

Goring Gap News

EVENTS, PEOPLE, BUSINESS, ARTS AND SPORT IN GORING AND STREATLEY

Three new wise heads in the wood



Photo: Simon Booker

GGN needs new wise heads in the office. These young tawny owls can't help – can you? We need volunteers to make the next generation of magazines. This month we are down to two production staff and we have had to reduce the size of the magazine. Please read our appeal on Page 3.

Village clean-up for all the family - see Page 5



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Goring Gap News

Winner of The Queen's Award

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All concerned in the publication and delivery of GGN are unpaid volunteers.

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News and articles of local interest, original poems, drawings and photographs are invited for the Editor's consideration. Articles and digital picture files (at as high quality as possible - at least 1.5MB for colour) can be sent to goringgapnews@gmail.com or submitted on memory stick, along with any handwritten or typed material, via the post box for Goring Gap News in Inspiration, 1 The Arcade, Goring, RG8 9AY, by courtesy of the proprietors. See website for more details.

Deadline for next issue: 4 November Distribution

We aim to deliver copies of the GGN to all ho

November 2026 weekend of 21/22

December 2026 weekend of 19/20

January 2027 weekend of 23/24

If your copy has not arrived after five days contact Victoria Brandon. (See above.)

Extra copies can be purchased from Inspiration and Westholme Stores.

Postal subscriptions – UK £52, Europe £100, Australia & NZ £136, USA £124, World Zone 1 £114.

GGN is published by The Goring Gap News Ltd (Registered in England & Wales No 3118490) whose registered office is at Goring & District Community Centre, Station Road, Goring, Reading RG8 9HB. The company is wholly owned by the Goring Gap News Association. Whilst effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information printed in the paper, the Editor and Publisher do not accept any responsibility for the consequences of any errors that may occur.

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Printed by Albury Print Ltd, Wallingford

GGN Production is having some difficulties ... can you help us?

We urgently need

- Help with the management of the business.
- Help with the monthly production – technical skills not essential but you will need organisational skills.
- A Business Editor – to keep in touch with Gap businesses and develop articles and information about those businesses.
- Someone to help maintain and support our production systems as and when necessary. You will need to be familiar with computer systems and be willing to learn.
- An advisor with knowledge of publishing/InDesign systems to help make GGN production more efficient.

Volunteers needed urgently to help produce GGN

Not all volunteer jobs can offer challenge, a monthly sense of achievement and a useful addition to your CV. Helping to produce the GGN magazine offers this. It isn't easy, but each month the team produces an attractive and informative magazine which makes a vital contribution to our local, vibrant community. The skills we develop are valuable and transferable.

Too many places have lost their local newsletter and are the poorer for it. We need to keep our GGN going; we can if others help to share the effort.

Management

GGN needs a general manager to keep it running smoothly. It won't be a taxing role, and at worst will take half a day a week. It is an organisational role rather than a hands-on job.

Producing the GGN magazine takes place over four scheduled days every month. We need a capable person to manage the production process and ensure that everything (people, systems and content) is ready by the time that production starts. It is not necessarily a technical role but focused on organising the production team so it is efficient.

Once production starts, 40+ articles plus 100+ adverts must be laid out on around 44 pages by different people, ideally ending up as a coordinated whole. Changing a pile of articles and adverts into a magazine is fun and satisfying and somebody to oversee this process will be central to this.

Production IT support

When the team starts making the magazine, the production systems must be ready. There are many small things that need to be prepared or resolved between production runs. There is no set time for doing these tasks, as long as the systems are ready when production starts. We need someone prepared to take this on.

Production trainee

If laying out the magazine is what appeals more than managing it, then why not train to become part of the production team? For this job you need to be available for most production runs – involving at least a couple of sessions on pre-scheduled days each month.

Publishing

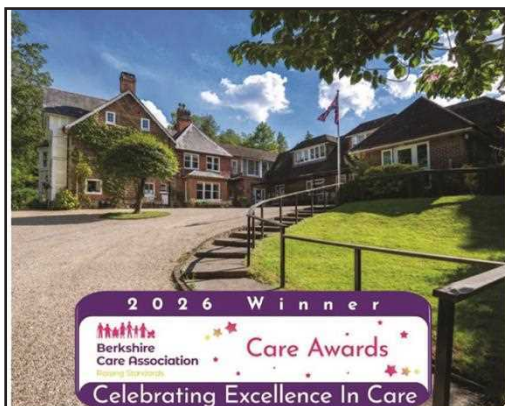
GGN is using software that is ageing and we need to look to future development. Hopefully there is somebody in The Gap with some technical publishing knowledge who could spare some time to offer guidance on our future direction? We have a budget and need a hand on the tiller to help us spend it wisely.

Other areas where somebody could help us

- The office is looking rather dismal. Can you help to refurbish it?
- The Editor is confused by Google mail. Can you train her in its mysteries?
- GGN has a rather basic website. Can you help to improve it? Maybe create a diary on it? Even look after it longer term?

Thank you for reading this, and a huge thank you if you can offer help.

If you think you can help with any of the above, please contact the GGN Chairman, Jeremy Spring, at ggnchair@gmail.com



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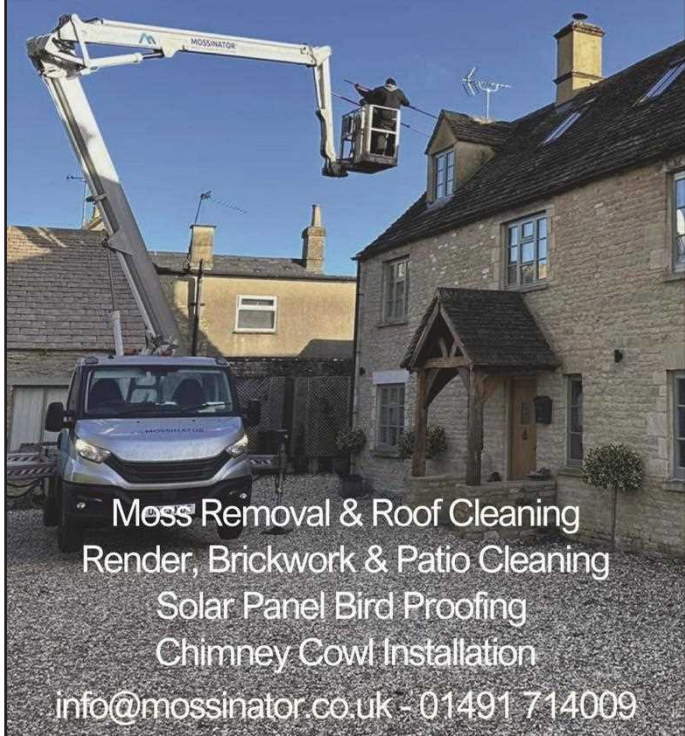
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Goring-on-Thames Parish Council

The Big Sweep – 7 November

A village clean-up for all the family.

Following the great success of our Village Weeding Day in May, the Parish Council is inviting residents to join us again for The Big Sweep on Saturday 7 November, this time turning our attention to the autumn leaves.

Keeping our pavements, drains and public spaces clear of leaves is an important part of looking after the village through the autumn and winter. Leaf clearance helps prevent pavements and drains from becoming blocked, while removing the rotting leaf mulch also helps prevent weeds from flourishing in the spring.

With reductions in funding at both County and District Councils affecting some of the services that in years past we have relied on, we hope that the Parish Council and residents, working together, can make a difference.

But The Big Sweep is about more than clearing leaves – it's a chance to get together, enjoy some fresh air and do something positive for our village.

Everyone is welcome, young and old, and you don't need any special equipment or experience.

There will be plenty to make it fun for the whole family, including:

A leaf-spotting challenge for children – who can collect and identify the greatest number of different leaf species?

A photography competition – capture your favourite autumnal view or moment in Goring.

Refreshments and treats – cakes, biscuits and drinks will be waiting when the work is done!

The meeting will take place on Saturday 7 November, 9am-12noon

Meet at Goring Community Centre, Station Road

Bags for collecting leaves will be provided, in both large and small sizes. If bags become too heavy to return, arrangements will be made for them to be collected. A limited supply of gloves will also be available, although please bring your own if you have them.

We hope lots of residents will come along and help make The Big Sweep another great example of the community spirit that makes Goring such a special place – with the added bonus of having the village looking clean and tidy in time for Remembrance Sunday on 8 November.

Bring the family, bring your neighbours and bring your enthusiasm – and let's give Goring a good autumn tidy-up together!

Meeting report

The principal points of the Goring Parish Council meeting on 14 September are summarised below. The draft minutes are available at www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk

- Councillors met with Thames Valley Police and the SODC Community Safety Officer to review antisocial behaviour in the village.
- It was approved to give a grant of £2,250 to the Chilterns Society to replace three kissing gates in the village.
- Goring Parish Council voted to express interest in the purchase of the Community Centre if it ever comes up for sale by the County Council.
- It was approved to purchase cut Christmas trees for the High Street and Rectory Garden with a budget of £425.
- Unanimously approved for the cricket club to install a glass washer and fridge/freezer at Gardiner Pavilion and dispose of the old fridge.
- Unanimously approved to delegate investigation of permanent football practice goals at Sheepcot and Gardiner to the Open Spaces Committee.
- Approved by majority to withdraw the Quiet Lane application for Battle Road.

Next Meetings: Reiss Room, Goring Community Centre, Monday 12 October and Monday 9 November at the new time of 7pm. See www.goringparishcouncil.gov.uk for the agenda.

Quiet Lane expression of interest withdrawn

Thank you to residents who took time to contact us about the possibility of Battle Road joining Oxfordshire County Council's Quiet Lane scheme. As a result of this feedback, the Parish Council has resolved to withdraw our original expression of interest and to take no further part in the scheme. We do, however, remain committed to supporting active travel in the village through the work of our Travel & Transport committee and the work they are doing on a cycling infrastructure plan and a car free/low traffic route to Wallingford. We're grateful for the support of Cllr Maggie Filipova-Rivers in these initiatives.

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The Gap Hall of Fame

Pete De Freitas

When you think of Goring and music one name usually comes to mind, but there are other famous musicians with Gap connections. One of these has been largely overlooked locally – Pete De Freitas. Pete was Echo and the Bunnymen's drummer on four top-ten albums and on *The Killing Moon*, their best-known song. Pete grew up here, and few people know it.

