

FECKENHAM NEWS

APRIL 2025

NEWS



Published by Feckenham Church for the village.
Editor Gilly Cooper - feckenhamnews@gmail.com

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Feckenham News in March

Dates for your Diary

April		
1st	Feckenham Sessions	Rose & Crown
1st	Lunch Club	Village Hall
5th	Midland Sinfonia	Village Hall
8th	Readers Group	
9th	Church Drop In	Parish Church
10th	Parish Council	Village Hall
11th	Perfect Days	FeckenOdeon
11th	Erstwhile Border Morris	Village Hall
23rd	Church Drop In	Parish Church
25th	Erstwhile Border Morris	Village Hall
26th	Swede Caroline	FeckenOdeon
May		
17th & 18th	Flower & Garden Festival	



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Front Cover:

Volunteer barista Chris West serves coffee at The Village Shop - see Alan Slater's report on page 16
Photo by Ian Bellion

Many articles in Feckenham News are contributed by members of the public. They remain the responsibility of the writers and neither the production team nor the publisher can be held responsible for the views and assertions contained therein.

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2025 Published by Feckenham PCC

Printed by SoloPress

COPY DATE: articles for inclusion should reach us by the 14th of the preceding month.

Editor's Note



Ian Bellion

Having been left in charge for a second month, I thought I'd prove that Gilly doesn't have a monopoly on portraits taken in exotic places. This month's delight doesn't have the Taj-Mahal as its background but does have a good deal of foreground interest in the form of a glass of chilled retsina. lassas!

APOLOGIES

Well, it was bound to happen! I thought I'd got my first edition off to the printer in good time and that all would be well. But fate and a slipshod filing system had other ideas and the complaints came in as soon as the magazine had dropped through your letterboxes. I offer my humble apologies to Cathy Fisher and Steve Dalloway for somehow omitting their hard crafted pieces. I sincerely hope I've done better this time but if I haven't... don't ring me! Gilly's back soon and will be delighted to answer your queries.

IN AN ENGLISH COUNTRY GARDEN

April's edition of Feckenham News has a distinctly horticultural feel about it. On page 6 there are details of the Garden Festival - if you've got a garden and haven't been roped in so far you still have time to own up to Cathy - and, if you can make cakes, you still have time to admit that to Jen (page 19). We've a report on daffodils (page 5) and Rob has put together a potted history of the Gardening Club on page 20 - Happy 50th Birthday! All this digging and dibbing does make Feckenham a marvellously flowery place to live during the summer months.

GIVING A BIT OF TIME

On page 16 you'll find Alan Slater's monthly report on activities at The Village Shop and this month he celebrates his volunteers - without whom the entire enterprise would founder. I know that Alan shares my concerns that volunteering for things within your community is regarded as severely "uncool" in certain sections of society - but, in rural areas,

without volunteers nothing can happen. Virtually every activity reported in this magazine is dependent on voluntary labour. Will there be sufficient activity to fill the pages of Feckenham News in 10 years time?

THANKS

And finally... as my brief sojourn in the Editor's chair draws to a close can I offer my sincere thanks to all our contributors who filed their copy on time, all the volunteers who distribute the magazine and to our readers without whom there would be no point to the entire enterprise. Do remember that contributions are welcome from all Feckenhamsters - just send them to: feckenhamnews@gmail.com Gilly will back to take charge of May's edition. I can't tell you where she's been but will just say that she's been eating KiwiBurgers, bungee jumping and shooting the rapids. In the meantime, if you want to keep up with my adventures (or lack of them) feel free to tune in to my "Happy Hour" programme on Swansbrook Radio - Feckenham's Own local radio station: www.swansbrook.com

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THE DAFFS ARE HERE

There's no surer sign that spring has sprung than the sight of daffodils bobbing their bright yellow heads in defiance of the wind/rain/hail/snow (delete whichever does not apply...if any). This year there's a fine display throughout the village augmented by some new planting undertaken by the members of Feckenham in Bloom. You can see their daffs along Astwood Lane near Winfield's and on Church Walk. Feckenham In Bloom are a group of volunteers dedicated to making Feckenham blooming beautiful. They plant and maintain flowering plants throughout the village. They're a working group under the wing of the Parish Council. Their Chair is Gay Bligh while Erica Guise and Jane Bull represent the Council. If you have green fingers and would like to help the work of Feckenham in Bloom they'd love to hear from you. It's not onerous - and it's sociable. If you're interested contact the Parish Clerk on 01527 892522 or email clerk@feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk



