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# Dates For Your Diary: Spring 2024



TOTs	St Mary's	3.30pm	Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March
Mothering Sunday Morning Prayer	St Mary's	11.00am	Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> March
Gin Distillery Open Day & Maker's Yard	High Street	11.00am-5.00pm	Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> March
St Mary's Church 'Walk & Reflect'	Meet at St Mary's	10.00am	Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> March
Dorcas Society Annual Spring Soup Lunch	Village Hall	12.30pm	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March
Palm Sunday Holy Communion	St Mary's	11.00am	Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> March
Garden Club AGM	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> March
Ladies Group: Talk On The History Of London Taxis	Village Hall	8.00pm	Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> March
Maundy Thursday Benefice Agape	Priors Hall Barn	11.00am	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> March
Good Friday AHATC	St Mary's	2.00pm	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> March
Easter Egg Hunt Brunch & Lunch	The White Hart	From 10.00am	Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> March
Easter Sunday Holy Communion	St Mary's	11.00am	Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> March
History Society Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> April
Bowling Club Race Night	Village Hall	7.00pm	Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> April
Garden Club Alpine Sink Planting Demonstration	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April
Ladies Group: Flower Arranging Demonstration	Village Hall	8.00pm	Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> April
Garden Club 40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tea Party	Village Hall	TBC	Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> May
History Society Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> June
Stebbing Summer Party	Priors Hall Barn	6.00pm	Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> June
Gin Distillery Open Day & Maker's Yard	High Street	11.00am-5.00pm	Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> July
Stebbing Summer Fayre	Mill Lane	11.00am	Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> September
History Society Talk	Village Hall	8.00pm	Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> September

## Stebbing Bowling Club News

Last year, The Stebbing Races was a most successful evening with everybody having a good time whilst the Bowling Club raised funds.

**The same winning formula will be repeated on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April in the Village Hall.** Our Bowling Club has kept the ticket and licensed bar prices the same as last year. A Ploughman's Special will be served, with a selection of alternative dishes, in order to meet most common dietary requirements.

Last year, the noise and excitement during the first race even surprised the experienced organisers – particularly as bets were only £1.00 each! The banter, cheering and even booing from some quarters added to the atmosphere. The club can safely say that the Stebbing Racing evening has gained a place on our fixture list.

Our Bowling Green improves annually. Last year all four rinks were passed as suitable for county competitions. Even now with two months still to go, the green looks good. The men's toilet and changing room have been upgraded. Thanks once again to many of our club members, who have worked so hard during the close season. To those of you who have never tried the sport of kings, Stebbing Bowling Club offers you everything from free instruction, to social bowling and club and inter club matches.

Why not make this the year to improve your fitness and try a new sport? Our 2024 membership fee is £85.00, and unlike many clubs, there are no green fees. New members will be made welcome.

*Humphrey Barbier*

### **Stebbing Bowling Club Race Night is Back**



**Stebbing Village Hall  
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£12.00 including food**

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*Paddy McKeown*



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## Parish Paths Partnership (P3) News

In mid-January we experienced a problem on one of our footpaths involving outright vandalism. January, if you remember, was very wet and this being Stebbing, some of our footpaths became very muddy. Footpath 45 in the wood above Brick Kiln Farm was particularly bad down towards the stream and someone had removed two wayposts and two marker posts (used to indicate the positions of half buried metalwork before we damage our equipment on them) in order to facilitate their passage through the mud. There were also signs that a quad bike had been driven through the stream into the wood which had helped to churn up the mud on the footpath.

Whilst we have replaced the posts and we can't be completely sure whether they were removed by the quad bike rider or walkers, the effect is the same: the quad bike was trespassing on private land and should not have been anywhere near the footpath and if the posts were removed by walkers, it is plain vandalism just because they were not wearing suitable footwear – rural footpaths get muddy in the winter. Our small team work hard to maintain the good reputation of our footpaths but there are some things which are out of our control: like mud and believe it or not, badger holes.

We have done what we can for now to deter joy riders and hope that this incident will not result in private property being turned into an overgrown adventure playground. If the damage was caused by walkers, while we would encourage people to get out and use the footpaths, PLEASE treat the paths with respect and dress suitably for the weather but if you do find a problem on any of our footpaths, or byways, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Brian Martin

A decorative border with four ornate floral corner pieces, each featuring a central square motif and swirling lines, framing the text.

### Stebbing in Springtime

*In Stebbing's embrace, spring unfurls,  
St. Mary's church, where joy swirls.  
Blossoms paint the lanes in hues,  
Nature's palette, vibrant clues.*

*The White Hart Pub, a haven of cheer,  
Mirth and laughter, draw near.  
Bowling green adorned in green,  
Echoes of delight, a tranquil scene.*

*Petals dance on the village air,  
Whispers of love, everywhere.  
Stebbing in bloom, a charming sight,  
Springtime's embrace, pure delight.*

## The Pilgrim Parishes: Signs Of Hope In The Garden



As I write this in early February signs of Spring are evident from my window. A female pheasant has wandered past the snowdrops and is now under the bird feeders, fattening herself up ready for her spring brood, The honeybees are collecting pollen from the aconites to feed the young of the hive.



There is a lot going on in nature as it wakes from the Winter and when you read this in March there will be even more.

There is quite a bit going on at this time of year in the church too.

On March 10<sup>th</sup> it is Mothering Sunday. I like this name more than 'Mother's Day' because it covers 'doing' mothering rather than 'being' a mother which might be done by someone special who is not a mother. In the past it was the day when people went either to the church where they were baptised or to the main church in the area, perhaps the Cathedral, being the 'Mother' church. It allowed those working away from home to see their family, perhaps picking posies on the way for their mothers. We give out posies in church to be given to mothers and others and, as we give thanks for mothers who are with us no longer, some are put on their graves too.

Later in the month is Palm Sunday on March 24<sup>th</sup>, when we remember Jesus riding humbly into Jerusalem on a donkey with people waving palms in celebration. The nearest we get to that in church is the occasional donkey processing and perhaps entering the church while the people wave crosses made of palm leaves!

Then the dates come very close together with Maundy Thursday on March 28<sup>th</sup> when we remember the Last Supper that Jesus had with his friends. He is arrested that night before his crucifixion on Good Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. The early joyful dates are all over and there is a sense of darkness and sadness.

Suddenly on Easter Day March 31<sup>st</sup> there is amazement and joy and people encounter Jesus, no longer dead but living and speaking to them. He has overcome death; he is alive and with them. What joy even when it is mixed with puzzlement and sometimes disbelief!

As we look at the flowers of the bulbs mentioned at the beginning it seems to me that they give us a glimpse of that Easter joy and that sudden surprising appearance of the unexpected which give us hope. The darkness of Winter is over and there is life bubbling up all over the place. This for me is a symbol of the Easter Joy we celebrate in church every Easter. Look at your snowdrops in anticipation of that joy and hope

*Cilla Hawkes*



## St Mary's Church Easter Services



Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Mothering Sunday Morning Prayer	11.00am
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> March	Palm Sunday Holy Communion	11.00am
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> March	Maundy Thursday Benefice Agape*	11.00am
Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> March	Good Friday AHATC**	2.00pm
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	Easter Day Holy Communion	11.00am

**Note:** Due to renovations taking place in St Mary's Church, some services will be held in Priors Hall Barn. Please see notices on Facebook, Nextdoor and Instagram for more information.

\* A shared meal and simple communion

\*\* An Hour At The Cross

**Scouts**   
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**Due to the loss of the current leader, Stebbing Scout group urgently require adults willing to become leaders/helpers to assist the running of the Cub pack for boys and girls aged 8 – 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>. Volunteering is easier than you think, with full support and training you can volunteer on a flexible basis.**

**With the support of other leaders, we will be able to continue for the Summer term, but unfortunately without any new volunteers we will be unable to continue holding Cubs from September.**

**If you are able to help, please contact :- [richardjlincoln@gmail.com](mailto:richardjlincoln@gmail.com) or 01371 865117**



**2024**

**St Mary's Church, Stebbing**

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*Subject to lottery funding*

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## District Councillor's Corner: Refuse Matters

The Editor asked me early in January as to what might be the theme I proposed to write about for this Edition. I advised her that I might write about the refuse service and the importance of waste recycling.



Little did I imagine then that I would be writing this piece by first of all giving an apology to our Residents concerning the performance of the UDC refuse service in the past weeks. But, I find myself in the regrettable position of giving a very humble apology on behalf of UDC, as I now do, to all in our community for the very unacceptable failure of that service. Many will have read the UDC advices (including those passed on via the Parish Council – many thanks to Greg as usual for doing so) as to the explanation for it. In short, it came about because of a failure in the UDC office to take steps in time to renew its HGV Operators' Licence, which then led to the UDC refuse fleet being temporarily "grounded". There were no deficiencies in the vehicles themselves nor as to the competencies of the drivers or loaders – they were all compliant.

The Operators' Licence is issued by the national Traffic Commissioner but required renewal in January as the previous Transport Manager had left UDC's employment and a successor was awaiting confirmation of his accreditation which was needed prior to the renewal being granted. Quite simply, this lapse should never have occurred and the failure of the administrative system which allowed it to happen also highlight a further failure of administrative controls.

There is no shortage of the understandable criticism of these oversights and justified complaints have been made by many of our residents. Of course, a detailed enquiry as to the human and administrative system errors which resulted in such inconveniences over the past several weeks, when refuse collections were missed and/or delayed, is underway. Several residents understandably have asked if they are to receive a rebate on their Council Tax to represent the cost to them of the missed/delayed collections. The answer is no – the actual cost per household is about £ 0.50 per bin collection/day missed and to reprogramme the invoicing system to make an adjustment for this modest sum would be disproportionate.

It was my original intention, before the recent disruption in collections, to give readers some background detail about the refuse service and so I now do that. UDC's budget for its refuse service function is some £12.22 m gross pa or £5.85m net pa, after recovery of fees etc. Currently, the district wide service is provided by nine large and one smaller front line refuse vehicles, together with three spare/standby older vehicles. Our vehicles are equipped to receive two grades of material at one collection i.e. either the non-recycling (black lids) or recycling (green lids) in alternate weeks, plus food caddy contents every week.

As a result of the unacceptable refuse service standards which have been vividly highlighted in the past month, a decision has been taken to improve substantially the service and increase the proposed budget for 2024/2025 to allow for the purchase of





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three additional refuse vehicles (each costs about £285,000) as well as the recruitment of additional loaders and driving personnel, thus increasing the number of rounds, leading to the improvement in the reliability and speed of completion.

This will enable an improved (and necessary) service response. In the recent past, Essex County Council had closed the waste transfer station in Great Dunmow, where our vehicles previously emptied their loads. This has meant that the vehicles now have to travel to Braintree refuse centre and the longer transit distances (an extra 45 minutes each way) result in slower/less efficient completion of the existing rounds. Further, the 15% population growth experienced in the district over the past decade also has caused greater volumes for processing. All this means that greater resources are needed and a commitment to provide that has been made but had already been planned for.

As might be recalled, I submit a monthly Report to the Parish Council which contains news of forthcoming developments and changes at UDC. A copy of these reports is found via a link in the Parish Council Minutes. I described there last Autumn plans to add/improve the refuse service this Spring since it was already known that improvements were needed. The recent problems have re-emphasised the need for a service “shake-up” and that is now in hand.

