



FECKENHAM

November 2022 NEWS

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

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Feckenham News in November

Dates for your Diary

November

2nd	S&B gardening Club
3rd	Parish Council Meeting
5th	Bonfire Night at the Cricket Club
10th	Book Club
12th	S&B Annual Quiz
13th	Live and Local: The Head gardener
18th	Feckenodeon: Brian and Charles
19th	Jazz Night
26th	S&B Christmas Wreath Making Feckenodeon: Belfast

December

10th	That Snow Joke
24th	Carols on the Square

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 taken by Julian Bull. From the Whirly Hole bridge towards Droitwich Road

Magazine online at www.feckenham.com

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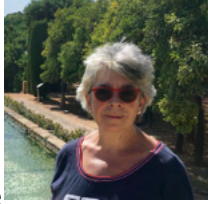
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Editor's Note

It's rather difficult to know where to start this month. A somber note and finish on a high or other way around? Apart from the lovely Autumn weather, there's not a lot positive to report really, so I guess I start low and aim high. There have been three sad deaths of well known villagers this month. Paul Nicholson and Russell Cotton who are remembered in the magazine and Arthur Hind whose Remembrance Service will be on 11.11.22 at 12:30 and at the Rose and Crown from 13:30. An article on his life will be included in the December edition.



We are living through very difficult times, not least the cost of living crisis. Most of us in Feckenham will probably not go hungry or cold this winter but many living within the district are already struggling. This was brought into sharp contrast last weekend when I visited the Alcester Food festival where we could treat ourselves to many delicious artisan treats. One of the stalls was for their local Food Bank who tell me they are supporting about double the number of people this year compared to last.

There are a multitude of ways we can help support those in need. Here are a few: Donations of food can be left in the church or we can donate directly to charities supporting the needy. Examples are The Trussell Trust and Redditch Foodbank at redditch.foodbank.org.uk.

On the positive side, what a delight to see Thea Matthews of The Square

marry at our beautiful church. I'm sure you will join me in wishing her and her husband, Tom, all the best for their future. They will always be welcome in the village.



Feckenham Square Management Committee

CAROLS - THIRD TIME LUCKY?

The Square Committee's Carols on The Square event on Christmas Eve has been an annual fixture in the village calendar for over 20 years - until Covid 19 got in the way. In 2020 the event was a non-starter, in 2021 arrangements were well advanced when a sudden upsurge in infections made it unsafe to continue. In 2022 it's hoped that it will go ahead if there are no further unpleasant surprises - so put the date in your diary - Christmas Eve, early evening. There'll be more details in December's Feckenham News.

Village Notices and Letters



We were glad so many people from the village were able to join us on 1st October for Tom and Thea's wedding.

We were blessed with a bright sunny day which after the mini-storm on the Friday, was a welcome let off. That and being able to use the church after the recent ceiling fall. It could all have been very different.

Even the trees had laid down a golden carpet for the bride to walk on, despite having swept the church path earlier in the week.

Thea has been linked to the village for all her life, she moved onto The Square from Callow Hill in 2004, having already attended the Nursery and the village school. She actually met Tom there, but claims not to remember it.

Many of the assembled could recall her from a very young age, wandering around the church in the services, then joining and singing in the

church choir when she was old enough. And here she was, a fully grown woman glowing on her wedding day. Rev John Green married them in his own inimitable style that created the tone for a beautifully relaxed and intimate day.

After photographs in the church, the reception was at Brockencote Manor, Nr Chaddesley Corbett, where despite a gas leak 100m from the entrance and slight disaster with the cake we actually had a wonderful time which as proud parents we were able to enjoy. Yes, it could all have been very different.

Thanks to everyone who made it possible – flower ladies, the bell ringers, the choir, the organist, the Verger and all who joined the congregation and confetti throwing afterwards. That you were able to join us made it very special.

Ann and Jeff Matthews



PAUL NICHOLSON

After a long battle Paul sadly passed away in Worcester Royal Hospital on 1st October.

Chris, Paul's brother writes:

Paul Sawbridge Nicholson was born 'at home' (no NHS then!) in Birmingham, 30th June 1939 precipitating WWII.

At the beginning of the war our parents moved to a new development close to the Wolseley Motor Co. at Castle Bromwich, where our Father 'Jack' was heavily involved in war work.

During the Blitz the housing estate with its gleaming white concrete roads, next to the Spitfire & Dunlop factories became a major target for the Luftwaffe & during one raid our mother 'Winnie' grabbed baby Paul & ran down the street to shelter in the church. In the pitch dark she fell into a bomb crater. Some have said that this resulted in Paul being 'the way he was'!

