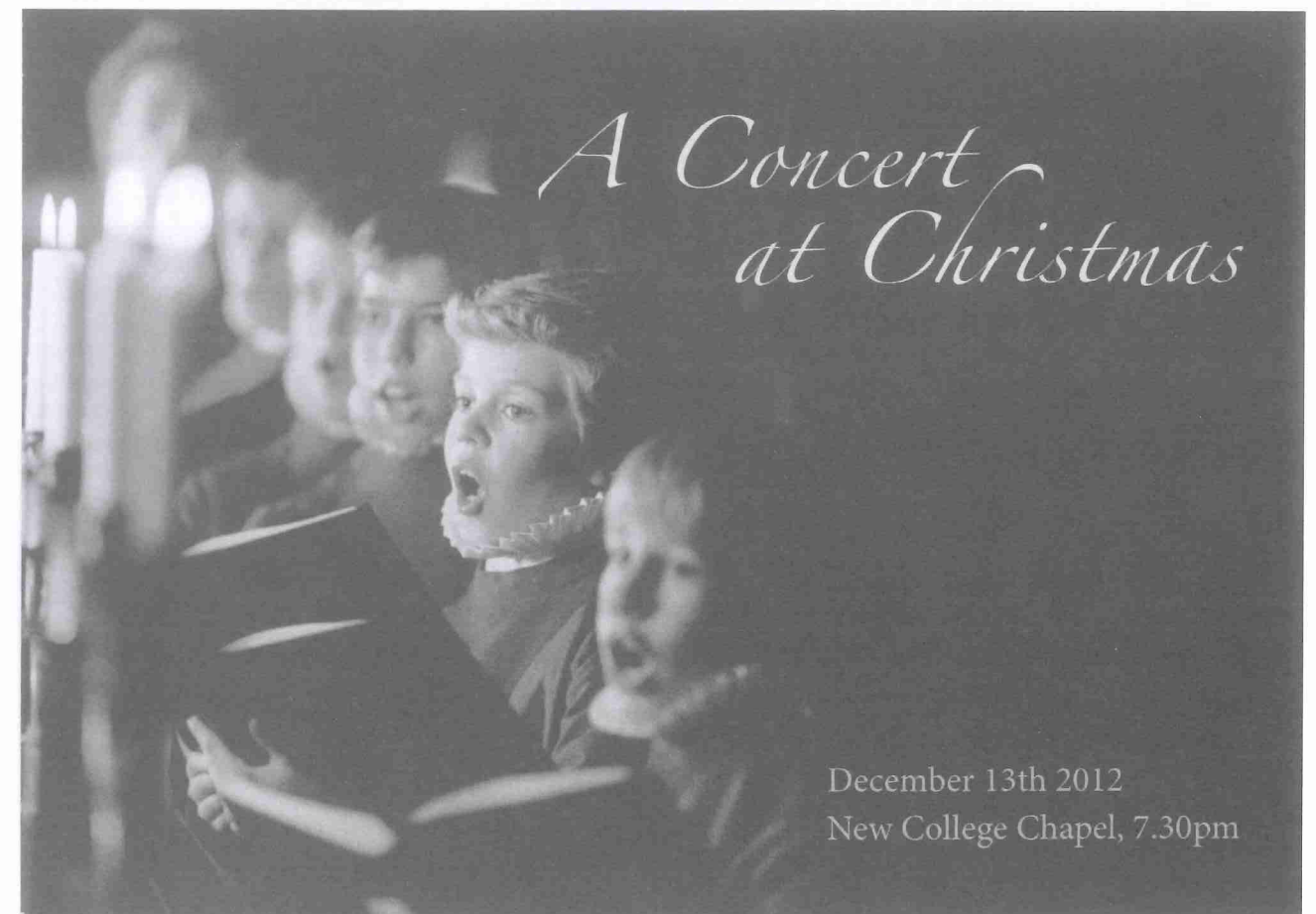
Antechapel £15

(no concessions)

This will be an opportunity to hear a world-renowned choir in its own beautiful home setting of New College Chapel. The evening will be a selection of readings and choral music to celebrate and reflect on this festive time.

All proceeds of the event will go towards building a Reading Room at Pegasus Primary School, Blackbird Leys where children who are finding it hard to learn to read will get additional help from trained volunteers.

Tickets by telephone from Tickets Oxford Box Office 01865 305305;
online from www.oxfordplayhouse.com/ticketsoxford; in person at the Playhouse Theatre;
or, on the day, at the door of New College Chapel. (Doors open 7.00 pm)



December 13th 2012
New College Chapel, 7.30pm



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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I recently had reason to visit my daughters in Bampton and needed somewhere to stay for a few nights. An additional problem was that I was accompanied by my granddaughter, aged 13. My daughters had recommended Biztro Hotel, Restaurant and Wine Bar. Biztro's website was very easy to follow and booking an appropriate twin room was no problem. The mid-week deal was very reasonable. On our arrival, the two of us were made instantly welcome. The lovely bedroom was beautifully appointed and looked out over the Square. Nothing was too much trouble for our hostess who took particular care to make my granddaughter feel at ease. The comfortable furnishings included a scattering of antique furniture – there was even a Victorian balloon-back chair in our twin room.

The breakfasts were superb – locally sourced eggs, bacon and sausages with wonderful bread and condiments. All the helpings were generous and served to set us up for our busy days. A lighter breakfast menu was available which, after a few days of full English breakfasts, was very welcome. We were never rushed over breakfast and arrangements for returning late to the hotel were made easy for us. There is always a little trepidation at staying at a hotel with which one is not familiar, but I would like to take this opportunity of not only thanking our hostess for making us feel so welcome but also to recommend Biztro to future visitors to Bampton.

Yours, etc., David Timmins

Dear Editor and Beam Team

We too would like to congratulate the Editor and all the Beam Team on the very successful start they have made in the world of journalism (Letters to the Editor- July 2012). The first two editions of the Bampton Beam with their freshness of approach, the liveliness of the reporting and the range of entertaining, interesting and informative articles can only ensure the continuation of a first-rate village magazine for the residents of Bampton and we other Beam readers. Thank you for all your hard work and long may you continue.

Best wishes. Frank and Penny Warner, Priziac, France

Hello

I used to live in Bampton when I was younger, moving away for my career. However when I was living there I was friends with a young boy called Chris Hardy. Unfortunately Chris was diagnosed with stomach cancer in 1998 and while he was in hospital receiving treatment we both watched the London Marathon together, shortly after this he died. I vowed to run the London Marathon in memory of him for a children charity, which I did in 2008. Since then I have continued this pledge and have ran London, Paris, New York and Berlin Marathon raising money for Whizz Kidz and Make a wish. I intend to go back to London next April and run it again raising money. I was wondering if you could publicise this in your next addition of the bampton beam helping me raise some more cash for children in memory of my childhood friend.

Thanks for your time. DC Lou Gibson

From the Beam Team:

If anyone would like to support this worthy cause, please let us know and we can put you in touch with Lou Gibson

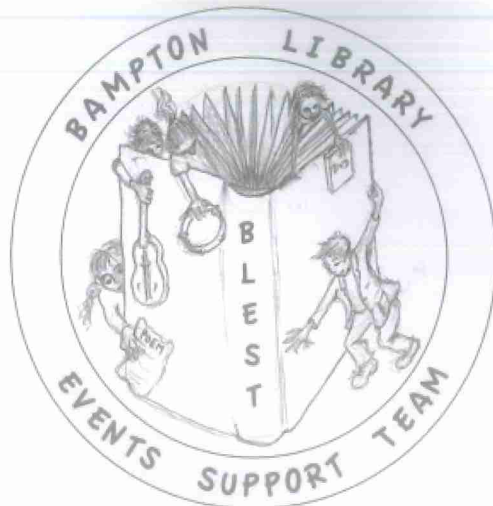
Bampton Library - more than just books

By Lesley Campbell

We hope that you have already heard the good news that, thanks to all your support, we have a solid foundation to build on and develop Bampton Library as a key centre for the village.

Our library is about much more than books - important as these are. As well as DVDs to borrow and the local newspaper to read, the library also holds masses of information about local clubs and activities. The library notice-board always seems to have details of events that appear nowhere else in the village. The library computers are well used and we have secured the future of the library photocopier that is such a useful village resource.

This year we have been trying out different events at the library to find out what works for all the different groups in the village. We organised two activities for children in the summer holidays and each school holiday we will try to put on a children's activity, hopefully timed for when parent energy is beginning to flag. Look out for our posters with the BLEST logo. Thanks again to Jo Lewington for the great design.



Crime always seems to be a favourite read, so we were delighted to be able to host two crime evenings. Mel Starr, the American author of the medieval mysteries based in Bampton, talked about becoming a writer and his plans for future books. Mel's books are on sale in the Vesey Room (next door) which is open when the library is open. This autumn we had another event for adults with Dawn Reed, a forensic scientist, as a guest speaker on Dr Crippen. More than 30 people turned out for this free evening event that provoked lots of interesting questions.

All of these events have been made possible by the fantastic support of BLEST - the Bampton Library Event Support Team. Each of these people have given their time and commitment to ensure the success of these events. A very big thank you to all at BLEST. If you would like to help out with a library activity, please contact us through Loraine, the library manager, or by emailing jane.wallis@phonecoop.coop.

In 2013 we will be continuing with a range of events and also plan to have an informal drop-in on the first Monday in the month starting on Monday 7th January. This drop-in will be a chance for people who like books to get together and talk about what they are reading and, no doubt, anything else that crosses their mind. There is no need to book, just turn up anytime between 6pm and 7pm and there is no need to stay the whole time.

We are also starting a new venture - Books in a Box - with the support of BLEST and our library manager. The idea is to get books out to the regular meeting places in her village for people who may not be able to get to the library. We are going to start in a small way and expand if this is a success.

All in all, 2013 promises to be a much brighter year for Bampton Library. We hope to see you at one of the events. If you want to hear what's coming up please follow us on Facebook, sign up for the newsletter or watch out for posters.



Bampton Community Shop Grants

By Fenella Gray MBE

If anyone is looking for financial support for a worthy cause for the Village, please write to me at the address below. In your application, please specify the organisation or cause you are seeking support for, how much money you are looking for and how the money will be spent. Please note that we need the requests by **end January** at the latest so that they can be dealt with before the end of the Shop's financial year.

