

FECKENHAM

March 2021

News



Published by Feckenham Church for the Village
Editors: Gilly Cooper & Sasha Furey
feckenhamnews@gmail.com
(Copy Date 14th)

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Feckenham News in March

Editor's Note

Hello everyone,

We are delighted to introduce Gilly Cooper as our new Editor. Gilly and I have co-edited this issue, and she will take over fully from April onwards. Gilly will be available on feckenhamnews@gmail.com from the beginning of March.

Taking on the editorial role for these past few months has been a wonderful and unique experience, and one that I will miss. It's time for me to complete my sixth form studies, in whatever form that might take!

I would like to thank each person who helps to produce and distribute the magazine for their help and encouragement. Finally, I hope Gilly will enjoy editing as much as I have.

Sasha

Dates for March



Book Club	11th
Mothering Sunday	14th
Deadline for The Village Shop	31st
Lent - Night Prayer - Monday nights	- 8.45pm

Does anyone have a reel-to-reel tape recorder I could borrow to play some old family tapes?

If so, please contact Arthur Hind: arthur7.hind@btinternet.com
07802775509

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892130

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Gilly Cooper - Editor

Contents

A Journey through Lent	p5
Alter Rail Gates	p9
Archaeology Group	p11
Book Club	p11
Church Flower Group	p5
Church Services	p4
Cricket Club	p13
Elizabeth Nixon	p7
FeckenOdeon	p12
Fundraising for QE	p8
Gilly's Lockdown	p13
Litter Picking	p6
Newshound	p6
Ode to Feckenham	p10
Square Management	p10
Swansbrook Radio	p12
Thought for the Month	p7
Village Hall	p10
Village Shop	p9

Front Cover

Spring time on the Square.
Photograph taken by Arthur Hind in 2007.

Magazine online at
www.feckenham.com

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.

March Church Services

PARISH CHURCH of ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Priest-in-charge: Rev Wyn Beynon **07595313035**

Church Warden: Ann Mathews **892180**

Please contact Wyn for Weddings, Baptisms & Funerals at wynbeynon@gmail.com or Ann at ann@the-madison-group.co.uk

Church Website: achurchnearyou.com/church/18729 **Email:** info@feckenhamchurch.org.uk

Wychbrook Website: <http://www.wychebrook.co.uk>

There will be a **service on zoom every Sunday at 11.00am**. Please phone Ann Matthews for details 892180 or e-mail ann@the-madison-group.co.uk for the link to join.

Due to the ongoing pandemic we are still not able to say whether there will be any services in church in March. Up-to-date information can be found on the church noticeboard at the end of Church Walk and on the church website www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18729

If you would like to be kept up to date on events in the church and would like to join our email mailing list please send your details to jeff@the-madison-group.co.uk



FECKENHAM ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

St John Fisher & Thomas More

There is a live-streamed Mass on Sundays at 4.30pm. Fr. Tony Rohan will officiate. The link is: www.eventcast.uk/live

Note: Type the link into your browser on your computer. Do not use a search engine.



Fr. Anthony Rohan, The Presbytery, Redditch. Tel 63096

Local contact: Phylis Mott, Feckenham. Tel 893898

A Journey Through Lent



As we shall be unable to meet 'face to face' for our usual ecumenical Lent Course, our journey through Lent this year will look and feel rather different.

As part of our Lenten discipline this year, I am offering the opportunity for us to come together each Monday evening throughout the 6 weeks of Lent within the context of Night Prayer (Compline) for a short Lenten Reading and Reflection.

beginning

Monday, 22nd February 2021

our service will start at the usual time

8.45pm for 9.00pm

and we will finish at around 9.30pm.

In addition, suggestions for further reflection and prayers will be circulated for each of the 6 weeks throughout the season of Lent & Holy Week.

If you would like to be part of this Lenten journey, please contact

Revd Barbara Wheatley
barbarawheatley@btinternet.com
01527 892969

Church Flower Group - Margaret Perry



Easter Sunday is on the 4th April this year and at the present time it is unknown whether a service in church will take place.

Nevertheless the flower group ladies will ensure a display of lilies will be put in the porch in memory of loved ones.

Should anyone require any information please telephone either Ann on 892180 or Margaret on 544440.

Margaret and Marg.



John and Debbie Watton and their two Curly Coated Retrievers moved into the village in November last year. John (44) is from Studley and we believe many of his distant relatives are buried in the churchyard here in Feckenham. One of his family members is currently working on the family tree, so we will hopefully find out one day. His wife Debbie (53) is from Kidderminster.