Pete was born on 2 August 1961 in Trinidad. His father, Denis, was a leading copyright lawyer associated with the performing arts. Denis moved his family to the UK, settling eventually in Goring. There were nine children in the family and they lived in Hairoun, a large house on Icknield Road. Madge, Pete's mother, worked hard for the local community. Always warm, generous and supportive to those around her, when there was no playgroup available for local children, she set one up in the basement of Hairoun. A few years later she was part of the group that set up the youth club and was its chairman for several years, generously holding barbecues for the youngsters in her garden.

Several of the family were musical, but Pete's special talent was his versatility. 'He was already an accomplished guitarist and pianist when the Bunnymen first approached him, one of Pete's brothers, Geoff, told *Goring Gap News*, 'Drumming was very much then his third instrument. He hadn't picked up the sticks until boarding school. In the early days of his career, he would practise frequently during the holidays on his drumkit at home, which wasn't soundproofed, so our long-suffering neighbours in Cleeve and across the fields in Elvendon Road were kept up to date on his progress whether they wished it or not. They never once complained – for which Pete was eternally grateful!'



Pete De Freitas - Liverpool November 1985

Photo: Tom Sheehan



The memorial in White Hills Burial Ground

He followed his two elder brothers to Downside School in Stratton-on-the-Fosse near Bath. At Downside he met Kieran Balfe, whose older brother David ran a small Liverpool record label called Zoo. In December 1978, Pete had his first public performance as a drummer, and in the following month he moved to a one-bedroom flat in Stamford Hill in London with his schoolfriends Perce and Kieran. Pete was readying himself for the Oxbridge entrance exam at this time. He bought a drumkit and installed it in the only room that could take it: the living room.

In August 1979, Echo and the Bunnymen, signed to Zoo, were told that if they were to get a deal with a major record label, they needed to abandon using a drum machine and find a drummer. Kieran suggested his schoolfriend Pete, so David soon went down to the flat to hear him. The three of them played a couple of songs, and though David thought little of the others, Pete could clearly play. Pete auditioned in the Bunnymen's rehearsal space, a basement in Liverpool. To the dismay of his father back home in Goring, Pete decided not to go to Oxford, at least not for education.

Pete was ultimately vindicated in his decision. The Bunnymen got their major record label. They released four successful albums over the next four years, with every member credited as a songwriter. Touring the world, the Bunnymen played in a line, with Pete at one end. The band's singer, Ian

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MUSIC and ARTS continued

McCulloch, was ready to drop *The Killing Moon* in 1984 until Pete suggested switching from sticks to brushes. He later said Pete 'played it like he'd done it all his life.' At the family home in Goring, as Pete's gold discs were received, they were displayed up the stairs in Hairoun.

On New Year's Day 1986, Pete flew to New Orleans with a new band, funded out of his own publishing money, wanting to create something new and monumental. Nothing came of it. When he returned to England, the failure in New Orleans made him seriously ponder leaving the music industry completely. In reviewing his options, he even asked his brother Geoff about whether he should consider office work. Geoff pointed out that unlike the popular music industry, office jobs involve turning up for work early every morning, don't come with girls queuing up backstage, don't pay 80 grand a year, and generally take a very dim view of drugs. After some reflection on his options, Pete rejoined the Bunnymen as a waged employee. He now sat at the back onstage and his only three songwriting credits on the fifth album had been written before he left.

His bandmate Les Pattinson noticed him taking his drumming more seriously, more deliberately, as if he were settling down. In July 1987, Pete met a model based in London who called herself by a single name: Jonson. She had never heard of the band but soon did and within a month Pete had proposed to her. In the autumn of 1988, their daughter was born. A couple of weeks later, the press reported the band's split, but Will Sergeant and Pattinson decided to continue with a new singer. Those around him saw a tangible change in Pete: with Jonson he was 'a man coming into himself and into his creative confidence.'

On 14 June 1989, Pete was riding from London, where he lived with Jonson and their eight-month-old daughter, to Liverpool to film a week of rehearsals with candidate singers. He strapped a bulky video camera to his Ducati 900. Jonson suggested he take the car; he said it was a beautiful day and he'd go slowly. She photographed him kissing the baby goodbye. Late that afternoon, on the A51 near Rugeley, Staffordshire, a 75-year-old woman pulled out of a side road onto the dual carriageway and didn't see him. She survived; Pete died on impact, aged 27.

His ashes are interred at White Hill Burial Ground.

Callum Samways

With thanks to Keith Cameron, whose feature *Shine So Hard* (*Mojo*, July 2014) is the source for much of this piece; also to Pete's family, who provided further insights into his life.

Gap Comedy – Daliso Chaponda

Comedian Daliso Chaponda opened Gap Comedy's new season in September with a hugely entertaining set that demonstrated exactly why he has become such a popular figure on the UK comedy circuit. With more than 300 million views of his stand-up online, Chaponda first rose to national prominence as a finalist on *Britain's Got Talent* in 2017. Since then, he has appeared on a host of major TV and radio shows.

From the moment he walked onto the Gap Comedy stage, Chaponda was completely at ease. His infectious enthusiasm quickly won over the audience, and he proved to be a comedian with a seemingly endless supply of material and a wonderfully engaging delivery.

Originally from Malawi, Chaponda has lived in several African countries before making the UK his home. He joked about some of the wonderfully strange questions that feature in the UK citizenship test – including the classic: 'When was the Magna Carta signed?' A quick straw poll of the Gap Comedy audience suggested that, despite being overwhelmingly British, not a single person in the room appeared to know the answer!

His material ranged widely – from the dangers of living in Africa and stories about his father, to observations about corruption in Malawi and the peculiarities of his new life in Britain.

Chaponda also ventured into the potentially tricky subject of racism, tackling it with considerable charm and a lightness of touch. One of the highlights was the wonderfully ironic story of meeting a girl for a date at the slavery museum in Liverpool.

He turned his attention to AI too, exploring both its potential dangers and the rather more personal benefits of having an imaginary AI girlfriend.

Late in the set, Chaponda took the brave step of opening up an impromptu Q&A with the audience. This can be dangerous territory for any comedian, but he handled the completely random questions with great confidence and plenty of hilarious responses. His answer to the suggestion that Britain's political problems might be settled by a cage fight between Nigel Farage and Andy Burnham was particularly well received.

Chaponda is a huge talent, and his Gap Comedy appearance gave us plenty of reasons why he has built such a loyal following. An energetic, intelligent and very likeable performer, he delivered an excellent show.

Mark Kibble



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MUSIC and ARTS continued

Mike Wilkins, Stuart Henderson – the music of Sonny Rollins

On Friday 11 September, Goring Community Jazz welcomed back tenor saxophonist Mike Wilkins, last heard in Goring in November 2025, joined by a more frequent guest, Stuart Henderson on trumpet, and the regular house trio.

Their programme was taken from music written or made famous by the ‘Saxophone Colossus’, Sonny Rollins. Walter Theodore Rollins was born in 1930 and died in May this year. He was raised in Harlem in a musical family, mainly by his politically active grandmother, who knew Paul Robeson and Duke Ellington. At high school he played alto sax, but under the influence of Coleman Hawkins, switched to the tenor instrument. By 1955 he was internationally famous, playing with the Miles Davis Quintet and then in a group he formed with trumpeter Clifford Brown and drummer Max Roach.

On *Serpent’s Suit* we heard Wilkins’ muscular tone and confident phrasing in the Rollins idiom. This was followed, surprisingly, by the rather clunky standard, *On the Sunny Side of the Street*. Nevertheless, Wilkins used the full range of his instrument, carving memorable phrases out of the air. Henderson’s trumpet was thoughtful, melodic and with flourishes reminiscent of Clifford Brown. Nick Hill’s piano solo had the lucidity of a Teddy Wilson, albeit from a slightly earlier era. In *God Bless the Chil’* both horns were movingly elegiac, and the first set ended with *Tenor Madness*, which, as well as an inspired Wilkins solo, featured a trumpet-and-bass duet, bringing Stuart’s burnished tone to the fore.

For me, the high point of the second set was *Pent-Up House*, a Rollins composition that he and Clifford Brown recorded in 1956, shortly before Brown’s untimely death in a car accident, which also claimed the life of the group’s pianist, Richie Powell. Later in the set, in an up-tempo 12-bar bop number, Stuart managed to sneak in a lengthy quote from, all of things, Gustav Holst’s *The Planets*. The very enjoyable evening ended with a calypso – Rollins’ parents had both been born on Caribbean islands.

Gus McGill.

Three Friends, Six Hands, One Piano

On Sunday 13 September at 4pm Ikuko Inoguchi, Sally Goodworth and Hayley Bell presented a concert on the piano in St Mary’s Church, Streatley, playing with all six of their hands at once. Hayley explained that this can cause interesting problems due to the close interactions with the other players. No one would have guessed this as the three players were wonderfully attuned to each other and played as if they were one, tackling difficult trio pieces with apparent ease. Trios produce very rich orchestral textures on the piano.

It was a very happy concert with toe tapping pieces and the performers were clearly enjoying playing together as much as we were enjoying hearing the music.

The programme was Hilary Collins *Three Friends* (pub 1935), Gurlitt’s *6 Tonstucke* (nos 1,2,4), Rachmaninoff’s *Two pieces for six hands*, Xaver Scharwenka’s *Polish dance*, Opus 3 no 1, Marteen D Smit’s *Tango for six hands*, Opus 3 no 10 and Bizet/Guirard/Kowaleski’s *Carmen Suites* No 1 and No 2.

The tea and cakes and social time that followed the concert was as always greatly appreciated finish to our very enjoyable programme of music. Thank you to all the wonderful helpers who make these concerts possible and thank you to our audience for being there.

Stella Robinson



Ikuko Inoguchi, Sally Goodworth and Hayley Bell at the piano

Opus Anglicanum

On Friday evening at the Church of Our Lady and St John, we were privileged to be entertained by ‘Opus Anglicanum’ a uniquely talented male vocal quintet with a narrator. They treated their audience to a fascinating and memorable evening with beautiful music ranging from Thomas Tallis to Edward Elgar and readings ranging from Geoffrey Hill’s *King Offa* to A.G. Macdonell’s *The Cricket Match*, with a sprinkling of well-known folk songs.