Bampton Community Shop Grants
c/o 13 Ballakneale Avenue
Port Erin, Isle of Man, IM9 6ND

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The Society was formed to improve the quality of life of those living here. It has successfully fought large-scale housing developments. It also contributes in other ways, for instance by securing Sandfords Field in perpetuity for the village.

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Our Community Education programme for 2012-2013 is now available. We have put copies in libraries, shops and schools around the area but if you still can't find a copy it is available to download on the Marlborough School website www.marlborough.oxon.sch.uk (Community tab then Courses for Adults).

We pride ourselves on our warm friendly service. Give us a try – we're sure you won't be disappointed. We aim to offer a wide variety of courses at reasonable prices, our tutors are all high calibre and passionate about their subject areas. Come along and be inspired.

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Classes beginning in January 2013 (exercise classes can be joined at any point during this term – ring for more information about availability).

January 2013 Weekly Classes

Pilates Tuesdays 5.15pm and 6.20pm
 Hula Hooping Adult and Parent and Child Wednesdays 5.30pm and 4.30pm
 Yoga Thursday 7-8.30pm, Tuesday 7-8am
 Calligraphy Thursdays 7-9pm
 Creative Writing Wednesdays 7.30-9.30pm
 Flower Arranging Mondays 7-9pm February 25th 5 weeks
 Italian for Beginners Mondays 7.30-9.30pm
 Italian Next Steps Mondays 7.30-9.30pm
 Badminton Mondays and Thursdays 7-8pm
 Archery Mondays and Thursdays 8-9pm
 Golf Saturdays 12.30-1.30pm
 Spanish - Beginners, Intermediate Wednesdays 7.30-9.30pm
 Guitar for Beginners (Acoustic) Wednesdays 8.15-9.15pm
 Life Drawing Wednesdays 7.15-9.15pm
 Watercolour Painting Tuesdays 7.15-9.15pm
 Computing for the Terrified Wednesdays 4-6pm
 Computing Next Steps Mondays 4-6pm
 Be creative with your photos (digitally) Monday 3 sessions 21 January 7-9pm
 Singing Beginners Tuesdays 7-8pm and Choir 8.15-9.30pm
 Learn to Knit Wednesdays 7.15-9.15pm starts 30 January (4 sessions)

Saturday 26 January One Day or Half Day Workshops

We are holding the third of our 5 Saturday workshops on 26 January. Courses running are:

Applemac Beginners
 Aromatherapy: An Introduction (morning)
 The Art of Picture Making
 The Great Game: Poetry and Rhyme
 How to use your Sewing Machine
 Meditation (afternoon)
 Stained Glass
 Yoga (morning)

Ring to book a place on any of the courses. We look forward to hearing from you.

Mrs Jenny Bodinham
 Community Education and Woodstock Partnership
 The Marlborough Church of England School
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 Email: comed.4560@marlborough.oxon.sch.uk

F.O.B.S. Friends of Bampton School By Verity Sharples

Have you heard of F.O.B.S.?

Some of you would have heard about us if your children attend Bampton School, or if you are associated with it in any way. Those of you that have not, here is a little bit about who we are and what we do. F.O.B.S. would like to extend our reach out into the whole of the community and we need your help to do this! Our events are great fun for anyone, no matter your age.



FOBS is a group of volunteers, (committee and occasional helpers) that run various social events for Bampton School. There are two main purposes to the events that we run. The first is to help raise funds for school resources such as the upkeep of the pool and coach fares for pantomime trips. The other is a mix of enhancing the social side of the school for all the families involved and to further strengthen our links with the local community in the process.

The past year has been a worrying one for FOBS. There were some concerns that we may be coming to an end due to a lack of volunteers. A skeleton committee was put together with the aim to run a few key events throughout the year, hoping that more people would come forward to help. Thankfully, we were able to continue and would like to say a huge 'Thank You' to Su Allen for being co-chair up until Christmas 2011 with a great hand-over, and to all the volunteers and members of the FOBS committee that helped us to continue. With this, we were able to donate £2,300 to the school.

Events included 3 discos, Christmas crafts, the Christmas Fayre, the Easter raffle, Quiz and Chilli, and the Summer BBQ (despite the torrential rain!). Jubilee events included the Children's Jubilee Street Party and the Jubilee themed school events funded and held within

the classrooms. Some of you may have seen the lovely displays put on at the church. FOBS also hosted a stall at the village-wide Jubilee event at the Bampton Recreation Ground which included photographic displays and a Jubilee themed family Treasure Hunt. Unfortunately this event was marred by extremely bad weather.



F.O.B.S.**Friends of Bampton School**

We would like to run some 'different' events this year alongside our usual plans. We are hoping to run an Easter Fayre in the Village Hall combined with a treasure/scarecrow hunt around the village and an Auction of Promises. We welcome any input you may have whether its donations of prizes or food, ideas for events, or if you would like to help us run an event.



Look out for our fantastic Christmas puddings and chocolate puddings that will be on sale from the 5th of November. Please email friendsofbamptonschool@aol.co.uk if you would like more information. They are extremely high quality and delicious. They will cost £5 and are sold in aid of School funds.

We have started with a Beetle Drive - the first of which took place after school (3:10pm) on Friday 19th of October. It is great fun for all ages; come along, have some tea and cake and see what we are about! Prizes too!

For more information about F.O.B.S. please contact:

Gill Waite - Chair, Jenny Walsgrove - Vice chair, Debra Wilson - Secretary, Verity Sharples - PR,

on:

friendsofbamptonschool@aol.co.uk

Do you shop with Amazon, Tesco, Sainsbury's M&S or Argos? You can raise money for Friends of Bampton School whenever you shop with them and 2000 other stores by using our fundraising website, [easyfundraising](http://easyfundraising.org.uk). It won't cost you a penny more and everything you buy will raise money for Friends of Bampton School - Oxfordshire.

Go to : www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fobampton and follow the simple steps to get shopping and start raising! Its that simple! Don't forget to use it with your Christmas shopping!

**Bampton Gardening Club News**

By Fenella Gray MBE

**Results of the Gardening Show held on 24th August**

The committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who participated in the show this year, and what a show it was! It was great to see the amount of vegetables and flowers after the appalling weather we have had all summer.

The results of the 2012 Show

Lady Anne Montague Cup - Norman Haynes
Illene Hammond Rose Bowl - Penelope Kettle
Sidney Constable Cup - Jean Cole
Dolly Stroud Cup - Norman Haynes
Percy Bowerman Cup - Jane Williams
Win Woodley Cup - Sarah Constable
John Smith Cup - Penelope Kettle
Reg Pratley Cup - Norman Haynes
Chennell Cup - Norman Haynes
Mrs P. Smith Cup - Sarah Ader
Vice President's Cup - Christine Haynes
Win Woodley Challenge - Charlie Sheeny

Jack Horne Memorial Cup - Hazel Carter
Raymond Taylor Cup - Hazel Carter
Andrew Pierce Cup - Norman Haynes
Ken Adams Cup - Roy Henley
Albert Tanner Cup - Norman Haynes
Henry Bone Cup - Christine Haynes
Keith Reid Cup - Norman Haynes
Frank Collett Cup - Paris Blewitt
Liz Chambers Silver Plate - Christine Haynes
Cottager's Cup - Gill Gummer
Betty Adams Cup - Paris Blewitt

Well done to all who took part and look forward to seeing you next year.

Coffee Mornings - Coffee mornings still to be enjoyed in 2012 will be held on 17th November and 15th December. They are held on Saturday mornings in the Village Hall, Bampton, at 10am. The usual coffee/tea, raffle, our 'odds and ends stall', maybe some plants - something in fact for all. If you would like to have a table at the coffee morning to sell your own produce, etc., these are available for a small fee - please contact a member of the committee for details. We also will try to answer any gardening problems (if the committee cannot answer the questions, there's usually someone who can).

AGM and Membership

The AGM is on Saturday 24th November 7:30pm in the Village Hall, where membership can be paid - the fees as usual are: OAPs £3, others £5. If you cannot be there membership can be paid at any of the Coffee Mornings or sent to Gill Gummer, 18 Mercury Court, Bampton, Oxon OX18 2AJ, Tel: 851913. Membership is available not only to gardeners but to those who join us for the social trips, the holidays we provide and we do try and keep the prices down for the Annual Show. Don't forget after the AGM we usually have our Cheese and Wine evening to thank all our members for joining us for another year in the Bampton Gardening Club.

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Bampton & District Aunt Sally Association

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| Pri 4 A Side | Cross Keys | v | Athletico Horseshoe |
| Pairs | Neil Lyon & Dave Townsend | v | Mick Berry & Eddie Lacey |
| Ladies Singles | Stella Hambidge | v | Louise Gray |
| Ter 8 A Side | Butchers Arms B | v | Windrush Pub |
| Mixed Pairs | Mary Drew & Neil Lyon | v | Rob & Bryony Brown |
| Mens Singles | Neil Lyon | v | Kevin Giles |
| Sec 4 A Side | Carterton Social Club | v | Fox Leaffield |
| Pri 8 A Side | Strickland Arms A | v | Three Pigeons |



The village hall was packed to the brim on Saturday 13th October for the culmination of the Aunt Sally season at the Bampton and District Aunt Sally Association Finals night.

Congratulations to the winners (in bold above) and also the runners up. It was a great night!

Our own editor, Louise got to the final of the ladies singles competition. She went out in style with a score of 'blob', 'blob'. Her Opponent, Stella, must have thought Christmas had come!

Neil Lyon was on form, winning the mens singles competition as well as the mixed pairs along with our good friend Mary Drew (pictured below)

If you are interested in giving Aunt Sally a go, it will be starting up again in the Spring. Just go along to your favourite pub and ask the landlord about their team.

More information can be found on the Bampton and District Aunt Sally Association website.

www.bamptonauntsally.org



Ode to a neighbour's new plastic lawn

Written by an ancient, somewhat-jealous grass lawn

O greenest sward, that from thy sandy bed sprung forth in spring-time colour in a garden fair - a constant colour, never season-changed - it's only snow can make thy face deranged.