Daffs in Church Walk (Photo Janine Lynn)

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Tuesday, 1st April in the Bar from 8pm - Free
TRADITIONAL MUSIC

20th April EASTER SUNDAY
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Egg Hunt in the Garden!
Open all day Good Friday & Easter Monday

Thursday, 24th April
SPECIAL THEMED MENU

www.roseandcrownfeckenham.co.uk

100km FOR CHARITY

Mel Clarke of The Rose & Crown writes:

I've decided to undertake the Ride The Night London 100km cycle challenge on Saturday 10th May.

Ride the Night London is the UK's biggest women-only cycle challenge where hundreds of ladies unite in bright, bold and sparkling attire to cycle 50km or 100km through the night raising vital funds for Women V Cancer.

Having lost family members to both breast & ovarian cancers this is both personal and a massive challenge for me as I haven't been on my bike for at least 3 years. Help! I'm going to dust my saddle off, pump up the tyres and off I go! Please donate!!

<https://womenscancer.enthus.com/pf/imelda-clarke>

The ride starts at 9.30am at Windsor Racecourse and will follow a route around London I'm not at my fittest but feel this will test me. I'm up to the challenge but would really appreciate any support.

Feckenham Flower and Garden Festival

Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th May 2025

40 YEARS OF SUCCESS

This hugely successful triennial Festival is now in its 40th year. The funds raised go towards the general maintenance of our historic Parish Church and Churchyard, with many village organisations also benefiting significantly from the weekend.

In 2022, over 30 gardens opened to the public. It was a great weekend with a real buzz around the village. I am most grateful to those garden owners who have already agreed to open their gardens once again or have agreed to do so for the first time.

HIDDEN TREASURES

As you may be aware, many of our gardens are hidden and vary enormously in size and style from the smallest courtyard gardens to those rather larger. This variety creates a huge amount of interest, plus an element of surprise. I hope to be able to visit most of the gardens during the next month. Due to safety, traffic and other regulations, the boundaries for open gardens fall between Winfields, Moors Lane and Brook House on the B4090.

Please do get in touch with me if you might be willing to open your garden or if you want any more information about the Festival.

A highlight of the weekend is the Flower Festival in the Church and this year's theme will be 'Renewal'.

HELP NEEDED

We need many volunteers including those to take payment and give out programmes in the field car park. Please spare an hour or two on either the Saturday or Sunday between 11am and 5pm and let me know if you can help.

Feckenham WI have kindly agreed to take on the provision of Teas and refreshments in the Village Hall. There will also be a barbecue at the Catholic Church. On The Square will be plant sales, The Barn garden accessories and Milk Blossom Handcrafted Ice Cream. All Round Voices Choir will also be performing at times during the Festival.



This is a wonderful village event with an enormous number of jobs to be done. So please consider whether you can help in any way, your assistance is very much needed and would be most welcome.

I should be most grateful if all garden owners and volunteers, who have not already done so, would contact me by email at catherine.fisher@talk21.com which will enable me to make direct contact with you all – thank you.

Catherine Fisher

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ORCHESTRAL SOUNDS

There aren't many village halls that can boast that they're sought after by top notch classical musicians - but Feckenham Village Hall is one of the few that can.

Following the enormous success of last year's visit by The Orchestra of The Swan we are delighted to present a concert by another major professional orchestra - The Midland Sinfonia.

The orchestra is based in Alvechurch and has been steadily building a reputation as one of the most outstanding ensembles in the region.

DEVILISH MUSIC

On April 5th they'll present a concert entitled "The Good, the Band and The...".

The programme will include Elgar's 'Elegy for Strings', music from Bernard Hermann's iconic soundtrack to the film 'Psycho', John Tavener's ethereal 'Song of the Angel', Charlie Daniel's irrepressible 'The Devil Went Down to Georgia' and Shostakovich's deeply emotional *Sinfonia for Strings* (from String Quartet No.8 Op.110) which is dedicated to 'The Memory of the Victims of Fascism and War'.

The Sinfonia will be lead by their director Shula Oliver-Smith and will feature Wendy Neiper (Soprano).

