

FECKENHAM

January 2023 NEWS



Published by Feckenham Church for the village.
Editor Gilly Cooper - feckenhamnews@gmail.com
(Copy Date 14th)

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Feckenham News in January

Dates for your Diary

January

- 5th Parish Council Meeting
10th Feckenham Forest History Society
S&B Village Natters: Rural Crime
11th Readers Group
16th WI
26th Stock and Bradley Gardening Club
28th Feckenodeon
Stock and Bradley Burns Night

February

- 26th Ma Bessie's Prohibition Party
Village Hall

Regular Sessions

- Mondays Restorative Yoga
Thursdays Bridge; Hatha Yoga; Pilates
First Tuesday of the month:
Feckenham Sessions and
Feckenham Forest History Society
Third Monday of the month: WI

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Front Cover

Photo Village Green
by the editor

Magazine online at
www.feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk

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 publishers can be held responsible for the views and assertions contained therein.

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Editor's Note

Welcome to the January magazine. At the moment we are well into Christmas preparations and I hope the printer can get this to us in time for the New Year.



I'm sure most of you will have noticed our beautifully decorated village green. This didn't happen without a lot of planning and heavy work. Our team of volunteers sourced a tree and a lot of new decorations using a generous donation from the village shop which demonstrates the shop's commitment and value to the community. The team were out on a very cold morning erecting the tree and putting up the decorations. They will have been out once more hosting Carols on the Square on Christmas Eve in aid of The Air Ambulance Service.

We say a fond goodbye to Rev Barbara and Prof Mark Weathley who are returning north to Yorkshire and their roots. I, for one, will miss them. I'm not a church-goer but I know how much of their time they gave to the village church and I've watched from the sidelines as Barbara trained for the Ministry.

As we approach the start of the New Year, my hopes are for a better year than 2022: free from war, pandemic and the cost of living crisis. Before the start of 2020, little did we know that we were living in the best of times. Now I think of the citizens of Ukraine who, this time last year, were not at war and hope the invasion will be ended and rebuilding can start. I'm also thinking of those people in our country who were managing to get by and now can't afford enough food or heating through no fault of their own.

We have done our bit to help in our different ways. For instance our village Christmas card raised £1250 which was sent to the Trussell Trust, the Foodbank Charity. Many thanks to all those who contributed.

Feckenham Village Hall



NO BOOZE BLUES

Ma Bessie and her Pig Foot Band take us on a trip back to prohibition-era America, bringing us the very best of the period's blues and jazz, with a brilliant homage to the Empress of Blues herself. Julia Titus, as Ma Bessie, treats us to a host of blues standards as well as many of her own compositions all perfectly in tune with the music of the time.

We'll be recreating a speakeasy - feel free to dress appropriately - spats and feather boas were very popular (not necessarily worn together!).

MA BESSIE'S PROHIBITION PARTY Sunday, 26th February at 7.30pm

Tickets for shows at Feckenham Village Hall are on sale at The Village Shop and The Rose & Crown.

You can also book by phone (through TicketSource) on 0333 666 3366 or online at www.feckhall.org

LUCKY WINNERS

Feckenham Village Hall is grateful to everybody who contributed to the Hall's Improvement Fund by entering the monthly draw. The first draws of the year took place at the meeting of the Trustees on 6th December with the following results:

November:

1 st (£25)	56	Phil & Erica Guise
2 nd (£15)	145	Claire & Mark Cull
3 rd (£10)	13	Ian & Veronica Griffiths

December:

1 st (£25)	70	TM & R Hayfield
2 nd (£15)	127	Steve & Ita Daniels
3 rd (£10)	72	TM & R Hayfield

Feckenham Square Management Committee



CHRISTMAS PAST

By the time you read this Christmas will be just a memory - but, at the time of writing, it's all still to come. The Christmas Tree is twinkling away on The Square complete with brand new lights and baubles very kindly donated by The Village Shop. If all has gone to plan, hundreds of villagers and visitors will have enjoyed Carols on The Square (complete with natural or simulated snow). This time All Round Voices will have added real harmony to the carols. Gallons of hot punch will have been guzzled and dozens of mince pies will have been consumed. There will have been a collection for the Air Ambulance and everyone will have enjoyed welcoming Christmas together for the first time in three years - before repairing to the pubs or returning to their firesides.

Assuming that all of this has happened The Square Management Committee would like to express its thanks to The Village Shop, everyone who helped mix and serve the punch, people who kindly donated mince pies, everyone who attended and gave so generously towards a very good cause and finally... the Man with No Name who supplied a lovely tree at a very reasonable cost.

Carols on The Square is presented by Feckenham Square Management Committee as a "thank you" to the village for all the help and cooperation villagers give throughout the year.

