

FULMER NEWSLETTER



June 2021 | ISSUE 68

WELCOME TO THE 68TH ISSUE OF THE FULMER NEWSLETTER

It's been another rollercoaster period for everyone with all that is going on in our world but we hope small shoots of freedom are helping us to be optimistic. It is hard to think that summer will arrive when we have been having so much inclement weather but Fulmer is looking lovely as always and the rain is welcome! Thanks to so many villagers who are joining organised litter picks (well done, Darren) or just doing their own patch.

Our usual thanks to contributors, advertisers (we would welcome more if anyone has suggestions) and those who help us to deliver this newsletter to your door. It is good that the What's App groups set up last year are continuing and prove most helpful as an alert or for seeking advice.

Editors

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| | |
|----------------------------|--|
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| Paul Bass: | Unitary Councillor (Paul.Bass@buckinghamshire.gov.uk) |

PERSONALIA

Leavers

Brian & Marion Weild who have moved to Gerrards Cross.

Thank you for all your efforts and good work in Fulmer over such a long time – we are all very grateful for the contribution you have made.

Welcome

Hugo & Milly Sanders and family who have moved to Windmill Road.

Deaths

We send condolences to the families of:

Nancy Kathleen Harding - died 1 Dec 2020, her funeral took place on 14 January

Norman Hampel - died 18 Jan 2021, his funeral took place on 17 February

John Alston Morrell - died 19 Jan 2021, his funeral took place on 4 February

Gilbert Runnicles - Died 6 Mar 2021, his funeral took place on 31 March

Anya Whitehead - Died 10 March 2021, her funeral took place on 22 April

Peter Eric Marshall - Died 20 Mar 2021, his funeral took place on 8 April

There have been no Births, Weddings or Christenings so far this year

FULMER CHURCHYARD

We are always happy and grateful to welcome any volunteers to assist with keeping our lovely churchyard looking colourful and tidy.

Do contact me if you are able to offer any help Sue Fagan
susanhumefagan@gmail.com

01753 662193

ANNA WHITEHEAD
7 November 1963 – 10 March 2021



SUSIE WEEKS writes – “All of us blessed to know Anya knew what a special person she was. She was like a beam of sunlight, dancing amongst us making everyone feel better about life. Fulmer will surely miss her fairy dust within our community, her genuine interest in everyone, her acts of kindness, warmth and generosity, her loud laugh and her love of life and nature. Although many knew her on a personal level, I am sure that few will be aware of just how accomplished she was in her career. So, I would like to share with you this Eulogy written by the some of the women Anya worked alongside at the British Institute of Interior Design and the KLC School of Interior Design. Anya was a Consultant of Interior Design and probably the most highly qualified person in our Country in Sustainable Design. She even presented at the Pentagon in front of Barack Obama! COVID Rules permitting, we intend to hold a Memorial Service and Celebration of Anya’s life in Fulmer Village on August 14, starting with a service in the village Church at 3pm and carry on into the evening. Should restrictions on numbers be imposed at that time by the Government, the event will be postponed until we can have unrestricted numbers, as we wish all that want to join in can. Anyone wishing to share words and photos about their wonderful interactions with Anya is welcome to send them over and they will be incorporated into the event. (if you wish to join or share, please email Susie Weeks weeks.sj@gmail.com)”

“In time people will forget what you said; In time people will forget what you did, But people will never forget how you made them feel”
Maya Angelou

It's an honour to have the opportunity to share Anna's remarkable career with you. Anna was one of the UK's foremost experts on sustainability in interior practice and in her own words, she was a sustainable interior design consultant, providing design and consultancy for interior environments that are resource, energy and water efficient - using ethically sourced sustainable materials and products. She volunteered for the British Institute of Interior Design for over a decade including being the lead organiser of the 2011 Retrofit Conference. Constantly pioneering climate conscious issues and involved with lobbying the government on indoor air quality.

Her qualifications are endless from an Honours degree in Human Physiology to Sotheby's qualification in fine art restoration. She was very proud to be the first British recipient of the United States Green Building qualification. Attended the annual conferences and was educational reviewer for Health and Wellbeing seminars for the annual Greenbuild Conferences in the USA. She was one of the few interior design specialists in the UK to have achieved LEED sustainable accreditation. (*Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design*). She published articles and delivered industry presentations on designing for health and wellbeing at Ecobuild, Grand Designs Live, The Royal Institute of British Architects and Green Sky Thinking. Always searching for something new and innovative. One of her major aims was to bring style and design to the building industry. Anna's sparkling personality and presence would shine like a red beacon in the midst of the grey suited construction conferences. Her eloquent delivery and hunger for knowledge would raise the bar on any research platform.