The choice of programme from down the ages must have been impossibly difficult to make but they succeeded in producing a swift succession of music and readings sometimes humorous and sometimes sentimental but always profoundly appropriate, capturing the essence of our ‘Green and Pleasant Land’. It was a wonderful evening.

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MUSIC and ARTS continued

A fresh vibe and a packed house at Goring Unplugged!

As many readers will know, Goring Unplugged is an institution. For nearly 25 years now 'GU' has been putting on acoustic music nights in the Village Hall. A number of nationally – and internationally! – renowned artists started out on GU's stage.

These days, Goring Unplugged is every two months, with an extra Christmas special. The audience brings their own food and drink. And it's only a fiver on the door! That's because the organisers want great local live music to be as accessible as possible to everyone.

For several years, one of the original founders of GU, Chris Hawes, has carried most of the responsibility for organising (assisted by amazing volunteers on the night). But now he's gathered a new 'GU gang', and together they're revitalising GU for a new generation.

September's Goring Unplugged was the first organised by the new 'gang of four', and it was a barn-stormer! The hall was packed with over 100 people, the new 'living room vibe' stage was loved by audience and musicians alike.

Performances included young band and local favourites Chazbags, ethereal folk from Daughter of the Water, 5-part a-cappella from Shiraz, elegant fingerpicking from Tim Coulson and folk-strumming from Steve Donnelly, stirring piano from Tim Cunningham, and regulars Harlequin were joined by the talents of 11-year-old Mark who accompanied on piano.

A particular highlight was the unpromisingly titled 'Nick & Mart + Leigh' (pictured) who brought jokes and country-blues vibes.

'I'm excited to have some new energy in the GU gang,' said Chris Hawes. 'One of our first changes is to make Goring Unplugged free for under 18s and students. We want as many people as possible to join us to experience great live music, and we realised young people were not coming to watch their friends play. Now they can!'

What you need to know

Sign up for GU's newsletter to get the latest info on upcoming shows at www.goringunplugged.co.uk or follow us on Facebook (we prefer email though, so we can be as Zuckerberg free as possible!). Next GU is Friday 27 November and the Christmas Hootenanny Special is on Friday 18 December.

Nick Parker

Reading Bach Choir celebrate 60 years

It's the Choir's 60th anniversary season so it's going to be a celebratory time from now until next July. The first event is in Goring at the lovely St Thomas' Church, with a beautiful concert for choir, cello and organ at 7.30pm on 7 November. Tickets are £18 in advance or £20 on the door. Under 18s are £5. Buy tickets on the door or via:

www.readingbachchoir.org.uk

The ever-popular Duruflé *Requiem* is partnered with interesting works by Becky McGlade, John Tavener and Nathalie Joachim. Duruflé's *Requiem* is a choral masterpiece that feels simultaneously timeless and thoroughly modern. Duruflé weaves a tapestry of Gregorian chant with undulating meters and harmonies which are distinctively 20th-century.

McGlade's setting of Tennyson's *The Oak* reflects on the cycles of life. The UK premiere of Nathalie Joachim's *Virtues* explores Benjamin Franklin's *The Thirteen Necessary Virtues* and is a Greek drama in miniature. Our American musical director, Daniel Mahoney, is introducing us all to this piece. Then Tavener's *Svyati* sets the cello and choir in dialogue with the text from the Orthodox funeral service.

In all a fascinating and beautiful concert beckons. A great start to our celebrations.

Daphne Rowbottom



Daughter of the Water

Photo: David Gristwood



Mark, Leigh and Nick

Photo: David Gristwood



Tim Coulson plays to a rapt audience

Photo: David Gristwood



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Village Trails – Sunflowers gone and Scarecrows to come

In the summer holidays, The Garden Design Studio in Goring on Thames organised the village's first ever Sunflower Trail and raises £49 for local schools. Now it is organising the Scarecrow Trail for October half-term.

What was the Sunflower Trail?

It was a fantastic opportunity for families and businesses to work together to drive extra footfall through the village, with local businesses dressing their windows in a Sunflower theme. Children purchased a map from The Garden Design Studio for £1 and followed the trail around the village before voting for their favourite window.

Votes were counted up for the children's favourite windows with the winners being, in joint first place, The Garden Design Studio and Goring Library, with Goring Hardware in second place. The winning children each chose a cactus or succulent from the studio as a prize.

Rob Jones, director and founder, commented: 'This was a simple idea to enhance the High Street, increase footfall, raise funds for local schools and provide an affordable activity for families in the summer holidays. Watch out for the Scarecrow and Pumpkin Trail coming at October half term.'

How to join in the Scarecrow Trail

During October half term, pop into the Garden Design Studio to buy a £1 trail map. Follow the trail around Goring, vote for your favourites and return your map to the Garden Design Studio by Saturday 31 October.

If the Garden Design Studio is new to you, please feel free to come in and see us at 10 High Street Goring RG8 9AT.

Ben Halson-Classey

admin@gardendesignco.co.uk / 07901 003364

Information on Instagram: [@thegardendesignstudio10](https://www.instagram.com/thegardendesignstudio10)



Lifelong carers celebrate 40 years of supporting Goring's elderly with community garden party

The owners of The Grange care home in Goring have celebrated 40 years of caring for the area's elderly residents with a garden party for the community.

Colin and Jackie Northey established Goring Care Homes in 1986 when they took over The Grange on Grange Close. 40 years on, it's still a family business now run by daughter Joy and grandson Aaron.

Residents, their families and members of the community were entertained in the home's garden on Thursday 20 August with live music, a tombola, glitter tattoos, foam axe throwing and a hog roast. Former residents and staff came along, including some who'd retired more than a decade ago.

Colin and Jackie started out running children's homes. Jackie returned to nursing for a while when changes to local authority rules meant married couples couldn't work together. A friend then invited the pair to take on the care of a large property. 'We knew it would work well for elderly people so that's how we set up our first care home,' remembered Colin, 'and then we took on The Grange. It was easy to adapt from caring for children to caring for the elderly.'

Jackie said care has changed significantly in the last 40 years with residents having greater care needs than in the 1980s. 'To start with, it was a bit like Fawlty Towers,' she joked. 'We provided care but it was more like a retirement home where people would move in for an easier lifestyle in their later years. Now, the residents tend to be older when they come to us and more of them have dementia. Plus, there's a lot more paperwork!'

Colin and Jackie retired in 2024 but still take a keen interest in the business, which now also includes Lyndhurst Care Home half a mile away on Lyndhurst Road.

Lisa Pettifer



Co-directors Joy and Aaron with residents Shirley Smith and Janet Whitlock

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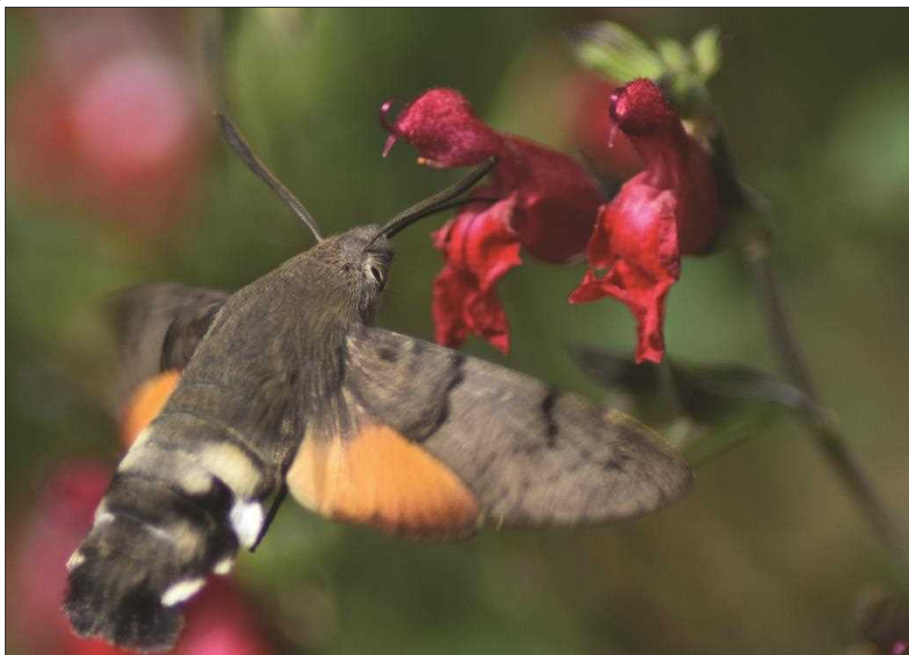
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Have you spotted a hummingbird hawk-moth?

The hummingbird hawk-moth (*Macroglossum stellatarum*) has been spotted in gardens throughout the UK and Ireland this summer. I had never seen one of these amazing insects until a few weeks ago, but since I first spotted them, they have been humming regularly around the *Salvia microphylla* (commonly known as Hot Lips) plants in our back garden. I have since discovered that in recent months there have been numerous sightings of this fascinating moth, which hovers like a hummingbird around the flowers it is feeding on.

It is smaller than most other hawk-moths, but shares the same distinctive hovering style as hummingbirds, hence its name. They beat their wings approximately 80 times per second, creating a loud hum which you may be able to hear if you get close enough. Like hummingbirds – which are found in the Americas but not in Europe – they can hover with precision to sip nectar and even fly backwards. But a hummingbird sips nectar by dipping its beak. In contrast, the hummingbird hawk-moth has an extra-long proboscis which it uses to probe tube-shaped flowers to feed on their nectar. Hence, even though they are unrelated, hummingbird hawk-moths and hummingbirds play a similar ecological role. This is an example of ‘convergent evolution’ (see footnote).

Most moths are active at night, but the hummingbird hawk-moth is fully diurnal and active in bright sunshine. It tends to visit the same flower patches at the same time every day, a practice known as ‘trap-lining’ (see footnote). Since they use this feeding strategy, it is relatively easy to spot them again once you have seen them. I’ve been away several times in the last few weeks but note that they are still visiting the same patch of *Salvia* at the end of September as they were at the beginning of August.



Moth on Salvia Hot Lips

Photo: John Chiltern



Moth at Stowe

Photo: David Humphries

Hummingbird hawk-moths have grey-ish brown forewings, bright orange hindwings and a grey body with broad black-and-white ‘tail’ feathers. However, they appear to be orange because they flutter their wings so quickly. The fast wingbeat makes it a challenge to take a good photo, hence the difference between the photo in our garden and the top-quality images taken at Stowe Gardens by David Humphries, who is a National Trust photographer and whose photo is reproduced here with his permission.