AN EXPLANATION

If you've enjoyed events on The Square or even if you've just sat on a bench and admired the view, you may be interested to know how this, and other local assets, are run.

The Square Management Committee, which organises the Carols and Fun on The Square events, is a voluntary Committee working to maintain and enhance The Square on behalf of the landowner, Feckenham Village Amenity Trust. There is a similar Committee which manages the Moors Lane Allotments - the Trust owns those as well.

Some years ago The Square was owned by a private landlord. When it came up for sale it was purchased by Lionel Hill MBE who offered to buy it for the village if a substantial donation could be made to Birmingham Children's Hospital.

Villagers embarked on a year long fund raising campaign and were able to give the Hospital £15,000. In 1996 the land was transferred into the ownership of a registered charity set up with the express aim of looking after the village's "green". The Trustee of the charity was, and still is, Feckenham Parish Council. In 2010 the Trust, through generous gifts and grants, was able to purchase the Moors Lane Allotments. Both sites were vested in the Charity Commission which means that, should the Trustee (the Parish Council) cease to exist, the amenities would continue to be maintained in accord with the terms of the Deed of Trust.

Both voluntary management committees include two representatives of the Trust and regularly report back to the Trustee. The Clerk to the Trustee submits annual reports and returns to the Charity Commission.

YOUR SQUARE AND YOUR ALLOTMENTS

All of this means that The Square and the allotments are owned by the village - and they're run by local volunteers. If you'd like to join them and help water the plants, mow the grass, keep the sites tidy, etc. you'd be very welcome! The Chair of the Square Management Committee is Jay Neale (square@feckenham.f9.co.uk) and you can enquire about allotment activities (and plot rentals) by contacting Fiona Hawker - falgsssec@gmail.com

Village Notices and Letters

T4U CHRISTMAS SHOEBOX APPEAL 2022 Lin Preece



From all of the children and all of the families that will have received one of your 'Special Shoebox Gifts', this Christmas, thank you so much, for your kindness and generosity !

Many of the children that receive a T4U box have nothing at all to call their own. Some children are so in awe at the box alone, that they need encouragement to open it up to take a look inside, they simply can't believe that someone, somewhere, cares about them ! Your boxes will have been so special to them this Christmas, not only because they contained lots of lovely goodies for them to enjoy and treasure, but also because each and every box contained so much more. In every box there was love, in every box there was thoughtfulness, and above all every one of our boxes will have given these children and their families hope for a better and brighter future !

I am over the moon to be able to report that this year we collected 411 Christmas Shoeboxes. I gave T4U £970-60p donations this included £410-60p from my stall on Wake Day & Open Gardens Weekend. This money enabled T4U to make up another 100 boxes on our behalf. The GRAND TOTAL this year is 511. That is so wonderful !!!

This has been a joint effort as always, so thank you Feckenham, Callow Hill Village, Stoke Prior, Upton Warren, Wychbold, Bradley Green & Hanbury. And a big thank you to the children of Feckenham First School, 1st Bromsgrove Otters Cubs & 1st Stoke Prior Guides.

Our boxes were distributed in West & East Romania to Arad & Tulcea. At time of writing T4U had collected over 52,000 shoeboxes nationally and were hoping to get to about 60,000.

Thank you again for all your support! Thank you for all the lovely boxes, all the generous donations, and all the beautiful hand knits !



These people are living through difficult and challenging times lets hope and pray that these simple gifts will have bought some light into all their lives this Christmas !

**TOGETHER WE CAN CHANGE LIVES
ONE BOX AT A TIME**



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MEDITATION

Tribute to Jim Tricklebank



As many folks of Feckenham would have known my Dad, I thought it would be nice to write a little tribute.

Dad and I worked together doing electrical work for 30 years. As many of you witnessed, Dad had a strong work ethic, and hardly stopped from 08.00 till 17.00. His time keeping was always 10 minutes early, so we were never late.

Dad only had one day off sick over this time, and that was because I got Sepsis and while I was recovering, Dad took the brunt of the work and got a hernia. Crikey I felt terrible about that as you can imagine, but Dad made nothing of it. A few paracetamol and a planned operation to net the hernia and back to normal. Amazing !!

Some of the larger jobs in the village, which took several days/weeks gave quite an insight into Dad's attitude to work. People often commented to me about how fit he was.

Dad started out working on the farm at 11 years old. At 15 he met Mum while he was working for Becketts Farm at Wythall. Mum

and Dad married in 1960.

They would go on to raise four children, Julie, Philip, Helen and Kay, then along came the next two generations, 10 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. They were happily married for 62 years, and we were all fortunate to be able to celebrate their diamond wedding anniversary with them.