After the war ended I was born (still no NHS), which probably pushed Paul 'over the edge'.

In 1953 the family moved to New End & Paul attended Cookhill County Primary School.

He 'did' quite well academically & took up cricket at which he excelled & knocked up almost 1000 runs in a season.

Apart from cricket which he loved all his life Paul enjoyed nothing more than riding his 'Dales Clansman' bike about the country.

Later on he married Lynette & after living in Cladwell for a short period they moved to a new house in Hooper's Ln Astwood Bank where Duncan was born. After divorcing Lynette a few years later he married Sylvia and lived in Redditch for a while. When that marriage ended he met Diane and they moved back to Astwood Bank. He

later moved to Feckenham to start a relationship with the love of his life (the village, and the Rose and Crown!)

Ian Bellion adds:

Paul was always involved in Feckenham events and happenings. He was invariably immaculately dressed for the occasion whether it required a fancy kilt or a florid Arab gown. The lady who patronisingly suggested that he might not have a flea in her ear and was henceforth known as "that woman".

He was the master of the prank - always clever, mischievous but never malicious. His April Fool gags were legendary. The proposal to site a radio mast on The Square, the menus distributed for a new Indian restaurant in the High Street and the discovery of gold in the Swansbrook - all Paul's invention (the latter even making it onto BBC television). There were many more - including the very rude but hilarious contributions to the Scarecrow Festivals.

Then there were his culinary talents - vast catering efforts for local good causes and smaller surprise suppers for his friends in the Rose & Crown. As Chris has written, The Rose & Crown was Paul's ideal pub - an unspoilt country local. His entrance at 10.30 (on the dot) every evening would herald another tale, joke or scheme. He will be greatly missed by the many who enjoyed his company and friendship.

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RUSSELL COTTON

Many villagers will remember Russell Cotton who has sadly passed away in Canada.

Russell and Catherine first came to the village in the late 1990s when Russ was working as the UK agent for Pratt and Whitney (jet engine manufacturers). They rented Cadogan House off The Square and plunged into village life.

Feckenham made such a good impression on them that they decided to return here to live when Russ finally retired and they settled at 51 High Street.

He served on numerous village committees - the Village Hall, The Square Committee and the Entertainments Committee amongst others. Russ chaired a Parish Council working party trying to solve the village's traffic problems. He soon became known as Feckenham's "Mr Fixit" - there are many examples of his craftsmanship still in use throughout the village. Working with former PC Chairman Rhys Williams, he helped to establish the church allotments. He was a keen supporter of The Rose & Crown and took part in almost all village events.

In 2012 he and Catherine decided to relocate to Catherine's native Scotland to be near family. In 2014 they decided to return to Montreal where they had spent the majority of their working lives.

Harvest Festival Margaret Perry



Harvest festival was splendid this year with an abundance of flowers, mainly gorgeous dahlias supplied once again by Mr Crump for which we are so very grateful- thank you Mr Crump.

Our ladies interpreted harvest so well too with hops and hay, pumpkins and fruit with arrangements of rich autumnal colours, thanks to all of you.



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Dear Villagers,

Well, here we are, we're finding it hard to believe that it's happened, but our beautiful and much loved cottage, nestled happily alongside The Square, has not only been put on the market, but is sold. We arrived here at The Badgers, back in March 2009. We were simply looking for a weekend bolt hole to get away from the pressures of our business, but found, like many before us, that a transient relationship with Feckenham is simply not possible. The village and its people drag you in and quickly progress your village flirtation into a full blown love affair.

Our bolt hole search had taken us around many Worcestershire villages, until we happened upon two cottages for sale on The Square. We viewed them both on the same day; firstly we viewed No. 1 which was being sold by Rhys and Andrea and then straight afterwards we viewed The Badgers (Nos. 5-7). We knew immediately that this was where we wanted to be. We had an offer accepted the very same day and our Feckenham adventure began.

On scraping together every last penny that we had to buy the cottage, it had escaped our notice that it would also be preferable to furnish it! Alas, our impoverished state made this impossible and so for the first few months our weekends in the country were spent sitting on two red and white striped deck chairs in front of a tiny portable tv and sleeping on a bed left behind by the previous occupants. Simple pleasures perhaps, but probably the subject of some of our happiest memories.