Our district recycling performance is interesting and compared with the other 11 local authorities in Essex, we perform very well in regard to our “green” bin effective recycling rate where we come top of the District at 29%. Our black bin recycling rate is much lower however, where we stand in ninth position at 20%; the “top” authority recorded a rate by comparison of 33%. Food waste collected via the brown caddies shows the District performance being ranked in the middle of the peer group at 8.9%. I will seek to explain in a future edition what these percentages really “mean” in practical terms and how we can improve upon them.

Essex County Council is currently publicising a campaign to encourage us all to recycle more effectively. The aim is to reuse, recycle, or compost 70% of all waste produced by residents in the County by 2030. The latest statistics reveal that for England, the rate is 44.4%, while in Wales it is 56.7%. One wonders why the difference?

As can be seen, from our current statistics, there is quite some “improvement” being aimed for. However, already, some 37,000 tonnes of food waste was converted last year via anaerobic digestion into energy (supplying power to the equivalent of 6,310 homes’ usage) as well as also providing high quality crop fertiliser. This bio-conversion results in a reduction of in excess of 32,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions pa. I hope to include additional comment in the future regarding other carbon and biodiversity issues.

If any resident has any questions or issues to raise on this piece (or of course any other unrelated subject), I will be very pleased to hear from them.

*District Councillor John Evans*  
E: [cllrevans@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:cllrevans@uttlesford.gov.uk)

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# Stebbing Garden Club News



Since the previous edition of Stebbing Scene was published, our members have enjoyed talks from two excellent, but very different speakers.

The first, in November, was given by Ed Cannon, proprietor of Langthorns Plantery. He spoke (very loosely) on the subject of the Queen's Award; how the nursery came to have it in the first place and the reapplication process now underway following the coronation of King Charles. We learnt that the nursery's plants were regularly 'grazed' by a team of the Queen's plant purchasers over many years. Can there be a better endorsement of the range and quality of the nursery's plants?



At our first meeting this year, we were lucky to have Peter Morris, vegetable grower extraordinaire from Bardfield Horticultural Society, come and talk to us about growing and showing vegetables. A Fellow of the National Vegetable Society (FNVS) he is a qualified RHS Horticultural Judge. He certainly knows his onions and hopefully we now know ours better, too.

*Margaret Rufus*

## Garden Club Diary

**Monday March 25<sup>th</sup>** – is the date of our AGM and Social for members.

**Monday April 22<sup>nd</sup>** – our own Lindar Gustar will be demonstrating planting up an alpine sink.

**Sunday May 19<sup>th</sup>** – our members are invited to a Tea Party to celebrate the Club's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Stebbing Garden Club meetings are held in Stebbing Village Hall, Mill Lane, Stebbing and start promptly at 8pm. Everyone is welcome, members free, visitors pay £4.

For further information please contact the Chairman, Jane Foster on 01371 856466.

## Stebbing Village Hall: New Committee Member Needed

---



As you may remember from the last edition of Stebbing Scene we heard just how well used and valuable our Stebbing Village Hall is to the community. The Village Hall has a committee whose role it is to make sure the property is sustainable for the future – and we need a new elected member to join that committee.

You don't need any specific skills or experience, just the commitment to attend three committee meetings a year and an enthusiasm to help us protect and maintain the Village Hall for the next generation.

We'd also like to encourage those of you involved with other Stebbing village clubs and organisations to join us at our regular meetings. Whether your club physically uses the Village Hall or not, we'd love to have you join us.

For more information please contact Linda White on 07779 939 166 or [lindalawhite@hotmail.com](mailto:lindalawhite@hotmail.com)

*Village Hall Committee*



### **Want To Book Stebbing Village Hall For An Event?**

Are you thinking about running a club, group or class? Our lovely Village Hall has spaces available for bookings. Weekly or monthly for mornings, afternoons or evenings. From an hour to a 4-6 hour session.

We have a beautiful hall with a kitchen and toilets plus a small meeting room also available to book. We also have our own car park next to the hall. Using our hall means supporting us all locally and keeps our amazing Village Hall going. Have a look on Facebook, HallShire or Instagram and contact us for more details at

[d.kiberd@btinternet.com](mailto:d.kiberd@btinternet.com)

# Stebbing Cricket Club News



Welcome to a new year of village cricket in which we have planned for significant growth and a return towards past times of regular matches from Spring to early Autumn. An extensive schedule of Sunday matches and one mid-week 20-20 game are already confirmed. We also hope for the return of our more socially-orientated mid-Summer evening match against a Stebbing Church team. Confirmed fixtures are listed below and any updates will be published in the early June issue of Stebbing Scene. Supporting social events will be arranged and announced in due course.

The possible use of our facilities by Dunmow Cricket Club has been discussed with them over the Winter and we are excited to announce that there are now plans for cricket training sessions for junior players, both boys and girls, on weekday evenings in the Summer. We may also be hosting matches on a number of Saturdays. Together with our expanded Sunday cricket schedule, this would increase the amount of cricket played in the village substantially and help underpin the future of our club; the sound of leather on willow in the village will hopefully become much more frequent! Further details will be posted once arrangements are finalised.

We are very keen for new players! Anyone interested in playing regular or occasional cricket, or helping in any way with social activities, fund raising or ground maintenance, should contact me or our chairman, Graham Bird (see contact details in the accompanying notice below). Newcomers of any age and range of skills are always welcome to the club.

We encourage any new players and local spectators out there to participate in or come and watch the cricket over the Summer. As you can see, we have plenty of home games on offer from mid-May to late July.

## Confirmed 2024 Fixtures

Sun. April 21 <sup>st</sup>	Abridge (A)	Sun. July 7 <sup>th</sup>	Great Baddow (H)
Sun. May 5 <sup>th</sup>	Canfield (A)	Sun. July 14 <sup>th</sup>	Hatfield Heath (H)
Sun. May 19 <sup>th</sup>	Eastons (H)	Sun. July 21 <sup>st</sup>	Braintree (A)
Sun. May 26 <sup>th</sup>	Hockerill (H)	Wed. July 24 <sup>th</sup>	Felsted Robins (A)
Sun. June 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Braintree (H)	Sun. July 28 <sup>th</sup>	Abridge (H)
Sun. June 9 <sup>th</sup>	Nettlewell & Burnt Mill (H)	Sun. Aug 11 <sup>th</sup>	Hatfield Broad Oak (A)
Sun. June 16 <sup>th</sup>	Woodham Mortimer (H)	Sun. Aug 18 <sup>th</sup>	Hatfield Heath (A)
Sun. June 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Hockerill (A)	Sun. Sept 1 <sup>st</sup>	Hatfield Heath (A)
Sun. June 30 <sup>th</sup>	Hatfield Broad Oak (H)	Sun. Sept 8 <sup>th</sup>	Nettlewell & Burnt Mill (A)

We remain extremely grateful to our club's sponsors, president and vice-presidents for their ongoing support of the club. Finally I thank our head groundsman Walter Crow, his regular assistant Ben Riley and other occasional helpers for their continuing work in maintaining the pavilion and ground ready for the season ahead. It should also be recognised how much their work benefits the village more widely by helping keep one of its primary recreation spaces in excellent condition.

*Adrian Farr*

### Inviting New Players & Volunteer Ground Staff

Please contact either: Adrian Farr: [Adrian.farr01@btinternet.com](mailto:Adrian.farr01@btinternet.com) or Graham Bird: [gjbird69@gmail.com](mailto:gjbird69@gmail.com) if you are an interested player of any age, gender or ability or are willing and able to offer even occasional help with ground preparation and maintenance.

# Salings Plant Sale!

Monday 6th May 2024  
10am to 2pm

Millennium Village  
Hall, Piccotts Lane,  
Gt Saling, CM7 5DW  
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# Stebbing Ladies Group News

Stebbing Ladies Group meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month in the Village Hall. We open at 7.30pm and start at 8.00pm.

Our aim is to provide a varied & entertaining programme throughout the year. It's a great opportunity to meet up with old friends & make new ones. Everyone is welcome.



## Wednesday March 27<sup>th</sup>

Gary Kerr is joining us to give a short history of the London Taxi Trade.

## Wednesday April 24<sup>th</sup>

We are pleased to welcome Jan from the Dunmow Flower arranging group who will make a flower arrangement look easy!

For more information on any of the above please contact:

Val Stokes on 01371 856882 [valstokes@yahoo.com](mailto:valstokes@yahoo.com) or

Gina Going on 01371 855943 [g.going@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:g.going@hotmail.co.uk)

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# Stebbing Primary School: Swimming Pool Update

With the fundraising pot sitting at a staggering £14,232 at the time of writing with the pot increasing with every day and event that goes by, we are well on our way to raising vital funds to rebuild our treasured swimming pool.

With hard work from the AFSS, staff members, parent volunteers and all stakeholders at the school alongside incredibly generous donations from the local village and our families, we are in a position where we can now start looking at our options in more detail and will have plans drawn up soon to share with you all.

A special mention to the following for your generous support towards the cause:

- £250 donated by the Friday morning market.
- £1,000 donated by Stebbing Tennis Club.
- £500 donated by Grange Farm Dunmow Runners.
- £2,789 raised by the AFSS during the Christmas festivities at the school.
- £100 donated by the Origami Team.
- £2,000 donation received from the Stebbing Fete Committee.
- £72 donated by Devilish Cookies.
- £2531.38 raised from the Winter Party held at Deersbrook Farm.
- £909.68 raised by the AFSS during the Stebbing 10 Remembrance Run.
- £653 raised with thanks to Ben Chandler and the AFSS team.

We are, however, some way short of our initial proposed target and work continues to go on behind the scenes with grant applications, fundraising plans and pool design meetings to ensure we meet our target and deliver on our promise to get the children of Stebbing Primary School swimming again.

In the meantime, the show must go on with year 5 and 6 enjoying their swimming sessions over at Felsted School, who have kindly opened their swimming pool for hire at a discounted rate for a local school, with year 3 and 4 looking forward to taking their turn after half term.

This project has provided me with the opportunity to take a look back at the vital role that the swimming pool has played in the lives of many villagers and pupils who have passed through Stebbing Primary School. My research tells me that the pool was installed circa 1987 by a team of parent volunteers who came together and formed the AFSS to fundraise and build the very first swimming pool.

I would love to hear from you if you have any memories or pictures of you, your children or your parents swimming at Stebbing through the years.

Best wishes  
*Tom Le Masurier*





# Ambulances To Ukraine

Anyone up early in around Gt Bardfield or Gt Dunmow on 14<sup>th</sup> September may have been surprised to see a convoy of three ambulances driving through the village! This was not due to some incident locally but something else altogether.



We all know how desperate the situation in Ukraine is but sadly it is fading from the news somewhat. We also know that an offensive is ongoing, and we can be sure that this will bring many more civilian and military casualties. It is also well known that treatment in the first few minutes/hours of a casualty incident is critical to their chances of survival.

Ukraine is desperately short of all things military, and this is clearly a governmental role. However, they are also short of ambulances and medical supplies. **AND THIS IS WHERE WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.** With the help of various contacts, not least of which is the Christian Medical and Dental Association (ICMDA) and through the generous donations we have received from other charities and work colleagues we arranged the purchase and equipping of three ex-NHS Ambulances. And with all ready we set off to drive to Lviv.