Dad went on to lorry driving and then retrained to become a teacher. This was an amazing change of career, but it suited Mum and Dad very nicely to enjoy the 12 weeks holiday together every year. At the tender age of 52, Dad took a part time position in teaching, and filled the week up working with me at Electrodyne Ltd.

Dad became ill after work on the 5th October this year, and had a few weeks in and out of hospital. Turned out that he had Non Hodgkins Lymphoma which was untreatable. He took the news courageously, his only wish was to die at home.

Dad spent his last 13 days at home in Barnt Green, looking out at the garden. He was attended by a marvellous group of carers and district nurses. He had his family around him constantly, and died peacefully on Monday 5th December.

Trish and I miss him terribly, as do all of the family.

Thank you to everyone for your kind messages and cards.

Phil Tricklebank

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Bio-Diversity Update - Jeff Matthews

The final lot of trees and bulbs will have been planted by the time you read this, with flower meadows set in the churchyard, the cricket field (at the North end) and on the Archaeology Site (in between the children's play area and site). Bulbs and plug plants have also gone into all these areas, as well as behind Coupass Cottages (with the support of Feckenham in Bloom). The Natural Networks grant fund will close in February, so this marks the end of the 45% funding that we have enjoyed towards the project. However, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust continue in the background with their advice and guidance. Chris Bristow is continuing the work, in particular in connection with the Archaeology Site. Can we thank the Parish Council, Feckenham Charity, Parochial Church Council and Friends of Feckenham Parish Church, all of whom supported the whole project, and Feckenham shop who supported the work on the Archaeology Site.

Also to Chris Bristow, Kathy Gee, Cate Statham, Judy Underwood, John Eaton and Ian Hunter for their work and support. There's still more to be done but a good start in this very important work.

Churchyard - How Would You Like to Help?

One of the pleasures I have had in recent years has been coordinating the work in the churchyard. I took over from Brian Robson a few years ago now organising the rota for

the mowing and organising the quarterly Churchyard Saturday mornings to keep things tidy.

We have just completed the bio-diversity work, and that needs to be continued with care for native species, the flower meadows and the new trees (as well as the nesting boxes and other habitats).

With us leaving the village in March, I am now looking for someone to take over the coordinating role of this very rewarding job. You don't need to be a Church goer, just revel in the beauty of nature!

If you would like to know more about the role and what it entails please get in touch: jeff@the-madison-group.co.uk or 892180.



NEW VILLAGE WEBSITE

The new village website is now live and open to visitors.

www/feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk

For many year the village has been represented online by feckenham.com which was managed and maintained by Tim Smith. Unfortunately, due to recently introduced regulations regarding parish council websites, this has had to be replaced by a new site. The Council is most grateful to Tim for his hard work and dedication over a very long period.

The new site fully complies with government accessibility legislation and contains Parish Council documents, information and useful links. It also contains Feckenham community information - and it's where you can read Feckenham News online. For the time being anyone visiting feckenham.com will be diverted to the new site. At the time of writing some areas of the site are incomplete but these will be attended to in the coming weeks.

www/feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk



THE FECKENHAM DIRECTORY

Remember the Feckenham Directory? The time has come to produce an updated version of this popular booklet which is full of information about all things Feckenham.

Looking for a group to enjoy your leisure time? Who does what on the Square? How can I contact my Councillors? What time do the pubs open? It's all in the Directory.

In order to keep the Directory correct we need people to send us information about any group they are involved with.

Contact me marionchute@me.com or Jen Cary on jen@thecarys.co.uk Information can also be sent to the Clerk to the Council at 7 Droitwich Road, Feckenham. B96 6JE.

The Directory is published by Feckenham Parish Council and everyone who lives in Feckenham Parish will get a copy delivered. The contents will also be available on the new Parish Council website

www/feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk

THE FECKENHAM DIRECTORY



2023

USEFUL CONTACTS AND HELPFUL INFORMATION
PUBLISHED BY FECKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Please contact the clerk with any queries on tel
01527 892522 or email
clerk@feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Amazingly this is the sixth time Swansbrook Radio has been able to greet a New Year. This time we do so in a village which is still struggling to regain its momentum following the pandemic. There are more things happening than there were at this time last year and we hope that Swansbrook can get out and about to report on them. We're also planning a major live transmission from a village event early in the year - watch this space!

JOIN US?

Right from the start Swansbrook Radio has been keen to nurture new talent and encourage anyone who fancies a go at broadcasting to take the first step. A lady who started broadcasting with us is now working with BBC Radio 1 - so we could be your stepping stone to stardom! If you have even the slightest thoughts that you might like to help keep our very local radio station on the air, just email us at radio@swansbrook.com and we'll be happy to chat about the possibilities.