THE MIDLAND SINFONIA
"The Good, The Bad and The..."
Saturday, 5th April - 7.30pm

TICKETS for this concert
are on sale at The Village Shop
Book online through www.feckhall.org
Sorry - telephone bookings
are not available for this event

BENCH RENEWAL

Those of you with long memories may recall that many years ago the village hall had some handsome oak benches which ran round the edges of the Main Hall. During the refurbishment of 2003, despite instructions to the contrary, the contractors ripped these out and replaced them with the current MDF benches. This "quick fix" has lasted 22 years but now constant use has taken its toll and the benches are starting to fall apart. The Committee has decided to commission some new benches with a polished wood finish - to hark back to the originals. These will be specially designed and manufactured and hopefully will be installed during the summer

Draw results

Feckenham Village Hall Improvement Fund February draw.

Carried out on 4th February, 2025.

1st (£25)	78	Eunice O'Brien
2nd (£15)	116	Cyril & Jo Warrilow
3rd (£10)	163	Chris & Marie West



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Services for April 2025

6th April	10.30am Eucharist	Rev Fiona Carter
13 th April	9.00am Traditional Language Service	Rev Fiona Carter
13 th April	10.30am Palm Sunday Family Service	Rev Fiona Carter
18 th April	10:30am-12:00pm Good Friday Children's Easter Activities (with refreshments)	
	6:30pm Good Friday Liturgy	Rev Fiona Carter
20 th April	10.30am Easter Sunday Eucharist	The Venerable Paul Taylor
27 th April	10.30am Eucharist	Fr Glenn Reading



Drop in (in church)

Wednesday at 10.30am - 12.00pm

9th April and 23rd April

All are welcome (coffee and cake)



EASTER LILIES

A reminder for anyone who would like to make a donation towards Easter lilies in memory of loved ones, to be included in the floral decorations in church for Easter Sunday to please send their contribution to Angela Fletcher 12 Mill Lane, Feckenham B96 6HY Tel No. 01527 893231 (cheques should be made payable to Feckenham PCC). Thank you everyone and we look forward to seeing the flower groups displays of lilies and spring flowers filling the church once again!

Margaret and Marg Co-ordinators.

FECKENHAM ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

St John Fisher & Thomas More

Mass will not be held at St John Fisher & Thomas More until further notice.

Mount Carmel 6pm Sunday Mass is now the Live Streamed Mass.

Link: www.eventcast.uk/live (Type the link into the browser)

Fr. Anthony Rohan, The Presbytery, Redditch. Tel 893898

Local contact: Phylis Mott, Feckenham. Tel 893898

Rev Fiona writes...

I absolutely love this time of year with the shoots of spring flowers coming up in the garden once again. It is a miracle that it happens every year, but it is always wonderful. Also, I enjoy seeing the lambs in the fields in and around Feckenham. I am really excited every year when I see my first lamb, who is normally keeping close to its mum.

The slightly warmer weather is also welcome, with the promise of things to come, and that this will evolve into much warmer weather in the later Spring and Summer. Hopefully, also the end of being freezing in the house, being able to ditch our winter coats and wear t-shirts rather than jumpers, and more chances and possibilities of being able to sit outside cafes and sitting in the garden, which I really love.

At the time of writing, the season of Lent has just started with Ash Wednesday on March 5th. Lent gives us time to reflect, maybe give up something or do something extra like visit someone who would appreciate the company. It culminates with the most special time in the Christian calendar – Easter. At Easter we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus defeated death through the crucifixion and because of his resurrection we also can be confident of eternal life.

The church services are special at this time of year, and we are very fortunate this year to have a family service on Palm Sunday, activities for children on Good Friday, a Good Friday Liturgy and an Easter Sunday Service all in our church in Feckenham. (See times in the Feckenham News or church website or noticeboard).

We journey with Jesus in Holy Week with the agony of Maundy Thursday. Jesus being double crossed, abandoned and rejected by his friends. Sometimes we may feel like we have been rejected or let down by people as well. Jesus knows how we feel. He was rejected by nearly every one of his followers on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Trusted friends who ran away, or as in the case of the apostle Peter who denied that he ever knew Jesus three times. This was a man who had spent three years with

Jesus watching and learning and experiencing the miracles. That was an extreme low point for him, and he must have felt terrible. But then Jesus who loved him so much and loves us as well, brings him back into the fold after the resurrection. Good Friday and the crucifixion are followed by the joy of his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

I hope you will all be able to have some time for rest and relaxation over the Easter period. It is a lovely time of year, and we are all so fortunate to be able to appreciate the beautiful countryside in this part of Worcestershire. So, I will end by wishing all of you a very happy and blessed Easter.