There were six of us driving, three per ambulance, and we were therefore able to drive pretty non-stop to Ukraine. The drive took us via the Eurotunnel (to whom thanks must be given for providing free transport for humanitarian freight) through France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and Poland. Then after a bit of sucking of teeth and lots of stamping of paperwork we were through the border and into Ukraine. Another 90 mins driving and we reached Lviv about 30 hours after we had left Great Bardfield.

We were warmly welcomed at the Charity's warehouse and briefed on the amazing work that is being done there. We had time to spend the night in Lviv which is a beautiful city. It was very noticeable, however, that there were very few young men around. On Friday morning we were shown around the hospital where so much good work is being done. Whilst being shown around, the director of operations shared many disturbing and emotional stories some of which we saw firsthand.

So far, we have raised just short of £35,000 and would like to see this grow to £100,000. We have plans for more fundraising events and a return trip to Ukraine in the Spring with more medical equipment and more ambulances.

So, please if this is a cause that you would also like to help with, then donations can easily be made via Just Giving at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/ambulances-to-the-ukraine> .

Thank you.

*Jamie Stolworthy*

## “Don’t Tell Him Pike”: A Tribute To Ian Lavender

Those of us of a ‘certain age’ will remember very fondly the wonderful Dads Army sitcom of the late 1970s and 1980s; but how many of us remember that one of its most memorable cast members and household names used to live in Stebbing?



Ian Lavender was best known for his role as “stupid boy” Private Pike in Dad’s Army, a BBC sitcom set during World War II. And then, more latterly from 2001 to 2005 as Derek Harkinson, a friend of Pauline Fowler in Eastenders. Sadly, Ian (the last surviving Dads Army cast member) passed away on February 2<sup>nd</sup> aged 77.

So, in tribute, I thought it appropriate to talk to those in the village who can remember his life here and find out a little more...

Ian Lavender was born in 1946 and apparently moved to Stebbing in March 1983 at the age of 37. He bought a house in Bran End called Bird in Hand from Clive and Barbara Burke, with whom he remained friends.

Ian was a regular in the Kings Head and by all accounts was extremely good company, very unassuming and had a great sense of humour.



He was also a great cricket fan, and many remember him playing cricket in Stebbing. Alongside other celebrities (such as Rowan Atkinson & Richard Stilgo) Ian is rumoured to have played against Stebbing Cricket Club in the ‘all stars’ matches organized by Richard Armitage who was a talent agent living in Stebbing Park at the time.

Ian lived in Bird in Hand with his then girlfriend, Miki Hardy. She was to become his second wife in 1993. A Canadian by birth, Miki is remembered for her vivacity and dancing skills. She’s reported to have met Ian when she taught him to dance for a stage musical.

This picture, which the Stebbing History Society were kind enough to let me have, shows Ian, talking to Miki in the Kings Head for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of VE Day in 1985. You may also spot Dot Hallums waving to camera, sitting alongside Barbara Burke in the scarf. The chap with the rugby shirt at the bar is rumoured to be Mark (Boogie) Lanyon! The photo itself was given to the History Society by Joan Matthews back in 2012.

*With thanks to: David Hallums, Barbara Burke, Jackie Kingdom, John Cant & Adrian Farr*



The White Hart  
*Stebbing*

## NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

**SUNDAY 10TH MARCH**

**MOTHER'S DAY - BRUNCH & LUNCH FROM 10AM**

**SUNDAY 31ST MARCH**

**EASTER SUNDAY - EASTER EGG HUNT BRUNCH & LUNCH FROM 10AM**

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SPRING IS ON THE WAY AND WE CAN'T WAIT FOR THE SUN TO COME OUT SO WE CAN GET BACK IN THE GARDEN. WE'LL BE HAVING LOTS OF LIVE MUSIC, BBQ'S AND SUMMER FUN.

WE'RE DOING LOTS FOR LOCAL CHARITIES, THE NEXT ONE BEING QUIZ NIGH FOR STEBBING PRIMARY SCHOOL'S NEW SWIMMING POOL, SO IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING IN MIND PLEASE GET IN TOUCH.

JUST A FEW OF MANY RECENT HIGHLIGHTS



## Dunmow u3a News

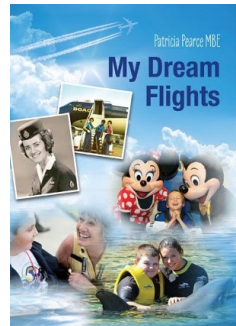


Are you looking for a new hobby? Maybe you are new to the CM6 area and want to meet local people. If you are also no longer in full-time employment then Dunmow u3a could be for you.

We are part of the UK-wide u3a movement and offer opportunities for members to learn a new skill, expand existing interests and share knowledge with other members in a friendly and informal environment.

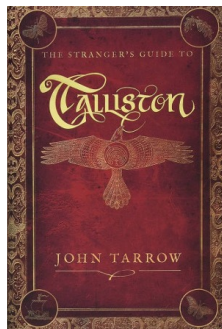
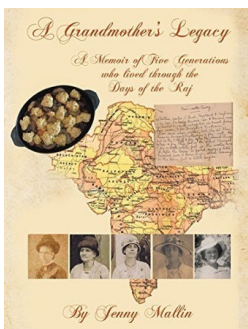
Dunmow u3a has over 35 member-led interest groups from arts to exercise and languages to sports, with indoor games, discussion groups and outdoor activities in between.

On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March, Dunmow u3a will be welcoming Patricia Pearce MBE to tell us more about her book "My Dream Flights". The first part of her book is about Pat's 39 year flying career as cabin crew for British Airways including flying the Queen. The second part is about the charity she founded in 1987, called Dreamflight. They take seriously ill and disabled children to Orlando every October for 10 days with a huge team of volunteer doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and other helpers.



Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March - 1.30pm for 2pm start  
**Foakes Hall, Dunmow CM6 1DG**

Looking ahead, at the end of April, Jenny Mallin will be telling us about "My Grandmother's Legacy - My British Raj family" and in May, we will be learning about Talliston House - the unique property on our doorsteps in Dunmow. Tony Harris will be back by popular request, at our AGM in June, entertaining us, this time as William Shakespeare.



Our monthly meetings are a great opportunity to meet up with other members, find out more about our 35 interest groups, book a place on one of our popular outings, choose a few magazines from our magazine swaps table, pick up a copy of our latest newsletter or just enjoy a cup of tea (please remember to bring your own mug) and enjoy the speaker.

These monthly meetings are free and open to non-members as well as members, so do come along and see for yourself.

To find out more, contact us on 07385 879846 or go to Du3a's website <https://u3asites.org.uk/dunmow/welcome>

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## Mill Lane Playing Field Play Equipment Replacement

Just over a year ago Stebbing Parish Council sent out a survey to find out what the residents of Stebbing thought of the playing fields in the village and suggestions for improvement. A lot of good feedback was received and from that the council commenced a project to improve facilities. The first phase of this will be a major revamp of the playing equipment at the Mill Lane Playing Field, with is the most used of the village's three playing fields.



New play equipment will include:

- Adult/child cradle swing seat.
- Noughts and crosses play panel.
- Tractor unit.
- Double flat swing seat.
- Play tower with four platforms and eight activities.
- Benches and picnic table.

We will keep the following equipment:

- Accessible adult/child nest swing.
- Slide.
- Gym equipment.

Work on installing the equipment will commence shortly; the 1<sup>st</sup> phase will be completed by this Summer and phase 2 next year.

This work will be partly funded by a generous grant from the Stebbing Society. The Stebbing Society was resurrected about 16 years ago as a community orientated group comprising a small committee of seven members and was involved in many projects for the benefit of the village and villagers. During that time the Society was responsible for restarting the Village Fete and successfully ran this for eight years. The Society also arranged several concerts in St Mary's Church and following bequests from two villagers, was also able to financially assist the Parish Council with the purchase of the Mill Lane playing field.

Due to changing demographics, however, the Society has been dormant now for several years and so is to close, with its remaining funds transferred to the Parish Council to be used as appropriate for the benefit of the community. The Parish Council thank the Society for all its achievements over many years and are hugely grateful for this donation which will be invested in this new playing equipment project, and which is very much in keeping with the Society's ethos.

Once the Mill Lane project is complete, the Parish Council will turn their attention to the other two playing fields; Alcott and Pulford and look to invest further in improvements to these in the coming years to make the fields more accessible for all ages.

*Stebbing Parish Council*

# Celebrating Unusual Stebbing Artisans:

## Josh McDowall

Hello,

My name is Josh McDowall.

Nature has been a constant throughout my life. From very early on, the natural world quickly became my greatest passion! And it is a passion that continues to this day.



The wildlife in the local area has fuelled my inspiration over the years. In April 2023 I ran in the London Marathon to raise money for the Barn Owl Trust. An achievement that I am very proud of indeed.

Growing up locally has helped me gather a greater understanding of our wonderful flora and fauna. British birds are my main focus. Over the years I have built countless bird boxes!

One species in particular that I have focused on is the majestic Barn Owl. I, along with a friend who is a bird ringer have helped increase and monitor the local population of Barn Owls. As a volunteer nest recorder for the BTO (British Trust for Ornithology), I have helped gather important data which goes towards gaining a greater understanding of how our resident and migrant species are faring. It's an intimate window into the more secretive side of birds that is often overlooked.



As well as being a very keen naturalist, I'm also an Artist! I produce artworks inspired by nature and the local wildlife.

My works are primarily direct observations of birds in the wild. However, some of my subjects are studies of species that I have cared for and rehabilitated.

One particular example of this was a Red Kite that I cared for for six months. She was a victim of persecution and would have perished had it not been for human intervention!





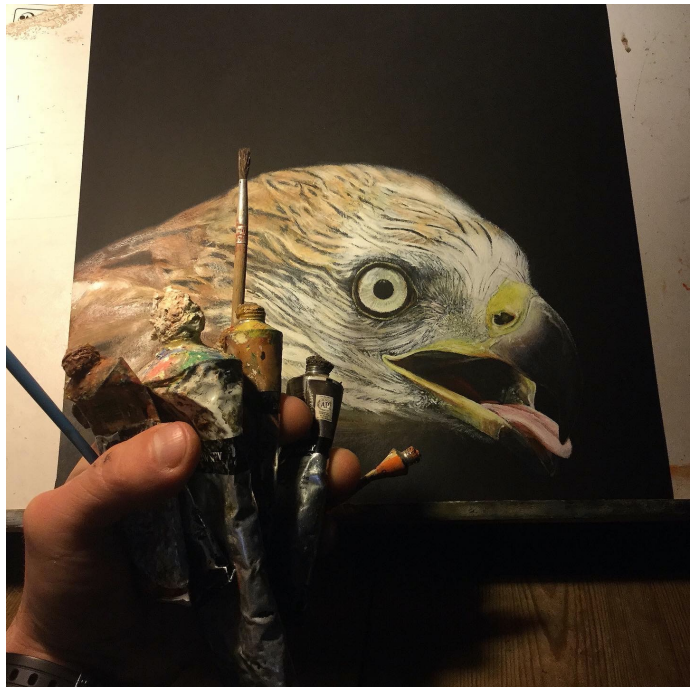
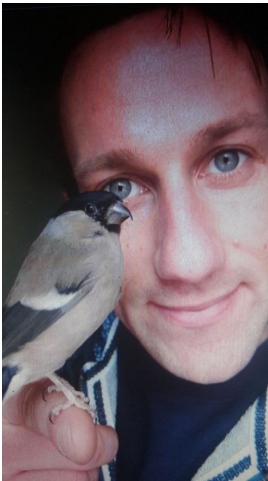
Time spent with these animals furthers the appreciation of their beauty and design. Situations such as these are of benefit to both parties.