Fourteen years on and we find that we need more space. Our children have been rude enough to catapult us into grandparenthood and along with the addition of nephews and nieces, the cottage is bursting at the seams with children's scooters, toy prams, indoor trampolines and the like. Having recently sold our steel business in the heart of the Black Country, we now find ourselves with the time to search for our new home. We have put down far too many roots to be moving far and would certainly stay in the

village if the right property came to market. Sadly, this seems rather unlikely, which leaves us with little more to say than THANK YOU FECKENHAM! IT'S BEEN A BLAST!!!

Mark and Lisa Hackett



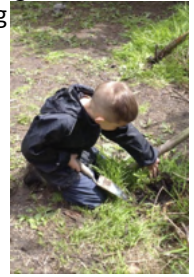
The glorious sound of the Big Band is returning to Feckenham in November! The 18-piece *Out of the Blue Jazz Band* will be generously performing at the Village Hall at 7pm on Saturday 19th November in aid of the Sick Children's Trust, and will feature vocalist Jan Harris. There will be something for everyone: classic swing, latin, blues, soul, pop and even rock & roll. There'll be a bar and a raffle – all in aid of the SCT which provides support and accommodation for the families of chronically sick children while in hospital – a benefit that assists in the healing process. Tickets £10 each from The Village Shop, The Rose & Crown, Jill Rowe (892666) or Shirley Harman (892140).

Dear Editor,

I'm writing to ask whether any of your readers may wish to recycle their surplus tools and kitchenware to a local Forest School. Forest School is a national association in the UK which promotes the importance of children learning through spending time in a natural environment, according to certain key principles. Most importantly, it is child led, encouraging independence and developing resilience. It aims to help children establish a connection with nature and build supportive relationships with each other. They have the opportunity to learn practical skills alongside problem solving, teamwork and assessing their own risks.



- Compost
- Seeds especially vegetables
- Webbed strapping from lorries
- String or wool
- Tarpaulin or the cover from an old gazebo
- Wooden pallets



If anyone would like to donate any of these or similar, please contact Rebekah Taylor by email rtaylor@millfields.worcs.sch.uk by telephone (evenings) 01527 878867
Thank you for your support,
Yours Sincerely,
R.Taylor, Forest School Assistant

At Millfields First School in Bromsgrove, all children from Reception to Year 4 participate in a weekly Forest School session. Some of the activities on offer may include den building, digging, making mud pies and potions, bug hunting, fire lighting, planting seeds and growing them on and learning how to safely use a saw, hammer, screwdriver, hand drill, secateurs, loppers.



If there are unwanted items from the kitchen or garden that readers would like to recycle, our children could give them a new lease of life, even if they are past their best! The sort of things we can utilise include but are not limited to:

- Saucepans/baking trays
- Metal or plastic jugs
- Sieves/colanders
- Trowels
- Secateurs
- hammers/screwdrivers
- Wheelbarrows/trolleys
- Plant pots

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CHURCH SERVICES



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Church Warden: Ann Mathews 892180

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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 November 2022

6th November	10.30am	Eucharist	Revd B. Wheatley
13th November	10.45am	Remembrance Sunday	Revd B. Wheatley
20th November	6.30pm	Evensong	Fiona Carter
27th November	10.30am	Eucharist	Fr Glenn Reading

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.

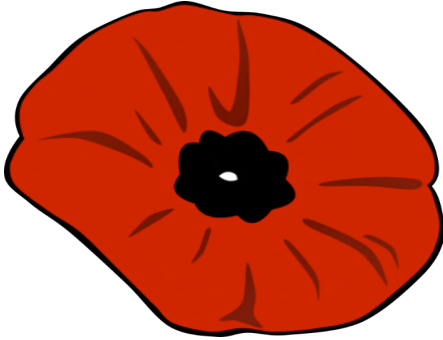
Mount Carmel 6 pm Sunday Mass is now the Live Streamed Mass.

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

Remembrance Day - Steve Fletcher



the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk. He is buried in Feckenham Churchyard.

John Llewellyn Griffith. Died 11th June 1944. Flying Officer, 39 Squadron RAF. John was born on 2nd October 1923, son of David and Violet Griffith of Dunstall Court, Feckenham. He was shot down in his Bristol Beaufighter on 9th June 1944 when on Anti-shipping and Maritime Reconnaissance Patrol in Sardinia, Italy, and died two days later while trying to escape his captors. He is buried in Staglieno Cemetery, Genoa, Italy.

Robert Henry Salmons. Died 23rd June 1944. Sergeant Pilot 1818690, 77 Squadron RAFVR. Robert was born in 1925, son of Soloman and Catherine Salmons of Meadow Farm, Alcester Road, Feckenham. He died when his Handley Page Halifax bomber was shot down on a raid to Laon. His mother's maiden name was Freeman; could she be related to George Ronald Freeman (see above)?