“We used to live in Feckenham at number 12, but after 5 years, in 2013, decided to sell up and follow our dream to Cornwall. Sadly, it didn’t quite work out as Cornwall is not great for logistics when running your own business. We are online retailers and have run our own business for some 15 years. So, with a heavy heart we came back to the Midlands settling at first in Hanbury, but Feckenham kept calling to us! And now we are back in the village, two doors up from where we left off. Hopefully this will be our forever home and village. Looking forward to meeting everyone properly when we finally can.”

“A little belated but massive hello from Kay Ramsden and Carl and Tom Butler and little 5 year old Daisy who all moved into Saltway Barn in October. Kay is a Key Account Manager (in sales) and in my mid 30s. Carl is a Technical Manager in his 40s and Tom is currently finishing his A-levels and will apparently be an adult in the Summer!!!

We’ve recently been lucky to move from Hanbury to the lovely village of Feckenham where we’ve always wanted to live and we have been made to feel so welcome and really love living here.

You will find us walking our bull terrier Daisy who is a little nervous with other dogs and can be grumpy but absolutely loves people.

We can’t wait to meet everyone for a drink in the local pubs and join in the activities when it is safe to do so.”



A pack of soggy sandwiches, one glove, cans and drinks bottles, sweet wrappers, a pile of cigarette butts and face masks: just a few of the articles you might find as you walk our local roads while the footpaths are muddy after all the rain and melting snow.

Our neighbours, Phylis and Michael Mott, were disappointed to see the hedgerows and ditches at the sides of the roads around the village so littered. I met them one day coming home holding their litter picking sticks and dressed in high viz gilets. We got talking, from a distance of course, and they told me that they had noticed more and more litter on the verges and decided to do something about it before the spring when vegetation grows over the mess. They have dealt with Swansbrook Lane, Rockhill Lane and the Saltway from Alcester into the village. At first they would take one bin bag but that’s often not enough, so they fill a few bags when walking and then return with the car to bring it home to be collected when the bin lorry comes round. Other residents have also been tidying up. Peter Teisen has concentrated on Flying Horse Lane and tells me he has been doing this for a few years noticing an increase since the pandemic struck, and Steve Bennett posted a picture of his car full of rubbish on our Facebook page.

All this begs some questions: Is there more rubbish due to lockdown or are we noticing what was already there? Who is leaving the mess and can they be discouraged from doing this?

I’m not sure we can answer all these questions but we can, like Phylis and Michael, do something about it. I hear that some villages have an annual working party who do big cleanup. Obviously we couldn’t work together but I wonder if anyone would like to coordinate a litter-pick and assign small sections to volunteers as a one off task or to be taken on for a longer term.

Anyone interested, please contact Gilly Cooper feckenhamnews@gmail.com

Thought for the Month

Rev. Wyn Beynon

Dear Friends,

One of the oddest things I see on the internet news sites is an invitation to let the editors know what I think about the Covi-19 vaccines. I have no idea what that could possibly mean as I'm not medically trained.

I am grateful that there are scientists and medical staff who understand how these things work. I'm grown up enough to know that nothing is, or can be, 100% perfect. But I trust science enough to accept that the vaccines offer the human race the best way out of pandemics; this one in particular, and other diseases in general.

Yet the need for "balance" in news means that, no matter what the subject, someone with the opposite point of view must be given their share of coverage. I'm told this is democracy. Well, yes, I get that. Up to a point.

The trouble is viruses are not respectors of democracy. Vaccines work whether you believe in them or not. These are not matters of opinion. They are simply, rough and ready, everyday facts.

Now, there are nuances of opinion within scientific communities, and sometimes large disagreements. But the overwhelming evidence is that vaccines are effective and safe. It's demonstrable time and time again in research. Yet we still have to give space to the doubters, the flat earthers, the evolution deniers and the conspiracy theorists as though their points of view are equally valid. But they are not. The earth is not flat. God did not create the universe in 7 successive 24 hour days. (The Bible doesn't say so, in any case!) Conspiracy theorists are sad people with a dis-eased view of the world. Yet we have to report them as though their views are a valid alternative to reality. But they are not.

In the Church we have the same sort of people who take conservative views on everything, seeing science and rational thinking

as enemies. They were the ones who wanted to keep slavery, deny women the vote and any place in ministry, insisting that men have authority over women, refused to accept the evolutionary hypothesis, wouldn't allow contraception, remarriage of divorced people and refused point-blank to understand same sex relationships.

Jesus met equivalent people 2000 years ago. He called them "whitewashed tombs" and refused to give them any credence. Now there's a thought for Lent!