The hummingbird hawk-moth is a strong flier and disperses widely in the summer but until recently has rarely survived the winter in locations north of the Alps in Europe and the Caucasus mountains in Russia. It is likely that the hot summer and strong winds have driven them further north this year. It’s also possible that there have been shortages of its usual food in the Mediterranean where it usually breeds. It may even now be becoming resident – rather than migratory – in UK since the warmer winters we are now experiencing because of climate change are enabling it to overwinter here in sheltered locations such as greenhouses.

Hence, although it is more commonly found further south, you may have spotted one locally and you may even have them pupating in your greenhouse!

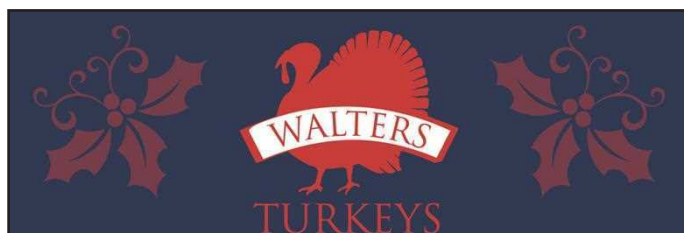
Janet Haresnape
Footnotes on P19



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Footnotes to article on P17 Goring-on-Thames Parish Council

For other hummingbird hawk-moth images taken at Stowe by David Humphries, see www.djhimagining.co.uk/hummingbird

Convergent evolution is the name given to the process whereby similar traits develop independently in unrelated species. In the example given here it is the hovering behaviour which has developed independently in both hummingbirds and the hawk-moth mentioned above.

Other common examples of convergent evolution are (i) the streamlined shape of dolphins (which are mammals), sharks (which are fish) and ichthyosaurs (extinct reptiles known from the fossil record), enabling them to swim fast through water; and (ii) the development of wings in both birds and bats. In each example, the trait has evolved independently in the different lineages, and not from a common ancestor. Bats and birds developed the ability to fly by flapping their wings, but their wings have different origins within the body plan. The wings of bats are similar to the human arm, but there is extreme elongation of finger bones to support the wing membrane and allow flight. In birds the bones of the hand (wrist and finger bones) are fused to form a single stiff element which to which the wing feathers are secured.

Thus the hovering behaviour evolved independently in hummingbirds and hummingbird hawk-moths, the streamlined shape evolved independently in dolphins, sharks and ichthyosaurs, and the wing evolved independently in bats and birds – all through the process of convergent evolution.

Trap-lining is a feeding strategy in which individuals visit food sources in a regular, repeatable sequence, so named because it resembles the way in which trappers might check their lines of physical traps. It is practised by many insects including bees, butterflies and moths but also by hummingbirds, and certain mammals such as bats and rats. It involves following a specific route which the individual traverses in the same order repeatedly, for example to check specific plants for flowers that hold nectar, even over long distances.

Young engineers bring Roman engineering to life

Pupils in Ibis Class at Goring CE Primary School recently stepped into the shoes of engineers for an afternoon, taking part in an exciting STEM workshop exploring the fascinating world of Roman engineering and structures.

The session began with an introduction to engineering and an exploration of how the Romans designed and built impressive structures. The children discovered the purpose of Roman columns and aqueducts and learned how these remarkable structures supported Roman communities.

The children then got hands-on, working in teams of three to tackle a series of engineering challenges. They experimented with different shapes and designs to create columns capable of supporting weight.

One pupil said, 'I loved making the different shaped columns.'

Next came the challenge of designing and building their own aqueduct. Following a set of specifications, the teams had to use their creativity and problem-solving skills to make their structures strong, sturdy and waterproof.

For many children, building a working aqueduct was a particular highlight. One pupil explained: 'My favourite part was making an aqueduct and testing it by pouring the water down it.'

Throughout the afternoon, the children worked collaboratively, testing their ideas, making improvements and learning from both their successes and setbacks. The workshop provided a fantastic opportunity to see how STEM skills can be used to solve real-life problems, while developing teamwork, creativity and design skills.

The children certainly enjoyed the experience. 'I had so much fun!' said one pupil, while another described the workshop as 'amazing.'

We are very grateful to everyone who made this exciting experience possible. We are also delighted that Clare from Inventors and Makers will be returning after half term to deliver further workshops with other classes, giving even more of our pupils the opportunity to discover the exciting world of engineering.

Miss Grey and Ibis Class



Aqueduct

Photo: Miss Grey

A day out in Buckinghamshire – Bekonscot and Chenies Manor

Thirty-three members and friends of the Goring Gap Local History Society set off by coach on Wednesday 16 September for our excursion to Buckinghamshire, visiting two very different attractions – Bekonscot Model Village and Railway in the morning and the historic Chenies Manor House and Gardens in the afternoon.

We could hardly have asked for better weather. It was a perfect September day, sunny and pleasantly warm without being too hot and ideal for spending much of the day outdoors.

Our first stop was Bekonscot Model Village and Railway at Beaconsfield, where we arrived at about 10 o'clock. After fortifying ourselves with coffee, we set off to explore this remarkable miniature world.

Established in 1929, Bekonscot is the oldest original model village in the world. Spread over some one and a half acres, its six little towns, together with castles, lakes, industrial scenes and an extensive model railway, recreate an idealised picture of English life in the 1930s.

There is an extraordinary amount to see and, wherever you look, another tiny detail catches the eye. The miniature houses, shops, churches, stations and other buildings are surrounded by beautifully maintained gardens, while trains make their way through the landscape. It is all done with a wonderful sense of fun, and we soon discovered that Bekonscot appeals just as much to adults as it does to children.

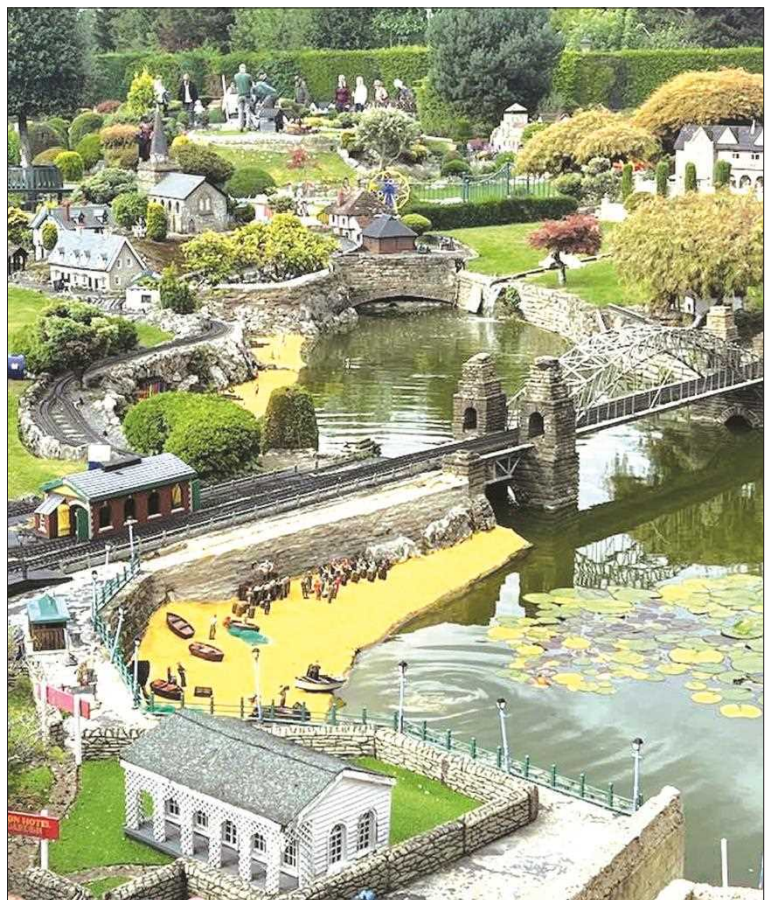
Several of our party decided that simply looking at the railways was not enough and took the opportunity to have a ride on the 7¼-inch gauge light railway. It proved a thoroughly enjoyable way to round off our visit before we returned to the coach at midday for the journey to Chenies.

Our afternoon destination could hardly have provided a greater contrast.

Chenies Manor House, formerly known as Chenies Palace, is a Grade I listed building with a history stretching back more than five centuries. The present house was built by the Cheyne family around 1460 and is one of the earliest recorded domestic brick buildings in England. Among its distinguished royal visitors were Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, while it was later the home of the Russell family, Dukes of Bedford, before they moved to Woburn Abbey in 1627.

On arrival, we were greeted by Charles MacLeod Matthews who told us how he, his wife and daughter restore the buildings, run the gardens, host events, and maintain the house as both a family home and a historic attraction, aided by a loyal team of helpers. We were then treated to a delicious buffet of sandwiches and brownies, accompanied by elderflower cordial, tea and coffee. It was an excellent lunch and set us up very nicely for the rest of the afternoon.

At 2 o'clock our guided tours of the Manor began, with our party divided into two small groups. These proved to be one of the highlights of the day. Our guides were excellent – knowledgeable and enthusiastic, but also able to bring the long history of the house and the people who had lived there vividly to life. Their enthusiasm made the tours particularly enjoyable and gave us a much greater appreciation of this remarkable Tudor house. Amongst the ghosts at Chenies Manor, the most notable is Catherine Howard, Henry VIII's fifth wife, but disappointingly, she did not put in an appearance whilst we were there.



Afterwards there was time to explore the gardens at leisure, and here September had provided us with perhaps the most memorable sight of the whole excursion.

The five-and-a-half acres of formal gardens are arranged as a series of individual garden 'rooms', framed by box and yew topiary and filled with seasonal planting. We had been promised that September should provide a good display of dahlias, but the reality exceeded expectations. The dahlias were magnificent, providing a stunning mass of colour throughout the gardens and looking particularly beautiful in the afternoon sunshine.

It was difficult to drag ourselves away, but at 4 o'clock it was time to board the coach for the journey home. Charles

Macleod Matthews, who had been there to welcome us on our arrival, very kindly came out again to see us off at the end of our visit – a particularly nice personal touch with which to end the day.

It had been a thoroughly enjoyable excursion: the charm and sheer fun of Bekonscot in the morning followed by the history, hospitality and magnificent gardens of Chenies Manor in the afternoon. With excellent guides, a delicious lunch and perfect September weather, we could hardly have asked for a better day out.