Bid thou autumnal yellow, ochre-brown in vain! thou stayest green throughout each season's change and, though we look each season at thy verdant bed, the spectrum of thy colour varies not in range.

No mower suff'redst thou, nor weeding's need; no seedy blemish spoils thy perfect lot - and forfeit is ability to grow a weed as borders thee around a perfect plot.

No leaves melt through thee, nor pets' excrement; no fertiliser needest thou, no chlorate bold. Thou hast a virgin greening through and through to hold thy purest greenfull weed-free sward.

Behold! A leaf has, wanton, fallen down and altered thy pure countenance - a yellow blemish on a sea of green that leads to greenish remonstrance.

Where is thy mud (a grass's normal friend)? By cunning spear-shaped form, thy leaves, which are forsworn to bear the colour brown, shed this forbidden substance lest your owner peeve.

A flower's shade, a tree's bold silhouette are amplified against thy constant em'rald sheen. One might say, "Boring! surely green must change as in an English village doth an English Village Green!"

It is not cricket to absent our Nature so - abjure our heritage and rape our nat'ral land. Thine edges, more, remaineth crisp - and very trim! and never maketh strain on neighbour's limb.



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Ode to a neighbour's new plastic lawn

None opportune or compromise thy vista fair
that joy brings to a season's show.
No biochemist can denature greenish hue –
no need to rake nor shallow dig nor hoe.
No mud besmircheth thee, no bird deposit lasts;
your Machiavellian system conquers all (at least where thou
art stuck fast).
My jealousy of greenness comprehensively expresses
despair at my poor gardener's lawn-work-care excesses.

But, then, thy heartless body knows no cutting pain
nor hears the grumble of my owner's sighs
nor feels the pain of spring-time growth
nor sees the season's colour change...

nor feels the busy worm escaping blackbird beak
nor senses welcome fall of rain that follows drought
nor bends with pressure from the lovers' clasp
nor softens to a picnic blanket's form...

nor yields to cricket stumps for childish play
nor grows the daisies for a small girl's crown
nor softens life's horizons, melding with the trees
that form the backdrop to my peaceful life and peace.

My neighbour's nether days are spent reclining
upon thy guaranteed green lining.
But, then again, perhaps I am not whining
for thy deathly plastic life - nor pining...

for thy life-span, said to number fifteen years.
Then I will watch thee - ripped apart and gone
while I remain here vigorous and strong.

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AUNTY BEAM

Dear Auntie Beam

I am considering getting my nipple pierced. I am a 20 year old rugby player and I am worried about what the other guys might say in the changing room. Should I get it done? Anonymous, Aged 20

Well, my dear, my first question would be is this to impress a lady or is it just for fun. If the first option, then go for it, because you can tell your rugby friends that it is because of a sexy lady and they will be very jealous and all want it done. The second option is what I chose a couple of years ago. And believe me honey, it is worth it! If nothing else, it is a handy place to hang your keys so you don't lose them.

Dear Auntie Beam

My boyfriend has started moving his stuff slowly into my house from his parents. I'm concerned that he wants to live me and I am not ready for that – what shall I do?

Well, dear your boyfriend sounds very young if he is still living with his parents. From my experience is this is just a relationship for a bit of fun put his stuff in a box in the cupboard and tell him where to find it when he comes round and tell him not to clutter your girly house with his scruffy stuff or if you really like this boy perhaps consider a trial 'living together' to see if it goes anywhere.



Edie Bindweeds Gardening Tips

So the rush of summer is gone and we gardeners hope we now have some time to put our feet up but there is still a lot to be done in the colder months. In November and early December, think

about insulating your greenhouse and also put a grease band around your fruit trees to prevent pests next year. You can start to plant your early broad beans and peas now as well as garlic and onion seeds. For a little extra colour in the Spring, plant out wallflower seedlings and tulips in borders.

In December and January, prune your gooseberries and deciduous trees and prepare your beds for Spring planting.

In February the fun begins again. Start chitting your early potatoes, planting early veggies and force your rhubarb and look forward to the Spring!





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SPAJERS news /1

Lynne Pointer

What a summer! In so many ways, one to remember. **The Donkey Derby and Fete** comes at the end of summer and once again we must thank the good folk of Bampton for turning out in force, despite the weather, to support us and have a good time. I think we are all glad to live in a village with an appetite for fun. Surprisingly the sales of ice-cream at the Donkey Derby were up on last year, and I thought it was only the Norwegians who ate ice-cream under umbrellas in the pouring rain.

As always the preparations for the event provided their own entertainment. This year we used our new marquee for the first time so a band of stalwart supporters gathered on Sandford Field and unpacked it. No instructions could be seen at first and then finally it was discovered that one had to login to one's Facebook account and could then download them. Needless to say those volunteers present with iPhones did not have a Facebook account, and those without iPhones had unaccountably not brought their laptops/computers with them. The comments ranged from "I don't believe it!" to the unprintable in a family publication. Anyway the nuts and bolts were sorted out and some good photos taken of the process. Rather reminiscent of that old favourite TV programme "Generation Game".

Don't forget that we will happily loan out either or both of our marquees for a donation to the funds. We set up and take down too. Get in touch with Mat on 850760 if you have an event planned.

Thanks to everyone who gave their time to baking cakes, setting up and clearing up the field, manning stalls and of course those who came along and spent their cash for a good cause.

Without the support of local businesses and sponsors we just could not put on such an event. We are very grateful to them all.

As with all our events, the profits go towards the Christmas Box and outings for members.

Remember that we are always very grateful for practical help with events; you don't have to become a committee member, just give us a ring or get in touch by email. See next page for the details.

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SPAJERS news /2

The annual outing to Poole was also on the wet side at first but the rain gave over in the afternoon, and certainly did not dampen the enjoyment of a day out. As you know we offer a shorter trip for those who find a long coach trip too much. **Please give us your suggestions for either the shorter or longer outing for next year.** We do not want to get stuck in a rut and are always happy to consider new places to visit.

The Bonfire and Fireworks night will be on **Sat Nov 3rd** this year.

As usual tickets will be on sale for the fortnight beforehand.

Advance prices will end at 12 noon on Sat Nov 3rd.

We have been able to keep entry prices the same as last year;

Advance: Adults £7 and children 5 to 16 yrs £3

On the night : Adults £10 and children £5

By request the band from last year will be playing again, and there will be a bar, pig roast, mulled wine and other refreshments. We reckon it's the Bonfire and music that makes the difference, and is one of the reasons we get folk from neighbouring villages coming along. This does mean that there is not a lot of parking space so please can Bampton folk walk down to the Recreation Ground.

Tickets are being sold from The Bampton Coffee House, The Romany, The Pharmacy shop and Adrian Simmonds in the Market Square.

Many Thanks to all these for their help.

Any enquiries contact Lynne on 851930

The next weekend on **Friday Nov 9th** sees the Famous **Josie's Draw** at The Romany. This will be Josie's 30th draw. Over these 30 years she has raised thousands of pounds for the Spajers, and she shows no sign of stopping yet. Tickets are on sale at the usual hostelrys and will also be sold outside Abbey Properties the Saturday before the event. Abbey Properties are kind enough to offer a roof over the heads of our team, and it has no mortgage chain!

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SPAJERS news /3

A bit of a rest before **The Bampton Mummers** get ready for their marathon tour of the village on Christmas Eve. If you want to book them for a private performance in your house then phone Mat on 850760 well beforehand. There is never enough time for them to fit in everyone who would like to host them, but you can always catch them at one of the pubs later on in the evening. They too have passed on thousands of pounds over the years, and like their jokes never seem to age.

On into 2013 and the date to put in your diaries is **Friday April 12th** for our annual quiz in the Village Hall. Last year we had a short speech in Welsh from the winning team. This year???

It would help us enormously if we were able to send you information on our events by email. We would therefore be grateful if you would send your email address to noreply@spajers.org. All personal data will be used in accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act and your details will not be shared.

To become a member you must be over 60 if female and 65 if male. Contact our membership Secretary Jeff on 850643 for further details.

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advance
with joyous colour and with bright-
ness new...
I was the simplest but the warmest
garb
reached out for when the frost nipped
hard and long
and needed as a complement to
wind-proof clothes.

Old-fashioned patterns and my col-
our gone -
all blinded by this cupboard's gloomy
gloom;
it's quiet in here - the other coats
and shoes
talk silently together of the cold
when they were needed for the sea-
son past.
It is a sad and lonely life I lead
when I am only loved with winter's
need.

I am not jealous, as the time will
come
when I am needed once again to
warm
a chilly child's chapped neck and
face and throat.
I hang here sadly while outside the
T-shirts play
with happy, jolly logos, sunny stripes,
extended arms defying gravity
and mocking my reality and form

so dull and lifeless, hanging, sad,
forlorn
and hidden by this cupboard's firm-
locked door.
Just audible, some children gambol
free
in sunshine's sunny, sultry light and
joy.
I am forgotten, drooping on my hook
in darkness with my lonely thoughts
and cares.

And now I hear someone is going to
use me as a draught excluder!

Rebecca Mead aged 11

Trevor Gardner

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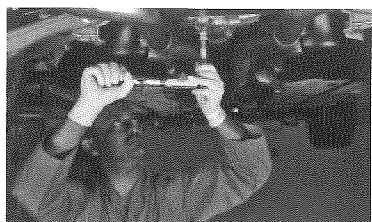
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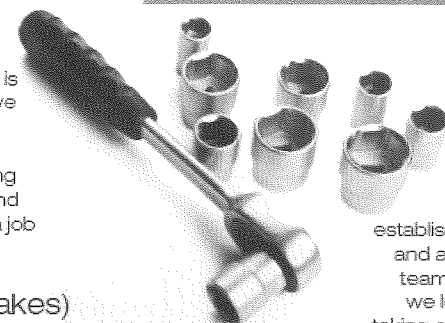
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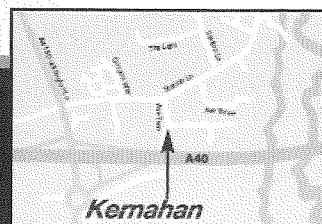
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It's a Pampered Life for me?