Best wishes,

Wyn

Elizabeth Nixon

June 10th 1921 to December 3rd 2020

Those of you who remember Elizabeth Nixon will be sorry to hear that at the age of 99 she died in December. She lived in Callow Hill with her husband John for 50 years before moving to Malvern.

Elizabeth was a Feckenham 'star' and instigated the drop in coffee mornings, the monthly lunch club, the open gardens and flower festival to name a few.

Alongside these commitments she had several sittings a year in the Magistrate's Court, tended her garden, entertained and was a wonderful wife and mother. Her motto was 'get on with it' which is fine if you have her boundless energy and love of life!

We will miss her and John. We send good wishes to her children – David who used to take services at John the Baptist and Rosie who sang in the choir and played the violin most beautifully.

Janie Anderson

Fundraising for Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, Birmingham

James Allardice

My wife, Kate Allardice, is a member of the Church Flower Guild, Volunteer for the Over-60s Lunch Club and, until May last year, a Foundation Governor at Feckenham First School. We've been supporters of village events and businesses since we moved to the area in 2017 from Malta.

In July, she started to notice some abdominal pain and discomfort. She went to see her GP and was referred for an ultrasound, which showed a large mass. The GP told her that it was probably nothing to worry about and that she "didn't want to say the C-word but..." so Kate was booked in for a CT scan.

The CT scan showed that Kate had a rare cancer called liposarcoma. Fortunately, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham is one of the UK's two main centres for the treatment of Sarcoma. She had been referred to two brilliant surgeons, Mr Almond and Mr Ford, who would be able to perform a life-saving operation. She spent two weeks in hospital, initially with a difficult recovery in ICU. Of course, with the Covid restrictions, we were unable to visit her whilst she was there. She was discharged the day after our 18th wedding anniversary, it was such a relief for us all to have Kate home and be able to care for her.

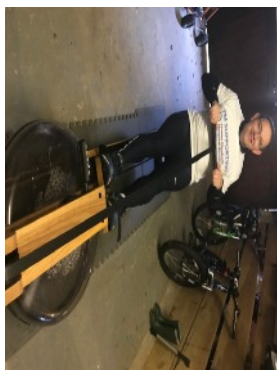
Sadly, we found out that the cancer has spread to Kate's lungs and spine. We're waiting for an appointment to see a sarcoma specialist oncologist to discuss possible treatments such as targeted radiotherapy or chemotherapy. It was difficult to hear this news so soon after her surgery and what we had hoped was her recovery. Even though it's very sad, this is a part of Kate's cancer story.

We really wanted to do something to say thank you and show our support for the Sarcoma Unit at the QE and also to fund much needed research into this rare cancer.

I've been fundraising for University Hospitals Birmingham Charity and Sarcoma UK by rowing 1 Million Metres in 2020 (pictured below).

So far, we've raised £4,105 (£4,932.50 with gift aid) which is just incredible!
If anyone else would like to support us, the link is:

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/JamesAllardice>



James and Kate





Twelve months ago at the start of the first lockdown, you may recall that many children in our village made drawings of coloured rainbows that they then displayed in their house windows. Those pictures certainly brightened up Feckenham and demonstrated the community spirit that exists in our Village. Now that we're in lockdown 3, we thought it would be a good idea to organise something similar in time for Easter. So the Shop Board has decided to hold a Children Colouring Competition throughout March and if you would like to take part, this is what you have to do.

Simply Collect an entry form from the Shop.

Colour in the template and return it to us by March 31st.

(Submit a completed entry and you will receive a free Crème Egg)

There are three age categories:

- **Under 7 years**
- **7 years to 11 years**
- **12 years to 16 years**

We will display all the entries at the Shop and judging will take place over the Easter weekend. The three category winners will each receive a prize of a large Easter Egg, so may we suggest that all you harassed parents take a break from hours of home schooling and encourage your children to enter.

Despite the continued road closure, we are still trading at a higher level than last year, so thank you for supporting us and all our hard working volunteers. As always the Shop is fully stocked and ready to meet all your everyday shopping needs.

Finally, don't forget that Mothering Sunday is on March 14th and we have a wide selection of cards, gifts and flowers available for you.

Now go and sharpen those crayons and pencils and start colouring.

Until next month...

Shop Safe

Shop Local

Support your Village Shop

Alan Slater, Chairman

Altar Rail Gates Ian Hunter

A John Knight has been in touch to say that around 1953 he was an apprentice carpenter with Huxleys of Astwood Bank and that he had made the Gates to the Altar Rail in the Chancel of the Church.

At that time he lived in Feckenham where his Father, Tom Knight was manager of the Co-op Stores.

Might someone recall the Knight family?