If you're new to Feckenham or haven't yet searched us out please follow the instructions below - you'll find music to your taste, conversations to savour and all sorts of local information. Our catalogue of programmes goes back six years - and they're all available for your to listen to On Demand

LISTEN TO THE SWANS

Go to www.swansbrook.com and follow the instructions you'll find there. Our programmes are available for you to play ON DEMAND - listen when and where you like - as often as you like.

FECKENHAM'S OWN Local Radio
www.swansbrook.com

The FeckenOdeon Cinema Society



FORE!

The FeckenOdeon's January film tells the story of the golfing world's answer to Eddie the Eagle. Maurice Flitcroft, crane driver, dreamer and incurable optimist, is determined to scale the heights and win the 1976 British Golf Championships. His only handicap? He can't play golf. Allegedly a true story, this tale has made a hugely entertaining film for golfers and non-golfers alike. Mark Rylance plays Maurice. (UK 2022)

PHANTOM OF THE OPEN (12A)

Saturday, 28th January - 7.30pm

Tickets for all FeckenOdeon films are on sale at The Village Shop and The Rose & Crown. You can also book by phone (through TicketSource) on 0333 666 3366 or online at www.fecknodeon.co.uk

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Wintery Images in the Village

Ash buds down Moors Lane -
Kathy Gee



Stunning tree a the start of the
cold snap. Marion Chute



Our cygnet developing its
adult plumage with one
of its parents at the
Whirly Hole



CHURCH SERVICES



PARISH CHURCH of ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Priest-in-charge: Fr Glenn Reading 01527 894436

Church Warden: Ann Mathews 892180

Please contact Ann for Weddings at ann@the-madison-group.co.uk

Glen for Baptisms & Funerals at glenn.reading@googlemail.com

Website: <http://feckenhamchurch.org.uk/>

Email: info@feckenhamchurch.org.uk



PARISH CHURCH
OF
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
FECKENHAM

Services for January 2023

1 st January	10.30am	Eucharist	Revd J. Green
8 th January	9.00am	BCP Eucharist	Fr Glenn Reading
15 th January	6.30pm	Evensong	Fiona Carter
22 nd January	10.30am	Eucharist	Fr Glenn Reading
29th January	10.30am	Headless Cross	
	4.00pm	Astwood Bank	

FECKENHAM ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH St John Fisher & Thomas More

Due to illness, Mass will not be held at St John Fisher and Thomas More until further notice.

Mount Carmel 6 pm 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 63096

Local contact: Phylis Mott, Feckenham. Tel 893898

Fr Glen writes

As we begin a new year the idea of 'New' has been a thought most of us would have had. We may have made New Year's Resolutions... 'a new year, a new me'. We may be contemplating moving house or job or doing something new for the first time.

Life, as we know does not stand still and things move on. It's a debatable point if things get better, worse but life rarely starts the same. In the ancient world the received wisdom was things got worse over time, succeeding Kingdoms and generations were inferior to the ones that came before.

Whether our country is getting better or worse I'll leave you to decide, but it strikes me that Britain is an uncomfortable place to live at this present time. As we begin 2023 we stand on a huge cliff of uncertainty and we feel divided as a nation. We seem to be asking ourselves the question "Where are we going?"

Many people have lost confidence in Government and the political class, have lost confidence in those who speak in public whether they be politicians, clergy, or journalists.

I see the rise of nationalism and populist politics, the rise of xenophobia, the rise of child poverty, the abandonment of the poor and vulnerable by rich political elite, I see political parties too weak lead, concerned only with their electability and survival. A government and opposition that seems to care not for its people. I want to add my voice to the thousands across this land that scream out and say "What about us? What about us?"

It is into this darkness, into this fear, that Christians across this land, Christians that are the Church need to reflect and shine out the light of the Gospel. For that is what God asks of us. "That we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children."

Because our Lord and Saviour, Jesus who died at Calvary and more importantly rose again calls us to show the world what a perfect, redeemed Kingdom of his people looks like. It is a Kingdom of love, compassion, justice, and freedom.

What then is the answer to fear and hate?...Love, love is the solution. 1 John says, "In love there is no room for fear; indeed, perfect love banishes fear".

Let us reflect the love and grace of God to everyone regardless of ideology, race, creed, religion, gender, or anything else.

Secondly, let us show compassion, as Jesus healed the broken and feed the hungry let us show those in need the compassion we have found in Christ, let us offer the healing we found for our brokenness. Let us show the country and the world how to have discussion and dialogue, to strive to understand the other, and find a way to live together life in all its fulness.

Let us strive for justice and challenge the unjust structures of our society and attitudes that serve only to divide.