God bless.
Reverend Fiona



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FECKENHAM AGAINST BATTERY STORAGE SYSTEMS & SOLAR

Since we started talking about the “BESS” (Battery Energy Storage Systems) proposed by four different developers, we have some pretty exciting news that Statkraft, the only one that had been granted planning permission by the Redditch Borough Council Planning department has pulled out. Their statement reads.....

Since summer 2023, Statkraft has been evaluating options for the Feckenham Greener Grid Park site after not being selected by NGENO for a tender to provide grid stability services. After careful consideration, we have decided not to implement the planning consent for the development.

It’s difficult to know exactly the reasons for this, but they have decided not to continue with their interest in our village. This may be a temporary reprieve for us, but in any event its very welcome news indeed. But this still leaves three other wannabees in the ring. Immersa, Innova and the comically named Boom Energy.....

What concerns us the most here is not only greenbelt being swallowed up to locate these projects, but the safety angle as there has been over the past few months in a number of other locations lithium battery fires which have polluted the local environment and have also been almost impossible for the local fire services to put out. This would leave an environmental catastrophe that these companies could not care less about.

Check out the FABSSS Facebook page for more information on these battery fires and their locations.

Other good news is that from the poll that came through your letterboxes, there was an overwhelming majority of villagers who voted categorically not to have these battery systems anywhere near our village.

This means that the FABSSS Team (Feckenham Against Battery Storage Systems & Solar) are monitoring what is happening very closely, to ensure we don’t get these unwanted developments in Feckenham.

More information is also available on our website www.FABSSS.co.uk

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Feckenham Square Management Committee

GETTING READY

As the Spring gets into its swing the Square Committee is gearing up to prepare for the summer season of events. Mowing and planting is starting in the hope that our village green is looking its best for the hoards of keen gardeners who will descend on us during the Flower and Garden festival in May. The Committee is grateful to Miranda Powell for offering to ensure that the flower tubs will look beautiful during regular planter Judy Hooker's current indisposition.

WAKES AND FUN

The grass will hardly have time to recover before preparations will be in hand for The Wake on 21st June when, once again, hundreds of feet will march across the turf.

Fun on The Square on July 26th will be a much lower key affair involving a pleasant night out for villagers.

All this preparation and maintenance is carried out by volunteers dedicated to keeping The Square at the centre of village life.

The FeckenOdeon Cinema Society



OH HAPPY DAYS!

A beautiful tale woven by master German filmmaker Wim Wenders and acclaimed Japanese actor Koji Yakusho. Hirayama (Koji Yakusho) works as a public toilet cleaner in Shibuya, Tokyo. His is a calm, quiet existence. Every day, he wakes up at the same time, gets ready the same way, and works the same way. Though his life may seem monotonous, no two days are ever the same. A fascinating portrait of a happy man and his Perfect Days (*Japan 2024*)

PERFECT DAYS (PG)

Friday 11th April at 8pm



ALARMS ON THE ALLOTMENT

Chaos reigns in this strange, funny and amiably anarchic British mockumentary about dirty tricks in the cutthroat world of competitive marrow-growing. As Caroline readies herself for the championship, her prized marrow plants are stolen, and her life turns upside down, so she hires two private detectives...who discover more than mere thievery is going on beneath the allotment surface. This film will make you laugh...and want to grow your own vegetables. (*UK 2023*)

SWEDE CAROLINE (15)

Saturday 26th April at 7.30pm

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WHAT'S ON IN

FECKENHAM VILLAGE HALL

Find us on:   

presenting a concert exploring...

THE GOOD

THE BAD

THE ?