I was able to successfully rehabilitate her, granting her a second chance at a wild life. And I was also rewarded. Not only by the sense of achievement I gained from seeing her fly once more, but I was gifted intimate exposure to such an extraordinary creature that will live on in my artwork.

From contemporary abstract pieces, to finely detailed oil paintings, my artworks are an expression of me, my interests and experiences. Sharing them with people can only be seen as a positive experience. In doing so I can showcase my craft that possesses the added bonus that it will hopefully inspire, educate and inform others along the way.



*Josh McDowall*



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## Restaurant Review: The Lion & Lamb, Little Canfield

LION  
—AND—  
LAMB

Devoid as I was of an invitation from a suitor to one of my four daughters I had to resort to an invitation from some very noisy mates.. No matter, as I had heard good things about this recently reopened and completely refurbished pub, which had found its rebirth at the hands of the Big Olive Pub Company which is family owned together with the excellence Queens Head at Fyfield. Re-opened some 18 months ago and following 12 months of major works, we reviewed the menu.



First the wine – an excellent value Pinot Grigio at just £22 so (with price belaying experience) up to £62 for a bottle of Chante Cigal Chateaneuf Du Pape pleased on the whites. Meanwhile whilst we did not try the Sentier Rouge at £21 a bottle, if comparative quality was as good as the Gevrey Chambertain Valet Freres at £87, the red could safely be said to match the white. As you would expect, Prosecco, Champagne and rose wines also abound.

Onto the food. Nibbles, not usually worthy of mention, but I cannot write this column without mentioning the Crispy Pork Crackling, quite simply the best I have every experienced!! On to Appetisers – having sampled the nibbles, we opted for one of the two sharing boards to leave room for mains. This gave us Spiced Apricot Chicken Wings, Chilli Tiger Prawns, Scotch Egg (with running egg interior), Salt Cod Fishcakes with Homemade Bread Selection – delicious!!



One of our number opted for the Dry Aged Homemade Steak Beef Burger which for the hungry was awesome and I thought good value at £19. This was off the Kopa Grill menu which provided the customary steak offerings which from what I could see looked yummy. The rest of us opted for the Main Course menu all of which looked excellent, but I think I made the others envious with my own choice being Pan Seared Hake with Bombay Aloo, Clams, Masala Sauce and Samphire all cooked in a Dill Oil sauce (at £23).



I am not a sweet eater, but I was taken by the thought of Baked Pear & Fudge Cheesecake with Clotted Cream, Brandy Snap and Honey for £9.

I find it so gratifying that in the Lion and Lamb here was a repeatedly failed pub, moving from disaster to financial disaster that has now found its way into what I am sure will be mainstream, albeit local success – well done the Big Olive Pub Company!!

*Kevin Farr*

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## A Walk of Words & Images

As the days lengthen and the temperature warms, stepping outside to walk the footpaths and tracks around Stebbing becomes a welcome distraction to the daily routines of life. The images that accompany the poem are taken on the same route many take on their journey from Bran End along the High Street to the village shop. So, make time in your day to enjoy the outdoors and breathe ...

And breathe ...  
Let's step back  
From our busy lives  
To look at nature  
And what lives and survives

Drown out the noise  
Listen to the birds' song  
It's melody reigns  
In the woodlands' throng

Drink in the scent  
That floods from the flowers  
And the smell the damp grass  
That lingers for hours

Let your eyes feast  
On the twists and turns  
Of the branches and leaves  
Fibonacci learns

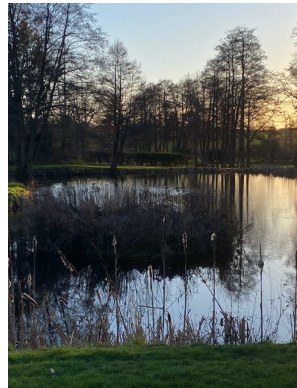
Hold your hands still  
Feel the gentle breeze  
As the sunlight dances  
Through the trees

Let's look and marvel  
At what creation achieves  
In awe and wonder  
Take ten and breathe ...

*Michelle Keeling*



**Being active is important for our mental health.** Mental Health Awareness Week 2024 will take place 13-19 May, on the theme of "Movement: Moving more for our mental health".

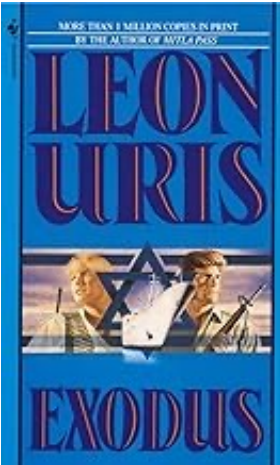


## Between The Covers – Stebbing Style: Spring – A Time Of Hope

In my choice of books this Spring, I am re-visiting three novels from earlier decades which contain courageous characters who have dared to challenge existing thought in order to make the world a fairer place. I have also read more recent books on the same subject, albeit in a more light-hearted fashion

### *My timeless classics:*

**No.1. "Exodus", by Leon Uris** - first published in 1958



In 2023, the world heard of a brutal attack by the terrorist group Hamas on Israel. Following this and the subsequent events, I felt the need to remind myself of how the bitterly contested creation of a Jewish state arose. This led me to re-read "**Exodus**", memorable blockbuster of a novel. It starts after WW2, when displaced people, including hundreds of thousands of Jews who had managed to survive the horrors imposed by Nazi Germany, were desperately trying to rely on **the Balfour Declaration** published in November 1917, promising to give the Jews a home in Palestine.

Exodus is based on this conflict. It starts in Cyprus when Ari Ben Canaan, a Palestinian Jew, is helping to evade the blockade imposed by British controlled Palestine and get a boatload of children into Palestine. The novel follows Ari's

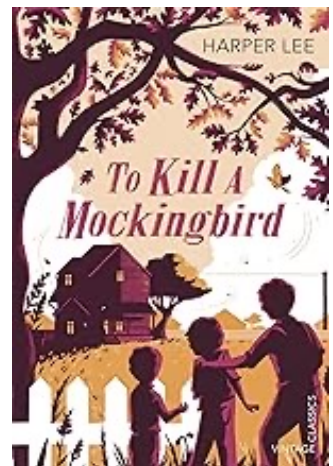
life through the bitter negotiations and the following War of Liberation against the surrounding Arab states which declared war on the newly granted state of Israel. The book is strongly partisan, but I recommend it both as an inspiring story of a fight against further discrimination and hatred, but also helps explain why the subject remains unresolved to the present day.

### *My timeless classics*

**No 2. "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee**  
– first published in 1960

This novel sits highly among my lifetime favourite books. Many of us look forward to finding people to admire: the kindly lawyer, Atticus Finch, is one such example and I often return to this book when the world, (and the Law!), has proved to be so imperfect.

The narrator of the story, Jean Louise, (known as Scout), the young daughter of Atticus, starts her perceptive account of her family and town when she is nearly of school age. The story begins when Scout and Jem, her brother, are joined by a new friend, 7- year-old inventive



Dill, who spends the summers next door to them and joins the pair in their increasingly madcap games, the most important being trying to discover more about the recluse living three doors away

As the years pass, respect and affection grow between the four of them. The novel intersperses these childlike tales with more momentous events including a serious house fire and trial of a young negro boy accused of assault and rape. The case forces Jem and Scout to face some unwelcome aspects of their beloved town. This is a deceptively simple but enthralling novel, with vividly drawn characters and a mixture of humour and pathos. The children slowly come to understand Atticus's exhortation to "learn to walk in the shoes of another".

### My timeless classics

#### No.3. - "The Book Thief by Markus Zusak

- published in 2006

A unique feature of the book is that it is narrated by Death and starts in Germany at the start of World War II.

I discovered another hero in Hans Hubermann, (Pa), who fosters in a young girl, Liesel Meminger after her Communist parents are in grave danger. In this "world gone mad period", it is refreshing to find a good German while most of the population in Hubermann's small town near Munich are slavishly following Hitler's warped ideas.

Before living with the Hubermanns, at her young brother's funeral, illiterate Liesel impulsively steals a book left behind.

Liesel and Hans, who is a very slow reader himself, tackle it together, leading Liesel to steal four other books when opportunities arise, such as the time of a public burning of books and from the Mayor's troubled wife, Ilsa who allowed Liesel to read in her library. ,

As well as facing hunger and, later, Allied bombing, times turn increasingly dangerous for the Hubermanns when they successfully hide a Jewish boy in their cellar. He becomes very close to the older Liesel. Max feels he has to flee when Hans's conscience makes him try to give bread to a starving man, who is in a column of Jews being marched through the small town on the way to a concentration camp.

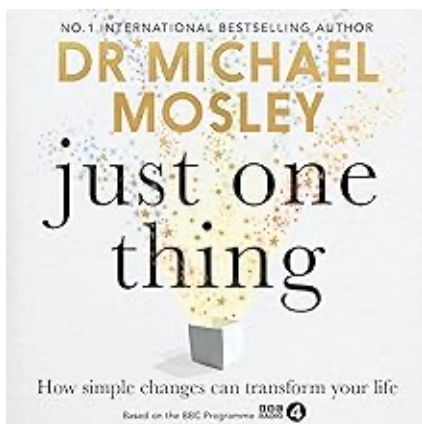
There are other standout characters in the book, including Frau Hubermann, who is verbally abusive to all and physically violent to Liesel and Rudy, Liesel's friend, while desperately seeking to make Liesel fall in love with him. It is an absorbing and unusual novel which is well worth reading.





## My Current Reading

*Just One Thing* by Dr. Michael Mosley - published in 2023



This affable and informative doctor is often seen on our television screens and is also a popular writer with two books currently in the Top 10 Sunday Times bestsellers.

I am currently reading the earlier of these, in which he urges us to adopt just one of the suggestions that he believes will help improve our mental and physical health.

As one of the ten rules which guided him in his choices was "Be Kind to Yourself", I thought that he was the man for me!

I was immediately pleased to find that, I was already following some of his other suggestions, eating oily fish and beetroot and getting some sun when it deigns to appear. I enjoy green spaces when I take the dog for a run, (the dog runs, I follow!) I am also hoping that my newly taken up game of Sudoku counts as a video game if played on my mobile phone. I read of course but also couple this with an evening hot bath (much to the detriment of the books!)

I realise, however, that I need to do more. These are: drink more water and eccentric exercises (I was delighted to discover that walking briskly DOWN the stairs, exercises our muscles more effectively).

Our good doctor suggests that, before we go to sleep, we should write down three things that have made us grateful. Studies support his view that such an exercise makes you happier, "it lowers your blood pressure, improves your sleep, eases pain and even rewires your brain."

Happy Reading  
Diana Rowe



# Celebrating Historic Stebbing Properties: Porters Hall

Porters Hall is one of three manor houses in the Parish of Stebbing. It is one of only 6,000 moated sites in the country and due to its archaeological significance, the moat and ground beneath the house and outbuildings are classed as an Ancient Scheduled Monument.