Finally let us show the world what true freedom looks like in the Kingdom of God a place where we can bring our worries and fears to God in prayer knowing God and hears and answers according to our need.

If Christians take our birth right in the Kingdom of God seriously, we will be offended by anything that denies love, compassion, justice and freedom. Because the heart of the Christian Gospel is:

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,

WHAT'S ON IN FECKENHAM VILLAGE HALL

MA BESSIE'S PROHIBITION PARTY

Sharing the Jazz & Blues
of Bessie Smith
and her contemporaries
with a new audience



FEATURING
MA BESSIE
AND HER
PIGFOOT
BAND

LIVE
& LOCAL

SUNDAY 26th FEBRUARY - 7.30PM

Tickets £13.50 from The Village Shop and The Rose & Crown

Book online at www.feckhall.org

Phone bookings: 0333 666 3366

Send details of events for FREE listing to:

FECKENHAM



THE
**FECKENHAM
SESSIONS**
TRADITIONAL
MUSICMAKING
at THE ROSE & CROWN

First Tuesday of every month from 8pm
NEXT SESSION: Tuesday, 3rd January

Feckenham Parish Council **MEETING**

Thursday, 5th January at 7.30 pm
Feckenham Village Hall, Back Room

Members of the public are very welcome
to attend. There will be an opportunity
early in the proceedings for parishioners to
voice concerns or ask questions.

*For the agenda of this meeting, minutes of
past meetings and other information
please visit:*

www.feckenham-parishcouncil.gov.uk

Feckenham READERS GROUP

Meets on

Wednesday, 11th January - 7.45

This month's book:

THE RED HOUSE

By Mark Haddon

Details: 892285



THE **FECKENODEON** CINEMA SOCIETY

Mark Rylance

BASED ON A TRUE STORY

Sally Hawkins

The **Phantom of the Open**

Every dreamer deserves a shot



12A

FeckenOdeon 1 Saturday, 28th January at 7.30pm

The FeckenOdeon Cinemas
at Feckenham Village Hall

Tickets for all shows from **The Rose & Crown and Village Shop**
Telephone Booking 0333 666 3366* Online Booking* & full information at
www.fecknodeon.co.uk

*Booking Fee applies to Phone and Online Bookings

*Phone calls answered by Ticketsource and charged at standard rates - NOT a premium line

the**WI** FECKENHAM **WI** INSPIRING WOMEN

Next Meeting - 16th January

8pm - Feckenham Village Hall

Coming soon: *Italic Handwriting Workshop*

Email karenreynolds2013@gmail.com for details

The Feckenham Forest History Society

KINWARTON **A Tin Pot Village**

An illustrated talk by Alan Godfrey

Tuesday, 10th January - 7.30pm

Webheath Village Hall

whatson@feckenham.f9.co.uk or call 892130



OUT OF THE BLUE Big Band

The Birmingham-based Out of the Blue Big Band and vocalist Jan Harris gave a stunning concert in the Village Hall on 19th November to a full and appreciative audience. The concert was given to raise funds for The Sick Children's Trust, a charity that supports and accommodates families while their chronically sick children are in hospital. The Band, under their conductor Jo James, entertained us superbly with a popular programme of classic swing, blues, latin, soul, pop and rock & roll. Several of the audience were inspired to dance, and not a foot stayed still! All of the performers generously gave their time for free, and in total we raised £1000 for the charity, so we are truly grateful to the Band, Jo James, Jan Harris and all those who helped, assisted, fixed the lighting, manned the bar, donated items for the raffle and the auction and also cash! An amazing village effort – so thank you. A response from the SCT can be seen

below.

Shirley Harman, Jill and David Rowe.

Good evening Jillian

I wanted to write to say a massive thank you for sending through the funds raised from your Jazz night – wow what a phenomenal amount of money raised which we are truly grateful for. How did it all go? Were you pleased and I bet everyone had the best time – I can't wait to hear all about it!

To put the amount into context this will fund over 24 nights of accommodation for a family when their sick child is in hospital at one of our home from homes when they are going through the toughest of times. To be offered a warm and comfy room, a warm shower, the opportunity for a hot meal, the support of our incredible house teams and that little sense of normality when the rest of their lives are out of control is something you cannot put a price on – you have all made this happen for so many families and it means the world to us.

I hope you are feeling super proud! Please do pass on our thanks to everyone involved and all of us at the charity wish you a safe and happy Christmas.