SATURDAY
5TH APRIL 2025
7.30pm

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VILLAGE HALL
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THE MIDLAND
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Director: Schula Oliver-Smith

Soloist: Wendy Neiper (Soprano)

PROGRAMME INCLUDES:

Elgar - Elegy, Taverner - Song of the Angel

Herman - Suite from Psycho

Daniels - Devil Went Down to Georgia

Shostakovich - Sinfonia for Strings (Op110)

Saturday, 5th April - 7.30pm

Book online at feckhall.org
or in person at The Village Shop

JUNIOR CRICKET



FECKENHAM CC WINTER NETS 8TH MARCH - 12TH APRIL 2025

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FECKENHAM FLOWER & GARDEN FESTIVAL

17th & 18th May, 2025 11am to 5pm

Approx. 25 Gardens Open - Flower Festival in the Church
Homemade WI Teas - BBQ Admission £7.50 (Under 16s free).
Proceeds to Feckenham Church Maintenance Fund

www.feckenham-open-gardens.co.uk



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NEXT SESSION: Tuesday, 1st April



Stock & Bradley Gardening Club

PLANTS FOR APRIL and BEYOND

A talk by Geoff Soulsby

Wednesday, 2nd April - 7.30pm

ANNUAL PLANT SALE

Saturday 10th May - 10 to 12 noon
Bradley Village Hall



Feckenham Parish Council Annual Parish MEETING

Thursday, 10th April - 7.30pm

Followed by an

ORDINARY MEETING

Feckenham Village Hall

(Back Room)

All welcome

THE FECKENODEON CINEMA SOCIETY

FeckenOdeon 2 Friday, 11th April at 8pm

Koji Yakusho in

PERFECT DAYS ^{PG}

A film by

WIM WENDERS



SWEDE

Jo Hartley

Aisling Bea

Ray Fearnon

CAROLINE ¹⁵

FeckenOdeon 1 Saturday, 26th April at 7.30pm



The FeckenOdeon Cinemas
at Feckenham Village Hall

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*Booking Fee applies to Phone and Online Bookings

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Feckenham READERS GROUP

Tuesday, 8th April - 7.45pm

This month's book:

THE BOOKBINDER

OF JERICO

By PIP WILLIAMS

Details: 892285



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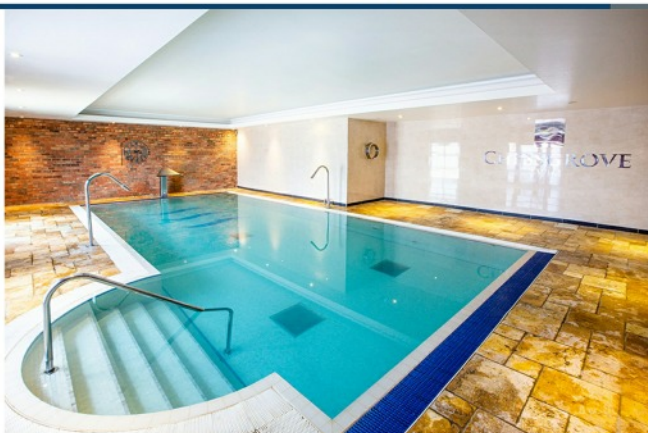
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NEW COUNCILLORS

The Parish Council Meeting on 13th March saw Cllr. Jacqui Barrett-Meade take her seat as Councillor for the first time. There was also another co-option agreed for Rob Oaten who will be returning as a Councillor. This will take the number of councillors to seven, which is the maximum number government regulations permit to serve as representatives of parishioners. The Council offered its congratulations to both Councillors and thanks to both for volunteering.

UNITARY AUTHORITY

Cllr Craig Warhurst and Cllr Brandon Clayton attended the meeting and gave updates about the Unitary Council proposals. Redditch Borough Council were due to hold a special meeting on Monday, 17th March, to discuss the options. It is hoped that in May the Government will decide on how Unitary Councils will work in Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Warwickshire, and Shropshire.

LITTER PICKERS NEEDED

As this year Open Gardens takes place on the weekend of 17th and 18th May the Parish Council is organising a litter pick on **Saturday 10th May from 12 noon until 2 pm**. Everyone is welcome to join in. Pickers will meet at the Village Square. Bags, Hi-Vis tabards, gloves and litter pickers will be provided. Should you be available to help please get in touch with the clerk on 01527 892522 or email clerk@feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk Redditch Borough Council have kindly agreed to undertake the picking on Astwood Lane, Rockhill Lane and the B4090 as these are considered to be too dangerous for volunteers to work on. The Borough Council will also collect the all of the rubbish on Monday morning. You will not have to carry the rubbish back to The Square as this will be collected and taken back by a volunteer. Please do consider volunteering to keep the village looking fabulous. Children with parents are welcome and

we do have some children's hi-vis tabards and picking equipment.

