



Finstock News 100

Serving Finstock, Fawler, Wilcote, Mt. Skippett and Finstock Heath

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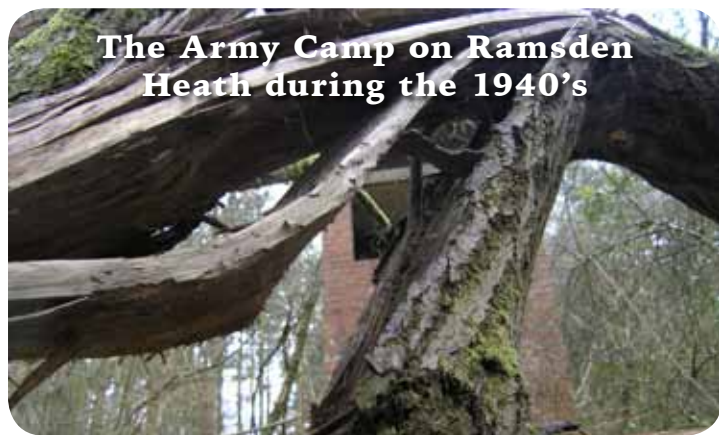
The *Finstock News* reaches Issue 100!

On behalf of the Editorial Committee of the Finstock News, we wish to thank everyone who has supported the Finstock News since its inception in 2000. We will continue to be secular, non-political, and non-profit.

Over the coming months, we will print a few articles from our archives for new villagers. In support of the Local History Society's scheduled talk for December on Finstock between 1939 and 1945, we are publishing the following abridged articles from 2002 and the article written by Mike Tooley about Finstock's Home Guard on page 9.

The Parliamentary By-Election to replace David Cameron will be on Thursday October 20th.

FROM THE FINSTOCK NEWS ARCHIVES



The Army Camp on Ramsden Heath during the 1940's

The camp was set up early in the war by the British army. In 1942 it was occupied by American soldiers, who were under the command of a well-liked coloured Colonel, who took his men, both coloured and white, to do military exercises in Holly Grove. It would seem that the coloured soldiers came from a better-trained unit than those who were white.

The American soldiers appear to have been popular in the area, and that they had chocolate to give away was an attraction. However, after a while, probably at the time of the Normandy landings, the camp was converted to an American army hospital. The American Military Cemetery at Cambridge contains memorial stones to American personnel who died at Ramsden.

In 1946-47 the residential quarters on Ramsden Heath were allocated to REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers) for the accommodation of other ranks. Apparently some of them got into trouble with the owner, Mr. Watney, for shooting rabbits. The officers and headquarters were lodged at Cornbury Park. The Nissen huts on Ramsden Heath were retained for a brief period after 1947, for use as deep litter housing for chickens.

Mary Castell

(Editor's note: Coloured, as in 'a well-liked coloured Colonel' was the language used during this period of history for black people.)

Finstock Hospital on Ramsden Heath

We know that Finstock Hospital was one of a large number of emergency hospitals erected during World War Two, and that the Finstock site was allocated to the Americans (according to the Office of The Surgeon General and HQ US Army Medical Command the 317th moved to Norton Manor, Taunton, Somerset and on to Paris.)

In most of the wartime emergency hospitals the wards were formed by large numbers of standard wartime Nissen or Quonset huts; though staff accommodation and administrative quarters were normally housed in brick buildings with low-pitched asbestos roofs. The Nissen huts and red brick buildings were linked by a network of concrete paths and roadways, traces of which can still be seen on the site of Finstock Hospital. Other distinctive features were associated with the need to supply sufficient quantities of clean water, and Finstock incorporated a prominent water tower: the large capacity metal tank being raised on a tall brick plinth to ensure adequate water pressure throughout the entire site.

The installation on Watney (now Cornbury) Estate stretched to the lakes, had its own sewage farm and was built by civilian labourers before the Americans appeared on site.

Italian and German POW's were bussed in and out of the area to work for the locals. Mr. Proctor planted the area that became our playing field with potatoes, using German prisoners-of-war. The POW's wore grey uniforms with a large circle on the back.

Roy Townsend was in charge of marking out and starting the planting of trees on the old hospital site in 1963-64. The buildings disappeared slowly into the village as their materials were reused.

Stanley C. Jenkins MA

Village Hall AGM

The AGM of the Finstock Village Hall charity is on Monday November 21st at 8pm in the Village Hall Open meeting. All welcome to hear about the past year and plans for the future.



VILLAGE EVENTS



Finstock Local History Society

The new season of talks kicks off on Friday October 21st. All meetings are held in the Village Hall and start at 8pm. The bar is open for light refreshments from 7:30. Membership fees are £15 for the year, £20 for a couple, or £2.50 on the door.

Friday October 21st: *Child labour in Oxfordshire* with Liz Woolley

Friday November 18th: *Yesterday's Runways - Airfields of Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, and the Cotswolds* with Bill King provides an outline of the development of the airfields in these local areas with illustrations of airfield archaeology and the memorials in place.