The moated site was originally considered to be associated with the family of Henry Le Portir, in 1284. The layout of the original building resembles that of a 15th century hall house, but historic maps reveal that the small medieval building to the rear of the hall was part of a much larger house that existed on the site before Porters Hall was constructed. By the 15th century the lands had passed to the Capel Family, who became the Earls of Essex.

In 1947 P.G Moore purchased the property, after farming the land for 10 years and then in 1958 Roman remains were found in a field forming part of Porters Hall farm.



Excavations revealed a complex of buildings and ditches including workshops and a bath house. A batch of coins were found within these 'workshop' floors and sent to the British Museum. They were identified as typical third and early fourth century local imitations of Roman radiates – indicating that the site may have previously been one of

the local irregular minting places for these coins! So, the Roman Rogues of Stebbing once lived here!



The property was inherited by its current owner, my father, Brian Moore in 2014, in a state of significant disrepair, due to a lack of investment and maintenance by previous owners.



Porters Hall Front elevation 1913 (Historic England Red Box Collection)

After selling some land to raise the funds, we are now renovating Porters Hall to use as a luxury furnished holiday let, available for hire by larger groups on an exclusive use basis – thus saving the property for future generations to enjoy!



We originally submitted our planning application in June 2020, and it took nearly two years to have our plans approved. A significant contributory factor to this long process was the COVID pandemic, which meant that Historic England staff and local planners were unable to carry out site visits.

It also didn't help that the local planning department were also very short staffed at the time and had been put under special measures.

We also needed to make some changes to our original plans, based on feedback received from various consultees. But we never gave up, and in April 2022 we finally had the news we had been waiting for – that planning permission was granted!!

We had to undertake many different types of surveys during the process: Structural, Bat, Arbicultural, Ecological, Great Crested Newt, Archaeological, Fire Risk Assessment and Topographical. In addition, due to the site's scheduling we had to obtain 'Scheduled Monument Consent' from the Secretary of State for Digital Culture, Media and Sport prior to any groundworks commencing on site!

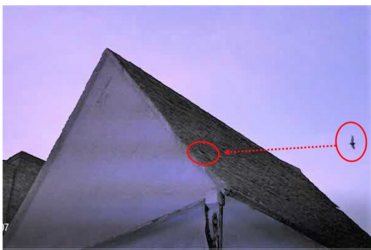
**Plate 3.6:** Brown long-eared bat in loft void of Hall (Photo: O Robson, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022).



We ended up having to complete the Bat survey twice, as the results are only valid for one year and as the planning process took longer than this, we had to re-do it in case the results had changed.

The surveys identified that we have a maternity roost of brown long eared bats in the loft of the main house, as well as roosts of Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle bats. In total 11 bats were seen flying around during the dawn and dusk surveys carried out.

**Plate 3.8:** Individual soprano pipistrelle returning to roost in Dove Cote roof on June 13<sup>th</sup> 2022 (Image from Sionyx night-vision camera).



We now have a Protected Species Dove License from Natural England, which contains essential mitigations which we have put in place to ensure the bats are protected before, during and after the works to the property are carried out.

We have a relative who lost one of his legs below the knee in a driving accident and, like many, we also have several elderly relatives who now struggle with their mobility and can no longer manage stairs.

Therefore making the accommodation as accessible as possible for guests, whilst not impacting the character of the building, was really important to us - but a difficult thing to achieve in a period property!



Sadly, there are 13 million disabled people in the UK, which represents 18% of adults and according to Visit England, approximately 430,000 British adults with an impairment do not take a domestic trip each year, due to the lack of accessibility provision. Our ambition was therefore that Porters Hall had two ground floor bedrooms with fully accessible en-suite bathrooms in the converted outbuilding adjacent to the main house and that the whole of the downstairs of the main house and grounds be accessible for wheelchair users

We are now really thrilled because in February 2024 Uttlesford District Council confirmed that we have been awarded grant funding from the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, to help achieve our ambition to ensure Porters Hall is accessible for all!

There is still a lot of work to do on the property, but we are hoping to be finished in early 2025 – you can follow our story on Facebook and Instagram and hopefully we'll provide an update in the next issue of Stebbing Scene!

*Fran Morgan*

### **Bee-location of previous residents!**

Prior to commencing work on the property, we had to safely remove and relocate two honeybee colonies who had made Porters Hall their home.



The biggest one was in the ceiling of a front bedroom, and we could see bees coming and going all day long through the top of the bay window. A big thank you to Jim from Eastwick Pest Control Solutions who removed the bees and relocated them to their new home in his apiary in Sawbridgeworth – poor Jim was stung several times and covered in honey by the time he finished! Did you know, it takes 2 million flower visits to make a pound of honey. Jim removed 23lbs of honey from the colonies, the equivalent of 46 million flower visits and 30 retail size jars!! They had been busy bees!

**Footnote:** We would like to acknowledge the rubble pile at the front of the property - just to reassure people, there is an environmental reason for this as we intend to repurpose and use it during the next six months as part of the project - as we have done with many other elements during the works.



## Exploring Our Local Museums

Our local area is blessed with an exceptional number of museums.

**Saffron Walden Museum** was purpose-built in 1835. It displays a real treasure trove of material relating to the local area.

**Imperial War Museum, Duxford** is enormous, displaying all kinds of wartime material including its own listed buildings from each World War, as well as many aeroplanes, both civilian and military.



Great Dunmow Maltings Museum

**Great Dunmow Museum** is housed in a former maltings. It encompasses displays about its former function as well as broader elements of Dunmow history.

**Forge Museum in Much Hadham** includes metal tools from the forge, while its own medieval wall paintings reveal an insight into Tudor fashion.

Still in Much Hadham, the hamlet of Perry Green was for many years the home of sculptor Henry Moore. Today, the **Henry Moore Studio** and gardens includes an extensive outdoor display of his large works and indoor history of his life.



Henry Moore Studios

**Ashdon Village Museum** has an exceptional display of all aspects of local life in the 20th century - and an excellent tearoom.

**Stansted Mountfitchet** has an extensive toy museum within Mountfitchet Castle which is itself a popular destination for children who probably don't realise that this fun place is teaching them a lot about the history of Norman times.



Ashdon Village Museum

**Finchingfield's 15th-century Guildhall** incorporates a small collection of local history, presented with help of modern technology.

**Great Bardfield** has a small Cottage Museum and also a village cage, a former lock up.



Hinxton Water Mill



Chishill Windmill



Forge Museum, Much Hadham



Saffron Walden Museum

Further information for each of these can be found on [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk) – either towards the end of the relevant Parish introduction, on What's On, or on the Attractions pages.

There, you will also find information about Fry Art Gallery, Linton Zoo, Hinxton Watermill and several windmills. We are, indeed, blessed.

*Ken McDonald, Secretary, One Hundred Parishes*

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## The Craftsmanship of Pew Finials

Before the 15th century, people attending a church service would stand or kneel. When benches or pews were introduced, they were sometimes decorated by skilled craftsmen. In particular, the top of the ends of some pews were carved with figures called finials or poppyheads.



Barley - acorns

The word poppyhead comes from Latin via Old French meaning the poop or figurehead of a ship. Poppyheads can be found in churches across the country, and they are particularly prevalent in East Anglia. The villages that form the Hundred Parishes have some fascinating examples.

The carved figures can represent almost anything. Some are of flowers or fruit or animals. Mythical creatures or demons were introduced to remind parishioners that if they led a sinful life they would go to hell. Saints and angels however meant that if you lived a good life you would go to heaven.

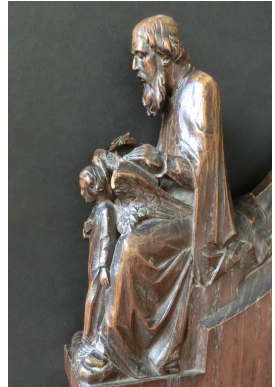
You will also find carved creatures depicting saints. In St. Mary's, Hatfield Broad Oak, 300-year-old poppyheads symbolize saints, with a lion for Mark, a bull for Luke and an eagle for John, while Matthew is represented by a 'divine man'.



Ickleton – St Michael weighing souls



Much Hadham - lion



Linton – scribe and angel

Ickleton's parish church has some fine examples of medieval carved poppyheads. One shows St. Michael weighing souls of the dead and another features a dragon-like creature.



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In Wendens Ambo parish church you will find a fearsome-looking beast which you may meet if your soul goes to hell! Linton's church has a wide range of subjects including scribes resting their books, one on the back of an angel and another on a dragon.



Hatfield Broad Oak – a bull representing  
St Luke



Hatfield Broad Oak – line of pews with  
poppyheads

When you are out and about, I encourage you to seek out these wonderful examples of ancient craftsmanship. Please let us know of others on either the feedback page on our website, [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk) or share a photo with the Hundred Parishes Group on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/groups/562396892237665](https://www.facebook.com/groups/562396892237665)

*Ken McDonald, Secretary, One Hundred Parishes*



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# Hold The Date: Stebbing Summer Fayre

## Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September

We're delighted to be able to announce the date for this year's Stebbing Summer celebrations. We're trying out something new this year with lots more food choices, entertainments and craft stalls – fun for all the family.



**We need some help, and we'd love you to volunteer!**

### **Would you like to sell your handmade crafts or food?**

Are you a local artisan? If you'd like to take a stall this year to sell home-grown or homemade food or crafts, please get in touch. We're hoping to have a really wide range.

To get in touch: please email Becca Harris at [thepaintbarn@hotmail.com](mailto:thepaintbarn@hotmail.com)

### **Would you like to bake a cake?**

We sell wonderful locally made cakes and biscuits in our tea tent, but we rely on donations from villagers. Could you make us a cake?

To get in touch: please email Sheila Bundy at [sheilab16@hotmail.com](mailto:sheilab16@hotmail.com)



### **Would you like to help run an entertainment stall?**

Fancy playing a part on the day? Joining in on the day can be loads of fun, even if only for an hour or so. We have lots of ideas for new fun entertaining stalls (remember the 'Human Fruit Machine' last year?!)... and we need people to help run them for us.

### **Would you like to help us set things up on the day?**

If you're free and fit and enthusiastic, we're looking for help to erect and dismantle stalls, bunting and signage.

To volunteer as a helper on the day, please email Karen Clark at [karen@howetraining.com](mailto:karen@howetraining.com)

And not forgetting, of course, we need all you lovely dog owners to enter your furry friends into our annual fun dog show.

Your time, energy and passion are invaluable. Please do join us in helping make this Stebbing Summer Fayre a day to remember.

# Stebbing Primary School News: Ready, Respectful, Safe & Kind



We had a wonderfully festive time at school in the lead up to Christmas. So many wonderful events. This term always feels as though it is the term of 'hard work' and really focusing on making lots of progress in all aspects of learning. All of our classes have been working hard, but not without fun and interesting activities and learning too.

This is what our Wrens (reception) class teacher Mrs Earle had to report:



Our Wrens concluded their topic: 'If you go down to the woods today' with a visit to our local park and new Woodland walk.

On a bright and sunny morning, they set off recalling the refrain of their first piece of literature: "We're going on a bear hunt...we're going to catch a big one...what a beautiful day."



The visit to the park delivered many opportunities to discuss their 'Understanding the World' element, which was all about animals and habitats. As the Wrens spotted burrows and nests, they identified possible homes for the characters in our second piece of literature: The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson.