BLOOMS AND PATHWAYS

Feckenham in Bloom have been working tirelessly around the village, and we hope that the sight of the snowdrops and crocuses planted by the volunteers have cheered people and made it feel as if spring is coming.

Paul Furey, the volunteer Parish Path Warden deserves a special thank you for working so hard to make many of the bridleways and paths passable again.

MEETINGS

There will be two meetings on Thursday 10th April. The first (at 7.30pm) will be the annual meeting of the Parish which offers an opportunity for the people to attend and ask any questions or to suggest ideas or issues they feel need looking at. Following this there will be a normal Parish Council meeting.

GET IN TOUCH

If you have queries or need help with local problems you are very welcome to contact the Council. Initially you can call the Parish Clerk on 01527 892522 or Email:

clerk@feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk

You can also visit the Parish Council's website for information about the Council, planning issues, local organisations and useful contact details to help you solve problems. You'll also find digital editions of Feckenham News going back to 2012.

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UNSUNG HEROES



The Chairman

In the majority of clubs and organisations, it's the hard work of the few that benefit the many. Often people are happy to just sit back and let others put the effort in to "make things happen". That certainly isn't the case

at our Village Shop. I have regularly written about our army of wonderful Volunteers and praised their commitment in making our Community Shop the best in the County. This month, however, I would like to be a bit more specific and focus on the contribution of our Management Board who ensure that the "show does really remain on the road". Excluding myself, there are seven other Members, each with their own area of responsibility and expertise who oversee the smooth running of the business. So, who are these unsung heroes and heroines?

MARTIN & TRACEY

Martin Gill, the Vice Chairman, has been involved with the Shop for many years and is our Head Buyer. Apart from overall responsibility for purchasing and pricing, Martin also looks after the Deli counter as well as the alcohol products and bread and cake items. He is ably assisted by Tracey Somers who not only bakes the fabulous cakes sold in the cafe, but she also ensures that the shelves are stocked with grocery goods and that the chillers and freezers offer a wide range of frozen and fresh products.

EUNICE & DAVID

Eunice O'Brien looks after our coffee supplies for the cafe and most importantly the planters and hanging baskets which every year enhance the external appearance of the Shop and gives it such lovely kerb appeal. David Rowe is our Property Manager and Mr Fix-It, liaising with our landlord and making sure that all our fixtures and shop fittings remain in good working order. David's skill

as a calligrapher is also evident on our beautifully presented chalkboards.

VICKIE & CAROL

Every successful business needs strong fiscal controls and strategic management information. We are fortunate that our Treasurer Vickie Whitehouse provides the Board with an abundance of both. The reason that the Shop is in such a strong financial position is primarily due to her professional expertise. Vickie like Eunice and Carol also doubles up as one of our Team Leaders. Carol Newton became our most recent Board Member when she was elected at last year's AGM. A natural organiser, Carol has taken over the responsibility for Volunteer training and I suspect much more to come in the months ahead.

PAUL

Finally, Paul Bradley who is our Company Secretary, does much of the essential but less glamorous work behind the scenes making sure that we meet all the necessary statutory obligations required of a retail business. Paul also deals with the numerous requests we receive for sponsorship and donations as well as organising our meetings including the AGM and our Anniversary Party for the Volunteers. I should also add that he acts as our in-house IT expert and his knowledge has been invaluable recently when outages have caused havoc with our back-office system.

RHIAN

Although not a Board Member, Rhian Thompson is our minute Secretary who manages to produce superb and coherent records of our ramblings and action plans to hold us to account thus ensuring we do what we say we are going to do. Rhian is also an extremely efficient Team Leader in her spare time. So with the support of all these talented and committed colleagues, my job as Chairman is easy and makes it a pleasure to lead the Shop Team. I should state that the above list of duties is far from exhaustive and that they all contribute above and beyond what I've mentioned.

The Village Shop

BUNNIES

If you've visited us during the last couple of weeks you will have noticed that the hand knitted Easter Bunnies (along with a few sheep and chickens) are again on sale in support of Project Morogoro. From only £5 they make unique gifts, and the monies raised will make a real difference for that most worthy charity.