Anna was such an important asset to The Interior Design School and KLC teaching teams. The knowledge and expertise that she shared with the students enabled them to understand how essential the sustainable message is in the design industry. Teaching staff and students adored her, and she often needed to be rescued at the end of her talk as the students never wanted to let her go. She had a tenacious hunger for answers to make the world a better place. Her climate conscious approach forced us all to question how we specify in the Interiors Construction sector. She introduced us to new methods - using mushrooms in construction, furniture made from recycled coffee grinds and fabrics made from nettles.

She was co-researcher on international colour for Akzo Nobel. Her most current work was with Lori Pinkerton Rolet on combined research relating to UK Furnishing fabric standards following reports relating to the Grenfell Tower disaster. This has led to recommendation as panellists on the UK standards committee and which Lori will continue to pioneer in honour of Anna. She contributed Chapter one on British Standards for The Hong Kong Polytechnic publication; Body of Knowledge for Interior Design published in December 2020. And it should not be forgotten that she was also huge fun and a great party girl. A glamorous addition to the events and awards ceremonies at the BIID. Always thinking of others, and we have all been recipients of her generous nature with thank you and congratulatory gifts. She wore her integrity on her sleeve - was inspiring, curious, tireless in her research, generous, kind, irreplaceable and we will miss her enormously. It's reassuring, however, to know that she planted the sustainable seed in many of our minds and her legacy will continue to grow.

An absolute legend.

IRIS DUNBAR, Director, The Design Institute for Interior Design

GILBERT RUNNICLES 1946 - 2021

It was with great sadness that we said farewell to a much-loved member of the St James family in March. Gilbert Runnicles had been prevailed upon to join the choir at St James, Fulmer nearly 50 years ago, and we have been blessed by his contribution ever since.

Gilbert grew up steeped in the traditions of English church and choral music, his father being a church choirmaster, organist and a fine tenor himself. As we can all testify, Gilbert had a glorious voice with a wide range. He was a tenor when he first came to Fulmer but he moved to the bass line with great success, only moving back to tenor after John Hedley's sad departure. Gilbert stepped into John's shoes as co-ordinator of the Fulmer choir with his unassuming but infectiously enthusiastic manner. He was passionate about the role that music plays in worship and, as Jill reflected at his funeral, had pushed hard for the reintroduction of psalms although that ambition was regrettably not realised. He was, of course, a star of the hand bell ringing group before our Christmas Carols and had become involved in church bell ringing (both of these with Pam). He was also a willing supporter of the more light-hearted church musical events that involved so many from the village community. Gilbert was a devoted husband to Pam, father to Nathan and Austen, and grandfather. Beyond his family, though, Gilbert's other love was golf. He was successful at so many activities in which he became involved and golf was no exception. He played for the Gerrards Cross Golf Club 1st team and members of the congregation will recall his slipping out mid-service (after the anthem, of course) to play in a match. When he was Club Captain at Gerrards Cross, he had the traditional caricature drawn which highlights some of his other interests. It will come as no surprise to see the prominent role that singing and Fulmer church play in Gilbert's picture. These few words here cannot fully do justice to Gilbert. His passing will lead a hole in a lot of lives - not only for his family, but also the choir, the golf club, the badminton club and many more. This Friday (14th) would have been his 75th birthday - too soon to have been takenom us. Rest in peace, Gilbert, and thank you for everything.

CATRIONA PORTER – fellow choir member, Fulmer Church



John Alston Morrell (1927-2021)

John Alston Morrell was born on 27th August 1927, son of Sir Arthur and Lady Audrey Morrell.

He grew up in Oxshott, Surrey and attended prep school at St Hughes in Bickley, Kent. After the outbreak of World War II, his parents made the decision to evacuate him to Canada for his own safety.

He spent three very years at Lakefield College in Ontario, which had been established by an ancestor, Reverend Alexander Mackenzie, in 1895. John returned to the UK in 1943 to finish his studies at Winchester College, the independent boys' boarding school. On leaving, he signed on to the Royal Artillery and trained near Durham. He narrowly avoided active service as peace was fortunately declared weeks before John was due to be posted. The army paid for him to read PPE at Oxford (Trinity College), where he attained a 2.1 degree and half blue for Ice Hockey. He then spent a further 2.5 years in the army, serving in the Royal Horse Artillery, including a year with the British Army of the Rhine (BOAR), stationed at a captured German army base in Osnabruck, West Germany.