In small groups they explored the Kingdom Woodland walk. And with their newfound reading skills they sounded and blended the beautifully crafted entrance board.



Our Wrens made us incredibly proud. They remembered from Mindfulness discussions to stop, breathe and listen to their surroundings. They identified bird song and spotted birds of prey.

We feel very lucky to have a space that adds so much value to our learning right on our Primary Schools' doorstep. And with the first signs of Spring emerging, we are excited to visit again soon. What a beautiful day.





As I am sure you will be aware, school finance has continued to be a challenge for many, and we are no different. We are working hard to maintain all of the lovely opportunities we provide, but also continuing to look for ways to improve our school as cost effectively as possible. We continue to develop areas within our outdoor spaces.

We have a wish list of donations we would like. If you have any of these things at home that you no longer have a use for, please contact the school.

- Garden spades, forks, rakes
- Pre-treated decking boards or similar
- Tarpaulin (new or pre-loved)
- Mallet
- Buckets and spades (any pre-loved)
- Balance bikes & helmets
- Scooters
- Sand toys (any pre-loved)
- Cooking utensils
- Old pots & pans
- Guttering
- Bark (new or pre-loved)
- Large gravel/shingle (20mm) (new or pre-loved)
- Trellis or willow screening
- Coloured stones or big stones
- Garden ornaments, toadstools, small animals, fairies, windmills, scarecrows, gnomes; anything bright coloured for outdoors
- Astro turf
- Tree trunks
- Dollhouse furniture

Thank you in advance  
Lucy Heys

---

## Stebbing Rainbows Are Looking For A New Leader

Rainbow Guides are the youngest section of the Girl Guides Association. Girls can join Rainbows after their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday and normally stay until they are old enough to join Brownies at seven. Stebbing has had a Rainbow Unit for the last 33 years. Sadly, in the last few years we have lost both our Brownie and Guide units.

We are looking for an enthusiastic new leader to run our Rainbow unit so that it can continue. This is a voluntary position to head up an experienced team of unit helpers. We have a unit administrator, a treasurer and can offer lots of support for the right person.

We meet for an hour and a half each week on a Wednesday, early evening, during school term times. We would love your help to lead our friendly team of volunteer helpers and Rainbows with craft activities, cooking and games.

If you would like to know more about this role, please contact Liz Hooper by email  
[Stebbingrainbows2@outlook.com](mailto:Stebbingrainbows2@outlook.com)



*The Rainbows enjoying a 'tell a joke' evening and making paper snappers.*

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## The Mystery Of Migration

To birdwatchers every season has its attractions:

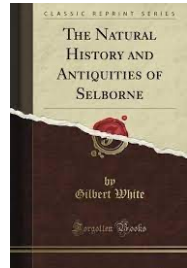
- In Summer most birds are in their breeding finery and young birds are everywhere and showing well.
- In Autumn all types of rare and unusual birds turn up in this country as they are blown off course during their return migration.
- In Winter large numbers of swans, geese and ducks arrive in the country seeking to escape harsh conditions on the continent.

However, my favourite time of year is Spring when migrant birds arrive in their millions. Many of these birds will have wintered south of the Sahara before starting their northwards journey involving thousands of miles of travel.



As part of the study of migration some ornithologist's trap and ring birds to track their movements and understand what migration involves. A friend of mine ringed a Willow Warbler one May in a small wood on the Island of Bute off the Scottish West Coast. This tiny bird, smaller than a Robin, was an adult and so it had already made the hazardous trip south of the Sahara at least once. Miraculously he retrapped the bird in the same wood the following two summers, an amazing feat of navigation and endurance.

The first Englishman to study and record wildlife, based on observation was Gilbert White, the vicar of Selbourne in Hampshire who lived from 1720 to 1793. His letters to other naturalists were published in a book "The Natural History and Antiquities of Selbourne" in 1789. Since its publication this amazing book has never been out of circulation and is the fourth highest selling book in the English language after the Bible, The Complete Works of Shakespeare, and Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales.



Both Charles Darwin and David Attenborough said they were influenced and inspired by White's writings and his house is still open to the public and a fascinating place to visit. The property also houses a collection relating to Lawrence Oates the polar explorer who died on Scott's fateful expedition to the Antarctic.

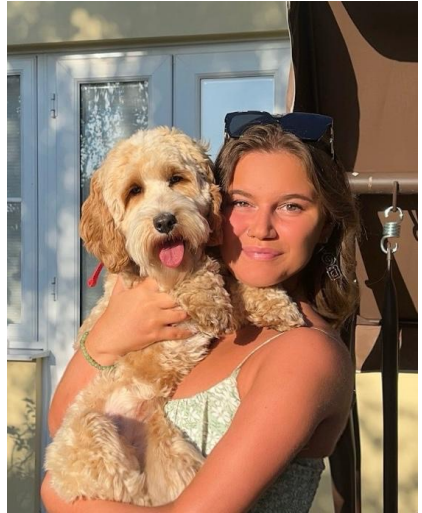
White was the first man to correctly identify that Willow Warbler, Wood Warbler, and Chiffchaff were separate species based on their different songs. However, in his early letters, White misunderstood aspects of migration and like other naturalists believed that Swallows and Swifts hibernated in the mud at the bottom of ponds for the winter. It was only when explorers and naturalists travelled to other countries that people such as White began to understand and document migration in all its wonders.

At the time of writing my Stebbing Parish list still stands on 99, although I am hoping to reach the magic figure of 100 this Spring. It would be a real pleasure if this could be a Warbler or Flycatcher migrating through the wonderful Kingdom Woodland Walk.

# Inez Parsell: Running The White Hart Pub Quizzes

Moving to Stebbing last year was quite a nervous beginning for me, still in my final year at university and coming back to a new home filled with boxes and living out of a suitcase was not ideal. I knew I wanted to get involved in village life as I didn't have that opportunity where we previously lived, and it felt strange living somewhere for so long and not actually knowing anyone.

I started working at the White Hart for a bit of extra money before starting my masters, and instead of just a part time job to pass the time, I have found new friends, met some amazing people and have enjoyed every second of being a part of such a lovely community.



*The White Hart*  
**PUB QUIZ?**  
*Night*

**MENU**

**Pizza:**

Queen Margherita 10.50 Diavola 13.95 calabrese 12.50 or BBQ Pollo 13.95  
Charcuterie Board(2 sharing) - £10.95

Chicken goujons & chips £8.50

Scampi & chips £8.50

**Sides:**

Triple cooked chips, Skinny fries, Sweet potato fries 3.75  
Homemade Coleslaw 2.75

*All food must be ordered before the quiz begins as it will be served during the quiz break at around 8.30pm.*

*22nd February 6:30pm*

As a quiz fanatic, I was gutted when I found out that they had stopped doing their pub quizzes. So, I took it upon myself to start it back up again for everyone to enjoy and more importantly gather at the pub for a night of fun, a few extra pints and raise money for charity.

As a child, I competed in dance and often performed on stage, therefore many thought I was very confident and came across self-assured. But really, I was normally quite scared, nervous and got very anxious speaking and performing in front of crowds and anything in public. Organising the quiz and actually hosting it has massively helped my own fears around social anxiety and increased my confidence to be myself around others, something I have always struggled with.

I normally start writing the quiz with weird and wacky questions in mind, then proof reading with my father who says, "no one will get that" or "take that one out and put my question in instead". I gather from different quiz question sources and mix up the questions from each so there's a good range that is applicable for everyone.



The support and enthusiasm about the quizzes have been amazing and really positive, so that it's become more of a regular event. It's been so nice to see the pub buzzing and packed with people booking up tables weeks in advance!

I want to thank Emily and Davide and the team at The White Hart for giving me the opportunity to hold these quizzes, the quiz on February 22nd was fully booked in advance, so get in quick for the next one around Easter!

**If you are wondering whether this is for you, try answering these questions!**

- Q1. Which material is used in the art form known as scrimshaw ?
- Q2. What is alliumphobia a fear off?
- Q3. How many hearts does a worm have?
- Q4. How many triple word score squares are there on a scrabble board?

*Answers below*



Quiz Night  
Christmas  
2023



## Stebbing Dorcas: Now & Then

We are often asked 'What is the Dorcas Society and what do you do?' Firstly, a little about the history of the organisation and how it has evolved in the 21st Century. It was originally named after St Dorcas, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, as a charitable woman who gave clothes to the poor.

The groups, which flourished all over the world, were mainly church based and rooted in community service. They were at their height in the 19th Century, which is when the original Stebbing branch was formed. Originally sewing clothes and providing food for those in need, they consisted of twelve women from local churches, meeting regularly in order to discuss what help they could give. In the agricultural depression of the 1870s, Stebbing being a rural community, suffered badly and any help that was offered, was gladly received.



Clothes were distributed at the start of Winter, often at a tea party, held in what is now the Village Hall. Other charitable acts such as providing coal at Christmas, vouchers for groceries, coach outings and tea parties were extremely welcome at times of great hardship and formed the basis of their work.

As decades passed the nature of the Dorcas Society changed. It was no longer regarded as a charitable organisation, rather as a support to the community, helping out whenever possible and still organising coach trips and teas until costs became prohibitive.

Gradually across the country, societies closed as they became regarded as tired and outdated and the Stebbing branch, which had remained active, was for various reasons, wound down in early 2006. As far as can be ascertained, the only remaining member living in the village is Doreen Cummings, who clearly remembers that the funds still remaining at the time were used to purchase the seat that is placed outside the front of St. Mary's church and for its continued maintenance.

Later in 2006, the late Dorothy Pelham decided to form the New Dorcas Society, which has taken its form from the original organisation, but again has evolved as life and circumstances alter. The format remains the same, with normally 12 members, but no longer affiliated to the church. It is no longer a charity, but rather aims to offer small gifts, flowers, cards etc. to anyone, who for any reason, such as illness, bereavement or being generally under the weather, would appreciate knowing that they are not forgotten and that we are thinking of them.



Twice a year in Spring and Autumn, lunches are held in the Village Hall, and everyone is welcome. Before Covid we held several small tea parties in members gardens and fortunately the weather was kind!

At Christmas small appropriate gifts are distributed to various village residents, whom it is felt would appreciate them at what can be a very emotive time. During 2022 a special tea party was held in the Village Hall to celebrate the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee, which was a great occasion and very much enjoyed by everyone.

Dorcas continues to flourish after 150 years and has been enormously helped with donations, often from people who have received some help or gifts from the society, and we are extremely grateful for these.

We hope to remain an integral part of village life for the foreseeable future and would ask you to contact us if you should hear of friends or neighbours who you feel would benefit from a visit so that we can respond accordingly.

*Rosie Pitkethly*

## The Dorcas Society: An Invitation

We would like to invite you to our  
**ANNUAL SPRING SOUP LUNCH**  
on **Friday 22nd March**

At the Village Hall – 12.30pm  
Tickets £6 per person

**EVERYONE WELCOME –  
PLEASE COME AND SUPPORT US**

Tickets limited so please ensure you book early – payment please at time of booking payable to: New Dorcas Society 2006

Tickets from: Ann Pattenden 856476 or  
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Coach - Mark Clark 07713-626239

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# Mad Medic

Hello everyone,

No Mrs. Blunderful blips today I'm afraid, she's enjoying a fab holiday in Australia with family.