It's been lovely to enjoy some early Spring sunshine. It gives a tremendous boost to our sales and hopefully a good indication of another busy summer ahead.

Thanks for your continued support.

Alan



Jazz for The Spring

Shirley Harman, Jill & David Rowe

BIG BAND SUCCESS

Spring sprang into foot-tapping action and Feckenham again demonstrated its ability to host live music on Saturday 1st March! The Birmingham-based Out-of-the-Blue Big Band returned to the Village Hall for a concert of wide-ranging music, from blues, swing, boogy to Sinatra and Elton John. Under their leader Jo James, and with the talents of vocalist Lee Hamblett, the audience was wowed with performances of some all-time favourites – all in aid of the Sick Children's Trust – a worthy charity that provides support and accommodation for the families of chronically ill children while in hospital.

Through ticket sales, bar-takings, a raffle and an auction of home-made Simnel cakes and planters with spring flowers, £1,100 was raised. The Band generously donated their time for free, and we would like to record a huge Thank You to all who helped out, especially the Village Hall Committee who rigged the stage, set up the lighting, ran the auction and manned the bar. We would also like to thank several people who assisted in setting up and clearing away afterwards. Feckenham is indeed blessed with helpers and volunteers. The Trust, which relies almost entirely on donations, was delighted of course and asked us to pass on their thanks too.

The Children's Society

Children's Society Collection Boxes

The boxes are due to be opened in **April**. If you have one, please pass it to Mary Smith, who has taken over from Vivien Hunter as the box coordinator for St John the Baptist Church in Feckenham.

Boxes can be handed over to Mary at a church service, or she can be contacted on 01527 550826 if you would like her to collect the box from you.

Alternatively, Jo Warrilow has kindly agreed that boxes can be dropped off at her house (Timber End Cottage) at the beginning of April.

The Children's Society

This month the photos from the archive show the lovely Tudor House on the Droitwich road. According to Historic England it dates back to c.1600 and in the 19th century was described as being divided into 3 tenements for needle makers.

On the left you can see a barn/stable building now converted into a house. The photos go back to 1970



Keep your contributions coming!

Send pictures and snippets of information to
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A GREAT DAY!

Monday, March 17th was a big day for the group as we had a food safety level 2 course in the morning and then we were hosting our first ever group meeting in the evening. A group meeting is when a W.I. hosts other local W.I.s, so we had ladies come from Hanbury, Inkberrow and Bentley Pauncefoot.

WINE & CHEESE

We decided to do a cheese and wine evening so we had Tom Newbold - 'Tommelier'- do an excellent 30 minute virtual talk on how wine is made and how to taste it (thanks very much to the wine club for the recommendation!).

Then we got into pairs with a new person and went round the room doing a blind tasting and answering a few questions for a bit of light hearted competition.

The night was a roaring success and we had some lovely comments from the visitors. We're all very relieved it's over now though but it's shown us all that we can pull together and run a slick and enjoyable event.

Bring on the Garden Festival!!

CALL FOR CAKES

Speaking of the Garden Festival – we will need around 100 cakes over the course of the weekend, which is a lot to ask for from our small group!

Therefore, if anyone wouldn't mind baking a cake or two between now and mid-May, that would be so helpful. Please write the ingredients down and get in touch with Jen Cary and I can arrange storage 07773 883 039.



The serious business of wine tasting



At the morning session 3 members of the village shop team and the 5 members of Feckenham W.I. successfully completed the the Food Safety Level 2 course.

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OUR 50th ANNIVERSARY

On 5th March 2025, 48 members of Stock and Bradley Gardening Club celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Club with a Celebration Afternoon Tea at the Jinney Ring in Hanbury.

It all began on the 24th March 1975 when a meeting of Stock and Bradley residents was held to decide if there was enough interest to start a horticultural society. By the end of the meeting, the Stock and Bradley Gardening Club was formed. The meetings were to be held on the last Monday of the month in the Village Hall in Bradley Green, and the annual subscription was 50p per person. It was decided to have monthly meetings in the winter months, and to use the summer months for visiting gardens, with a break in December or January for a dinner at a local venue – a formula still followed today.

On Monday 23rd April 1975 the first meeting was held with 23 members. During the years that followed, the day for the meeting changed and finally became the first Wednesday of the month. Fund raising began with coffee mornings, cheese and wine evenings and even a social fancy dress event.