Warmest wishes
Vanessa

Vanessa Simmons | Head of Fundraising
| The Sick Children's Trust
07886
934957 vanessa@sickchildrenstrust.org
| www.sickchildrenstrust.org

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celebrantrosemary42@gmail.com

Readers Group

The book, American Dirt, by Jeanine Cummins made for a very interesting discussion. The story is set in Mexico where a mother and her son, who are on the run from a cartel, escape across the border to the USA. For some of us it was quite a page-turner with some very gruesome elements and some heartwarming descriptions of people who help along the way. The author, who is from the USA was criticised for writing the book when Mexican writers struggle to get published. We felt she had every right to write on this subject and she did explain in the afterword that she has done a lot of research.

The book made us reconsider what causes people to become assylum seekers, refugees or economic migrants - a very topical subject. It was interesting to be thinking about the issue but on a different continent.

Our next read is The Red House by Mark Haddon

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Gary Ford—NFU Local Rep and Partner at NFU Mutual Insurance will talk about Trends and Impact

Tea & Coffee will be available & *we will ask for donations toward hall running costs on the night.

Please register for this free event at sbvh.org.uk/shop to help us establish numbers.

BURNS NIGHT SOCIAL & CEILIDH DANCE - 28th Jan - 7.30pm

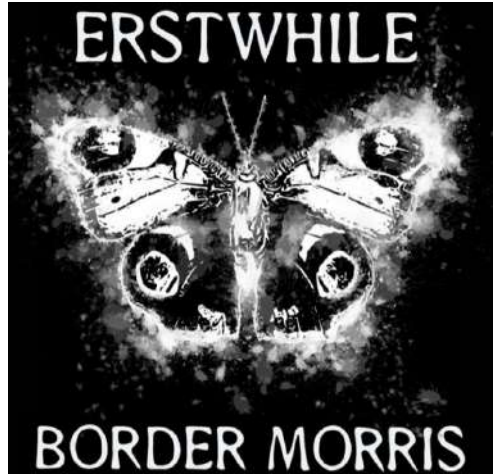
Help drive out those Post-Xmas Blues. A light buffet with a Scottish theme and bar & raffle.

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All tickets on-line at sbvh.org.uk/shop or phone 07976165191 for details

Feckenham WI - Jen Cary

For our November meeting we were very lucky to be joined by Erstwhile Border Morris, a rather unusual mixed Morris group based up the road in Bradley Green. We all thoroughly enjoyed listening to the fabulous music and watching the intricate dances. Thankfully, when it came our turn to learn a dance they gave us a simple one! Many thanks to Cindy Foster and the whole group for making us feel so welcome and being so patient with us!



Our meetings are every 3rd Monday of the month in Feckenham Village Hall back room. Doors open at 7.45pm and the meetings start at 8pm. Members are free and guests are £5. Our next meeting is on the 19th December and is either a trip to the Snow Dome for those who fancy it, or drinks in the Rose and Crown.



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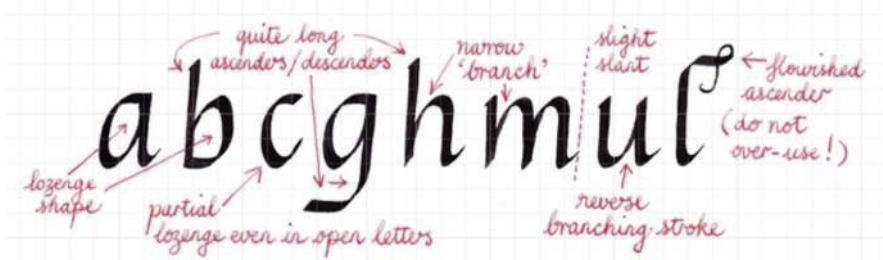
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Italic Handwriting Workshop with David Rowe



Date: TBC but likely to be late January.

Cost: £15 plus you'll need to buy a basic kit in advance

Venue: Feckenham Village Hall

Lunch: Bring your own

After so many of us enjoyed David Rowe's demonstration of his beautiful calligraphy at October's WI meeting, Karen has approached David and asked if we could take him up on his offer of a day-long workshop. This would cover the basics of italic handwriting.

We need a minimum of 5 people to run the workshop. If we get over 18 then we will have to add on a small venue hire charge as we'll have to go in the main hall.

Although this event is being subsidised by Feckenham WI, it is open to members and non-members alike.

If you are interested in taking part, please email Karen Reynolds with which dates you can make: karenreynolds2013@gmail.com

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Feckenham Archive - Marion Chute



This month it seemed appropriate to show this lovely picture of the High St circa 1919 with everyone clearly in their Sunday best and dragged in to pose for the photographer. Most notable are the shops on the right of the photo. I've had a couple of new photos and hope to add more. Your precious photos will be returned to you once digitised.
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Feckenham Village Shop - Alan Slater

Happy New Year everyone, I hope you all enjoyed the festive season and you are looking forward to whatever you are planning in 2023.