Our thanks must go to Janet Hurst and Geraldine Grayson, who organised the outing and put together such an enjoyable and well-planned day for us all.

The Goring Gap Local History Society is planning a number of other visits and talks in the coming year and if you would like details, please contact our Secretary, Janet Hurst, on goringgaphistory@gmail.com or see our Facebook page or website goringgaphistory.org.uk



Chenies Manor

Alan Winchcomb

Chairman, Goring Gap Local History Society

A connection made through GGN

Following last month's article about Wing Commander (Digger) Larkin, I was very glad to receive an unexpected email from Sylvia Larkin, his widow, who lives in Cornwall. She had been sent the article by a friend in Goring and wrote that: *Wing Commander (Digger) Larkin was my husband. We married in 1976 and he died in 1980. I have never remarried as I loved him so much.*

We had a daughter called Sarah in 1977; she tragically died 11 years ago, aged 37. However, I have been blessed with beautiful twin granddaughters, Rebecca and Delphie, who are now 23 years old. Sylvia has since told me that Rebecca lives in Newbury and Delphie still lives in South Stoke with her father.

In another email Sylvia said that their daughter Sarah took after her father with a talent for music and got her degree from Roehampton University, later teaching the piano privately. She married and lived in South Stoke. Despite being told that she could never have children due to health reasons (of which she had many), she gave birth to twin girls.

Sylvia enclosed the photo right of an article written about Sarah when she was at school, which also mentions Wing Commander (Digger) Larkin and the Ferry Lane open space.

Editor

Music Award

Many people living in Goring and Streatley will remember the late **Wing Commander "Digger" Larkin** who lived in Goring for many years and was an influential member of the community. It is due to his generosity that the open space at the end of Ferry Lane in Goring is now part of the public area next to the river. "Digger" and Sylvia Larkin and their young daughter Sarah lived at The Pavilion, Thames Bank, and some time after his death, Sylvia Larkin and Sarah moved to Redruth in Cornwall.

Sarah, now 16, is a pupil at Tremough Convent School and is one of only five people in Britain who has been selected to win the coveted BBA national music award. Having just finished her GCSE exams, she heard that she was one of 10 finalists and went to Solihull in July for the final selection where she sang a traditional Scottish lullaby and played a Mozart piece together with some sight reading.

Her prize is an all expenses paid trip to Birmingham this month to sing with the Midlands Festival Chorus whose members come from all over Europe. Sarah will be continuing her music studies to A level at Tremough Convent School.

Amongst a wide variety of local interests in Goring and Streatley, Sarah's father was President of the Goring and District Music Society (now the Goring Chamber Choir) for many years, and it is good to know that his daughter has inherited this interest and hopes to make music her career. We wish her well.

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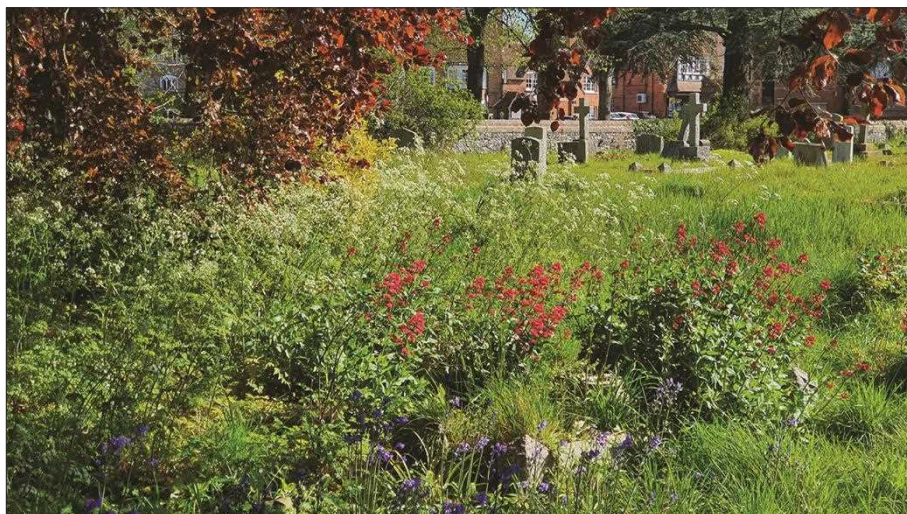
Pop in for a butchers!

St Thomas' churchyard

Many villagers and visitors walk through the Churchyard or come and sit on the bench in the sunshine and appreciate the beauty and tranquillity of St Thomas' churchyard.

The last burial in St Thomas' churchyard was in the 1980s, but this has left a legacy of over 200 gravestones, with the gaps filled with areas of grass which needs mowing regularly`.

For the last 20 years, we have managed our large (1½ acre) churchyard for ecological diversity so that species native to this area flourish. This was the idea of Myrna Anderson with Ray Carter, who had noticed that in areas where the grass was left to grow, beautiful and sometimes unusual flowers flourished. Myrna surveyed the churchyard to highlight areas favoured



Wild flowers in the churchyard spring 2026

by certain plants and from that devised a maintenance plan which balanced control of grasses with thriving of native flowers which were previously unable to grow. She produced a photographic record of the flowers which encouraged people to take an interest in the project. With the flowers came bees and other insects and they in turn supported a greater number and variety of birds. Gradually people got used to the slightly unkempt and wilder appearance of the churchyard, which was a change from the neatly mown grass which had prevailed for decades.

In addition to these plants, the churchyard is home to many trees – beech, Irish and English yews, cedar, Leyland cyprus, giant sequoia, silver birch and cherry. They provide good cover and nesting sites for a large number of birds but also produce a lot of seeds each autumn with seedlings taking root in unwelcome places. With such a large area to maintain, these are often unnoticed, growing into saplings before they are discovered.

Keeping the churchyard attractive and supporting wildlife requires a lot of planning and effort.

Recently, the churchyard has been managed by Tom Worthington, retired from a career in Agricultural Consultancy, with a particular interest in wildlife. Tom would walk the churchyard on a regular basis, noting areas needing attention and where unwanted brambles and trees had taken root. These could damage gravestones and walls and prevent people from finding, let alone tending, the grave of a relative. Tom has also organised working parties to do particular tasks and agreed with our arborist on work to the trees.

We also have invaluable maintenance work done regularly by John Taylor and Richard Ball, volunteers who have been mowing, trimming, raking and clearing undergrowth for several years.

Unfortunately, Tom Worthington is no longer able to organise work in the churchyard.

Is there anyone in the village who would be prepared to give some time to keep an eye on the churchyard, assess what needs doing, liaise with John Taylor and organise work parties or liaise with professionals to keep the churchyard in (not too much) order? Relevant professional experience would be useful but above all enthusiasm and some knowledge of plants and wildlife.

In addition, John Taylor and Richard Ball would always welcome help with the maintenance of the churchyard.

If you think you could help in either role, please email Rob Howard (Churchwarden) at officeofgsandss@yahoo.com

Rob Howard

Cressida Downing, author of *Consider the Ravens*

We are delighted to be welcoming this first-time author to Goring to discuss her historical novel set on the atmospheric island of Lindisfarne. The year is 1495 and Linnet, the Roll Bearer's daughter, has sought refuge within the monastery on the Holy Island. As a child she learnt to scribe, learnt about monasteries and the value of gathering information. As an adult these skills are proving dangerous. Hiding secrets of her past, she returns to the island where she felt safe as a child. However, the monks have their own reasons for being on such a remote place and also have secrets to hide. The peace of the monastery vanishes as it emerges that there is a killer among them.

Can Linnet identify the evil one amongst them to protect herself and her place of refuge? Please join us in Goring Library on Wednesday 18 November to hear Cressida discuss the ideas behind the novel and of course, the roll of the ravens in this mystery. Atmospheric and historically interesting this is a wonderful first novel by a gifted writer and a fully deserving winner of the Lindisfarne Prize. Doors open 7pm, talk starts at 7.30pm and for tickets please visit the library.

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The Knights Templar – and what they ever did for us

In August, members of the Goring & Streatley Probus Club enjoyed a vivid and wide-ranging presentation on the extraordinary rise and dramatic fall of the Knights Templar. The talk by local member Mike Cairns opened with the powerful scene of Jacques de Molay, the last Grand Master, burned at the stake in Paris in 1314 with fellow Knights.

The story then travelled back to the origins of pilgrimage in the 4th century, when Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine, identified sites associated with the life of Jesus, such as the Holy Sepulchre and the Nativity, establishing Jerusalem as the centre of Christian devotion and pilgrimage for centuries to come.

After the First Crusade captured Jerusalem in 1099, pilgrims flooded to the Holy Land but faced grave danger on the journey. In response, nine French knights led by Hugh de Payens founded the Knights Templar in 1119, taking vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and dedicating themselves to protecting pilgrim travellers.

The order grew rapidly. Recognised by the Church at the Council of Troyes in 1129 and accountable directly and only to the Pope, the Templars became a formidable military force and a vast international organisation. They built and manned castles across the Crusader states, and established commanderies, churches and other operations throughout Europe – including sites at Bisham and Sandford-on-Thames.

They also pioneered financial innovation. Their system of letters of credit functioned much like modern ‘travellers’ cheques’, allowing pilgrims to deposit money in England and withdraw it in Jerusalem. Their impeccable reputation for honesty and integrity led to them acting as royal bankers, tax collectors and custodians of treasuries, becoming in effect the medieval world’s first multinational corporation.

The talk concluded with the Templars’ downfall: King Philip IV of France, heavily indebted to the order, arrested its members in 1307, leading to torture, forced confessions, executions and eventual dissolution of the Order. Yet their legacy endures – in architecture, finance, legend and the enduring fascination they inspire.