Starting a smallholding is not as easy as it looks
....A year in the life of Pampered Farm

by Phillipa Timmins-Gray



Well last time I wrote a column for the Beam it was dry and sunny. Now as the clocks go back, our small patch is wet, spongy, muddy, mossy and claggy with more rain to come.

Autumn and winter for a smallholder carries with it mixed blessings. On the one hand, you need not worry as much about flies, ticks, too much sun and lack of water, but the nights draw in giving you much less productive time, the grass stops growing and most of your time is spent in wellies and rain coats....in the dark.

Summer was great this year. We had just enough rain and sun to give us lots of grass and lots of veggies. Our animals for the best part were all healthy and everything looked rosy.



We did have a fox attack on our chickens which was an awful night but actually was lucky for us in the end: the fox must have been very inexperienced. We only lost 5 hens and it could have been a lot worse but we were extra vigilant for about two months after that while the fox was prowling about. I don't know how many times I had to get up in the night to soothe and quiet our dogs who were barking wildly at the fox that was sniffing and skulking around the house outside. It seems to have moved on for now - for good I hope.

So for most of the summer, when not mowing the ever rapidly growing lawn, we ate meals of home grown chicken, pork, lamb and veggies, with barbeques that should go down in history.

Everything was going smoothly and then - the dreaded 2 week holiday abroad! Going away for more than a few days is a smallholders nightmare. We had not been abroad for a number of years and definitely not for two weeks so I was dreading it. Our poor house mate Emma was charged with watching over our brood with a long list (well actually 6 lists) of jobs, including watering the greenhouse twice a day and feeding all the animals, including the cats and dogs. She did a grand job with only a few casualties, mostly the cabbages and sprouts which had a massive cabbage white butterfly attack while we were away (didn't think to put that on my list) and so they became chicken and pig food instead of dinner for us.

Unfortunately, while we were away our favourite ewe, Lucky, passed away (why is it always your favourite one that dies?). She had not been looking very good since an illness last year and she was always given extra treats and cuddles but I guess it was just her time to go - sorry Emma. At least she didn't have to cope with another bad winter like last year, and she went peacefully so we are thankful for that.

Anyway holiday was great and most things were alive when I got back so that was good. Might even consider having a holiday next year, well maybe just one week this time. Had a new shearer over for the autumn shearing as the singing shearer was busy. Mike Churchouse is a great character if you are ever looking for a shearer. He also has two fabulous little sheep dogs which made penning up our normally antagonistic (with a capital 'A') sheep look like child's play. He took a fancy to our Leicester Longwools (two of which were male and castrated and the ewe was barren so they only had one destination...which we were reluctant to send them to....) and has taken them for a pampered life producing rare breed wool for home spinners. I am so glad that we didn't have to take them to 'the other place' and that they now have a useful career.



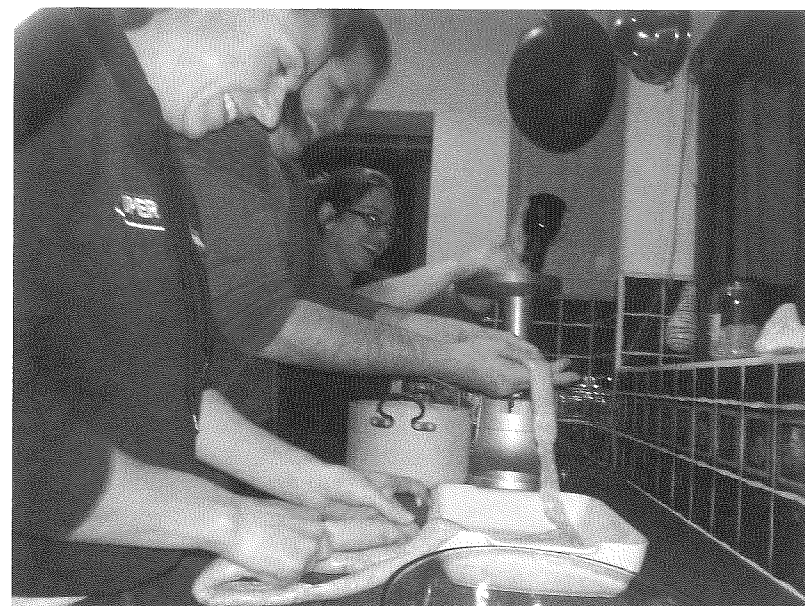
It's a Pampered Life for me?

Talking of 'the other place', the last of our Gloucester Old Spot pigs are now gone and our freezer is full to the brim. The task of repairing fences and re-seeding and resting their pen begins. This time it will take a while as both our pens are knee deep mud and will take a while to recover. Lucky we now have enough pork to sink a battleship so won't need to keep pigs for a while. I think we are all outwardly relieved as keeping pigs is definitely the most exhausting part of our hobby (sheep and chickens are much easier to handle and don't turn everything to mud as soon as they look at it)

A few weeks ago, some of our Gloucester Old Spot pork was made into sausages by members of our local ladies rugby team, the Witney Angels. They are our biggest customers when it comes to bacon and sausages and wanted to have a go. Well the photos say it all I think but it was great to teach a few people what we have learned, only by trial and error (and lots of internet searching). Thanks Sarah, Claire and Theresa for a great night!

The pork legs are now curing and hopefully we will be able to try our own Parma ham at the end of next year.

So now we are battening down the hatches and preparing for winter which mainly means lugging food stocks about, repairing fences and digging up the last of the veggies. There is something so sad about digging up your courgette plants that have served you so well or chucking out your grow bags with your crispy cucumber plants or seeing your massive rhubarb plant go into hibernation.



The list of jobs is shrinking as we get closer to November, after which most outside jobs are pointless and all you have to do is ensure that everyone is well fed and warm.

The only creature working harder than us at the moment is our ram Bernard. I will say nothing more than the fact that I don't think next years lambing time will be as spread out as last year

Next time I write it will be Spring, my favourite time of year, and we will be looking forward to daffodils, spring greens, lambs, chicks and the promise of the ever elusive perfect British Summer. See you then.

Check out our Pampered Farm Facebook page for more stories and up to date news.

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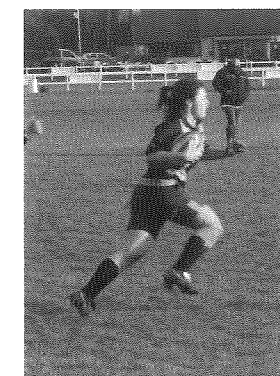
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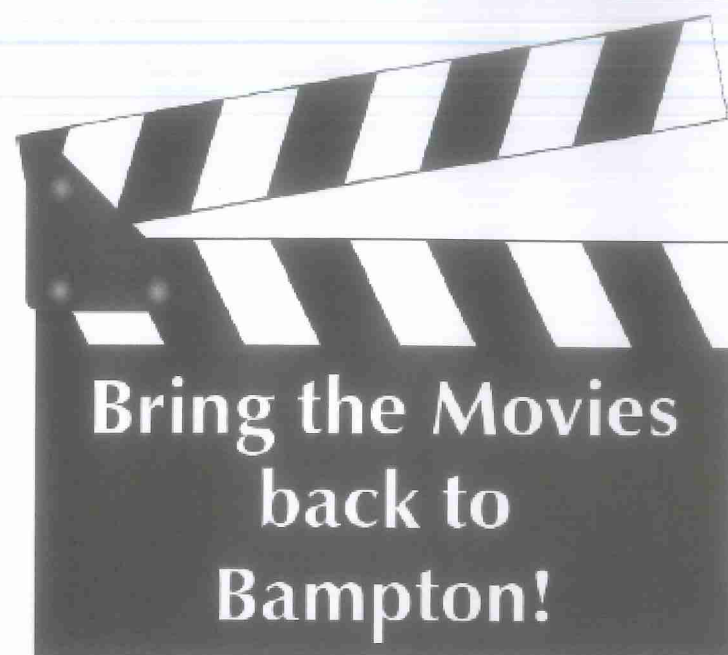
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CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to our editor Louise Gray and her team mate Sophie Hicks for being selected for the Oxfordshire County Women's Rugby Team! Good luck in your first county match!



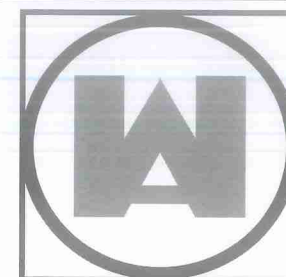


- ◆ Chipping Norton Theatre has discontinued Movies on the Move but we want to continue to bring films regularly to Bampton by installing a cinema system in the Village Hall.
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ANDREWS ESTATE AGENT - Their chief executive Michael Robson 'admits that the initial asking prices may have been too high' (*Andrews Website)

CONCLUSION

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RESIDENTS: As many of you may be aware there have been some burglaries in the local area recently that the police are investigating. There are a number of things you as residents can do to help prevent these offences happening. Crime is largely opportunist so by taking simple steps to protect your home will deter criminals. Ensure that your house is always locked and secure regardless of how long you are going out for, it is important when going out to ensure desirable small electrical items such as laptops are where possible hidden. Car keys should also be kept out of site and not on a hook near the front door. Community vigilance is also very important so keep an eye on your neighbour's properties, and if you see anything suspicious such as vehicles or people hanging around please report it on the numbers below. In an emergency always call 999



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EMERGENCY NUMBER**



Clanfield and Bampton Historical Society 2012/2013 Season of Meetings

Once again, the programme is an interesting and varied one, covering a wide historical period, with a special emphasis on local interest.

All meetings starting at 7.30pm. They will be in the Carter Institute, Clanfield, except on March 20 and May 22, which will be in Bampton's Old School Community Centre:

November 20 – Tim Porter: Matilda, her Fight for the Throne.

February 19 – Tony Hadland: Researching Family History.

March 20 – Muriel Pilkington: The Burford Mutiny.

April 16 – Liz Woolley: Oxfordshire Lodging Houses.

May 22 – Mark Davies: The Joneses of Jesus.

Membership has been kept at £17.00 for the season and visitors to pay £3.50 for individual talks.