Fred Tufft. Died 27th October 1941. Leading Aircraftsman 1207274, RAFVR. Fred was born on 13th August 1910, son of Samuel Joseph and Emily Tufft from Swanwick, Derbyshire. He married Winifred Hodges in 1935, and they moved to Feckenham, where he was Headmaster of Feckenham School from October 1938 until he was called-up in 1940. Winifred also taught at the school, until 1944. Fred died in an accident at the No.3 British Flying Training School in Miami, Oklahoma, USA. He is buried at the Miami (Grand Army of The Republic) Cemetery in Oklahoma.

In addition to the above people, whose names are all included on the Village War Memorial, we should remember **George John Hopkins** and **Arnold Geoffrey Beastall**, the crew of a Bristol Beaufighter, who died on the night of 15th November 1943 when their plane crashed near Shurnock Court, Feckenham after instrument failure in bad weather.

As we approach another Remembrance Day, perhaps it is a good time to remind ourselves of the former residents of Feckenham who fought and died in the two World Wars.

Details of those who died in World War One were circulated to all villagers a few years ago as part of the village's commemoration of the centenary of the end of World War One, but little has been said about those who died in World War Two.

To help with wider knowledge of the lives of these people, brief details of the five villagers who gave their lives on active service in WW2 are given below.

Arthur George Cooke. Died 28th August 1944. Private 14040582, 1st Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment. Arthur was born on 8th August 1915, son of Fergus Arthur and Maude Cooke, who by the 1960s were living at 12 High Street, Feckenham. Arthur was wounded near Vernon in France on 27th August 1944 and died from his wounds the next day. He is buried in the Saint Desir War Cemetery near Lisieux, France.

George Ronald Freeman. Died 3rd June 1940. Private 5107614, 2nd Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment. George was born in early 1911, son of Frank and Ellen Freeman of Bradley Green, who later lived at 55 High Street, Feckenham. He died on the last day of the evacuation of troops of

Feckenham WI - Jen Cary

Our September meeting was postponed to the 26th out of respect for the Queen's funeral. We like to keep things seasonal so we took advantage of the abundance of apples in our village and we did some apple juicing. Nearly all of us had never done it before and it's definitely something we'll do again as all 17 of us went away with at least 1 bottle of delicious juice each. Many thanks to Iona and Jon Ratcliffe for hosting us (again!) and to Maggie Meixner and Nikky Tearle for bringing their presses and scratters.

Our meetings are on the 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 (it is currently £33 to join) and guests are £5 each per session. For more details contact Jen Cary: Jennifer.clements@openreach.co.uk

Book Club - Judy Hooker

Quarantine by Jim Crace. A lively discussion. Some liked it, some hated it. The early donkey scene put some off altogether. It was felt the description of the landscape was lyrical. Nobody liked Musa, how could you? We queried what was the author thinking in bringing together these particular characters in this setting.

Next month's book is Mark Haddon's 'The Red House' on November 10th

Information about book group from Marion Chute 01527 892285



Recycle for the Refugees of Ukraine. UPDATE.

As a result of further on-line sales of items remaining after the April event a further £350 has been donated to the DEC Appeal, bringing the total to £1952.00
Thank you again for your donated items

Jillan Rowe and Gilly Cooper

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Parish Council

The Parish Council met on 29th September, the meeting having been postponed from 15th September which was within the period of national mourning for the late Queen. Alan Smith (Chairman) and the clerk attended the Proclamation event in Redditch on Sunday 11 September.



You may have noticed the gate has been replaced at the entrance to the recreation field. The purchase of the gate and associated works was instigated and funded by the Parish Council. The Parish Council then negotiated an agreement with Redditch Borough Council whereby they agreed to fund the installation.

The Parish Council are also hoping to fund a new bench at the top of the recreation field. This has been delayed due to the fixing conditions which are required by Heritage England.

To celebrate the Queen's 70th Jubilee the Feckenham in Bloom Group are hoping to gain permission to plant seven trees close to Winfields Outdoors.

The bridge ballustrading and fence leading up to the school has now been repaired with thanks to Worcestershire County Council Footpaths Department. The footpath leading from Dunstall Court to the Church has had further stone added to help improve the surface for pushchairs, wheelchairs, and mobility scooters.