John was drawn to the City where he had a distinguished career spanning over 50 years. After the early years working as an equity analyst at Hendersons, he was recruited by Robert Fleming & Co where he established himself as a pioneer investing into Japan and the Far East. He was credited for setting up the first ever Japanese Investment Trust. In 1981, he joined Henderson Baring Asset Management as Managing Director which ultimately became Baring Asset Management, from which he retired as Chairman in 1994.

John was a dedicated and loyal friend and servant to Fulmer spanning over 40 years. He and his wife Anna purchased the Old Rectory on Windmill Lane in 1967 where they spent many happy years raising their three children CJ, Rupert and Marcus. A Fulmer Parish Church Treasurer and a regular lesson reader he was a familiar face to many and became lifelong friends with a number of Fulmer based families. He was also Chairman of the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed in Bangladesh, founded by Reverend Bill Taylor's daughter Valerie, overseeing fundraising and ensuring the successful expansion and development of the Centre. He was always very proud of Fulmer's awards for 'Best kept village' as he would often be seen picking up occasional litter on his way back from Church each Sunday. In 2001, John and Anna moved to Farnham Common.

John was known for his wisdom, charm, modesty, selflessness, generosity and for his ability to reach out to so many people from all walks of life and across all age groups. He was a devoted husband and loving father and grandfather who will be much missed by all who were fortunate to have known him. John passed away on January 19th, 2021.

RUPERT MORRELL

EVERYTHING IS ROSY NOW ...

*Lookin' at the world through rose coloured glasses; everything is rosy now
Lookin' at the world and everything that passes; seems of rosy hue somehow...*

If you're a Frank Sinatra fan you might be singing along ... How do you see the world right now as we come out of Lockdown 3? Does everything look rosy now? Maybe you're feeling really excited about the prospect of travelling to your favourite holiday destination, albeit on the 'green list', or taking a 'staycation', and best of all being able to hug loved ones again.

We are slowly and cautiously being given more freedom than we've had for some time, though everything is not quite rosy now. We're certainly not out of the woods yet. The virus is still around and there may yet be a third wave. As we begin to get out more, able to do things we've previously taken for granted, and as we begin to socialise again, I think each one of us will discover that Covid-19 has changed us in some way. Some have tragically lost loved ones through this time, including our Queen at the loss of HRH Prince Philip. Both my parents have died in the last few months, together with a number of our congregation members in Fulmer and a dear neighbour. Many have lost jobs and incomes, or been furloughed, whilst others have been working harder than ever. Some have lost precious planned events; family parties and celebrations, baptisms and weddings to be re-scheduled. End of year proms, exams, holidays and a whole host of other things precious to us have also been lost. These things will have taken their toll on us, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

Yet, even in the midst of lockdown, some have found positives, enjoying the gentler pace of life. Others gaining a new appreciation for the countryside around us, noticing nature and wildlife in a way not noticed before. There's been a wonderful sense of community, neighbours looking out for each other and getting to know neighbours not met before, connecting via WhatsApp and knocking on doors. For some, life has slowed down a little, allowing time to reset patterns of being.

As we come out of lockdown, it's good to pause and take stock, to mourn the people, events and time we've lost. It's a time also to be thankful for the positives. Let's also take time to reflect: "Where has God been in all of this?" Of course, I believe that He has been there, but sometimes we need to look a little harder to see Him, sometimes we just need to slow down to be able to recognise His handiwork. I find that when I pause and take the time, I begin to recognise God's presence in all kinds of situations, discovering that He's been with me and alongside me just as He promised. Even when we've not felt God's presence, when it seems like He's not been there I believe He will have been – because God promised He would be. Deuteronomy 31:6 says: *'the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.'* These are truths from the Bible worth hanging on to as we move forward. When we look through God's lens, rather than maybe our rose-tinted glasses our future has a different certainty. Christians believe that those who trust in Jesus Christ as Saviour have the assurance of eternal life.

As we begin to look forward, as we dare to plan and consider what the future might look like, let us try and find ways of taking the positive things we've learned and experienced through

lockdown forward with us. It's been an incredibly tough time and we're not through it yet but we're getting there. Wonderfully there is hope and a future ahead of us.

If you'd like a place to pause and reflect, perhaps to mourn and to be thankful and light a candle in memory of a lost loved one, please come and spend some time in our beautiful church. It's a special, prayerful space and we're currently open on Wednesday mornings 11–12.30 pm for private prayer, plus a mid-week Holy Communion service at 10 am (1st Wed of the month). Please contact me if you'd like to talk through anything that's been troubling you or to discover more about the Christian faith.