For any further information, please contact Alan Smith, on 01367 810245, or email smithequi@aol.com, or Raena Farley on 01367 810604

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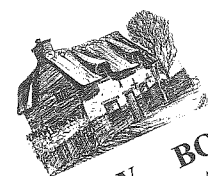
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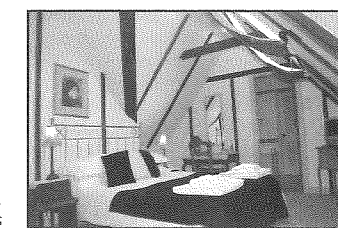
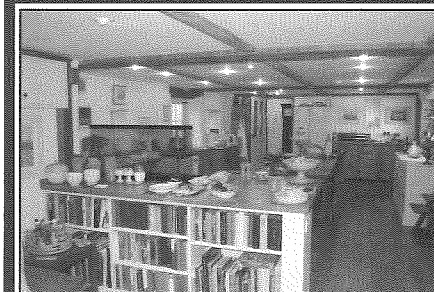
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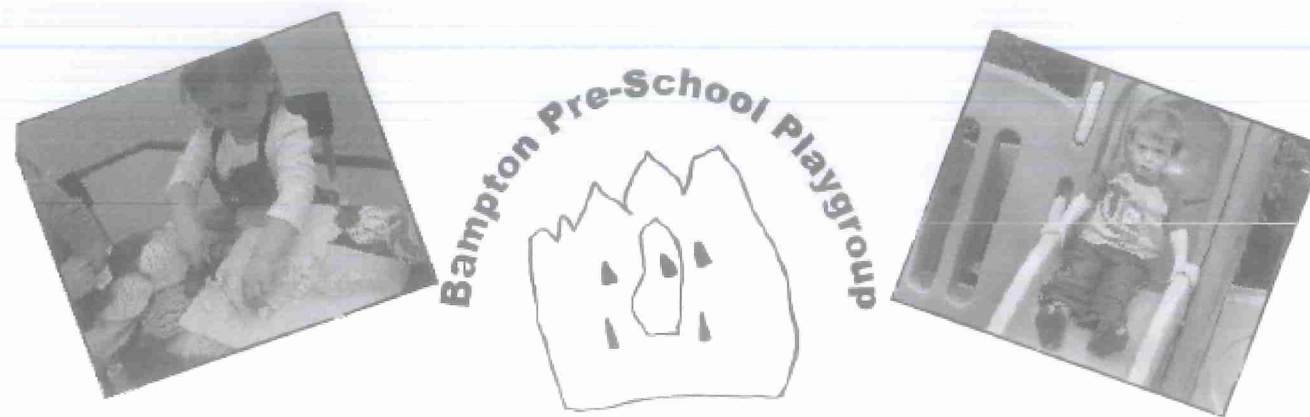
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"Such a dear.."

A short story by David Timmins



It's always nice to be complimented about one's husband. Dan was "such a dear!", "such a steady man!" Perhaps over the years, I suppose that I had taken him a little for granted – and, I suppose, it was true that we had one of those marriages that some women dream about – a marriage that was steady, undemanding and, sometimes, rather predictable. Perhaps it is only now that he has slipped away from me that I have begun to see what Dan was and what he represented through another woman's eyes.

Children long gone – one married and the other at University - meant that we had more free time than we had ever had as students when we met.

Some years ago, I read a short article out loud to Dan about our local church ringers and how they were looking for new members. As usual, Dan grabbed this new idea with his familiar enthusiasm and quickly became tedious, and a little annoying, with his research into all things concerning bells and bell ringing.

"Did you know that bells are made of bronze?" "Did you know that some of them weigh over a ton?" he would ask over tea – which we had at 5 o'clock, every day – yes, thinking about it, it was 5 o'clock every day except on Dan's golf afternoon.

"No dear," was my inevitable reply. Dan's enthusiasm led to his starting to learn change ringing at our local church tower, and I suppose that it was also inevitable that I would eventually become involved – initially helping to make the teas to be served after a carol service and then, much against my better inclination, to having a go at ringing the bells myself.

As ever, Dan progressed with the art of change ringing - as he did with every other interest he took up - with alarming speed. I was hopeless and, even though the tower captain was endlessly patient and encouraging, if a little sharp, there came a time when I realised that I was making myself miserable on a regular basis every week when there really wasn't any need. So I stopped going – that must have been just over a year ago. I was quite happy to stay at home and listen to an evening play or follow a T.V. series.

Perhaps it was also about a year ago that I realised that, although we should be spending more time together, we hardly saw each other from one end of the week to the other. Golf seemed to be taking up much of two afternoons of his week – and sometimes those afternoons would last well into the evening.



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"Such a dear.."

"Well, I have to meet up with the chaps!" he would explain.

"But you're bell ringing again tonight! Can you see your way to getting tomorrow afternoon free – I would like to visit Aunt Mary sometime soon. She's been so poorly recently."

"Don't mind my saying so, but your Aunt Mary always seems to be poorly lately – anyway, sorry, I'm booked for a match tomorrow. Might not be back until late."

Not again, I thought. Ah well, there'll be another day; and it was true, Aunt Mary did seem to be on the phone more than her troublesome arthritis deserved. It wasn't that excuses became more frequent – Dan continued to be his usual solicitous, popular self – and, if anything, our days together passed by in an even more ordered way. Perhaps Dan was checking his diary a bit more frequently, but I put that down to a little forgetfulness.

Then, one day, Dan complained of feeling a bit under the weather...

"I'll skip golf today and have an early night, dear. Perhaps I've been overdoing it a bit recently."

"Sensible idea," I agreed. He went upstairs, and I thought I heard him mumble to himself. Perhaps he was wondering where the paracetamol was...

"The paracetamol is in the bathroom cabinet – there should be a new packet!" I called upstairs. After a pause, there came an, "OK, I've found them!"

But his 'bit under the weather' went on for over a week. Going to see the doctor was a last resort, Dan explained, which partially explained his approach to my Aunt Mary, but there really was no alternative. Dan insisted on going on his own.

"You won't believe this," he said on eventually getting home, "the GP was very nice but she insisted I had a blood test there and then! I'm going back to bed," he groaned.

"What's that on your neck, dear?" I asked tentatively.

"Where?"

"On the back of your neck – it looks like a nasty bruise!"

"Oh, I don't know," he sighed, "must have caught it on something..."

"Funny place to bump yourself," I said helplessly. "Anyway, get up to bed and I'll bring you up something light for your tea."

"I really don't think I could manage anything," he grumbled.

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"Such a dear.."

During the night, Dan was restless. He became very hot and then sweated mercilessly. His bedside light was on and off; he'd read for a bit and then settle. By the morning, we were both exhausted. Drawing back the curtains the next morning, the bruising on his neck was far more obvious. Before I had had time to ring our GP, the telephone rang.

"Hello?"

"Hello, is that Mrs Stephenson?"

"Yes, that's me...."

"Could I speak to your husband, please? This is his GP. It's quite urgent...thanks."

Dan spoke briefly to the GP and was obviously quite agitated.

"OK, OK, I'll go straight there!"

"What on earth's the matter, Dan?" I asked, full of trepidation.

"Er...it was our GP. She says I have to make my way straight to hospital. She says I mustn't drive. Could you take me there, darling?"

"Yes, of course – was there some sort of problem?"

"Well it looks like my blood test showed something pretty grim and I need urgent treatment."

"Oh, no!" I exclaimed. "Give me a minute and I'll pack you a bag!"

Within three weeks, he died of leukaemia.

I was lucky in some ways that I had those precious few weeks to say goodbye. I am not sure whether it is worse having somebody you are close to die suddenly or have to watch a long, lingering death. It may sound unfeeling, but I was so glad he didn't have to suffer; I felt, in some ways, more sorry for the doctors and nurses who had tried so hard to save him. Naturally, over the first few days after his death, my friends came round to console me – and my relatives did their best. One even offered to help me with Dan's financial affairs but, being married for so long, we had got all that sort of thing organised.

Funeral arrangements were sorted out between endless cups of tea and, before long, I felt myself to be totally alone. The children helped so far as they could but, as they both lived so far away, they had to go back to their home and hall of residence in what seemed to be a blink of the eye.

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"Such a dear.."

Yes, alone. For several weeks, I left everything as it was. It sounds silly, but it was as though Dan had just 'popped out' for a minute. After I had notified all our family and friends of Dan's death, the day came, after the funeral, when I had to sort out his things. Of course, I started with the easy stuff – insurances, papers, solicitors and so on. But I knew that the day had to come when I would have to tackle his more personal bits and pieces.

Once again, I started with the easy things - what to do with his clothes, books, ringing journals, keys - and that annoying extra spare key he kept for the garden shed which he always kept in his trouser pocket 'in case he should need it'. But then there came the time when I had to sort out the things that were closer to him and that he had treasured. That teddy bear thingy that Julia had given to him to fix to his key ring when she was five. Dan had pretended to be so pleased with the Christmas gift and I thought at the time that he was just 'being nice' but, in fact, he had kept it for years. Julia is now 31 and probably would not remember now how pleased her father had been with the gift. Then there were the usual other bits and pieces - a penknife Robert had given him (after I had told him not to buy it), some nail clippers, a clean handkerchief...

In the top left hand pocket of the suit he always wore to work was his mobile phone. I thought I had better check to make sure that there had been no-one I had forgotten to notify of Dan's passing so entered his code and called up 'Addresses'.

The first half dozen or so were friends who I had already notified but then came a mysterious name – *Elaine*. Who was that, I wondered. No surname. I thought for a while but, as time was pressing, I simply jotted down the name and the number on the pad by the telephone and moved on. Many more names and numbers I recognised, but then I came across another name – *Jacqueline*. Again, no surname. A kind of pit-of-the-stomach feeling came over me while I quickly scanned down the rest of the names. Dan was "such a dear", "such a steady man" kept reeling around my head; here I was starting to doubt him after finding just two names on his mobile. No, here was a third – *Susan*!

I had to sit down and think the whole thing through. Barely a month had gone by since the funeral and here I was already doubting our thirty-five year marriage! There must be a simple explanation. There were the names - clear as day - and there were the phone numbers.