In retrospect the last twelve months has been another successful year for the Village Shop, so much so, that we have been able to continue the Boards policy of investing a substantial proportion of our profits into supporting numerous Feckenham events and organisations. For example, during 2022 we gave donations to:-

- *Fecken Breakfast (Ukraine Appeal)
- *Feckenham Spring Fayre
- *Feckenham Horse Show
- *Feckenham Allotment Society
- *Hanbury Countryside Show
- *Feckenham Open Garden Festival
- *Feckenham Wake
- *Feckenham Parish Council
- *Friends of Feckenham Church
- * The Square Christmas Lights
- *Feckenham Senior Lunch Club

All of which would not have been possible without your support of the Shop. However these sponsorships are under threat for as I mentioned last month, we are facing a challenging year ahead as we anticipate massive increases to our overheads. The majority of which are beyond our control, so it is vital that your support of the Shop continues. In fact if every Villager spent just a pound a day in the Shop, over a year our sales would double, our profits would increase and we would be able to continue investing in our local community possibly to an even greater degree. I would also like to make another appeal, as well as being a customer why not become a Shareholder ?

The Village Shop is a 'not to trade for profit' Society with any surplus generated being used for the operational needs of the shop and local community investment. It was launched 14 years ago this month with establishment funds from over 300 Shareholders, at £10 a share.

Like any company, Shareholders play an important role in holding the Shop Board to account: determining who and how it is managed and ensuring that the management team is operating in a manner to its success.

As the years have passed, a number of the founding Shareholders are, alas, no longer with us or indeed many have relocated from the village. It is therefore, critical to the ongoing success of the business that we invite new shareholders to join. We encourage all villagers (and Volunteers) to participate, for new shareholders bring the energy, insight and new ideas that the Shop needs to sustain its future. I urge you to give this invitation serious thought and if you are interested please visit the Shop for a Shareholder Application or email Paul at info@feckenhamshop.co.uk Invest in your village by investing in your shop. Ten quid it's a bargain!



An Organic Allotment in January by Pete Delaney

HARVESTING THE PAST, SOWING THE FUTURE

Happy new year. Midwinter's day is past and though still in the heart of Winter, nature will have opened an eye to the seasons to come. Down the plot the land looks bleak but the winter produce is still coming. Being mild until mid December helped our winter crops, we can hardly believe we were picking raspberries until late last month. I even picked some frozen to the plants in the first frost of the year. Also we were harvesting banana peppers in the polytunnel until almost Christmas. Our winter lettuce has kept growing strong under a cloche. Don't water them much and after frosts discard damaged outer leaves. Jerusalem artichokes were a new crop for us this winter, they turned out well with several tubers to each plant, sliced and added to a vegetable stir-fry is nice or in with a butternut squash curry.

Another first was red winter radish (Daikon). We had to fight off slugs when they were autumn saplings, but once established they didn't need much looking after and grew on through all weathers, large and peppery, a tasty winter harvest. For a second year leeks have been a great winter crop, it's nice to see a couple of rows of something growing at this time of the year. Later this month I shall sow next winter's leeks in trays in the polytunnel, alongside broad beans in pots with glass sheeting or clear plastic over them. For me cabbage is a must grow for the winter, green goodness thriving in the frost, with hardly a bug or butterfly to bother them. Slug watch is important though, if there are holes in the leaves they are there somewhere - search every leaf. I happened to have observed that if a colony of slugs has been removed from a particular cabbage, there seems to be a period of time before any new slugs colonize that plant. I

get to know each plant and keep watch for new holes in leaves. Through the winter I regularly feed cabbages with diluted comfrey water. This month I consider what will be growing where according to my crop rotations for this year. Patches of ground that previously grew a very hungry crop, I feed own-made compost with extra horse muck and ashes forked in. Cabbages take a lot out of the ground and soon I shall take down the half of my cabbage net in which I grew a summer crop. (leaving the other half as it still has the winter crop in it) and begin feeding and preparing the soil for its new produce: this year's runner beans and peas. This will include digging a trench to fill with veg peelings and such discards, giving the proposed runner bean patch its own purpose-made compost bin. Land that has had crops with small roots grown in it, such as salads, should not really need feeding and should be good in the next season for maybe onions or root veg. Another good reason to plant beans and peas on tired land is that they have a good give and take relationship with the earth, feeding from it, but giving some goodness back, which also seems to me to be the purpose and experience of keeping an allotment.



Rob Cole's Gardening Tips

Christmas in Madeira

Not being great lovers of the run up to Christmas, we have often escaped to the Porto Santa Maria hotel in the Madeira capital, Funchal, quietly situated on the edge of the 'old town'.