Friday December 9th: *Christmas event plus film*: Finstock in World War II and the military camp at Finstock Heath with Shaun Morley and company. The talk will give a history of Finstock from 1939 to 1945 examining the social history of the village and the impact of the war on the place and its people. Using many newly-examined records, this illustrated talk will bring to life a variety of issues and identify others. What was the history of the military camp at Finstock Heath and how important was it to the war effort? What was banned from the village hall and who flouted the ban? How did the village support the troops? And why did social activity flourish?

NOTE: On this occasion there we will start at 7.30pm, mince pies and wine from 7pm. The talk will be followed by a showing of the wartime spy movie, *Cottage to Let*, for reasons that will become evident from the talk. We should finish at 10.15pm.

For more details on these items and the programme for the rest of the year contact mike.woodfield@btinternet.com.

North Leigh History Society

Tuesday October 4th: *Research into Hailey and Crawley* with Helen Bridge.

Tuesday November 1st: *The Home Front in the Second World War* with Bill King.

Meetings take place at 7.30pm in the Turner Hall, Church Road, North Leigh OX29 6TX. All welcome. Visitors £4. Members free. Further details from Diana Power 882301.

Charity Tea Party in aid of Mind

Saturday October 8th from 2 to 4pm at Finstock Village Hall

Adults £5, Children £2 including biscuit decorating activity

Tickets can be purchased from Finstock shop or Loren Townsend lm1townsend90@gmail.com.

Voice Box Choir

Saturday October 15th, Voice Box Choir will be performing at 7:30pm in Ducklington Church to raise funds for the Friends of West Oxfordshire Citizens Advice. This concert will have a special emphasis on folk music from around the World, full of variety and entertainment.

Utopia

Utopia was written by Sir Thomas More and published in 1516. *Utopia* is about the political system of an imaginary ideal island nation. He was Lord Chancellor of England under Henry VIII. After refusing to take the Oath of Supremacy which acknowledged Henry as Supreme Head of the Church of England and the annulment of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, Thomas More was convicted of treason and beheaded. He was reported to say: "I die the King's good servant, but God's first."

OCTOBER

8th	Charity Tea party
22nd	Evenlode Folk
27th	Poppy Appeal
28th	Plough Party

NOVEMBER

4th	Pop-up Folk
21st	Village Hall AGM
26th	Village Arts & Crafts

DECEMBER

10th	Christmas Fayre
17th	Christmas Dinner

On Saturday December 17th a free Christmas dinner will be provided for Finstock residents over 65 in the Village Hall, organized by Eileen Peters with money from the Beer Festival.

Ladies, give us your support!

Give all your unwanted old bras a new lease of life and help raise money for breast cancer research. Bring them to Joy Murphy at 63 High Street. Against Breast Cancer will receive a donation based on the weight of bras we collect, so every bra counts!

Charlbury Medical Centre

Flu vaccinations available:-

Thursday October 6th:	8am-5pm
Tuesday November 1st:	7.30am-5pm
Saturday November 5th:	9am-12pm

Please use the open clinics rather than booking an appointment.

Finstock Table Tennis Club

Tuesdays

Seniors	8pm-10pm
Juniors	6.30pm-8pm during term time

Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock - it is FREE

September 21st-October 16th *The Cotswold Art & Antiques Dealers Exhibition*

Visitors will be able to view a selection of furniture, clocks, textiles, glass, ceramics, fine art objects, paintings and watercolours.

October 22nd-November 6th *The Allure of Silver Past and Present*

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DISTRICT COUNCILLOR LIZ LEFFMAN

As you may be aware, there has been discussion lately about the future structure of local government in Oxfordshire. This started a year ago when West Oxfordshire announced that it was looking at joining with Cotswold District to form a unitary authority. This idea was quickly shelved, as the two districts are in different counties and, more importantly, cross over two different police authorities.

Recently, the District and City councils in Oxfordshire commissioned a report from Price Waterhouse Coopers, which looked at a number of alternative structures for unitary local government. At the same time, Oxfordshire County Council commissioned its own report from Grant Thornton. The two reports

come to different conclusions. PWC favours a structure of three or four unitary authorities, with an over-arching Combined Authority for the county to oversee governance and facilitate partnership. The Grant Thornton report favours a single unitary authority for Oxfordshire.

At the moment all options are being considered by the councils, and it is unlikely that there will be any major changes for some time. There is no doubt that some re-organisation is needed: there are big savings to be made, and those savings will go towards providing better services. A combined authority will be able to work more closely with Oxfordshire health services, for example, to provide better social care, and relieve the pressures on our hospitals caused by bed blocking. I am in no doubt that more integrated local government is a good thing, and I look forward to participating in future consultations.

Liz Leffman
District Councillor

Please note: WODC leader, James Mills' comment on the report into changing local government structures in Oxfordshire admitted a major shakeup was now "off the table".



Vive la Différence

"Alsace does make red wine, but I have never been able to understand why."

Robert Parker

If Robert Parker doesn't see the point of Alsace reds, he is not alone. The whites however are an entirely different story.

This unique region in the north-east of France on the German border has been ruled by both countries in turn over the years. The influence of both cultures is clear; but along the way it has acquired a streak of independence and cultural discipline which renders its people single-minded and distinctively different.

What do you suppose Albert Schweitzer, Marcel Marceau and Arsène Wenger have in common? The answer is that they were all born in Alsace.