In the early part of the second year, members decided to hold a Flower and Produce Show which was held in September 1976 and took a lot of preparation. The show ran for about 30 years, but although the Show was the highlight of the year, it finally stopped in 2005. A Spring Bulb Show was started in March 1977 and was held annually until 1983 when it was discontinued, but was later resurrected.

In 1980, 1982 and 1998 the outlook for the Club's future caused some concern as members did not come forward to take office when the retiring committee wished to stand down. Membership declined in the nineties but the club survived and by 2004 had started to pick up again.

I became Chairman in October 2007 and still remain in post, some 17 years later, supported by an active and exemplary Committee. In 2000, the

annual membership fee was £5, the same as it is now, 25 years later. Not many societies can claim such success.

The Annual Plant Sale started in May 2007 and has become a very successful event, raising the bulk of our funds, enabling us to have a very full programme of speakers and events each year.

The exact date of the 50th Anniversary is 24th March 2025, but the Committee decided to hold the celebration on the afternoon of a normal meeting date, the first Wednesday of the month. The Club is in a healthy financial position, and funded the bulk of the cost of the celebration.

Our 2025 membership stands currently at 69, and we attract between 40 and 50 members to our monthly meetings. With such a continued strong showing, I'm happy to believe that the Gardening Club can look forward to the next fifty years with some confidence. We welcome new members and would be delighted to see you at our next meeting.

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Stock & Bradley Gardening Club

CLUB MEETING – Wednesday 5th March 2025

The Gardening Club celebrated its 50th anniversary on 5th March by way of a special celebratory ‘Afternoon Tea’ at the Jinney Ring, starting at 3:30pm, instead of an evening meeting. The event was a huge success, attended by 48 members who all enjoyed a splendid afternoon tea, beautifully presented by staff at the Jinney Ring. The venue was decorated with bunting and the savouries and sweets were served to each table on tall columns of plates. A marvellous afternoon of celebration.

NEXT MEETING – Wednesday 2nd April 2025

The next Club meeting will be a talk by Jeff Soulsby entitled ‘Plants for April and Beyond’. Jeff runs a wholesale nursery in Harvington and will bring along seasonal plants to discuss. Plants will also be for sale.

The theme for the monthly competition will be ‘Three Daffodil Flowers (the same or different) with foliage’.

Club meetings are normally held on the first Wednesday of each month at the Village Hall, Church Road, Bradley Green starting at 7.30pm, and are free to members for an annual subscription of £5.00 for 2025. Visitors are made very welcome and may attend for £3.00 per meeting. If you require any further information, ring Rob Cole (Chairman) on 07544 832052.

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SENIOR TEAMS

At the time of writing the weather has improved and we have had a full weekend of sunshine which bodes well for the cricket season as ground preparation work continues.

Feckenham is running three Senior Men's teams in the 2025 season and the 3rd XI will now be playing their Home fixtures at Bromsgrove CC. The 1st XI play their opening fixture in Worcestershire Division 3 at home against Droitwich Spa 2nd XI on the 19th April. The 2nd XI commence their season in Division 8 at home against Cookhill 2nd XI on 3rd May, whilst the 3rd XI also commence their season in Division 9 on the same day against Redditch Entaco.

JUNIOR TEAMS

Junior Teams: The Junior cricket fixtures are now planned out for the 2025 season. Feckenham will be running teams in three different Worcestershire Junior leagues this summer: Under 14 - Pairs (8 a side), Under 14 - T20 (11 a

side), Under 15 - Pairs (10 a side) The Under 14s will commence their season with away games at Coombs Wood (T20) on 4th May and Hagley (Pairs) on 7th May followed by home games on the 13th May versus Bromsgrove (Pairs) and Old Hill (T20) on 18th May. The Under 15s commence their Pairs matches at home against Belbroughton on 12th May.

SOFTBALL

We have also entered an U9 softball tournament (4 Sunday mornings) and are keen for some extra players to help us.

JOIN US

Weekly summer Cricket nets will commence on Friday evenings at 6pm following the Easter Holidays. We are always on the look out for new players so if you are interested in joining either the Senior teams or the Juniors for training and matches then please contact us on feckenhamcc@outlook.com.





The Sisters Fish & Chips van returns to the Cricket Club on 11th April and 2nd May - Friday tea? Sorted!

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