Ian Hunter



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My Ode to Feckenham in Isolation

Brian Robson

Feckenham is where I live. The cottage off the square.
And isolation means, you're bound to find me there.

The Churchyard is my garden. It stretches far & wide
It is the very special place, to meet the ones who've died.

This also is my working space, where you can see me shine.
For that is where I'm mowing, as I think the place is mine.

The Village Shop is doing well. Its range is even wider.
From Deli goods, fresh veg & meat, to even cans of cider.

I had a cat which had no name, that slept up on my lap
We always thought he was a girl, but really he's a chap.

But that was when the other day, he quietly passed away.
And that just makes it harder, to get through every day.

So that's my little roam around the churchyard in the square,
It's mainly good, but in those days, my wife was always there.

My Eileen was my darling, the Apple of my eye,
I thought we'd be together and never have to die.

But spring has come to brighten lives, and give us back some cheer
But that will never mean as much, as when my girl was here.

Brian Robson

Square Management Committee



TREE WORKS

Approval for work to the protected trees on The Square has now been received from Redditch Borough Council. The trees are regularly inspected by Council approved experts to ensure that they pose no danger to public and property. The most recent inspection carried out in the autumn revealed some minor problems which need to be remedied before the trees come into leaf. Contractors will be working on The Square in early March.

NO FUN?

It now seems highly unlikely that The Square Committee's annual Fun on the Square event will take place this year. The Committee is monitoring the situation carefully and is hoping that things will improve sufficiently for a modified event, possibly mounted in cooperation with another village organisation, may be possible later in the summer or early autumn.

Feckenham Village Hall

Ian Bellion

NURSERY RE-OPENS

Feckenham Village Hall will once again host a village nursery school. Provided all goes to plan and government regulations don't change, the new nursery will open its doors for the first time on 19th April. The nursery will be operated by Little Men and Misses Nurseries which runs a number of well regarded early learning centres in the area. Operating hours and days will be limited at first but it is expected that a full five day a week service will be available from the start of the school year in September. We expect to publish more details next month.

STILL WAITING

At the time of publication the Hall remains closed and no bookings are being accepted. The only activities permitted under current Covid restrictions are regulated early learning schools (nurseries) and elections. There is a Local Government election due to take place on May 5th. We'll publish any changes to the situation in next month's Feckenham News or you can check the Hall's website at www.feckhall.org



We are now able to give residents the latest news on the village archaeology project. Since our last update, the Group has been busy working for the completion of a Conservation Management Plan which will be used to guide future management and upkeep of the medieval moated site.

The Plan has now been completed and includes a comprehensive outline for the future maintenance and care of the site as well as a brief history. In addition, the Plan includes an archaeological survey, a tree survey and an ecological survey. It has been put together by Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Services with input from various specialist organisations as well as the Feckenham Archaeology Group. We would like to thank Emily Hathaway and her colleagues at Worcestershire Archaeology for all their hard work and support over the past couple of years.

Funding for the Conservation Management Plan was raised by way of generous grants from a number of local organisations, donations and various fund raising events in the village. We would like to extend our grateful thanks to everyone who has supported the project to date – your help and interest has been invaluable.

The Plan will guide any future works on the site, which will also be subject to formal agreement from Redditch Borough Council as the landowner and to Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic England.

The availability of the Plan is very timely as it will assist in the village Natural Networks Project currently taking shape, in which a couple of members of the archaeology group are involved.

Once Covid 19 restrictions are eased, we hope to start fund raising again to take the archaeology project further, including the design and construction of interpretation panels giving further information about the site and its history and, if possible, a geo-physical survey to see if there are any archaeological remains on the site.

We would also like to organise an exhibition and presentation of the project for interested residents.

We will keep you updated on future developments as and when they are happening.

Judy Underwood

Secretary

Feckenham Moated Manorial Site Community
Archaeology Project

Book Club



Currently meetings are held over Zoom. Next meeting Thursday 11th March.

Book of the Month is *Strange Pilgrims* by Gabriel García Márquez.

Details from Marion Chute 892285

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The FeckenOdeon Cinema Society
Ian Bellion



INTERNATIONAL SWANS

Because Swansbrook is an internet Radio station we can be heard the world over. We've recently been contacted by listeners in Canada, the USA and Wales who have found us through Radio Garden – an international community radio app. Local listeners will find it easier to go to www.swansbrook.com and follow the instructions you find there.

Most programmes are now 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

Your favourite classical music
Chris Fletcher



While putting together the February playlist for Classical Swansbrook I began to think about what I would choose of all the music I love if I could only have one. Very difficult. Then it occurred to me that it might be interesting to ask others what their 'one only choice' might be. So I put the question on the Feckenham Facebook page. There has been a great response and there are now enough pieces of music to fill two programmes and people are still replying, which is great.