Situated between the Vosges Mountains and the river Rhine, the region boasts one of the highest concentrations of Michelin-starred restaurants in France. This pretty enclave of fairytale villages and castles makes German wines in the French way. Alsace wine makers cultivate Gewürztraminer, Riesling, Sylvaner, Muscat, Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris (the same grape as Pinot Grigio) and the resulting wines are quite different from those anywhere else. There are also the less successful dawn-pale reds made from Pinot Noir which failed to impress Robert Parker.

All the whites share a tingle of brilliant acidity. Wine makers here do not use oak ageing to add spice and richness; instead they ferment all of the grape sugar into alcohol, resulting in dry, steely, full-bodied wines. The glorious exception to this is Gewürztraminer. This is intensely perfumed with aromas of rose petals, lychees and pineapple. No other region in the world has been able to produce significant quantities of Gewürztraminer that even approach the richness and exotic fruit qualities that are achieved here.

A glass of that Gewurztraminer might even bring a smile to Arsène Wenger's face.

Osiris

Nothing great is created suddenly, any more than a bunch of grapes or a fig.

Epictetus



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The Plough at Finstock



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Guy and Jordan Wallis wish to thank everyone in this area that has supported them; and now that they are buying The Plough, they invite you to celebrate with them on Friday October 28th from 7.30pm. Free Prosecco and canapes will be available.

Try the Plough's triple cooked chips, which are noted near and far as the best chips in our area. On Tuesdays they serve fish and chips, two dinners for the price of one; Thursdays are steak nights.



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Fireworks

Don't you just love fireworks? Don't you look forward to all those thrilling bangs and whooshes and explosions? No? Then perhaps you are an elderly person living alone, or farm animals frightened and alone in their fields, or a nervous spaniel or a hysterical Labrador, a terrified whippet or a shell-shocked cat, or their owner.

In the days when firework celebrations were confined to Guy Fawkes Night pet owners could take pets away from the village or manage somehow to soothe and reassure their animals but now that "the season" lasts from the weekend before Halloween to the weekend after November 5th anxiety is becoming acute; particularly now that some people find the need to shatter the peace at Christmas and New Year with explosions as well.

Small boys have always found it fun to shock grown-ups with anti-social behaviour; but those exploding military or industrial rockets at midnight are surely adults who should grow up and consider the effect of their puerile behaviour on their neighbours.

Please enjoy Bonfire Night (having checked for hedgehogs) with consideration for others in our village.

Barbara Pensom and Fancy

*Depression is merely anger
without enthusiasm.*

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LETTERS

Dear Editor:

I read with interest your salute to Roald Dahl on the centenary of his birth. I wondered if Finstock News readers may be interested to learn that I was the midwife who delivered the last two babies of Roald Dahl and Patricia Neal, the actress and his lovely wife. I delivered their fourth child Ophelia in May 1964. Patricia then became pregnant quite quickly again but sadly she had a massive stroke in early 1965. The consultant, Mr. William Hawksworth flew to Los Angeles to examine her and see if the pregnancy was viable, which it was. As soon as she was well enough she was brought back to Great Missenden,

where they lived. When she came in for delivery she was still very poorly and had a job speaking. I was the midwife in charge of that delivery, and also of Lucy in August 1965. He gave me one of his books, which was signed with thanks. Roald Dahl was amazing. Patricia Neal needed so much physiotherapy, etc. to try to get her walking again, that he organized rotas of willing volunteers in Great Missenden, who went in for two hourly stints to help manipulate her joints and encourage her to walk. She did eventually return to acting, but her speech never fully recovered.

Viv Wightman

New X9 bus schedule

from Pulham's Coaches:-
tinyurl.com/hxfmqo3

Finstock Baby and Toddler Group Updates

Finstock babies and toddlers (and some from further afield!) had a few meet-ups over the summer, and even a holiday themed sensory session with sand, sea and seaweed! Much gloopy fun was had by those that joined us. The group is now settling into the autumn term back in the Hall. We will certainly enjoy the space and warmth over the next few months!

We meet from 10am every Wednesday morning (term time) and have plenty on offer for all that come along: toys, activities, crafts and snacks for the little ones, plus hot drinks, cake and chat for the adults! We are planning a wide variety of seasonal activities over the coming term leading up to Halloween and, of course Christmas! It's never too early to get the glitter out for that surely.

If you haven't tried us out yet, come along for a free first session! You can keep up-to-date with what we are doing on Facebook, or our weekly emails: contact us on finstocktoddlergroup@gmail.com and we can add you to the list. We really enjoy our weekly group, catching up with friends and making new ones! We look forward to seeing you there.

Helen Fallows

'Save a Life' app

Save a Life is a free Android and Apple app from South Central Ambulance Service that uses GPS functionality to show where to find your nearest defibrillator. It also features videos, cardiopulmonary resuscitation instructions and more. www.scas.nhs.uk/savealife to find your nearest defibrillator.

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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Photographs thanks to staff members and others.

Read the Finstock News online at www.finstock.org.uk; join the Finstock Yahoo group – groups.yahoo.com/group/finstock; or write to us at 63 High Street, Finstock Oxon OX7 3DA.