The Parish Council engaged a private speed survey to look at the speeds of traffic on the

B4090 near to Moors Lane. The results show more traffic is speeding than previously recorded. This information has now been shared with our Borough and County Councillors. It has also been shared with West Mercia Police who will pass on to the Safer Roads Partnership. The Parish Council hope this may bring additional help to this ongoing problem.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held Thursday 3rd November at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

Jane Bull Clerk to the Council



WHAT'S ON IN

FIREWORK DISPLAY

**Saturday,
5th November**

At Feckenham Cricket Club

**Bonfire lighting at
about 6.45 pm**

Fireworks at 7.30pm

FECKENHAM VILLAGE HALL

Untied Artists present

THE HEAD GARDENER

BLOOMING
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THEATRE!



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Tickets from The Village Shop and The Rose & Crown

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Out of the Blue

Jazz Band

With vocalist JAN HARRIS

Saturday, 19th November - 7pm

Feckenham Village Hall

Proceeds to The Sick Children's Trust

Tickets (£10) from The Village Shop,

The Rose & Crown or call 01527 892866



**The Sick
Children's
Trust**

We're here, so families can be together

Jez Lowe's That Snow Joke!

with The Bad Pennies
& special guest
Benny Graham



SATURDAY 10th DECEMBER - 7.30PM

Tickets 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, 1st November

Stock & Bradley GARDENING CLUB WINTER IN BLOOM



A talk by Nigel Hopes
at Bradley Village Hall
Wednesday, 2nd November - 7.30pm

Feckenham Parish Council MEETING

Thursday, 3rd November at 7.30pm
Feckenham Village Hall Back Room
All welcome.

Feckenham READERS GROUP

Meets on
Thursday, 10th November - 7.45
This month's book:

RED HOUSE

By Mark Haddon

Details: 892285



THE FECKENODEON CINEMA SOCIETY

BRIAN AND CHARLES

PG

A British Robocom*



*Robotic comedy

FeckenOdeon 2 Friday, 18th November at 8pm



Kenneth Branagh's

BELFAST

12A

FeckenOdeon 1 Saturday, 26th November 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

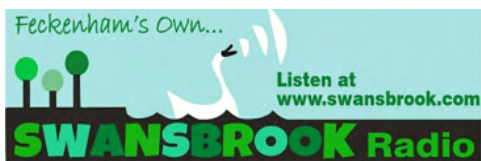
*Phone calls answered by Ticketsource and charged at standard rates - NOT a premium line

The Feckenham Forest History Society

HISTORY OF ASTWOOD BANK

A talk by Richard Churchley
Tuesday, 8th November - 7.30pm
Webheath Village Hall

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



EARLY CALL...

The mince pies may have been on the supermarket shelves for the last three months but Swansbrook likes to leave any mention of Christmas until the festive season proper. It is on the way though and it can't be avoided - so we thought we'd just mention the fact that we're ready and willing to deliver your Christmas messages to your loved ones no matter how far away they may be.

Because Swansbrook broadcasts over the internet we can be heard anywhere in the world... as long as there's broadband... so that probably means that relatives in the wilder parts of Tibet or the hidden corners of the Kalahari desert won't be able to pick us up. If the wifi works we'll be loud and clear - so why not record a personal greeting to your far away friends and family - you can record it yourself on your phone or we can record it for you. We'll play any piece of music you choose - so get in touch and let us help you make somebody's Christmas a bit more special.

Our Christmas programmes will be available throughout the festivities so you can listen to us while you wait for Santa, stuff the turkey or burn the sprouts. Send your greetings, requests or rude messages to radio@swansbrook.com - we'd love to hear from you.

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



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE???

Brian, an affable and odd amateur inventor, is holed up in a cottage in the wintry Welsh countryside. To stave off loneliness he does what many of us would do in such circumstances - he constructs 'Charles Petrescu', a seven feet tall robot who looks like Albert Einstein struggling to digest a washing machine. At first all goes well... but then Charles develops ideas of his own... A gentle, quirky and very British comedy. (UK 2022)

BRIAN AND CHARLES (PG)

Friday, 18th November - 8pm



BUDDY FROM BELFAST

"Belfast", November's main feature at The FeckenOdeon, is Kenneth Branagh's impressive semi-autobiographical film about growing up during The Troubles in Northern Ireland. Although violence is always lurking in the background, this is primarily a film about the way people maintain their humanity - and humour. It's a poignant story of love, laughter and loss in one boy's childhood, amid the music and social tumult of the late 1960s. (UK 2022)

BELFAST (12A)

Saturday, 26th November - 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.feckencodeon.co.uk

Feckenham Village Hall



BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES!

The first show in the new Live & Local (formerly Shindig) season arrives at Feckenham Village Hall on **Sunday, 13th November**.