However, I have an embarrassing blip of my own. I love that my friends share worries and trust with me and really take it seriously. So, there I was, make up laid out ready to try and summon a miraculous transformation to something more human.

My phone pinged, a distressed friend needing help. My once, not too bad multi-tasking skills had disappeared overnight, it seems. Concentrating on her woes, I dipped my fingers into my skin care concoction, plastering it generously on to my face and neck one-handedly.

Writing a memo afterwards, I saw that my fingers were beige tan and yucky. I'd absentmindedly delved into the foundation pot. Smothering myself in thick pasty goo instead of carefully blended dabs. A sight I could never unsee. Not a 'selfie' person as a rule I sent a photo to her. Laughing out loud she declared it to be the best therapy going. As for me, it won't be added to my therapeutic repertoire, even if laughter is the best medicine. Also, my street cred is already questionable, so it isn't going on U tube.

Mrs B.has messaged from Australia to say that her son in laws skin cancer 'autopsy' came back clear, she's just great, I miss her..

Re: my Mumbai trip this year and Chappal (flip flop ) fund. Huge thanks to Diana and Peter Roe in Stebbing, Amanda and John in Moreton, Carol in Braintree, Pauline Broyd in Braintree and Ian Mower in Norfolk. Between them they have paid for a third of the amount needed. I'm so happy at having such lovely kind friends.

Take care everyone, loads of love Valerie ❤️ ps. Mumbai trip update to follow, and update on my book, 'Mummy's House' is well under way.

*Valerie Mulcare-Tivey*



## Can You Help?

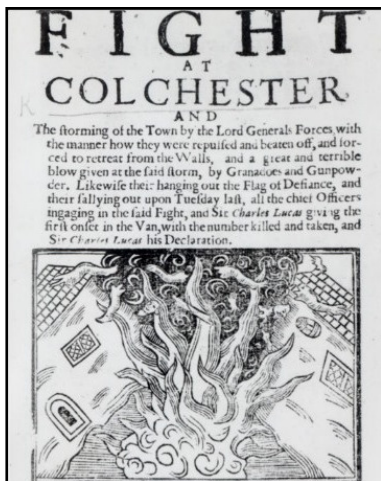
If you would like to make a donation to help Valerie buy as many Chappals as she can for the children in Mumbai, please send her an email at: [munchkinpie63@gmail.com](mailto:munchkinpie63@gmail.com)

## Stebbing Local History Society:

### Stebbing & The Civil War

(The following article was first published by the the Local History Society in 2015)

In the Essex Record Office, there is a document (Q/SR 406/23) from the Michaelmas Quarter Sessions held at Castle Hedingham on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 1665. It reads as follows;



*Certificate of the undersigned justices that in obedience to an order of the Court, 17 July, they have examined the certificates of Henry Hurrell, Richard Hitchcock, both of Stebbing, Thomas Doegood of Braintree and John Ray of Gosfield, that they were at Colchester during all the time of the Seige there, and continued constant to his Majesties service, and that they have all received some hurts there and believe they are perfectly cured excepting Hurrell who hath upon every Strayne some remembrance of his wound; and the two jurors conceive that some gratuity to them all would do better than the continuance of their pension.*  
C Raymond, J Symonds

The siege referred to was the Colchester Siege, which played a significant part in the Civil War.

The Civil War was made up of three distinct parts known today as the First Civil War (1642 to 1646), the Second Civil War (1648 to 1649) and the Third Civil War (1649 to 1651). The First Civil War ended when the Parliamentarians had finally got the upper hand against the Royalists and Charles the First decided to seek shelter with a Presbyterian Scottish Army who in turn handed him over to the English Parliament who imprisoned him.

The Colchester Siege formed part of the Second Civil War. In the Summer of 1648, there were a number of Royalist uprisings in various parts of the country. A particularly large army was raised in Essex under the leadership of the popular Sir Charles Lucas, a Colchester man. Our two Stebbing men, Henry Hurrell and Richard Hitchcock were part of this army and there may well have been others whose names are not known to us.

It is quite possible that they were recruited by the prominent royalist Arthur Capell, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Capell of Hadham. He was born in 1608 and his family owned the two principal manors of Stebbing: Stebbing Hall and Porters Hall, as well as the adjacent manor of Rayne and there was therefore a strong local connection. The Royalist Essex army numbering about 4,000 attempted to obtain weapons from the county magazine located at Braintree, however, they didn't succeed and so marched to Colchester. A battle was fought outside the town on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 1648 against about 5,000 Parliamentary soldiers and 1,000 cavalry commanded by Sir Thomas Fairfax.

Although effectively winning the battle, the Royalist army retreated into the walled town of Colchester and the siege began. Both sides expected reinforcements, although due to defeats elsewhere none were forthcoming for the besieged Royalists. The Royalists position became increasingly difficult as food became scarce and after a failure to break out, they were forced to admit defeat on the 28<sup>th</sup> August and negotiate a surrender.

The terms of the surrender required that the Lords and Gentry (the leaders) were to be prisoners of mercy, whilst the common soldiers and junior officers were to be disarmed and issued with passes to return to their homes after they had sworn an oath not to take up arms against Parliament again. Our two Stebbing men obviously returned home although from the later text they were both clearly injured and by the wording of the petition Henry Hurrell was never to fully recover. Lord Capell for his involvement was eventually beheaded at Westminster by order of Parliament on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 1649. The King himself had already been executed on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 1649.

The Third Civil War of 1649 to 1651 was primarily one between England and Scotland and is really outside the scope of this short piece although it did result in an outright win by the Parliamentarians and resulted in the foundation of the Commonwealth and latterly a Protectorate under Oliver Cromwell. Following Cromwell's death in 1658 the Commonwealth/Protectorate broke down and in 1660 Charles the First's son was declared King. Those that had remained loyal to Charles the First were rewarded after the restoration of the monarchy. Arthur Capell's son, also Arthur was created the Earl of Essex in remembrance of his father's support and his descendants remained as Lord's of the manors of Stebbing Hall and Porter's Hall until they sold them in 1901. As for the two Stebbing men they received a pension, although it is not clear what led to the request some five years later in 1665 for a gratuity and whether they ever received it.

*Graham Jolliiffe*

## **Stebbing History Society 2024 Programme:**

**8th April:** Elphin Watkin – Cecil Hewett, the Pioneer of Timber Building Dating and Polymath.

**10th June:** Dr. Phillip Bone, Rouge Dragon Pursuivant – The History, Work and Records of the College of Arms.

**9th September:** Neil Wiffen – subject TBD.

**11th November:** TBD.

All meetings held in the Village Hall at 8pm. Visitors £1 admission.

## St Mary's Church: The Way Forward Project



The Way Forward project aims to preserve and restore St Mary's, and leave a legacy for the next hundred years and beyond.

It is our desire that this beautiful building remains open. The church community has spent the last ten years looking into what needs to be done. Following an enormous amount of work and ascertaining how much everything would cost, we have been awarded a very large grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund

However, as detailed in the Winter edition of Stebbing Scene, we continue to await decisions from other grant making bodies. Despite the confirmation of the funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, (who will be funding 80% of the project), we still need a further £300,000 to begin the work. Without this further funding, the project may not be allowed to start. So do pray that the money comes in. If you would like to join with the money being raised by church community's giving and contribute financially, please scan the QR code which will take you to where you can donate.



You may have seen our posts on social media for the vacancies that we have for various roles required to bring the project to life. These, along with salaries, can be viewed on our church website, [www.stebbingchurch.org/roles-available/](http://www.stebbingchurch.org/roles-available/). If you know of anyone who may be interested in any of these roles, please do get in touch via email: [smvwayforward@gmail.com](mailto:smvwayforward@gmail.com).

Over the last few weeks, we have been taking a detailed inventory of everything inside the church, from kneeling cushions to cups and saucers! Before the building work starts, the church must be emptied of everything inside. Items that won't be used regularly over the coming months need to be boxed up and put into storage. We need lots of help to do this, please do get in touch if you can lend a hand over the coming weeks! Email [smvwayforward@gmail.com](mailto:smvwayforward@gmail.com) for more information.

Our final service in the church before the renovation work starts will be on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> February at 11am. So, if you want to view the church as it looks right now, you are warmly welcome. After this date, services and other regular church activities are planned to take place in the barn at Priors Hall (opposite the church car park), pending final agreement with the owners. Further details will be communicated on social media and notice boards.

During March, an appointed specialist conservation company will be investigating the walls of the church for any paintings that may have been covered up. During the church closure, they will also be conserving the c.15<sup>th</sup> century wall painting which is visible in the nave and restoring the two church models. We welcome anyone with knowledge about previous wall paintings to get in touch via email so that we can document as much as possible: [smvwayforward@gmail.com](mailto:smvwayforward@gmail.com).

In April, the contractors will move in; the church building will be out of bounds (the churchyard will still be accessible, with the footpath diverted to the north of the church) and the renovation work will commence. There has been no heating in the church since 2019 when the boiler failed. A new fuel tank will be buried in the churchyard and pipes will run from this to a new boiler which will power the new underfloor heating and radiators.

In February we held a Q&A session in the church after presentations by the project team. We have summarized some of them here, copies of all the Q&As are available at the back of the church. There are also forms available upon which to write questions; please leave contact details and we will endeavor to answer.

**Q: Why are you removing the pews?**

A: The pews restrict access for those with limited mobility; people in wheelchairs or with children in buggies have to sit away from their family. They are uncomfortable to sit on and restrict activities that take place regularly within the church. The PCC and members of the church, having sought advice from professional bodies and having consulted with the Victorian Society, have found the pews are low grade catalogue purchases. A consensus was reached some time ago to follow the lead of many churches across the country, (including cathedrals), to remove the pews in favour of flexible seating which can be configured for different sized congregations. The pews will not be sent to landfill. Some will be repurposed for new furniture in the church. The others will be sold; there will be an opportunity for anyone wanting a pew to be able to purchase one and details will be communicated in due course.

**Q: Why are you fixing the interior when you have a leaking roof?**

A: The roof is regularly repaired whenever a leak appears. It is also regularly inspected. We follow the guidelines set out in the quinquennial report (a very detailed document produced by our architect), which covers every aspect of the building and sets out what needs to be done to conserve it. Every repair is paid for out of the generosity of the people in the church. Eventually, the church will need a new roof which will be a costly project. The congregation has to pay for the entire work of the church, its priest, training, expenses and the running and upkeep of the building. Those attending this place of worship are the ones paying for it; without them this ancient place of worship would close. There are no external funds to support churches. Those paying for a church's upkeep are the ones who determine how the building is used. Each new generation has changed the use of the building, to help it reflect both the past but also to make it viable for the future. We are grateful that the Victorians put in light and heating, now it is our responsibility to ensure that this building survives still further.

**Q: Why are you not taking the opportunity to "go greener"?**

A: Such a huge space is always going to be problematic to heat. The lack of graveyard space for a ground source heat pump and noise issues for a large enough air source pump have ruled these out. We spent months meticulously researching all possibilities and inviting input from experts. A tank which in time will be filled with bio gas, is deemed to be the most efficient, greenest and over time, the cheapest way of heating such a huge space and maintaining a temperature above dew point to stop the ancient stonework from deteriorating.