John Barrett



Knights Templar

Stokerpix masterclass for GAP Festival winners

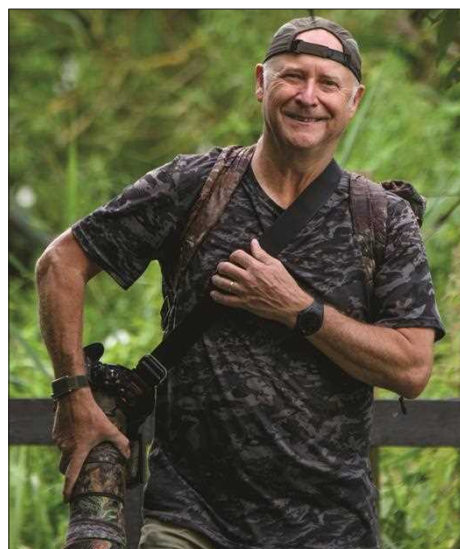
This year’s Goring Gap Festival featured a wonderful series of events celebrating our local nature and how to capture it. Alongside a popular exhibition of his work in the church, Simon Booker delivered an engaging wildlife photography presentation on the main stage. Building on this momentum, the team ran a children’s photography competition, culminating in a special winners’ workshop at the stunning Withymead Nature Reserve.

Category winners Zalika Nsamba (age 9, 8–11 category) and Gabriel Eapen (age 12, 12–14 category), accompanied by their fathers Alfie and George, were treated to a half-day masterclass of tips, tricks, and tutorials from Simon. He also brought along professional



The class in action

Photo: Simon Booker



Simon Booker

lenses and a thermal imaging camera, giving both youngsters hands-on experience with pro-level kit.

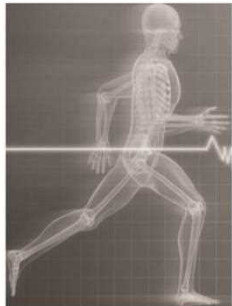
Following an introduction to the essentials of composition and camera settings, the group headed out to the Kingfisher Hide to put their skills into practice. Simon emphasized that fieldcraft is vital for wildlife photography: the children learned how to move quietly through woodland, spot tracks and signs, use the Merlin Bird ID app, and scan dense cover using thermal imaging.

While a passing kingfisher decided against posing for the camera, wildlife photography is all about adaptability. Inquisitive sedge warblers, moorhens and other riverbank wildlife stepped into the spotlight, giving Zalika and Gabriel plenty of opportunities to capture striking shots.

It was an inspiring day out – giving two talented young photographers fresh ideas to fuel their creative journey, and giving their parents a firsthand look at the patience and passion behind the lens.

Reflecting on the day, George Eapen said: ‘Thank you for a fantastic workshop session, the slides and the photos from the experience. Gabriel really enjoyed it and I picked up quite a few photography tips myself!’

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LIVES REMEMBERED

Chris Vickery 10.04.1939 – 02.07.2026

Few people have left quite as many physical reminders of their life around Goring as Chris Vickery.

From designing the logos for Goring's cricket and football clubs, to making the wooden scoreboard in the pavilion, to local paintings, handmade games and countless household items repaired during his years at the hardware shop, Chris's fingerprints can be found all over the village he called home for most of his 87 years.

Chris was born at Log Cabin on Red Cross Road, the house where he would spend much of his life. He attended Ashmead School in Reading, where he trained as a draughtsman – skills he would put to good use throughout a lifetime of designing, painting, making and fixing things.

In 1973, Chris married Janet, and the couple made their first home together on Springhill Road, where they started a family.

Sport, and particularly Goring sport, was a huge part of his life. A talented sportsman from a young age, he represented Berkshire at the All-England athletics competition, finishing fourth in the 110-yard hurdles.

Following in the footsteps of his father, Marley, Chris played cricket for Goring as a medium pace bowler and keen fielder, although the social side of the game was every bit as important. Long days in the field were often followed by equally long evenings enjoying a beer, a singalong or a game of cards with friends in the Social Club

Even after his playing days ended, Chris remained one of Goring Cricket Club's most loyal supporters. He was a familiar sight on the boundary or 'legends bench', watching matches, chatting to players and offering plenty of advice (requested or otherwise!).

Football was another great passion. A quick, goalscoring winger, Chris played for Goring United until a knee injury ended his career prematurely. He remained a devoted supporter and was rarely absent from Sheepcot Rec, whatever the weather.

He became particularly known for welcoming new players, telling them what they had brought to the team and how much he was looking forward to watching them again the following week. His enthusiastic – and occasionally vocal – support from the sidelines also became part of the matchday experience.

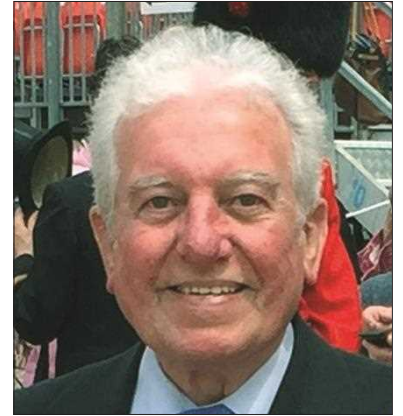
Another generation of villagers knew Chris from Goring Hardware, where he began working part-time in the mid-1990s. He was never a conventional salesman. Chris hated selling people something they didn't need and would much rather repair a broken spade, sharpen a pair of shears or find the exact screw required from his house over the road. When once questioned about his habit of 'downselling' rather than upselling, his explanation was simple: he loved helping people.

A talented craftsman and painter, Chris also made and sold bird tables, back-scratchers and his famous wooden Shut the Box games, which became a fixture of family Christmases and Boxing Days in the Social Club.

Above all, Chris was a much-loved father to Janine and Jamie and a devoted grandfather to Josie, Millie, Frank and Nancy.

He will be remembered for his generosity, his unmistakable cackle and his wonderfully positive outlook on life. Ask Chris how he was and, more often than not, the answer came back: 'bloody wonderful' or 'absolutely superb'.

It seems a fitting way to remember a man who gave so much to the village he loved.



Marathon runner seeks support from the Gap

I have been lucky enough to secure a place in the London Marathon in April. I will be raising money for The National Brain Appeal.

One of my friends started working for The National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in 2021 after her partner was unfortunately diagnosed with MS and their lives changed forever. She is so proud of the work they do and was hoping to run herself but a low back and sciatic nerve issue stopped her being able to run.

I was honoured to be offered the opportunity. The National Brain Appeal supports world leading care at The National Hospital and trail blazing research at The UCL Queen Square Institute of Neurology. They raise money to help those with neurological conditions which affect 14.7 million people in the UK. See:

www.nationalbrainappeal.org

As a chiropractor I have seen first hand the dedication it takes to run a marathon and I hope to make the charity proud. If you would like to support the work they do, please donate using the QR code. You can follow my training journey on Instagram @ [goringandstreetleychiropractic](#) or give me a wave if you see me running around the village!



Charlotte Parsley



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Pangbourne Twinning Association

Following the closure of the Twinning Association in Goring we thought we would introduce ourselves to all those interested in France and all things French. Have you considered joining us at Pangbourne, where the Twinning Association continues to thrive? As you may have seen on the road signs entering our village, we are twinned with Houdan, a charming and historic French market town, an hour by car from Paris and on the traditional road from there to Brittany. It is particularly known for its unusual breed of chicken.

Twinning visits are made in alternate years, usually at the beginning of May, with reciprocal visits from the Houdanais (as they are known) in between. The pattern of these visits is the same, whether in France or England. The long weekend begins on a Thursday or Friday evening. The first full day is an all-day visit to a local landmark or place of interest. This May we were taken to Paris, including a fabulous visit to the Musée des Arts Forains, a unique fairground arts museum. Last year we took the French to Winchester, visiting the Cathedral and the College. The next morning there is an informal but sociable tennis tournament and a bowls/pétanque session and, a first this year, pistol shooting at the club in Houdan. The weekend grand finale is a delicious meal, usually in a beautiful setting, with the return home the following morning.

This autumn/winter our main social activities will be a Sunday walk and lunch and on Saturday 21 November a fun Line Dancing evening at Purley Barn (contact Lauren Kilsby-Steele, details below, for tickets). We will continue with our very popular French Film Nights, held in Pangbourne Village Hall on the last Sunday of every month between October and April (except December). Doors open at 6.45pm, for socialising over a glass of wine, before the film at 7.30pm. The films always have English sub-titles.



Houdan chicken



Group photo before leaving Houdan in 2026

Membership is free and individual or family members of any age are welcome. It is not necessary to speak French. More information about our group and our activities can be found on our website at www.pangbourne-twinning.org

Lauren Kilsby-Steele
infopangbournetwinning@gmail.com

Other activities include a periodic Saturday morning 'coffee/tea, cake, raffle and chat' at the Art Café in Whitchurch. More frequent are the conversation evenings at The Greyhound in Whitchurch (Thursdays at 7.30pm) and the informal Marcher et Parler walks or café visits, usually on a Tuesday or Thursday, where the chat is mainly in French. We also hold a Fête des Rois Epiphany Dinner every year at the beginning of January, and in the summer a pétanque afternoon at the Wallingford club.

Why not make contact and join us at one of our events? You will receive a very warm welcome.

You can also meet us at our stall at the Pangbourne Fête on the first weekend in June.

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Under 11 Girls crowned county champions to cap a a great season for girls cricket

Goring Cricket Club's Girls teams have had a record year with over 40 girls representing the club in hardball cricket between the ages of 10 and 16, making it one of the largest girls operations in the county alongside giants like Henley, Oxford and Tiddington.

All three age groups performed very strongly in the county leagues with the first defeat for any of the teams not coming until late in the season in mid-August.

The U15s, led by Addie Richards and Xanthe James, claimed the scalp of league favourites and eventual champions Henley early in the season and were cruelly denied a place in the finals by a rain-affected final match.

The climax to the season for the U13s and U11s was the Oxfordshire Finals Day, which for the second season running was hosted by Goring. This was a hugely successful day, thanks to the many volunteers involved who combined to put on a great show, which resulted in excellent feedback from the County officials on our hosting.

The U13s, led by Rosie Ruxton

and Gracie Burch went one better and won their league pool undefeated earning them a spot at Finals Day. On the day they were bettered by a strong Oxford team but should be proud of a fantastic season.

But it was the U11s who led the way with a blistering season, remaining undefeated and claiming the county champions title with a 56-run victory over Cumnor on the Finals Day.

Taking an unprecedented four wickets in four balls not once but twice, through Bella-Rose Hildreth and Poppy Richardson, they shook off the disappointment of last year's one-run defeat to earn the title they thoroughly deserved. Skippers Autumn Tier and Tilly Tate along with coach Richard McNeill raised the trophy on their home ground to rapturous applause.

Rich McNeill



U11s raising the county trophy after final win



U11 Girls and coach Rich McNeill

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A great summer of tennis and pickleball

Goring Tennis Club has had a fun and successful summer, with membership continuing to grow on a background of extended and improved facilities and the recent introduction of pickleball.