Plan ahead – Know the deadlines

Issue	Deadline
Feb/Mar	First of January
April/May	First of March
June/July	First of May
August/September	First of July
October/November	First of September
December/January	First of November

Please keep articles short. As space is limited, the Editors reserve the right to shorten long pieces in the interest of balance. Finstock News does not necessarily share the views expressed in readers' letters.

SMALL ADS

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Line ads are charged at 20p per word, payment in advance.

Please contact: Ann Sullivan on 868597.

TVSA VILLAGE SHOP AND POST OFFICE

Congratulations to the Finstock News on its 100th issue!

Once again autumn is with us. Halloween brings ghoulies, ghosties and long-legged beasts, not to mention witches and wizards. The Shop will have Halloween stock and another Halloween Competition.

Halloween and Guy Fawkes bonfire parties will be happening around November 5th. Don't forget to order your sausages and burgers from us in good time. We will obtain them from Patrick Strainge in Bampton. We also have a good selection of beer and wine.

The Shop always has local cakes, bread, chutney, jam, marmalade and ham.

Every day we are open we can supply a tremendous range of food from our freezers, and general grocery shelves: tinned fruit and vegetables, packet soups, soft drinks, pasta, rice, tea, coffee, biscuits

and pet food. We have a great choice of newspapers and magazines.

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Saturday morning we would be very grateful. Training will be given for dealing with newspapers and opening and closing the shop. We really need help at this time. Perhaps you can manage just a few weeks or a regular week every month?

Please continue to support our Food Bank collection. It is still very much needed. Thank you for your generosity.

Post Office open Monday to Friday 9am-1pm.

You can post letters and packages, pay your utility bills, withdraw cash and buy foreign currency.

Karen Williams and the volunteers

MarketInvoice

WODC is investing £50,000 in local businesses via funding platform MarketInvoice which allows firms to release funds from unpaid invoices. Business owners will be able to upload their invoices online where they are funded by investors including the Council. When the invoice is paid, typically after 45 days, investors' money is returned and is ready to be used again. The Council's £50,000 will be deployed on a continuous basis but only to local businesses. For more information see www.marketinvoice.com.

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Thoreau, 'Walden'

Welcome to the Anthropocene

The Anthropocene defines Earth's most recent geological period as being human-influenced, or anthropogenic, based on overwhelming global evidence that atmospheric, geological, hydrological, biospherical and other earth system processes are now altered by humans.

The Anthropocene is distinguished as a new period either after or within the Holocene, the current epoch, which began approximately 10,000 years ago (about 8000 BC) with the end of the last glacial period. www.anthropocene.info.

Green Gyms

Green Gyms help people become physically and mentally healthier by taking part in practical nature conservation activities to improve their local environment. Everyone is welcome to

join. For more information, see www.tcv.org.uk/greengym/how-green-gym-works.

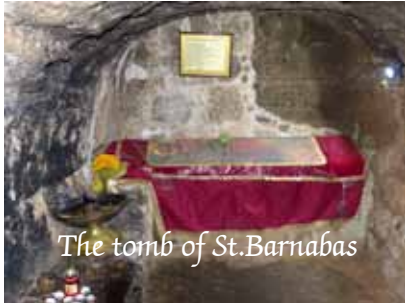
We provide all tools, training and refreshments.

Council pledges food waste reduction target

WODC has signed up to the Courtauld Commitment, a pledge to cut food and drink waste by 20 per cent before 2025. The Courtauld Commitment 2025 is a voluntary agreement launched by the Waste and Resource Action Programme (WRAP), which brings together organisations across the food system from producer to consumer to food waste disposal.

Food waste recycling was introduced in West Oxfordshire in 2010. Householders are provided with a free kitchen caddy and outdoor bin. After collection it is taken to an anaerobic digestion plant in Cassington where it is recycled into a liquid fertiliser called 'digestate' for use on local farmland and renewable electricity to power 4,000 homes is generated as a by-product during the process.

PICTURES FROM A TOUR OF NORTHERN CYPRUS AND TURKEY



The tomb of St. Barnabas



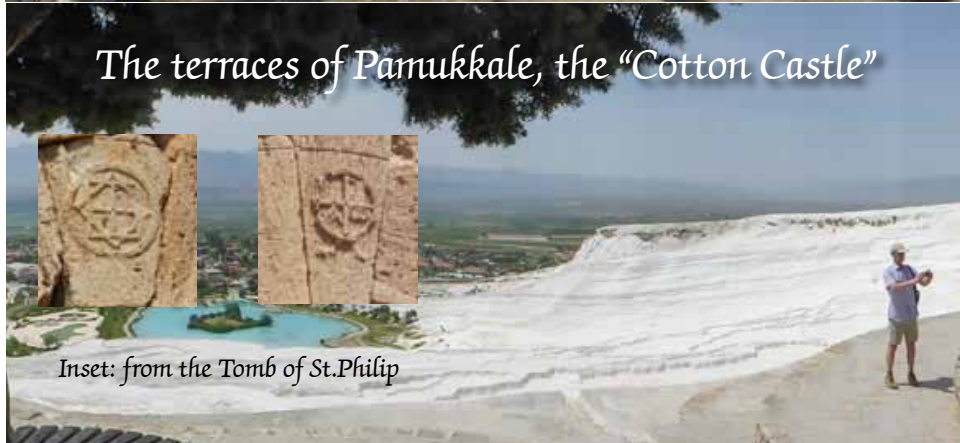
A week of touring Northern Cyprus was followed by a week in the Turkish Riviera, in an area completely full of hotels. (It took ages to get to the dining room(s), or the private beach, from the bedroom!)