There is a bit of confusion between 'classical' and 'classic', but no matter, so there will be some surprises when the programmes go out! So do listen out in April, May and perhaps longer, for Feckenham Favourites, and do send your own choices if you have not already done so.

BOND WILL BE BACK.... BUT WHEN?

The cinema industry is dormant. Hopes were high that the release of the latest James Bond adventure, "No Time to Die", scheduled for April this year would see cinemas reopened. Sadly the pandemic has not eased its grip despite the charms of Mr Bond and the release has been delayed until October. Currently all cinemas are closed and our local cinema, The FeckenOdeon, is no exception. The 2020-2021 season was to have been a celebration of twenty years of big screen moviegoing in the village but a year after the nineteenth season was abruptly terminated the FeckenOdeon team can only watch and wait to see how things develop. Rest assured that, like Mr Bond, we will be back!

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As I write, snowdrops are gloriously visible around the village and daffodils spears are poking up through the soil, signaling that spring will soon be here. Our thoughts now naturally turn towards preparation for the new season and some clubs have started on their square - but the sodden and muddy state of our ground prevents wicket brushing, mowing and pretty much everything else at present.

However, work continues in the “shed”, where all machinery has been undergoing annual maintenance and some items undergoing more fundamental work - such as a new cutting cylinder for our 40-50 year old wicket mowers and the refurbishment of a powered scarifier.

We have recently replaced our old Land Rover, which towed our gang mowers and trailer, after its clutch failure proved uneconomic to fix. We are hoping to sell the old machine for spares.

Due to the long lockdown, we have been forced to dispose of perishable bar stock that had passed their use-by dates. With the press predicting that we could re-open the bar and clubhouse in May or even earlier, a major restocking will be needed.

The Worcestershire County League has just published their fixture lists that show that the first home match of the 2021 season will be our 1st team lining up against Burghill, Tillington and Weobley on 17th April in Division I, following a friendly match against Bromsgrove the preceding weekend. Both of course are subject to Covid regulations.

Finally, we are preparing for the ECB’s “All Stars” program that introduces 5-8 year old boys and girls to the game of cricket. More on that next month.

Stay Safe.

HELP FOR YOU if you are self-isolating
From Volunteers Co-ordinated by Feckenham Facebook Group & Parish Council

A group of local volunteers from the village are available to assist you with PICKING UP SHOPPING, or POSTING MAIL, picking up URGENT SUPPLIES (including medications) or just having a FRIENDLY PHONE CALL during this challenging time when many people are being advised to self-isolate if they are either vulnerable or ill.

If you would like some help then please contact JANE BULL, Clerk to Feckenham Parish Council either on 892522 or clerk.feckenhampc@feckenham.com and we will be in touch (& the help is free!). Any goods will be left on your doorstep. More updates on our local radio: swansbrook.com

NOTE: Coronavirus is contagious. Please take every precaution to ensure you are spreading only kindness – Avoid physical contact (keep at least 2m distance from others) and Wash your hands regularly

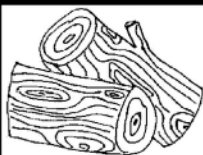
Gilly’s Lockdown



This is the first of what might turn out to be a series of articles about Feckenham in lockdown written by members of our community.

On 10th of March 2020 I returned from a holiday during which I’d been monitoring the spread of what became known as Covid-19. Prior to leaving, a friend warned that this would probably be the pandemic we had feared for many years. Next day I did one shopping trip then decided to isolate for as long as it took to be safe. Family and friends thought I was over-reacting but it seems I was right.

So, what does an optimistic and sociable person do when she realises that much of life is on hold? I worked within the parameters I set for myself which included joining the team of retired doctors speaking to patients with possible Covid-19 on the phone and signposting them, and soon I hope to be vaccinating. More important than my actions, I decided I maintain a positive state of mind. I appreciate what I have such as living in this community, the countryside around us and I try as much as possible to think about what I am able to do and very little about what’s not possible. That is my message to anyone struggling. Of course there are members of the community who might find this more difficult than I and I’d encourage them to seek help. We have a wonderful band of willing volunteers. *Gilly Cooper*



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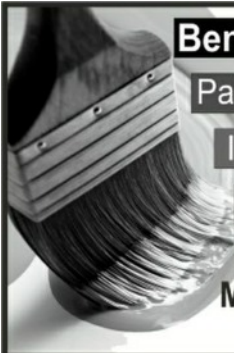
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