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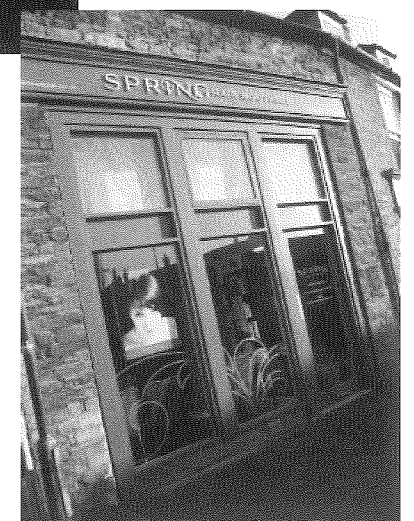
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"Such a dear.."

I hadn't a clue why they were on his phone. My first concern was that these were people that Dan knew but that had not been informed of his death – he really hadn't had the time to write as he had been so ill. My next thought, and I had to confess it to myself, was why were there three women's names on his phone that I did not recognise?

There was no-one I could ask. I felt a bit faint and made myself a cup of tea.

"Whatever happens," I thought to myself, "I'll have to ring the numbers as there's nothing worse than phoning or writing only to find out the person has died." But how to go about it? My loyalty to Dan could be stretched a long way – in fact, when we first met, to the ends of the earth.

"Best, soonest!" my Grandmother used to say. With a sigh, and a deep slurp of tea, I hesitantly phoned the first number.

"Hello? Chiropractic Surgery – how can I help?"

"Oh!" I stupidly answered, "just give me a moment!" Why did I not even think that Dan had appointments that he would not have bothered me about?

"Er, it's Mrs Stephenson", I feebly continued, "I was just ringing to let you know that my husband passed away about a month ago and he may not have had the chance to let you know..."

Address?"

"Er...14 Cedar Close..."

"Who is his usual practitioner?"

"Er...could it be Elaine?"

"That's fine Mrs Stephenson – we'll take his name off our list and I'll let Elaine know. Goodbye." Dismissed with one sentence! Part of me was relieved but part of me was angry at the thought of Dan simply being on someone's 'list'. Fired with indignation, I dialled the next number – one down, two to go, I thought shakily.

The next number was answered by a machine. A gentle, recorded voice asked me to ring back later.

The third number was answered by a voice I thought I recognised.

"Hello? Mrs Carter speaking; who's that?"

"It's Mrs Stephenson speaking. I was hoping to speak to a Susan."

"I'm Susan. How can I help you?" Suddenly, the penny dropped.

"I'm so sorry – you're Susan Carter, the tower captain!"

"Of course I am! Who are you?"

"I'm Mary – Dan's wife."



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"Such a dear.."

"It's about time I got a phone call from you or Dan. Did you know he's missed at least four Sunday morning rings and countless practice sessions? We can't have unreliable ringers, you know - and he was getting on so well!"

I recovered my wits in the face of this barrage. "You might remember me, Mrs Carter. I came for the first few weeks with Dan but not long enough to learn your Christian name. The thing is, I have some bad news – Dan died about five weeks ago and I've only just discovered your number on his mobile phone. I'm sorry about the delay in letting you know..."

"Well, a note to the church warden or the tower captain might have helped! We're not mind-readers, you know! Ah well, it can't be helped. I'll let the others in the band know. Goodbye."

After that, I poured myself a glass of wine and tried the second number again. No reply. "I'll try again later this evening," I thought – glad to put the evil hour off.

A second glass of wine found me sitting relaxed in my favourite arm chair with the telephone that evening. A deep breath – and here goes...

"Hello?" a gentle voice replied, "who's that?"

"I'm Mrs Stephenson – Dan's wife. Are you Jacqueline?"

"Well, most people call me Jackie but, yes, I'm Jacqueline. How did you get my number?"

This was the tricky one. "Er...it was in Dan's mobile phone and I didn't recognise the number."

"Oh!" came the soft voice again. "I've never spoken to you before. Hello, Mrs Stephenson, is everything OK?"

I don't know how, but I just knew she was feeling for a chair – she was obviously uncomfortable with my phone call. I gave her a moment to compose herself; I was determined to stay ahead in this conversation.

"How do you know each other?" I asked in all innocence.

"Well, Dan and I have been seeing each other for some time – usually on a Thursday afternoon...erm...sometimes in the evening as well."

"But he plays golf on Thursdays and sometimes stays late to be with his friends...!"

"Is that what he told you?" I could sense that she had found a chair. "We have grown to be more than friends over the past six months or so..."

"Six months?" I exploded. "When were you going to let me know?" All thoughts of telling this woman that her lover had died had now vaporised. I was certainly not going to be kind.

"We were going to wait for the right time – but there never seemed to be a right time. He is such a sensitive, caring man he wouldn't want to upset you. He hasn't been to see me for a few weeks and perhaps he is trying to pluck up courage to talk to you about it." Her use of the present tense pricked my conscience. And when had Dan been 'sensitive and caring'? – certainly not for the past ten years or so.

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"Such a dear.."

"I suppose you're now going to tell me he was a great lover!" I said, carelessly using the past tense. There was a silence that was palpable through the handset.

"Is he O.K.? It isn't like him not to phone or leave a message. You're such a lucky lady to have such a sweet husband. I'm sorry you had to find out about us this way."

There was something about the inflection in her voice that made me hesitate and not use the invective I had felt building up in me over the past few minutes ready to pour out. She sounded young – too young.

"Look," I said, "perhaps we'd better meet and I'll explain everything..."

"Are you sure that's wise – for either of us?"

"Oh, yes I really think that would be wise..."

Arrangements were made to meet at a local coffee shop in a few days' time. Perhaps it was silly, but I found myself taking especial care over my make-up that morning and wondering whether Jacqueline was doing the same. By design, I arrived a few minutes late for our appointment and looked around the café. There was nobody that I would have described as 'young' and, despite myself, I began to feel uncomfortable.

Then that gentle voice again. "Is it you, Mrs Stephenson?" A rather plain-looking woman, perhaps in her early forties, was sitting in the corner of the café with two empty cups in front of her. "I thought it must be you... I think you wanted to talk about Dan?" I did not look her up and down but straight into her eyes. Her eyes were enquiring, gentle and unassuming...

"Yes, I do," I replied. "The thing is, Dan passed away about five weeks ago and I have been going through his mobile telephone numbers to make sure I had not missed anybody – and your name came up. I didn't know what to think. There were two other people on his list, but one was his chiroprapist and the other the tower captain..."

"Oh, the fearsome Mrs Carter," she said. "That's where Dan and I met – in the tower, I mean." She was reaching into her handbag for a tissue. "Died, you say? About five weeks ago? What happened?"

I explained about Dan's brief illness and how it first showed with a bruise on his neck.

"I expect you thought it was a love bite!" she giggled through a very wet tissue. "Do you have any more tissues? That was my last." There was no helping it; I found that I was having a hard time hating her. I was soon calling her Jackie.

"I can't tell you what a kind and loving man he was – but I expect you knew that already," she said. I knew him to be kind and loving, but not perhaps in the sense that she meant. It seemed that we had both been looking at the same man – both loving him – from different directions. I discovered that he could be 'warm and cuddly'...

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"Such a dear.."

She listened to my telling of our long and happy marriage, what a wonderful father he had been and how all his friends adored him.

"But, didn't you find him to be so thoughtful? He would often bring me a posy of tiny flowers – did you know that they were his favourite? – before taking me out for a coffee or a meal? I had obviously always placed myself as second to his wife, whoever she was, and I could only imagine how she was treated! It's lovely to know that he had such a happy marriage – how happy you both must have been."

There was no doubt that, by now, I was feeling suspicious of Jackie's voice, implications, and, dare I say it, 'niceness'. I looked at the younger woman coldly and quite unprepared for her candour. Jackie continued to chat quite disarmingly about Dan. She obviously loved my husband (now he was 'my husband', not Dan) and I felt a mixture of sadness, failure-as-a-wife, inquisitiveness about their relationship and doubt about Dan's and mine.

I should have been feeling very angry – both at her and at Dan – and their presumption at taking their relationship to boundaries I could not fathom. How dare she speak of my husband with such familiarity?

But I was not angry. I just wanted to listen to that gentle, lilting voice telling me how lucky I had been to be married to Dan. With an occasional sniff into a clean tissue, she spoke of her sadness at the loss of Dan. He had been so kind when she was struggling with her bell handling as a learner and with the necessary introductions to the ringing band. She had always been shy, and Dan helped her to get over this. Yes, he had been round to her flat some afternoons. No, nothing untoward had happened. He just liked to talk.

Dan would speak of his pride in his two children and she would explain the problems with her recent divorce. She was starting out on a new life with a determination to meet new friends and develop new skills. Dan had taken an interest in her English Literature course at the local college and her work at the local Primary School.

It all sounded so innocent. I surprised myself that here I was listening to another woman talking about my husband and how little it troubled me.

It did rather sound as though Dan had, if not encouraged, then certainly fostered this relationship.

After a pleasant half an hour, and more coffee, we parted amicably – she with the remnants of my packet of tissues and me appreciating another side of the Dan I had barely touched over all those years of marriage.

I don't suppose that our paths will cross at any time in the future but, knowing how another woman could love Dan in such a complete but totally different way, made me look at his photos over the later years and wonder, "What else had I missed?"



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ROUSE'S RAMBLINGS/1

I'm suffering from mixed emotions, which I am told is like seeing your mother in law driving over a cliff in your new car!

We have had the worst Summer in living memory, yet are we feeling down? No of course not, this has been the best year for British Sport, the best for service from Volunteer Workers and there is still hope that at the next General Election we might get a Referendum on whether we want to be governed by Europe as each political party is promising one. Come to think of it they all did at the last election, I am still full of hope that we will get one in the future.

Talking of voluntary work, wasn't it impressive at the Olympic Games how many people gave of their time freely to assist in the smooth running of the event, it was so obvious just how much fun they were getting out of it. Fun is infectious so by being happy, they were making everybody around them happy as well.

Locally there is a big demand for volunteers in all areas of our community so if you are looking for something that is very rewarding, get out there and join in.