St. Hilarion Crusader Castle



The pillars of Salamis



The terraces of Pamukkale, the "Cotton Castle"

Inset: from the Tomb of St. Philip



Carpet weaver

A church which has been turned into a mosque:-



St. Nicholas

Mustafa Pasha

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Residents can get their Electric Blankets Checked Free

Now is the time for residents to book their blanket in for a free check in October. Oxfordshire County Council's Fire & Rescue Service and Trading Standards are urging electric blanket owners to get their blankets tested free of charge ahead of the approaching colder months.

Testing electric blankets annually is important as all electrical systems have the potential to go wrong. In 2015 a total of 22 per cent of the electric blankets failed the safety test and were declared unsafe to use. They can be

perfectly safe to use provided they are in good condition and have the necessary overheating safeguards incorporated into the design. Station Manager Chris Barber of Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service said: "Like any other piece of electrical equipment, it is vitally important that electric blankets remain in safe working order, last year nearly a quarter failed." Testing is by appointment only, strictly on a first come, first served basis. Residents should call Trading Standards on 01865-815000, option 4, to arrange an appointment, or email communityengagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

Comet - transport from your door to destination

The X9 bus still operates most of the timetable due to it being a well-used and now commercial service; but just in case there are journeys it doesn't do, the Comet, a new bookable transport service from Oxfordshire County Council, can fill the slack.

If any user groups or individuals are interested in using this service your County Councillor would be happy to put you on the right road! Please see more details at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/comet

Finstock News

My grateful thanks to all involved in producing and circulating what is one of the best Parish based newsletters in my area - it is superb.

Cllr Rodney Rose

rodney.rose@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Finstock Link

Finstock Link is the response of Finstock Parish Council to times of local emergency, such as adverse weather and its consequences (heavy snow, flood, etc.), but may be implemented at any time at the instigation of the Chair of the Parish Council. Finstock Link co-ordinates activity within the parish and where appropriate with local authorities and emergency services to help protect vulnerable members of our community and mitigate the effects of the emergency for all residents. This includes ensuring all those in need of help have access to adequate medical provisions, emergency heating, general provisions and have personal care or contact where that is within the power of the Parish Council to deliver as emergency support. In case of such an emergency, a single point of contact will be established and communicated to all households in the village. The most frequent use of the scheme is adverse weather, especially snow, and volunteers grit in advance and clear after a snowfall where necessary.

We currently have 32 households that act as volunteers. If you would like to be added to the list please email the Parish Clerk june.pratley@btinternet.com or speak to any parish councillor. We especially need a few more people available during daytime on weekdays as this is when there is a frequent demand for winter gritting.

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Village Hall Bookings

Evenlode Folk

Saturday October 22nd Finstock welcomes Oxfordshire folk legend **John Spiers**, well known for his long-standing duo partnership with Jon Boden in the formidable Spiers & Boden, as well as his contribution to the massively popular Bellowhead. John has also played with Eliza Carthy's Ratcatchers and a number of local folk-dance bands. Known better in folk circles as 'Squeezy', he has made a name for himself as one of the leading squeezebox players of his generation. Tickets £10 in advance, £12 on the door from www.wegotickets.com or email villagehallfinstock@gmail.com or call 868020.

Pop-up Folk

Friday November 4th at 7.45pm **The Owl Light Trio**: Jim Penny (concertina), Jane Griffiths (fiddle), and Colin Fletcher (guitar). Thoroughly good tunes from Ireland, Brittany, Sweden, and beyond. Support will be provided by members of the DellyWellyBoot Band. £8 entry on the door. For more information contact Judith, jmih.boot@zen.co.uk.

ChOC Films

www.chocfilms.org

Sunday October 9th at 7.30pm: **Dad's Army**

Sunday November 13th at 7pm: **Everest**

British Legion Poppy Appeal 2016

The 2016 Poppy Appeal will launch on Thursday October 27th. It runs until Armistice Day, November 11th. This year Remembrance Sunday falls on November 13th. Each year door to door collections are made throughout the UK giving everyone an opportunity to donate what they can to this very necessary and worthwhile cause.

Finstock has always played its part, giving generously each year. We have been fortunate enough to have a great team of volunteers who kindly give up a little of their time to visit each home as collectors. This year however, due to a couple of great stalwarts retiring from our team (having more than done their bit), we are looking for fresh volunteers to join the team. Having served, or having had links to the military, is not a requirement; so if you feel the desire to support us and you can give up just an hour or so of your time, just once a year, please contact me on 869283, or email me at mjcharlesworth@btinternet.com.