We've just completed the resurfacing of three of our courts – they now need painting but this has to wait until the tarmac is 'cured' and the weather is right. The public court is back in action – a resource greatly valued by the residents of Goring parish. Please help us to take care of it by using the court only for tennis!

Pickleball demand explodes

Pickleball has seen fantastic growth at GTC this season, highlighted by brilliant turnouts for our Monday evening open play and Sunday family mornings. Following the recent court resurfacing, we are currently playing on temporary lines across four pickleball courts, and eagerly await the final painted lines to complete the setup.

To support this demand, the club is fully equipped for anyone wanting to try the sport. We currently have two nets (with two more on the way!), plus eight paddles and plenty of balls available in the clubhouse. We will update our session schedule as the seasons change and the courts are finished off, but the momentum heading into winter is brilliant.

For more information about pickleball at the club please contact pickleball@goring-tennis.co.uk

Tennis goes from strength to strength

With social play sessions on Tuesday evenings and Sunday mornings, the ladies only session on Friday mornings and the early morning sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays, there are plenty of opportunities to meet other members for a friendly game.

Walking tennis is a great low impact alternative to tennis, sessions are on Wednesday afternoons during school term time, always followed by tea and biscuits.

On the competitive front we've had five teams playing in the Oxfordshire weekend summer league with varying success.

Congratulations to the men's B team who will be promoted (from division 11 to 10) next summer season and to the men's A and mixed A teams who hold their places in their current divisions. Commiserations to the ladies A and B teams who both slip a division next year.

In the Oxfordshire mid-week summer league the ladies A team are awaiting results from other matches to find out their placing.

The teams welcome new players and we've just launched a men's C team into the winter league. Good luck lads!

We'd like to help all members develop their game. As part of this we're playing regular friendly matches against Pangbourne and hope to arrange more matches against other local clubs.

Non-members can try us out with up to three free tasters for any of our timetabled social tennis or pickleball sessions – a friendly welcome guaranteed.

For more information about activities at the club please contact chairman@goring-tennis.co.uk

Junior section continues to thrive

Goring Tennis Club has a strong and active junior section with regular after school tennis and junior squads run by Head Coach Jon Howey of Oxfordshire Tennis.

Many juniors train at the Club every week – their commitment, enthusiasm and willingness to learn is fantastic to see.

Our summer tennis camps were a great success with the courts buzzing with activity throughout most of the school holiday, the sessions were packed with energy and enthusiasm, giving juniors the opportunity to develop their skills through a mix of tennis drills, fun games, matches play and competitions. We're already looking forward to the next Junior tennis camp which will be running during the October half term. For more information visit www.oxfordshiretennis.co.uk

Jane Cartledge

GCC's 150th celebrations culminate in Lord's Gala Event

The climax to Goring Cricket Club's 150th year celebrations is a Gala Event at cricket's greatest venue – Lord's Cricket Ground on Saturday 28 November. Even better than that we will spend our evening in the Long Room – the most iconic room within the famous Lord's Pavilion.

The event is for anyone with a connection with Goring Cricket Club – players past and present, wives/husbands/partners, academy, parents, siblings and supporters in the village.

The Event will take place between 5-10pm, with a sparkling wine reception, a hot buffet and unlimited house alcoholic and soft drinks available free of charge throughout the evening.

We are able to offer the opportunity to purchase tickets for £105 for adults and £85 for Under 18s. For five hours celebrations at The Home of Cricket with food and drink included, we believe that is exceptional value!

This will be a fantastic and unmissable way to close out the sesquicentenary, and you can book your place now by contacting Jonny on 07825 552009 or jonnyrussell100@outlook.com

Jonny Russell, Chairman



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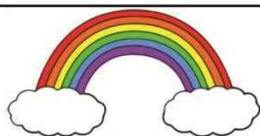
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Thursday's from 8am - 9am
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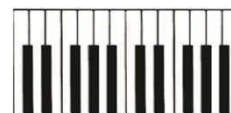
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GORING GAP PLAYERS, *THE LADY VANISHES*

This autumn production is on 18–21 November at The Morrell Room, 8–10.30pm. Doors open 7.30pm. Licensed bar. A Simplon express train travelling from Istanbul to Venice stops at a remote region of the Alps and a mixed group of travellers board the train. One of these travellers, a wealthy young woman – Iris Carr – befriends elderly Miss Froy. But then, after lunch, Iris wakes to find Miss Froy has disappeared. Mysteriously, the other passengers deny Miss Froy ever existed. What secrets are the sinister doctor, the fierce baroness, the so-called honeymoon couple, the vicar and his wife and the garrulous spinster twins hiding? The play is based on a novel, *The Wheel Spins*, written by Ethel Lina White in 1936 which was adapted in 1938 by Alfred Hitchcock as the film, *The Lady Vanishes*. This stage play was adapted in 2018 by Derek Webb from the original 1936 book. Tickets cost £15 per person (£12.50 for first night) and can be bought from: www.goringgapplayers.co.uk, Inspiration, or Jean Betteridge: 01491 873530.

REMEMBERING

As the clocks change, the nights draw in it is a good time to tend to inner thoughts on the past, blessings and love received, and determination to better prepare for the new that is to come. The annual Thanksgiving for Departed Loved Ones service is on Sunday 25 October at 4pm in St Thomas' Goring. All welcome. Remembrance Sunday is 8 November. At each of our villages there will be an Act of Remembrance at 10.50am by the village memorial, followed by further reflection and prayer in church. And again a very simple prayer at 11am on Wednesday 11 November.

Further afield

WHITCHURCH AND GORING TWINNING ASSOCIATION, QUIZ

Saturday 31 October, 6.30pm for a prompt 7pm start at Goring Heath Parish Hall, RG8 9AG. Are you a fan of a pub quiz, or maybe TV's The Chase, Mastermind, Eggheads or University Challenge? Whatever your preference (or level!), come along to our friendly quiz night. There is parking adjacent to the hall. £15 per person, to include a delicious chilli supper. Licensed bar. Teams of 4-6, come as a team or join others to make a team on the night. Run by Whitchurch and Goring Heath Twinning Association. Book tickets via Sarah Dragonetti sarah@dragonetti.co.uk, adding if you want the vegetarian chilli.

BENSON GARDENING CLUB

On Thursday 5 November 2026 Benson Garden Club will have Martyn Cox coming to speak on *The Hidden World of Fruit* at Benson Parish Hall, OX10 6LZ. His topic covers the myths, legends, lore and secret history of a wide range of fruit. Martyn is a qualified horticulturist and experienced garden communicator. He has written for many newspapers and gardening magazines. Martyn's talk costs £5 for visitors, £2 for members – just turn up on the door, no need to book. Doors open at 7.15pm for a 7.45pm start. Further information from <https://bensongardeningclub.weebly.com> or email bensongardeningclub@gmail.com

LANGTREE SINFONIA CONCERT

Saturday 14 November, 7pm, at St Mary le More Church, Wallingford.

The concert includes Mozart's *Titus Overture*; Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto*, with soloist Steve Nurse, and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 1*. Tickets: £18, students £9 (under 16s free). In advance: £15, students £7.50 (under 16s free). Available www.langtreesinfonia.co.uk, or on the door. Contact: 07951 712611 or langtreesinfonia@gmail.com

LOCAL FIREWORK DISPLAYS

South Stoke Fireworks Night: Friday 23 October 6pm, South Stoke Rec.

Fireworks display, choreographed to music. DJ from Birmingham all evening. Earlybird tickets £37 family, £12.50 adult, £8 child (plus booking fee). In aid of South Stoke School. Licensed bar, BBQ, doughnuts and glow sticks.

Cholsey Bonfire Night Friday 6 November 6pm. Cholsey Cricket Field, Wallingford OX10 9GW. Bonfire is lit 6pm. Firework display 7.30pm. Cholsey Cricket Club will run a bar and BBQ and Cholsey 1000 Plus will sell mulled wine, hot chocolate, sparklers and glow sticks. Free entry, please give generously.

Wallingford Bonfire and Fireworks Saturday 7 November, Kine Croft, from 6pm. See Events on <https://www.wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk/>

Pangbourne Fireworks, Saturday 7 November from 5pm. Pangbourne Primary School, RG8 7LB. Earlybird prices until 1 November: £24 family, £10 adult, £4 child. In aid of the school. Hot food and drink, coffee and cakes, bar, glow toys, tombola and amusements. Bonfire lit 6pm. Fireworks 7pm.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

- In an emergency dial **999**
- **For medical advice** at all times, including surgery out-of-hours, dial **111** or use <https://111.nhs.uk/> You will be told how to obtain any further help if needed
- **Local pharmacies** can offer advice and treatment for some conditions. Goring Pharmacy: **01491 872124**
- **Nearest First Aid Units:** Townland Hospital, Henley **01865 903755**, or West Berkshire Community Hospital, Thatcham **01635 273508**, or Abingdon Community Hospital **01865 903476**
- **Goring & Woodcote Medical Practice:** Monday-Friday 8am-6.30pm **01491 680686** Requests for appointments are triaged to direct patients to the correct help and should be made using the form available at www.goringwoodcotemedicalpractice.nhs.uk If you are unable to use the form, the practice can be contacted on the above number to support you.
- **Nearest Casualty Department:** Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading **0118 322 7020**
- **Emergency Dentist** – call **111** for advice
- **Goring medical equipment** – including, wheelchairs, toilet aids, mobility aids and more: r **01491 874333** or **07966 245264**
- **Goring transport office** – 10am-12noon Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, to arrange volunteer transport to local surgeries, dentists and hospitals **01491 873565**.

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Monday 19 October

Goring Gap Local History Soc. 2.30pm. GVH. Katrina Cooper: *Soldiers of the English Civil War seen through the lens of the Sealed Knot*. Contact Janet Hurst, goringgaphistory@gmail.com.

Tuesday 20 October

• **Social Scrabble Club.** 4.45-7pm. GL. All welcome with refreshments.

Wednesday 21 October

• **Goring Gap Textile Group.** 7pm. CR. This group meets every third Wednesday of the month. The programme is rich and varied: some evenings we have a new textile related activity, other meetings are social get-togethers to share our love of textiles. New members welcome. Members £2, Visitors £3.50. Contact gaptextilegroup@gmail.com

• **Coffee Morning.** 10.30am-12noon. St Andrew's Church South Stoke. The 3rd Wednesday of every month.