The weather in Madeira in December is varied, but the daytime temperature is fairly consistent at around 19C. We have been lucky to have sunshine nearly every day, and some of the days have been cloudless giving us plenty of opportunity to enjoy walking and to visit some of Funchal's gardens. The terrain of Madeira is very hilly, and whilst the main commercial roads are often good dual carriageways, lesser roads are narrow, twisting, and cling precariously to the hillsides.



The high level Botanical Garden can be reached by local bus, by the cable car from the waterfront at Funchal, or by a strenuous and steep walk up the hill. The Garden is well maintained and contains a wide variety of warm climate plants, many of which were completely unknown to us, or recognisable

only as house plants. The whole site is on a terraced hillside, and paths criss-cross the terraces, and steps or slopes give access up and down.

Another garden nearby is the Monte Palace Garden, and this is built around a steep ravine. Planting here is more woodland in feel, and the pathways are styled with red Japanese bridges and many sculptures. There is a large house on the site, and the surrounding water features give an air of elegance and style.

A third venue for plant enthusiasts, not to be missed, is Palheiro Gardens to the north east of Funchal, again set at high level in the hillside. To us, this felt more familiar to our English styling, although the planting was again quite exotic and very well maintained.

If you are a keen walker, one of the escorted walks along the network of levadas is an absolute must. The levadas are an extensive system of narrow water channels, constructed to carry water from the wetter north of the island to the drier south, primarily for crop irrigation, and alongside they have narrow maintenance paths which have now become tourist walkways. Many companies offer these escorted walks, either for a whole day or a half day, and they are the safest way to explore these fascinating trails.

If you prefer coastal walks on your own, you could do as we did, and catch the local bus from Funchal to the neighbouring fishing port of Camara de Lobos, and then walk back the 11km to Funchal by a delightful and very varied coastal walkway. As you get closer to Funchal, there are plenty of little cafes, not at all expensive, where you can take a breather to admire the sea views.

Madeira has much to offer the Christmas time tourist, and crowds of locals throng the streets of 'old town' Funchal in the evenings, in a very busy but friendly atmosphere.

On every visit, we have loved it.



STOCK AND BRADLEY GARDENING CLUB

Our 7th of December event, after our AGM, was a talk by Adrian James who gave us an illustrated insight into the world of 'Folklore and More'. Adrian is a talented photographer and gave us examples of the many myths and legends which surround our garden plants.

NEXT CLUB EVENT - Thursday 26th January 2023 at 7:00pm for 7:30pm

We do not hold a meeting in January, but instead gather together for a Dinner Evening. This year we are again at The Boot at Flyford Flavell. Members have been notified, and pre-booking is essential.

Membership of the Gardening Club is currently by £5.00 annual subscription which becomes due on 1st January each year. Please make cheques payable to 'Stock and Bradley Gardening Club'. We welcome new members to join us at any time throughout the year.

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 2022. Visitors are made very welcome and may attend for £3.00 per meeting. If you require any further information, ring Dinny Pynsent (Secretary) on 01527 821355 or Rob Cole (Chairman) on 07544 832052.

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Feckenham Cricket Club - Bob Gordon

The wet spell in late November and early December restricted ground maintenance because of the very soft ground but as I write is rock hard due to the very low temperatures. This has at least allowed the remaining debris from the November 5th bonfire to be removed. The bonfire site will now be raked and a magnet used to find nails and other metal debris that must be retrieved before the bare patch can be prepared and seeded.

The tree work that was mentioned last month has largely been completed, the diseased ash by the clubhouse having been cut down to fence level, a task that was fascinating to watch. The trunk has been cut into smaller pieces and members that need fuel for their fires/log-burners will share this. Membership until the end of 2023 is available at £15 per adult, £20 for a couple and £10 for senior citizens, from the club (or contact me on 07749 884062).

In addition, some of the smaller lower branches were removed from the large bough of the ash tree that crosses Mill Lane by the club's pedestrian entrance. The contractor will complete the reduction work once they have arranged for Western Power to temporarily switch off the electricity to the nearby overhead wires. Local residents will be advised when we have a date and time.

The club hosts a Christmas Jumper competition on the afternoon of Saturday 17th December and we will be graced by a

visit from Mrs Claus! There will also be a raffle, with a hamper as the main prize.

On New Year's Eve we will again be providing members with a fun evening (starting at 7:30pm) as we see in the New Year with some karaoke and games and a few nibbles. Fancy dress is encouraged and admission is strictly by ticket (£5). A maximum of 30 tickets are available so early booking is advised.

Over the festive period, the club will open Thu-Sun as usual, although we will NOT be open on Christmas Day. On Boxing day we open from 1pm.



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