The Bampton Youth Club is beginning to show signs of re-forming again, it has taken a very long time I know, but the signs are good. Anne Setch from the Boxing Club which is using the Youth Club premises for their meetings has agreed that with the help of fellow members of her club, she is willing to take on the mantle of re-forming the Bampton Youth Club. She has great enthusiasm and feels the same as I do that there is no reason, that given the right start, the youth of Bampton could have a Club to be proud of, providing of course, that there are enough volunteers to help.

The now defunct Bampton Youth Club as it was, had a Management Committee watching over it, known as the Bampton Youth Centre Management Committee. Its purpose was to look after the building and control the funds that were raised, to operate the building for the benefit of the youth of Bampton. They are still functioning and doing their best to assist and advise on the setting up of a new Club. The one thing that they will not do is throw away the money that has been accrued on something that is not constructive to establishing a Youth Club with long term prospects. Once a new Youth Club Committee is established and proves that it has the ability to organise and make sustainable plans for the future, the old Bampton Youth Centre Management Committee will then go into a well deserved retirement. If anyone has got the bug for useful voluntary work then this, a very worthwhile cause, is waiting to hear from you. They will need the youngsters to tell them what they would like and will need young adult volunteers to help them achieve their dreams. So if you are up for it get in touch with Anne on 01993 851156.

At long last your local Neighbourhood Action Group has a regular representative from the Parish Council who is offering constructive comments on what is troubling the people of Bampton. NAG in return, through its many connections is helping the Parish Council to achieve a better Bampton. Let me know when you see a new 'Dog Poo' box has been installed! It's on order! Your local NAG is also putting pressure on the authorities to assist the Council in getting the Police to do more speed checks in the streets. It appears that the 'Chicanes' traffic calming measures are not working. Why am I not surprised!! It was the biggest waste of money ever.

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ROUSE'S RAMBLINGS/2

A report had been made to the NAG regarding anti social behaviour by youngsters using the SPAJER's 'Dora Townsend' seat in The Lanes as a meeting place. This will now be moved to a place where our senior citizens can still benefit from it yet hopefully it will not be of interest to the youngsters. It is a shame really because it was placed in an ideal position for our folks to have a rest between their homes and the shops. If you are interested in joining the Neighbourhood Action Group, talk to our PCSO, he will direct you in the right direction.

We meet in the Fire Station in New Road alternate months.

From my Farming note book, I notice that in my last Beam Ramblings I toyed with the thought of a few 'happy farmers' being in the vicinity if we had a dry and sunny July, August and September. Well, we didn't have the dry weather and we most certainly did not have the happy farmers. We are now being told that as a result of the bad weather we are now going to have to pay a lot more for our food! With bad weather throughout the world we are also told that there is a desperate shortage of basic foods, this seems to me to be an annual warning, so in my opinion it is about time that the government did something about it. There are still areas in this country where farmers are being paid not to grow food on land that would be quite capable of doing so. My friend in the Green Wellies tells me that the government is encouraging and paying towards the growing of non edible crops, like birdseed, and the creation of nectar plots. Now I am aware of there being a problem with the bees and the valuable role that bees play in the food production chain, but growing food especially for the birds strikes me as being a bit over the top. Perhaps it could help people that sing for a living. It does bring a whole new meaning to having knowledge of the birds and the bees.

As I trawl the Supermarkets with my wife doing the weekly food shop and see some of the prices, I am amazed at how cheap some of the foods are. Being a retired farmer and a part time gardener I know that there is no way that I could produce the food as cheaply. Only pence for a bunch of spring onions, likewise carrots and parsnips, how on earth can they grow, harvest, wash, package and transport them to the shops so cheaply? Those gardeners amongst us know that we could never produce food as cheaply and that's with having our own land and providing the labour, which makes me wonder why we bother with all the hard work? But we do take great comfort from the fact that ours taste so much better when it comes straight from the garden and is cooked within minutes of being harvested.

Talking of parsnips, does anyone know what the producers treat them with to stop them looking all shrivelled up after a week? Those that I dig freshly from my garden look quite sad and sorry for themselves after a few days. Whatever it is that they use, could you let me know? I could do with some for my face!

For several weeks now some supermarkets have been selling 4 pints of milk for £1.00. how on earth can they do that without 'screwing' dairy farmers out of business? I find this worrying, British dairy farmers are leaving the business in droves, in the end milk will be another commodity that will be totally imported from abroad.

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ROUSE'S RAMBLINGS/3

With the infrastructure gone it would take more than twenty years to re-establish a dairy industry in this country. It needs action now. If there is one crop that this country can grow in abundance, its grass, and grass produces milk and meat. So let us maintain an independence for producing food for our people. Insist on buying food from British farms and keep our countryside filled with animals.

My learned friend in the Green Wellies also tells me that another problem that is being created by the lack of large animals in the countryside is the effect it is having on the service and knowledge of the veterinary profession. A few years ago, we here in Bampton were surrounded by a whole batch of absolutely first class vets, Stanford in the Vale, Lechlade, Carterton and Witney all had surgeons that you could call upon at a minutes notice, day or night. All of these except one have closed down their large animal services to concentrate on domestic animals as it is more lucrative. Who can blame them? I suppose we, like them, will just have to move with the times.

I know that when I was farming, there were very few jobs that a skilled herdsman could not do himself, like curing a cow that was unconscious caused through lack of calcium or magnesium, assisting a cow with a difficult calving; normally they were best left on their own, and only calling the vet if a caesarean operation was needed. Trimming of the cows feet, though dangerous, was an operation also carried out by the herdsman. If we lose our dairy herds I suppose that we shall lose all these skilled workers along with their wealth of knowledge as well. I know you are probably saying that having skilled herdsman we have only ourselves to blame for the demise of the large animal veterinary industry, with several hundreds of large animals on most of Bampton's farms there was still a need for a visit from the Vet at least once a week.



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ROUSE'S RAMBLINGS/4

As a member of Carterton Lions I was thrilled to be invited along with the U3A and members of the British Legion to a reception at RAF Brize Norton, convened by the RAF and David Cameron to say thank you to all the volunteers that assist at the Repatriations. We were shown what happens before the Cortege arrives at the Memorial Garden. There are eight Chapels of Rest along with a beautiful reception area with two smaller rooms where children can play with toys and T.V. consoles, these facilities are manned by RAF personnel who like us, on these occasions are working completely voluntarily. It was interesting to talk to the Padres who offer comfort and assistance to the mourners, I was pleased to hear that even people from non Christian religions took comfort from the Padres, showing that death is the same the world over, it just hurts!

By the time you are reading this Christmas will be upon us. The Bampton Mimmers will be plying for hire, the Carterton Lions will be taking out their Father Christmas complete with sledge to raise money for those who deserve a good Christmas yet cannot afford one. So I do hope that when you see volunteers holding tins (I used to call them 'Tin Shakers' but of course it is against the law to 'shake' a tin,) with the idea of raising money for good causes, you will give generously, unless of course you are the one holding the tin, then I say 'WELL DONE YOU'.

I would like to wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and that the New Year will bring much joy to us all,

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Dubai done; Back to Bampton

By Michael Gallagher

Neither tax free money, almost constant sunshine nor the fear of not being able to secure suitable employment in The United Kingdom failed to keep me from returning.

After around 8 months in The United Arab Emirates, it had become clear that it was time to leave. In the last few years I have put my body through many punishments (most of which lead to great adventures, of which I am sure I will repeat on many more occasions before my time is done), but Dubai was too much for me to deal with on a daily basis. Not because it is an Islamic country that can be quite restrictive to a person such as me, not the sand storms that blocked the sun out and made living life outside free of air conditioning almost impossible, or the fact that even in the middle of the night in summer you could not walk outside due to the extreme heat. It was because it is a place that only exists because of money, and because of this, the only thing to keep it running is the pursuit of more money. If I had to make a list of things I value that could only include money and people, money would be second. To survive in a place such as Dubai, you need to put money first and second... no space for people.



In April 2012 I felt myself be ground into the dirt, and it was beginning to take its toll both physically and emotionally. When I first arrived I had made friends with a South African girl who had arrived only a week prior to me, but due to extreme work commitments around 3 months had passed between the first and second time I met her again in February. The first thing she said to me on our second meeting was "Wow Michael, you look really old". I felt it, I looked it, I was dead man walking... I was completely floored by that comment, there was no response I could give, and so I went home to

my tiny studio apartment overlooking Dubai Marina and tried to wash the old off. As ridiculous as that sounds, it is what I honestly tried to do. In a matter of 5 months Dubai had managed to suck 25 years out of my life.

The long hours, the heat, the fact that 98% of the people I socialised with outside of work were customers made it feel like that even at 3am in a nightclub somewhere in Dubai I was still at work. Unwinding after a day at work could only be achieved with the help of excessive amounts of alcohol. By the time our May end of month meeting came around, I was prepared to pack my suitcases and make a mad dash for the airport. How to break the news to an employer that has been both a good customer and a good friend of mine for a number of years was not the easiest conversation I have had. Given that when I agreed to take on this role the previous September in a hotel in Leeds I had to give assurances that I would not get itchy feet after 12 months and go live in Africa, telling them that I could not remain in The United Arab Emirates went well; they knew I was a broken man, it was written all over my face. Deciding whether or not to come back to Oxfordshire with no job, or returning back to Australia to pick up where I had left my life back at the beginning of 2008 was the next decision I had to make. Without too much thought as to what might happen here in West Oxfordshire should I return, I booked a flight back to the United Kingdom. I walked out of that meeting a free man; free of the stresses of a job that had me being the kind of person that I never wanted to be, free to sleep at night, free to enjoy Dubai.