Saturday 24 – Saturday 31 October

Free crafts and trail. Half Term. GL. Theme: Enchanted woods. Drop-in.

Monday 26 October

Genie News Copy Deadline. Genie is published twice a month. Email us: news@genienews.org

Tuesday 27 October

Chess Club. Children 4.45pm-5.45pm Adults 5.45 – 7pm. GL. Drop-in.

Wednesday 28 October

The Arts Society. 11am and 2pm. GVH. *The Extraordinary and Outlandish Royal Pavilion*. Speaker: Patrick Conner Refreshments available at 10am and 1pm. Guests £5 through prior booking email info@theartssocietygoring.org.uk More info at www.theartssocietygoring.org.uk

Thursday 29 October

• **Goring Gap U3a.** 10.30-12noon. GVH. Speaker: Muriel Pilkington: *Four Oxford Celebrities*.

• **Storytime with craft.** 10.30-11am. GL. Drop-in.

Monday 2 November

• **Goring and Streatley Bridge Club.** 6.45pm. GVH. Held every Monday.

Tuesday 3 November

• **Goring Mobile Post Office.** 1.30-4pm. Westholme stores, Wallingford Rd, Goring. Every Tuesday.

• **GLIB Library Book Group.** 5-6pm. See library staff if interested – one space.

Wednesday 4 November

• **Goring Village Green Fingers.** 7.30-9.30pm. SL. *Indoor plants* by Gemma Haigh. Competition: Last but not least – what vegetables do you still have in your garden. Visitors are welcome at £5. www.villagegreenfingers.uk

• **Goring Gap News.** Copy deadline for December events. News and articles of local interest to goringgapnews@gmail.com

Thursday 5 November

• **Goring Mobile Post Office.** 8-11.30am. Westholme stores, Wallingford Rd, Goring. Every Thursday.

• **Storytime.** 10.30-11am. GL. Drop-in.

Friday 6 November

Goring & Streatley Wine Society. 8pm. GVH. *Watlington Fine Wines. Best Value and Unusual Wines*. Presenter: Martin Chapman. Enquiries email gswinesoc@gmail.com

Saturday 7 November

Reading Bach Choir Concert. 7.30pm St Thomas' Church, Goring. See P13 (Arts section).

Tuesday 10 November

Lego Club. 4.45-6pm. GL. Please book. 01865 815155.

Wednesday 11 November

• **Goring by Cleeve WI.** 7.30pm. SL. An Evening of Remembrances, including a talk by Elaine Shepherd about her work with the 'Standing With Giants' charity. Contact Katrina Cooper: 01491 875334, kcooper@rsk.co.uk

• **The Soundbar Open Mic.** The Miller of Mansfield. Sign up to play from 7.30pm. Music 8-10pm. Fancy playing? Come along or get in touch, HelloSoundbar@gmail.com

• **Stay and Play.** 10-11.15am. GL. Drop-in.

Friday 13 November

GREADIES Library Book Group. 10-11am. GL. See library staff if interested. Full.

Monday 16 November

Goring Gap Local History Soc. 2.30pm. GVH. Sem Seaborne : *Black Wantage: True or false?* Contact Janet Hurst, goringgaphistory@gmail.com

Tuesday 17 November

Social scrabble club. 4.45-7pm. GL. All welcome with refreshments.

Wednesday 18 November

• **Goring Gap Players, The Lady Vanishes.** 7.30pm. MR. See P35. Showing from the 18 – 21 November.

• **Coffee Morning.** 10.30-12noon. St Andrew's Church, South Stoke. The 3rd Wednesday of every month.

• **Goring Gap Textile Group.** 7pm. CR. Visitors £3.50. More info from gaptextilegroup@gmail.com

• **Author talk.** 7.30pm GL Cressida Downing. *The Ravens*. Tickets £10. Please book from the library or Eventbrite.

Thursday 19 November

Pick a Flick. 10.30am-2pm, CR. *Evil Under the Sun* (1982). Hercule Poirot is on holiday in Devon and staying in a hotel. A famous Broadway actress and her husband have also checked in and when she is murdered the plot thickens. Contact Sarah Fraser 01491 871838 or Jenny Boyd 01491 872109 to book and to

ask for transport if required. The cost is £5 per event, including a light lunch.

Saturday 21 November

Make a Rhyme Time Bag. 10am-12noon. GL. To celebrate Baby Week come and learn how to make a Rhyme Time Bag to help with singing rhymes at home. Drop-in.

Tuesday 24 November

• **The Arts Society.** 8.30am. Visit to Winchester Cathedral and Christmas Market. email: info@theartssocietygoring.org.uk. Details of all events and activities may be found at www.theartssocietygoring.org.uk

• **Chess Club. Children** 4.45-5.45pm. Adults 5.45-7pm. GL.

Wednesday 25 November

The Arts Society. 11am and 2pm. GVH. *Banksy: Fraud or Genius?* Speaker: Pepe Martinez. Refreshments available at 10am and 1pm. Guests are welcome to attend for £5 through prior booking email: info@theartssocietygoring.org.uk Details of all events and activities may be found at www.theartssocietygoring.org.uk

Thursday 26 November

• **Goring Gap U3a.** 10.30-12noon. GVH. Speaker: Tim Healey: *A Victorian Christmas*.

• **Genie News Copy Deadline.** Genie is published twice a month. Email us: news@genienews.org

Friday 27 November

• **Goring Unplugged.** 7.30pm for 8, GVH. Entry is £5. BYOB + nibbles.

• **Macular Society Support Group.** 2.30 – 4.15pm. GVH. Meeting with afternoon tea. Please note: this meeting is taking place one week later than usual. Contact: Rowena Buie 01491 875103. (the August edition unfortunately had a missing digit in the telephone number for Rowena)

For more events on the Events Calendar at www.genienews.org

The following abbreviations are used:

Bellême Room	BR
Canterbury Room	CR
Free Church Hall	FCH
Goring Community Centre	GCC
Goring Library	GL
Goring Social Club	GSC
Goring Village Hall	GVH
Morrell Room	MR
Storton Lodge	SL

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Thames Valley Ambulance on Gardiner Recreation Ground



Photo: Adrian Turner

Blooming Boatiful in September



The Goring on Thames in Bloom planter on the lock still growing in September

Photo: Stephanie Bridle

Sparrowhawk - been waiting for a paddle all summer!



Photo: Simon Booker

Welcome clouds over parched fields

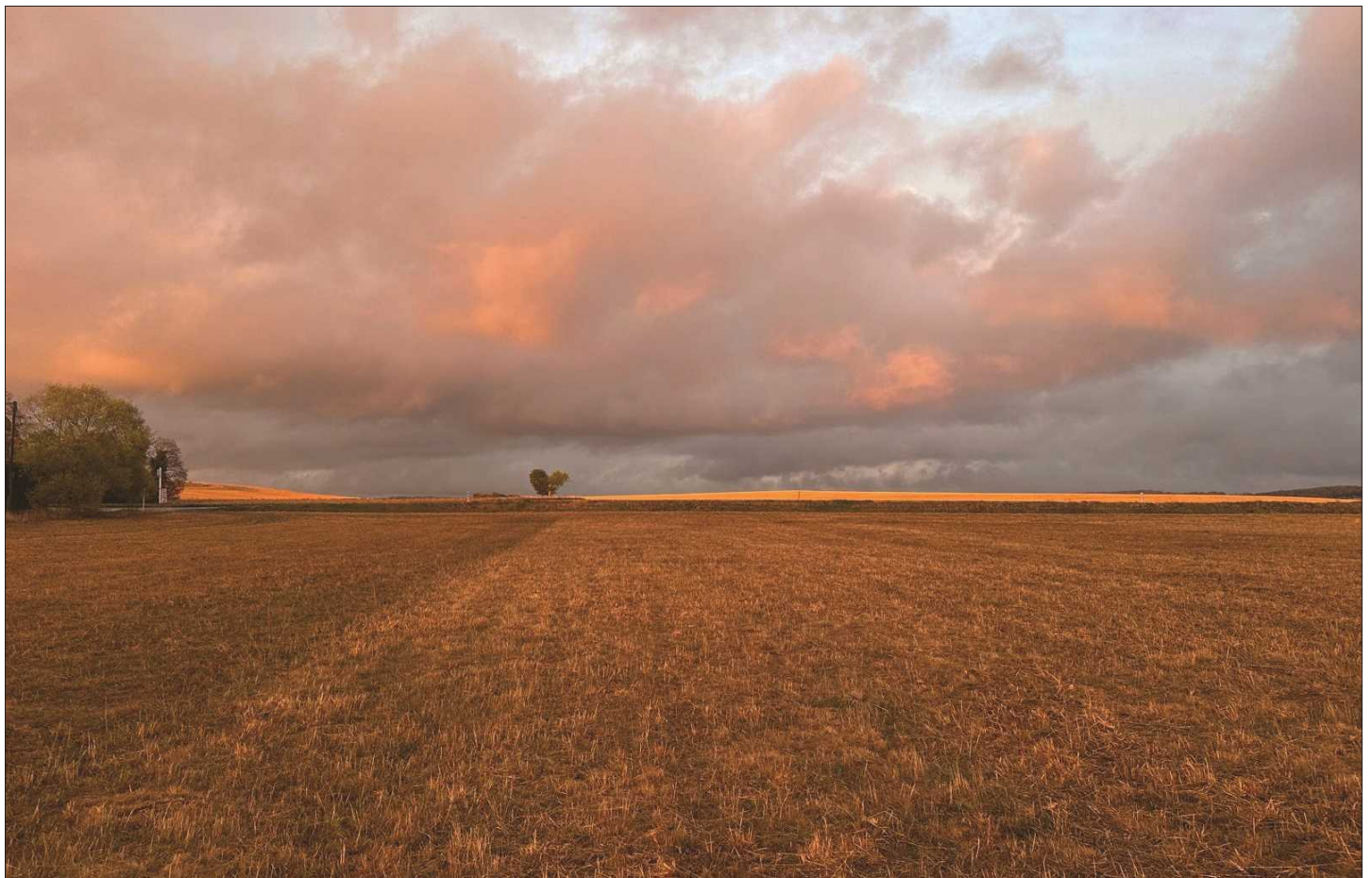


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