“The Head Gardener” features real garden design, visual surprises and delights a plenty - this horticultural theatre show is perfect for those who love their garden or those who don't quite know what to do with their green space.

Gardening is good for you! It seems more and more people have been embracing the simple pleasure of growing things. Brothers Jake and Warren Oldershaw have propagated a delightful theatre show during which they'll design, draught and bring to life a unique and beautiful garden; share fascinating stories of different plants and species; tell personal tales of why gardening is good for you... and throw a few songs into the mix. They'll even let you walk around the garden they create on stage!

THE HEAD GARDENER

Sunday, 13th November at 7.30pm

NEXT MONTH: December 10th

JEZ LOWE'S "THAT SNOW JOKE"

Christmas is coming and so is the North-East's favourite yuletide entertainer. With his band The Bad Pennies, Jez will make sure that even Mr Scrooge is in the mood for Christmas.

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

DRAW

The **Improvement Fund Draw for October, 2022** was made at the meeting of The Trustees on 4th October.

Winners:	29	Ian Bellion	£25
	62	Matt Clarke	£15
	133	Mike & Gay Bligh	£10

IMPROVEMENT FUND DRAW

The results printed above are for the last draw for the 2021/22 year.

The first draws for the 2022/23 year will take place at the Village Hall Trustee's meeting on the first Tuesday in December. But first we have to collect your contributions for entry in the 12 draws from Nov'22 to Oct'23.

Three cash prizes are drawn each month - £25, £15 and £10 (£600 in total over the year). A £12 contribution buys you entry to each of the 12 monthly draws (your entry could win £300 over the year – very unlikely, but theoretically possible!)

Most village households will receive a letter inviting you to contribute during the next month, with an explanation as to how to pay by cash, cheque or bank transfer.

Last year's Fund contributed £1,248 (after paying out the £600 draw winnings), so this is a worthwhile and important contribution towards covering the cost of improvements to the hall and its facilities.

We know times are particularly hard for some at the moment, but if you've got room for a flutter, thanks in advance for any £12's you can afford.

Peter Chute (Hon.Treasurer)

WE'RE ON SOSHUL MEEJAH!

While it must be admitted that many members of the Village Hall's Committee wouldn't know their twitter from their Tik-Tok, the Hall has burst onto the social media landscape courtesy of a new member. Claire Cull has created a Facebook page which will carry all the Hall's news and information. It'll be constantly updated so this is the place to go to find out what's on, what's happening and how to book the hall. You can access the page in the first instance through the link on the Hall's website : www.feckhall.org

Introducing... Marion Chute



She completed a degree in Librarianship and worked Birmingham Libraries for over 30 years, a career she really enjoyed.

The couple moved to Astwood Bank and then, luckily for the residents of Feckenham, they won on the National Lottery and used the winnings to come down the hill to Feckenham, moving into the Old School House on Mill Lane. Soon after their arrival Marion joined the Adopt a Path scheme, walking local footpaths. It must have suited her as all these years later she came to see me after a long walk with her dog around some of the village paths. Next she set up the village readers group which has been thriving for over 22 years. Before she retired she would order sets of books for us. The person choosing the book would let Marion know their choice and she would hand the books out at the end of the meeting - a surprise present every month.

The next year Marion and Peter joined the committee who set up The FeckenOdeon. This has been quite a commitment. During the season, they set up the village hall as a cinema, sell tickets and run the bar among other tasks of great complexity, like actually screening the film. Again, this committee has more or less the same membership all these years later and The FeckenOdeon has a loyal following.

For many years Marion has been a member and then Chair of the Wake Committee. This has been a massive task and she, along with the rest of the committee, is responsible for the wonderful event which is the Wake today. As most of you will be aware, The Wake has been a fixture in the village calendar for centuries. It did go through the doldrums some years back but it thrives now, in large part due to Marion's quiet hard work and great people skills. She reminded me that The Wake is not there to make a profit but to be an opportunity for villagers to have a fun day and to allow village organisations and local crafts people to

Marion has quietly supported many groups in the village and I took the opportunity to talk to her about her life and times. She was born at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital where she also had both her sons - Tom born in 1979 and Ed a couple of years later, but this is to jump ahead. Sadly her mother died when she was only 11 years old but she developed a very good relationship with her stepmother who was very supportive. She was the person who suggested Marion might like to train as a librarian. She loved books and people and definitely didn't want to be a teacher. The youngest of 3 children, she remembers her older brother having to look after the house while he was an apprentice as their father was working hard and couldn't do all the caring for the children he may have liked to do. She clearly remembers her parents' socialist campaigning and was with them on the Aldermaston Marches.