Dubai done; Back to Bampton

It wasn't all bad news out there; it is an amazing city, one unlike any other I have ever experienced. Desert safaris in jeeps out the middle of nowhere, jet skiing in the Arabian Gulf in the shadow of the tallest building on the planet and Friday brunches in some of the most beautiful hotels I have ever experienced was amazing. When work allowed, making a weekend trip to India to attend a wedding and experience rain (Something that very rarely happens in Dubai) was a welcome break from everyday life in The U.A.E. Before leaving Oxfordshire behind and moving to Dubai, I had concerns about living life in an Islamic country, concerns that were quickly erased soon after arriving. When Christmas arrived, the decorations and Christmas carols were up and playing throughout the many shopping malls that cover the city. There are many mosques, but also 2 churches for those of us who do not follow Islam. Most importantly, there was no shortage of bars and clubs that had plenty of alcohol to help unwind after a day at work. I did quite a bit of work with Emirates and Etihad Airlines as well as lots of dealings with the United Arab Emirates armed forces, which had me in contact with a lot of people from very different backgrounds; I took the opportunity to learn as much as possible from these people. As a result of my dealings with the local Emirati and my factory workers that came from countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, India and Iraq my perception towards the people from that particular part of the world has changed for the better. Now I am back in greener pastures, I can reflect back on my Middle Eastern experience with a slightly less cynical view on my time there. I made a small handful of good friends over there that I do miss; I have gained some very valuable life and work experience and made some very valuable business contacts that have made my work situation here in Oxfordshire much brighter. There may be a few wrinkles, and a few grey hairs from the experience, but I managed to take more from Dubai than Dubai managed to take from me. For that, I am happy that I took the opportunity to go.



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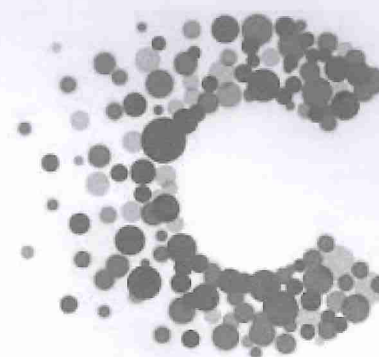
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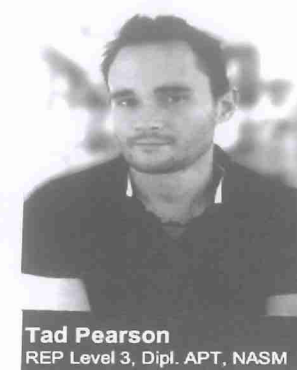
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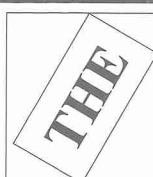
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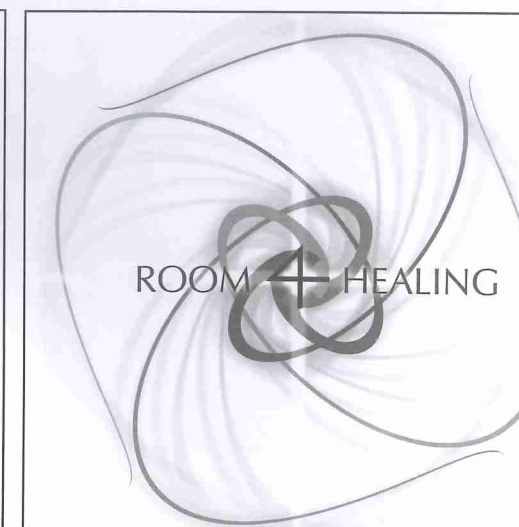
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- Elizabeth Chanter -

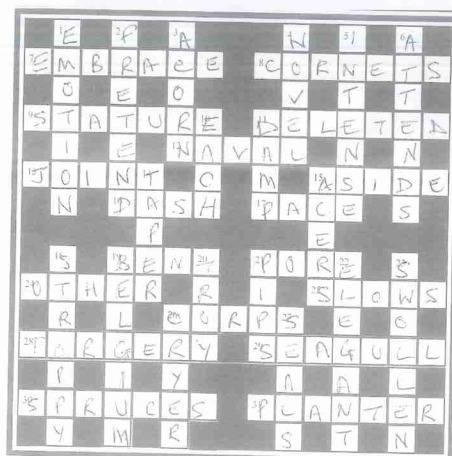
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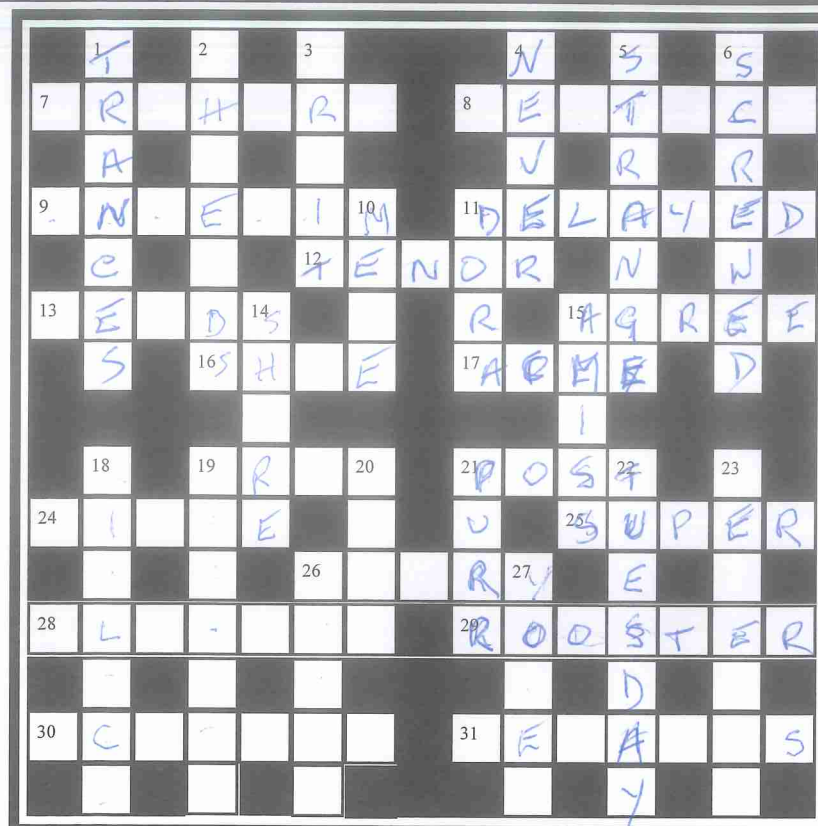
Solution to the March
BEAM CROSSWORD

The winner of the July crossword is Jackie Wheeler of Church View.

Congratulations, and your prize is £10!

As a thank you to Annette Minto for producing the Crossword, and in line with her wishes, 'The Beam' is donating £10 to The Bampton Bush Club.

THE BAMPTON BEAM'S CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS

CLUES DOWN

Message from Annette

Thank you for your good wishes. I am 'getting there' as the saying goes! Unfortunately not as fast as I would like but I never was a 'patient' patient. Hopefully not much longer!
Yours Annette Minto

From the Beam Team

Annette, Thank you once again for creating the crossword for us even when you are feeling so poorly. Hope to see you back as your normal bright self soon.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 7 Fruit growing area | 1 Dreamlike states |
| 8 A salad vegetable | 2 Found in sewing or carpentry |
| 9 Provisional | 3 Feature or quality |
| 11 Held up | 4 Not at all |
| 12 Male singing voice | 5 Peculiar |
| 13 Repairs | 6 Similar to nailed! |
| 15 Concur | 10 A lake or marsh |
| 16 Footwear item | 11 Old fashioned girls name |
| 17 Highest point | 14 Can be rocky or sandy |
| 19 | 15 Wrong |
| 21 This is delivered to your door | 18 Small hill or mound |
| 24 French city | 19 Warm Cover |
| 25 Great! Brilliant! | 20 To carry or have |
| 26 Seaside town in Wales | 21 Animal sound |
| 28 Sometimes on a race horse | 22 Day of the week |
| 29 He will wake you up | 23 Hot and sweaty |
| 30 Dialects | 26 Bed on ship |
| 31 Talks over | 27 Heard in the Alps? |

Entrants! Please include your postal address with your entry so that, if you win, we can send you your cheque!

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SPORT

Bampton Badminton Club

Meets Tuesday mornings, 10 - 12noon (during term time) in the Village Hall.

If you are not sure, just come and try, (you can always borrow a racket). Coffee at 11am! Contact: Marlene Snow: Tel: 01993 850113

Bampton Social Netball

If you fancy trying your hand at netball, trying to get fit or maybe just looking to be more sociable in Bampton then please pop along! No need to book - just turn up on Tuesdays at 19:30 at Bampton Recreational Ground. For just £2 you can enjoy a 1 hour session on the court and then it's off to The Morris Clown for a well deserved drink (not obligatory but widely enjoyed)! This is a group for all ages and abilities. We do not play competitively - although if there are enough Bamptonians wanting to, we will look at putting a team together. If you have a question you can call Bernie on 07780 761822

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Calendar of Events

November

| | |
|------|---|
| 11th | King and Country, Village Hall |
| 11th | Poppy Service at War Memorial |
| 17th | Gardening Club Coffee Morning |
| 18th | Gardening Club Outing to Hop Pocket Shopping Village |
| 20th | Clanfield & Bampton Historical Society Matilda, her fight for the throne |
| 21st | Cancer Research UK Bingo Night Village Hall |
| 24th | Gardening Club AGM |

December

| | |
|------|---|
| 7th | Cancer Research UK Quiz Night Village Hall |
| 13th | A Concert at Christmas New College Chapel |
| 15th | Gardening Club Coffee Morning |
| 20th | Bampton's Living Village Nativity |
| 21st | Cancer Research UK C&W Dance Carterton Social Centre |

2013

| | |
|----------|--|
| 19th Feb | Clanfield & Bampton Historical Society Researching family history |
| 20th Mar | Clanfield & Bampton Historical Society The Burford Mutiny |
| 12th Apr | SPAJERS annual quiz night |
| 16th Apr | Clanfield & Bampton Historical Society Oxfordshire lodging houses |
| 22nd May | Clanfield & Bampton Historical Society The Joneses of Jesus |

THE BAMPTON BEAM

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Editor

Louise Timmins-Gray

Sub-Editors

Phillipa Timmins-Gray

Jeanie Boyce

Alexandra Miller

New Design Advisor

James Wildman

Artwork

Jo Lewington

Treasurer

Grace Wilkins

Photography

Richard Wilkins

Contributions are always welcome with the preferred method being email - see below for details.

Contributions by post should be sent to:

The Bampton Beam
c/o Abbey Properties
Market Square
Bampton
Oxon OX18 2JJ

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The Bampton Beam

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(Please be patient if you get in touch—there may be a delay in our response)