Mick Charlesworth

Natural History Museum

www.nhm.ac.uk/take-part/identify-nature.html

Have you found a strange bug or a new plant in your garden, or stumbled across an intriguing animal bone or fossil while out on a country walk? Let us help you find out about it. The dedicated team at the Museum's Identification and Advisory

FRIENDS OF FINSTOCK SCHOOL (FOFS)

We are gearing up for another full year of fun and productive fundraising to help enhance our wonderful school. Our first aim is to get ready for our Annual General Meeting, which will hopefully be held during October. Please look out for details of the date and time of this meeting on the noticeboard outside the school and I will report on this in the next edition of the *Finstock News*. It's now an important time to organise ourselves for the year ahead as members leave our committee and, hopefully new faces join us. New members from the school and wider community are always most welcome.

The only date agreed for school events so far is the Christmas Fayre, which we plan to hold jointly with the Church as usual. The Fayre is set for Saturday December 10th; time and venue to be advised. We have also arranged for the traditional Pantomime to visit the school in the run up to Christmas, which should be a fabulous treat for the children. We

aim to pencil in dates as soon as possible for other events for the year, which will include discos and should include another Ladies Pamper Night and the Finstock 10k Run in the spring. We may run old favourites such as our Quiz and Bingo Nights or perhaps try something different, but we will always strive to make our fundraising fun and targeted towards purchasing a specific item for the school.

One project is a recipe book filled with easy to prepare, low cost, delicious (and hopefully healthy!) quick evening meal ideas. If you have any suitable recipes you would like to share with us for the book, please let us know at htcfinstock@gmail.com. The aim would be to sell as many copies of the book as possible to raise funds.

Many thanks for all your support in the past and we look forward to seeing you at our events throughout the coming year.

Rachel Mackenzie (FoFS Chairperson)

Power cuts helpline

WODC supports the launch of 105, a new national three-digit helpline telephone number that will make it quicker and easier for people to report a power cut. The public can also call 105 if they spot damage to electricity power lines and substations that could put them or someone else in danger. If there's a serious immediate risk the emergency services should also be contacted. Visit www.powercut105.com to find out more.

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DAD'S ARMIES

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust (SOFO) Museum, Park Street, Woodstock

From now until December there is an exhibition on the Amateur Military Tradition. Local and amateur soldiers predated the establishment of a standing army in the 17th century. This joint exhibition between the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust and the Buckinghamshire Military Museum Trust is devoted to the story of these local auxiliary forces, the militia, yeomanry and volunteers, and to their successors in two world wars: the Volunteer Training Corps and the Home Guard. The exhibition brings together some

Citizen Access to council tax and benefits

This new WODC Citizen Access system enables residents to go online for information on Council Tax and benefits, as well as change any information when required. You can view a property's Council Tax band and annual charge; inform us of a change of address and register to pay by direct debit. Benefit claimants can also view their current entitlement, the date of their next payment and the amount to be paid. The system also allows residents to sign up for paperless billing by email for their Council Tax and Business Rates.

To register, use the account reference number and online key at the bottom of your latest bill. For more information, see www.westoxon.gov.uk/ebilling.

unique uniforms, artefacts and images of a largely forgotten part of Britain's military, political, social and cultural history. www.oxfordshirehomeguard.uk

Please visit www.sofa.org.uk/whatson.php for events for adults and children.

From the Finstock News archives

Most people have seen the TV programme Dad's Army about the Home Guard during the Second World War. Well, I remember the Finstock Home Guard (Defence Volunteers) very well, and I can assure you that they were not in the remotest sense like the Dad's Army bunch.

Mr. Oliver Watney, the owner of Cornbury Park Estate, was the Captain: a tall, dark-haired, stern, no-nonsense type of man, and his butler was the sergeant. I can see them arriving outside the Village Hall in a huge shooting brake around 2pm on a Saturday for briefings.

At first they had no Army-type rifles and had to make do with mainly shotguns with a sporting rifle or two. The team consisted of younger men that had not as yet gone into the Army, or middle-aged men who were too old for military service.

My dad had four shotguns in the house and the one he favoured for his Home Guard duties was a double-barrelled 12-gauge hammer shotgun. I can remember him at the kitchen table reloading some Eley Grand Prix cartridges with buckshot: ¼ inch lead balls replacing the normal lead shot. Anyone fired upon and getting hit

with this fearsome load would have been severely wounded or killed, that's for sure. They sometimes practised with their guns on a Saturday afternoon in Wards or Luston ground fields. When they were issued with a machine gun, I remember hearing its rapid fire from the village.

After the fall of France and the evacuation of the British Army at Dunkirk things became very frightening when it was thought invasion was soon to take place. The big worry inland was parachutist landing. Every evening after coming home from work these men would patrol the fields and woods around Finstock for most of the night. A huge movable barricade was erected down the main road next to the big barn that has just been turned into offices. The barricade consisted of a tree trunk about three feet in diameter. The end opposite the barn gable was pivoted to a large tree; on the other end a huge steel axle was fitted on which an Oxfordshire wagon wheel of about five feet in diameter was fitted. When the Home Guard men blocked the road they would swing the trunk on the wheel across the road to jam tightly against the gable end of the barn. Huge chains through the barn wall were wrapped around the wheel and tree trunk and then locked.