In her teens she met Pete and they have been together ever since - married in 1974.

make some profit. They do need to manage the funds in case of emergency but usually they are ploughed back in to support the following year's Wake. She is stepping down now leaving the management to the very able committee. She said "If anyone has a good idea for the Wake, please get in touch with Julian Bull, (julian.bull@virgin.net) the current chair and remember that for all its hard work it has been great fun". Retiring after 13 years on the Wake doesn't mean stepping away from Village involvement and she is now concerned with the Feckenham Archive digitisation project collecting old photos and documents to digitise. She was also involved in producing the Feckenham Directory and is looking to help with its update.

When asked what drives her to be involved she said, "I suppose I've always felt that you should be part of your community and my library experience was often about connecting people. Maybe that's all there is just enjoy being in your community and join in."

Most importantly, Marion is also a very hands on grandmother to Peggy and Wren, Ed's children, and Cerys, Tom's daughter who lives in Australia.

Feckenham Archive - Marion Chute



This postcard of the Droitwich Road looking up towards the Alcester Road (once called Brook Road I believe) shows a very different view to the current one. Is that the Old Cider Mill on the right, and who is that smartly dressed lady in a hat walking down the road with the pony and trap? Let me know if you have any old photos or can shed any light on this one. marionchute@me.com



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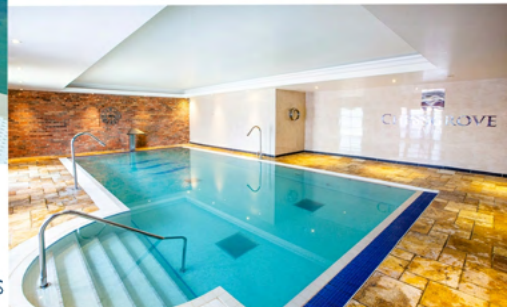
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Feckenham Village Shop - Alan Slater



Last month we saw the Feckenham Community spirit at it's very best as customers gave magnificent support to our coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Nurses. An incredible £660 was raised which more than doubled the previous year's total. A great team effort and I have to extend a massive thank you to all the Friday Team who helped on the day and especially Annita for organising the morning, all our Volunteers who baked cakes for the event, the fourteen suppliers who so generously donated prizes for the raffle which gave a huge boost to the final total raised and all our customers who supported us and helped to raise £660 for such a worthy cause

Just one footnote to the occasion, all the raffle prizes were claimed except one. So if Hazel Barker (or anyone who knows her) reads this, please come to the Shop and claim your prize. I can assure you it will be well worth the trip.

As Christmas will be soon upon us we're getting ready to stock up with plenty of festive products and treats. Again this year we will be selling Margaret Green's beautiful hand knitted gloves, socks and hats, with all the proceeds from the sales going to Project Morogoro in East Africa. On the subject of winter clothing, why not wrap up warm and come and join us for a hot chocolate on our covered café terrace. If you are out for a walk in the beautiful winter sunshine drop in to see us. (Four legged friends are also most welcome.)

MORE NEWS FROM THE VILLAGE SHOP

This year we have commissioned Deborah Watton to produce a Christmas card exclusively for us. Deborah lives in the Village and is a member of the Feckenham Artisans. The card depicts a local winter scene that includes the High Street and the Square. The cards can only be purchased at the Shop and there will be a limited stock available from 1st November. These unique cards are priced at £1.95 each and we are sure they will be very popular.



The Junior Cricket teams brought their season to a formal closure with the Awards Presentation evening on Friday 7th October. This was one last opportunity for the children and parents to get together and celebrate the progress and achievements of the 2022 season. It was very well attended and proved to be an enjoyable night.

Key award winners for the U13 squad included Sam Curtis (Fielding and Player's Player), Ben Eost (Batting and Player of the year) and Finn Davies (Bowling). In the U12 squad, captain Sam Drumm won Best Batter and Will Reynolds both the Best Bowler and Player's Player awards. Rory Freeman won both the U11 Player of the Year and Best Bowler awards whilst Tommy Eost secured the Best Batter awards. U10 winners including Oli Alekna (Bowling) and Benny Reynolds (Batting).

The club now looks forward to Winter nets and preparation for the 2023 season. We would be delighted to hear from any juniors looking to join us for next summer.

Around the ground, the new grass has emerged on the Square following the hard work put in over four days in late September's annual renovation. The conifer trunks have been cut up and relocated to the corner of the field nearest to the Whirly Hole – although not recommended for indoor burning, feel free to take some if you can use it.