**We now have a dedicated Way Forward website where you can find out all about the project and the activity plan: [www.wayforwardstebbing.org](http://www.wayforwardstebbing.org)**

Information about the church is still available on the church website: [www.stebbingchurch.org](http://www.stebbingchurch.org)



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## Obituary: Joan Mary Matthews

7<sup>th</sup> March 1934 – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023

In a fond tribute to his mother, Phil Matthews told the many family and friends present at Joan's funeral, of her fondness for travel. Although it wasn't until after her husband, Ray passed away in 2004, that she was able to pursue her wanderlust.

Joan had always wanted to visit other countries, but Ray preferred to be at home, so she embraced her new status and jetted away to places she had always dreamed of going: America, Italy, Finland, The Scilly Isles, cruising along the rivers of Europe with her holiday 'buddy' Angie (Newbrook) on all manner of short breaks and weekend getaways. She also holidayed on her own, but usually it was with her group of Stebbing friends.



Joan Mary Turner was born on March 7<sup>th</sup> 1934 in Hackney, East London (A point she was proud of and mentioned at every opportunity.....). Daughter to Fredrick and Mabel who were housekeeper and gardener respectively, to a Dr Nichols whose surgery was in the local area. When Dr Nichols was called up at the beginning of WW2 the surgery closed, and the Turner family moved to Hornchurch in Essex.

Joan spent her formative years in Hornchurch and then trained to be a children's nanny. Soon after completing this, she became the focus of attention of a young man, Raymond Matthews, who was carrying out his military service in the area and they married in July 1956.

Dad was born and bred in Dunmow and the newly married couple rented a flat in Dunmow High Street whilst Ray worked as a clerk at Haslers Seed Mill in the town.

Their first born, David came along in 1960 and Philip arrived shortly after in 1962 – approximately the same time as Prince Andrew and Prince Edward but that's where the similarity ended!

Early travel for holidays at that time included a week at the Martello Caravan Park at Walton-on-the-Naze where Joan's parents rented a beach hut. The walks up the (seemingly) never ending hill from the caravan park to the beach were something that both David and I will never forget. We also spent what seemed like days travelling in the car to far-off corners of the British Isles, as both Joan and Ray loved the beautiful mountains of Wales, Scotland and the Lake District.

Joan was busy raising their sons when Haslers closed, so she and Ray applied to become part of the social service system. They ran the Old Manse Children's Home in the centre of Dunmow. Later, they were asked to run three different homes in Essex in the space of less than a year. This proved to be too much for them, so they moved on.

The family were offered a council house in Bran End Fields and life in Stebbing began. Philip had a close association with the cricket club and with Joan's love of sport, they met what were to become and still are, lifelong friends. There was a move back to Dunmow when new council houses were built on the old brewery site, and Joan started work at the Doctors' surgery. By then Ray had become steward at the Dunmow Club.

Joan & Ray were able to purchase their council house when the scheme was introduced and once Ray retired, decided that they loved this village so much, they managed to move back in 1993. Joan threw herself into village life and became associated with a number of groups, including the original Dorcas Society, Gardening Club, Bowls Club, Historical (Hysterical) Society and Friends of Stebbing Village amongst others.

In her later years (aged 80 onwards!) Joan struggled to get around as much, so she devoted her time to researching projects that interested her. These included the History of Downs Terrace where she lived, her family tree, Franklin's ships on the Northwest Passage, The pencil factory in Hackney, where she was born - yes there was one! And countless others which the family now have the pleasure of owning. She also wrote an adventure book which was published locally (according to her, and we have no reason to doubt that...)

Joan was tech savvy as well, enjoying the delights of Sky Sports, ordering online shopping from the likes of Sainsbury's and Tesco's. She was a devil for buying bits of tat from eBay, and Dunelm where her Grandson Nick works ("I like to help keep him in a job..") Joan had mastered (almost) email and to an extent - Facebook. Her "inbox" was full of requests to help Princes in a foreign land to reclaim their inheritance - but to her credit she never did. Her mobile phone was basic, but nigh on useless, because she could never hear anything anyone said! Yes, she had hearing aids but steadfastly refused to wear them ("I don't need them...")

In the last few years Joan had become more reliant than she would have liked on her close-knit group of friends and neighbours, especially Linda (White) who selflessly took her to hospital appointments, on shopping trips to Dunmow and beyond, and would check on her daily to see if anything was needed, right up to the end. These are true friends indeed.

Joan was especially proud of her family; children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and loved to get the knitting needles out to make a toy, piece of clothing or blanket. The younger family members have or will come to know her as someone who would always take an interest in what they were doing and loved to see them smiling and enjoying themselves, wherever they were. We happily have an archive of photographs and letters going back to the mid-1800's which are treasured and will be passed to future generations.

Our Mum never suffered fools. She could be headstrong and stuck in her ways and would rarely admit to being wrong. It took time to be "accepted" by her and has led to a few disagreements over the years, but she could never be accused of not trying to do her best for her family and friends.

I'm guessing that Mum would like to be remembered fondly within the village by those who knew her. We hope she is; I know we are all going to miss her.

*Eulogy by Philip Matthews as told to Jackie Kingdom*

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## February Fillydye

Stebbing Green flower meadow  
24<sup>th</sup> February 2024.



Flooding is traditional at this time of year. 'Fillydye' used to refer to the melting of January's snow but this year it's persistent rainfall that is to blame.

Our whole area used to be named Freshwell Hundred, due to the ubiquity of underground springs. The springs are still here and make flooding even more likely. Water standing in the fields reduces the amount of flow in ditches and rivers, but the building of houses and roads has the opposite effect.

If you look very carefully you can see two ducks in the photograph; it's an ill wind.

### Seasonal Recipe: Gooseberry & Mint Lemonade

#### Ingredients

250g caster or granulated sugar  
3 large lemons, plus more to serve  
350g gooseberry, topped and tailed, then halved  
Mint leaves from 3 sprigs  
Ice and sparkling water, to serve

#### Method

- In a large pan, gently melt the sugar in 250ml water. Meanwhile, using a vegetable peeler, pare away a few long strips of lemon zest. Squeeze the juice to give about 100ml.
- Add the zest, juice, gooseberries and mint leaves to the pan, and bring to a simmer. Cook for 5-10 mins until the gooseberries are very soft, then mash with a potato masher and leave to cool. Strain through a sieve, pressing the flesh well to extract the juices, then chill thoroughly.
- To serve, dilute 4 tbsp of the lemonade base with 100ml sparkling water (or to taste), adding extra ice, lemon and mint



*BBC Good Food Recipe*



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I have availability for trips to: **Chatham Dockyard & The Call The Midwife Tour** on 6<sup>th</sup> April, **Expressionists Exhibition at The Tate Modern** on 11<sup>th</sup> June, **Jesus Christ Superstar** on 12<sup>th</sup> July, **Fiddler On The Roof at Regents Park Open Air Theatre** on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, **Kiss Me Kate at The Barbican** on 13<sup>th</sup> August, **Thursford Christmas Spectacular** on 2<sup>nd</sup> December and **White Christmas at The Mill, Sonning** on 28<sup>th</sup> December.

There are of course many other trips during the course of the year which are sold out, The Unfriend, Just for One Day, Mamma Mia the Musical and Fisherman's Friends to name but a few. Please contact me for details in case I have cancellations and I can add you to my mailing list for up-to-date information. I will be adding other trips as we go along.

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# Puzzle Corner: Word Search

Back by popular demand we have another word search, kindly designed for us again by Ethan Calder, aged 11. This time we are Easter themed, with words hidden amidst the grid representing this very special season.

Kindly designed for us this issue by Ethan Calder, aged 11.

S	A	V	N	M	R	Y	W	T	M	Y	E	W	O	T
T	M	R	S	A	T	U	V	A	A	P	R	I	L	G
H	Y	U	W	V	P	R	I	M	R	O	S	E	V	S
E	R	E	M	A	L	I	P	Q	C	T	U	L	I	P
C	M	A	S	M	A	S	A	G	H	C	T	I	H	R
R	A	I	G	T	M	A	R	C	H	T	C	D	O	I
O	Y	E	G	W	B	E	E	I	A	S	S	O	T	N
S	P	A	E	R	U	E	G	G	R	A	C	F	C	G
S	B	S	R	S	A	M	U	A	E	I	L	F	R	E
A	N	T	E	B	N	T	I	N	X	D	P	A	O	Q
X	N	E	T	D	G	S	O	O	E	F	A	D	S	U
I	T	R	S	U	Q	K	P	R	T	F	U	A	S	I
D	B	B	A	G	B	C	R	S	Y	E	T	F	B	N
S	M	U	E	O	T	I	I	O	S	B	U	N	U	O
F	L	N	X	F	Z	H	Y	M	R	O	I	T	N	X
O	G	N	H	O	T	C	A	A	Z	S	L	R	S	I
I	W	Y	W	D	D	G	A	P	S	M	A	R	D	B
M	G	H	C	R	U	H	C	S	Y	R	A	M	T	S

MARCH  
 APRIL  
 MAY  
 BEE  
 LAMB  
 EASTER BUNNY

ST MARYS CHURCH  
 CHICKS  
 THE CROSS  
 DAFFODIL  
 EASTER EGGS  
 TULIP

SPRING EQUINOX  
 MIGRATORY BIRDS  
 HOT CROSS BUNS

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AFSS/Stebbing School	Office	856260
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Badminton (Evening)	Mark Hayden	07791526278
Beavers & Scouts	Nieky van Veggel	niekyvanveggel@gmail.com
Bell Ringing	Neil Bromley	820898
Bowls Club	John Pitkethly	856155
Carpet Bowls (Afternoon)	Pat Hopwood	856183
Carpet Bowls (Evening)	Roger	856348
Church (Administrator)	Emma Nicholls	pilgrim.parishes.enquiries@gmail.com
Church (Priest in Charge)	Sue Hurley	revsuehurley@gmail.com
Church Flowers	Hazel Kerr	856993
Cricket Club	Adrian Farr	856691
Cubs	Drew Fisher	artfis@hotmail.com
Dorcas Society	Rosie Pitkethly	856155
Fete	Karen Clark	07710400581
Footpath Rep	Brian Martin	856664
Friday Morning Market	Kim Matthews	856112
Friends Meeting House	Angela Newbrook	856464
Garden Club	Margaret Rufus	856122
History Society/Archive	Derek Towler	856680
Judo Club	Faith Pitman	07595 331073
Ladies Group	Gina Going	855943
Meals on Wheels	Sue Riley	856548
Over 60s	Doreen Cummings	856408
Parish Clerk	Greg King	855805
Parish Paths Partnership	Brian Martin	856664
Primary School	Lucy Mawson	856260
Rainbows	Liz Hooper	856814
TOTs & Co	Rev Sue Hurley	859158
Scouts	Drew Fisher	artfis@hotmail.com
Stebbing Scene	Karen Clark	07710400581
Tennis Club	Stan Ryman	chair@stebbingtennisclub.co.uk
Village Hall	Donna Kiberd	01787 703993
Village Stores	Volunteer Staff	856380
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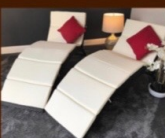
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### Please send contributions to:

Karen Clark (articles, letters & advertising)

Jon Clark (queries about delivery)

Jackie Kingdom (obituaries)

karen@howetraining.com

jon@adaptainer.co.uk

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### Copy date for next issue is 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024

All contributions are welcome. Email is preferred where possible, but even handwritten contributions are welcome (if we can read them)

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