Mr. Perce Howse, the village blacksmith who lived at the Waterloo Arms off-licence, was the village air raid warden. Every night he would patrol the village to make sure that every house was in total darkness and that garden fires were put out as soon as it became dusk. There were severe penalties for those who ignored the blackout laws.

No, there was nothing amusing about Finstock Home Guard, and it was certainly no laughing matter. M. Tooley

New online social housing system

Homeseeker Plus allows anyone on West Oxfordshire's housing register to apply to rent vacant Housing Association properties. Prospective and existing tenants are banded according to their individual needs. Properties are advertised weekly and the Council then offers each property to the most appropriate bidder.

Further details are on the Council's website (www.westoxon.gov.uk). Anyone requiring help with the new process should contact the Housing Team on 861000.



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FINSTOCK SCHOOL

After a long summer break both staff and pupils have arrived back at school with renewed energy and vigour. It is always an exciting time of year with new children, new staff and all children going into new year-groups. Everyone is ready to meet the challenges ahead of them. It is therefore fitting that our value this term is 'Challenge'.

You will remember that in October last year we became a founding member of the MILL Academy, and as such uphold and live the agreed values of Motivate, Inspire, Learn and Lead through our distinctive Christian and British Values education. At the end of last term we had a really lively meeting involving all members of the school community, pupils, parents, staff, governors and members of the local community, where we discussed which values we felt that we wanted to be at the core of our school and which really fitted the fully-inclusive and aspirational nature of Finstock School as a member of the wider Academy. Amongst those values that were considered important were: challenge, respect, inspiration and belief. It was felt that these values included many of the other aspects that we hold important, e.g. friendship, trust and aspiration. We use these key Christian values during our Collective Worship and in our daily learning and play, which supports the development of a real community-based ethos for the school,

and where stakeholders are motivated and inspired, have a love of learning, and are equipped to lead and face challenges.

At this time of real change and reducing resources in education, the partnership that we have developed with the other academy members has proved a real strength, whilst allowing Finstock School to retain its own ethos and character. It has supported the development of resources within the school. For example, the whole school has had a new guided reading scheme funded by an academy grant. It has also enabled staff to access training, share good practice and develop their skills. The school has been able to call in external expertise to review its provision, and help focus on areas for development in our unerring drive towards 'outstanding' and has been able to call on internal expertise in areas such as Special Needs Education and ICT. By combining resources in areas such as finance and HR, we have been able to not only make savings in the budget, but also free up time for school leaders to focus on teaching and learning. The Academy journey has only just begun, but already we are seeing the impact at Finstock School.

Sue Dawe Headteacher

.....
October School schedule
 Monday 24th - Half Term Holiday Week

Finstock Craft Club

On behalf of all members of the Finstock Craft Club, I would like to add our thanks and congratulations to everyone involved in the production of the Village Newsletter, especially for this very unique 100th edition.



The Craft Club continues to meet at the Village Hall, on the 2nd Monday and 4th Wednesday of every month from 7:30 to 10pm. Dates for the upcoming meetings are as follows: Monday October 10th and Wednesday October 26th; Monday November 14th and Wednesday November 23rd.

We are very happy to report on the continuing success of the Craft Club as it grows by at least one new member joining us at each session. With these new members has come the opportunity for us all to improve our individual skills. This is especially true as the varieties of crafts grow and the ability levels increase. We all get great pleasure in sharing and seeing how thrilled newcomers and existing members are when they have been shown some technique or possibly just a more effective way to complete a particular task. Whether you are an experienced crafter or a beginner, there's a place for you at Finstock Crafts club. You will be very warmly welcomed!

On another note, the Annual Village **Arts and Crafts event** will take place in the Village Hall on Saturday November 26th so please contact me at rosacrafts@btinternet.com, if you would like to book a table for this event or just require more information. Cost of table is £10.

Rosa Charlesworth

The Shepherd's Life – A Tale of the Lake District by James Rebanks

"I understand for the first time that our sense of belonging is all about participation. We belong because we are part of the work of this place."

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Finstock Girlguiding

All sections meet on Wednesdays. There are always places available for new members.

Rainbows: for girls aged between 5 and 7 years: meets from 4.45pm until 5.45pm.

Contact: Amy Booth 07495-064634, ajb5@btinternet.com

Brownies: for girls aged between 7 and 10 years: meets from 6pm until 7.30pm.

Contact: Caroline Booth 07890-629001, carolinebooth4@gmail.com

Guides: for girls aged between 10 and 14 years: meets from 7pm until 8.30pm.

Contact for Guides is Kim Lovelock 07792-907252, kimberley.lovelock@yahoo.co.uk

Short Mat Bowls

Certain sports and activities generate images of the stereotypical players: think of golf, darts or show jumping: I'm sure you are already constructing those in your mind's eye. Now, thanks to the very much welcome facilities of the new Village Hall, we have the opportunity to play bowls, Short Mat Bowls. I'm sure the image is already imprinting itself on your retina: all those grey people, a bit dodderly, tea and biscuits, enthusiastic reminiscences of Saga holidays; but no, it isn't like that (except for the tea and biscuits).

It was with a little trepidation that a few of us, wanting to support the hall and hoping not to be recognised as we certainly were not those stereotypical players, attended the first few sessions and

have been regulars since.