We are considering work on the ash tree near our car park which we understand is suffering from die-back. One large branch is now leafless and will need to be removed. The other large ash by our pedestrian entrance is in better shape but minor work to remove dead branches is likely, as is some reduction of the large bough that curves over Mill Lane.

Several hedges have been trimmed, including along Mill Lane, where visibility is now much improved.

Finally, the annual bonfire and firework display is imminent, taking place on Saturday 5th November. The bonfire will be lit at 6:45pm approximately and the firework display commencing at 7:30pm. As usual, there is no admission charge but do please contribute generously to our bucket collection as this pays for next year's fireworks!

Ridgeway Bridge Club

RBC is a friendly bridge club. We are always looking to attract new members and are planning some beginner's classes in the new year(2023). Guests are very welcome but you do need a partner to play with. If you don't have a partner, we can try to arrange one for you.

We play:

Monday evening - 1830 for 1845 start, at Cookhill Village Hall

Wednesday afternoon - 1330 for 1345 start, at Cookhill Village Hall

Thursday morning - 9.45 for 10am start at Feckenham Village Hall.

Table money is £3 for members and £4 for visitors; this includes tea, coffee and biscuits which are freely available

For further information contact David or Joan on 01527 452556

What's On at Stock & Bradley Village Hall? (sbvh.org.uk)

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The Annual Stock & Bradley Quiz— Sat Nov 12th 7pm

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1st prize 6 bottles of Fizz; Tables of 6; Tickets £12

Xmas Wreath-making Class—Sat Nov 26th 9.30-12.30

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Rob Cole's Gardening Tips

The Directory is a fascinating look back into the plant and nursery world of 40 years ago. So many of the nurseries or nurserymen no longer exist, including famous names like Jack Drake, George Osmond, Helen Ballard, Joe Elliott, Walter Ingwersen, and Elizabeth Strangman. Others such as Beth Chatto's nursery and Hillier Nurseries are, happily, still with us.

The Hardy Plant Directory and The Plant Finder



The Nottinghamshire branch of the Hardy Plant Society first published a Plant Directory in 1975

as a guide to assist its members in finding a source for the rarer and more unusual plants. It was updated in 1978 to commemorate the 21st Anniversary of the Hardy Plant Society, and again in 1982 to celebrate their Silver Jubilee, and I have a copy of this edition which was given to me a few years ago by a member of Plant Heritage upon hearing of my interest in the origins of The Plant Finder.

In this 1982 third edition, the country was split into seven regions and each of the nurseries in each of the regions was allocated a number, identifiable by a key. Then, in a simple matrix, plants were listed alphabetically in a column on the left hand side of the page, alongside seven regional columns, wherein the number of each nursery which sold that plant was listed. Using the number key, you could then find which nursery in your region sold the plant you were looking for. The listing ran to 88 pages, all of which were typed manually and then photostatted and ring bound. Around 2,500 plants were listed, and 93 nurseries.

The Hardy Plant Society finally updated the content and presentation of the Directory and published it as 'The Plant Finder' in April 1987, devised and compiled by Chris Philip, and edited by Tony Lord. Its purpose was still to list the availability of ornamental plants, the nurseries from which they could be bought, but now also to update nomenclature changes. The book was an instant success and has grown in size and standing ever since. It is reissued every year to keep pace with current naming and plant availability.

The first edition comprised just over 400 pages, cost £6.95 and listed around 22,000 plants from some 300 nurseries. The current edition has 992 pages and lists more than 78,000 plants and over 600 nurseries, and is now compiled by the Royal Horticultural Society.

I have a copy of that first edition which I found many years ago in a jumble sale at Feckenham Village Hall, priced at 50p!



I am so pleased to own this little piece of horticultural history.

Stock and Bradley Gardening Club Report



Our 5th of October event was a talk by Gary Farmer who gave us an illustrated talk on 'The Wildlife of Worcestershire'. Gary has been a popular speaker with our members over the years and always gives an entertaining and informative talk - and this was no exception. He gave us an insight into our local wildlife, especially insects which were new to the area in recent years, as well as creatures now becoming much rarer. His work with the Vale Landscape Trust was also beautifully illustrated.

NEXT CLUB EVENT - Wednesday 2nd November 2022 at 7:30pm

Our speaker for the November meeting is Nigel Hopes who will give us a talk entitled 'Winter in Bloom'. Nigel was formerly at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, and is now Head Gardener at John Massey's Ashwood Nurseries.

The subject for the monthly competition is 'Autumn Colour' and will be judged by our speaker.

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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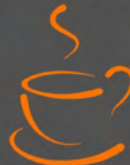
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