As all novices we have come to realise and enjoy learning the skills needed. Some of us have experienced the elation of improving, that is, getting the bowl to stay on the mat and end up near the 'jack' (note the technical language) but occasionally it will still veer off across the floor and head for Fawler. Basically we all get involved; we try really hard and enjoy the mild competition of a team sport.

If you are ever free on a Monday or Thursday afternoon and might be tempted to try something new why not come along and at least see what it is like - you may want to stay.

Anon

'Open Up' About Medicines

To drive down waste of medicines and ensure people use their medicines safely, the 'Open Up' about medicines campaign encourages patients to talk to their healthcare professional when they do not need medicines or have stopped taking a medication. Unused medicines are estimated to cost the NHS £300m a year.

Men's natures are alike; it is their habits that separate them.

Confucius

Home Library Service

Volunteers work with Oxfordshire libraries to bring the library into people's lives. They work alongside library staff and other volunteers by taking books, audio books and DVD's to customers in their homes and care homes; they liaise with the customer, develop an understanding of their reading tastes, and share an enthusiasm for books and reading; and they support independent living, reduce isolation and ill health. To learn more and become a volunteer, visit tinyurl.com/nfrohpm.

Tell us your thoughts on the Health Service

You can share your thoughts on how NHS services in Oxfordshire can deliver high quality care now and in the future via Talking Health, which is OCCG's consultation website. To fill in an online survey on Talking Health click here: tinyurl.com/ze5gfrk.

Alternatively, if you require hard copies of the survey please email your contact details, including your address, to cscsu.talkinghealth@nhs.net; or write to the Communications and Engagement Team, Oxfordshire CCG, Freepost RRRKBZBTASXU, Jubilee House, 5510 John Smith Drive, Oxford OX4 2LH.

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ONE PERSON'S WEED, ANOTHER'S PASSION?



Many of us marvel at a meadow of red poppies and purple Corn Cockles, which were once common weeds of corn fields. Some gardeners love the magnificent candelabras of pure white flowers of cow parsley or the long flowering pink Campions (ragged robins), yellow cowslips and the blue geraniums in the hedgerows. The fine structural form of teasles, whose purple bristled heads were collected in the past to provide a natural combs for cleaning, aligning and raising the nap on fabrics, particularly wool. The poet Gerald

Manley Hopkins must have been thinking of these plants when he romantically wrote, "Long live the weeds": but surely not the nettle or ground elder!

What is a weed? A professor, doing a research project with nettles had taken over one of the college flower beds to grow them. When he had a group of students, a rather disgruntled gardener came in and asked rather pointedly, whether he should "weed out" the one remaining rose bush in the patch!

Most of us handle the stinging nettle with great care, as it is covered with microscopic hairs which inject at least three chemicals: histamine acting as a skin irritant, acetylcholine producing the burning sensation and hydroxytryptamine to activate them. The old country remedy of reducing the pain is by using a dock leaf to rub on the sting, as it contains chemicals which inhibit this hydroxytryptamine.

In the past, nettles were used to provide fibres for rope and cloth; and before the First World War, the Germans harvested up to 60,000 tons per year to make the soldiers uniforms. In the early 1940's, as part of the war effort, the County Herb Committees in England called for 100 tons of nettles to be collected to produce extracts for the green dyes needed for Camouflage and the chemical chlorophyllin to make certain ointments

used to lower inflammation caused by injuries and promote wound healing. Nettles can also be used to make nettle soup and even Samuel Pepys records in 1661 having some "very good nettle porridge". Nettles enjoy richly manured soil and thus it is one of the first places that the Police seek "the body".

The bane of gardeners everywhere is ground elder, which was introduced



by the conquering Romans as they enjoyed eating it. Young ground elder can be eaten raw in salads (cheaper than bags of mixed supermarket leaves!), cooked in stews, casseroles, and soups and steamed like spinach; but I still wish the Romans had left it at home!

Happy gardening, Robert Bigwood

Reed diffuser

A reed diffuser will give your home a subtle and long-lasting fragrance that will transform the ambience of any room in moments. You will need a packet of bamboo skewers; an essential oil; one cup of sunflower oil or other unscented cooking oil; a few herbs or spices of your choice; and a pretty container to put it all in.

Select your essential oils such as rose or jasmine (at either Boots or Bean Bag). Mix 10-12 drops of the essential oil with the sunflower oil and pour into the container to fill about half-way to the top; add sprigs of herbs like rosemary or thyme or spices like cloves, nutmeg or cinnamon sticks; add ten or so skewers and you are ready to go. Rotate the sticks every few weeks to stop them from drying out.

Book a GP Appointment via Smart Phone App

OCCG has launched a new phone app to help you find local health services quickly. You can also book a GP appointment via the app.

Health and Care Oxfordshire provides advice on when it might be best to visit a pharmacist or a GP and when to call NHS 111, and when self-management at home might be more appropriate. It highlights the type of injuries or illnesses most appropriate to be seen at minor injuries units or first aid units in Oxfordshire.

To download the app for iPhone click here: tinyurl.com/o8r6p6m; and for Androids click here: tinyurl.com/phxl6op.



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