Contact details and other information can be found on the Saint James Gerrards Cross and Fulmer website: www.saintjames.org.uk.

Revd Jill Roth, Pastor - St James, Fulmer

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Churchwarden's Report

Once again, I am writing this piece, still in degree of lockdown and with the threat of Covid hanging on. Christmas 2020 was very different. As so few could gather in Church, we were unable to hold the several services we usually do across both Churches. However, what was achieved was innovative! In Gerrards Cross there were Carols in the (Tesco) car park, two events which had all tickets taken in a very short time. Here in Fulmer our "Carols by Candlelight" service was filmed on 13 December. The Church was decorated with the help of a few folk who felt they could and looked the same as usual! The choir occupied the pews and sang wonderful hymns and read the Gospel Christmas story. Their enjoyment at being together again and singing was very evident. The film went out on You Tube on Dec 20, same day as usual and over the next few weeks was viewed around 850 times in several countries! A resounding success. Sadly however, it was our lovely Choirmaster's swansong, as he, Gilbert Runnicles, died in March. He is and will be greatly missed.

Instead of Christingle for the children and families; we had a Christmas Trail. We were to have had a specific afternoon on December 24th with 17 families, but this had to be cancelled with fears of the virus numbers creeping up again. Across the week, despite the wet and cold weather, over 40 families from around the village, church, school and in the nearby area came and took part. The lovely displays had QR codes to link and listen to the appropriate story and sing a carol. The Trail finished with a Christmas message from Daf, Senior Pastor, with a goody bag! The children were encouraged to tie a ribbon to the Christmas prayer tree. Over 117 ribbons were there by the end of the week. Again successful, beyond our expectations.

By January 5th the country was back in lockdown. This time the Government did not close the Churches but the risk of spreading the virus was high. The County Council asked churches in Buckinghamshire to limit attendance to those who were producing services. Fulmer was closed except for Private Prayer on a Wednesday and we returned to livestreamed services from Oxford Road led by Matt and the team, with our own Fulmer Zoom coffee gatherings. These Zoom gatherings have become valuable to many and closer friendships have formed. By early March, we returned to a limited number of people in Church on a Sunday watching the livestream, with strict distancing and sanitising measures in place. Zoom coffees continued. Whilst livestream in Church does not suit everyone, those that have loyally attended have enjoyed being in church and the limited fellowship.

We shared Good Friday and Easter Services from Oxford Road. In Fulmer, we offered an Easter Trail, on a similar basis to the Christmas Trail. Not as well attended as Christmas, as by Easter people could meet others outdoors, we know it was appreciated by many families. This time prayer ribbons were tied to the netting on the wooden cross and of course goody bags were on hand. Midweek Communion on the first Wednesday in the month began again in April. In recent weeks on Sundays, we have had Communion outside in the Church grounds and finished with a hymn. Singing is allowed outside! Sadly, we have lost more people from our congregation and community, although not necessarily to Covid. We look forward to returning to Church with lighter summer days and welcoming you all back. Until then Reverend Jill and I and the Ministry team are available if needed. Keep safe and God Bless.

Francesca Hall-Drinkwater

From David Brackin, Chairman Fulmer Parish Council

Despite the weather doing its very best over the past few months to pretend that Summer will never come, I can't help feeling that sense of optimism that comes with this time of year. Since the depths of Winter, the successful rollout of the vaccine to over 70% of UK adults; the ability to see loved ones in person again; being allowed to enjoy an evening out; and the extremely low rates of infection in Fulmer and across the South have all left the distinct feeling of a return to normality. And notwithstanding the threat of new variants and some international catch-up, we dare to start to plan summer holidays and village events again.

I shan't be sorry to say goodbye to Zoom socials and exchange them for the warmth of in-person contact, but we have been lucky in Fulmer to have such a strong community and beautiful village this past year and I wonder what habits we will keep. Will the daily walk in the woods keep going? Helping out our neighbours with a kind word or picking something up at the shops? Tidying up litter, fixing a broken fence, clearing a blocked ditch? I hope so. I plan to continue the weekly email of local news as long as people find it useful – if you haven't signed-up and want to know what is going on, be included in local consultations or just see photos of the village, then do go to <http://eepurl.com/gm28Xb> to sign up.

The Parish Council met in person for the first time in over a year this month, and while it was great to see everyone in person and discuss issues face-to-face, I missed the participation and contributions of those who have joined us via Zoom. We are now looking at ways to stream the meeting and allow online contributions. Is this something you'd like to see? If you can help us overcome the technical challenges to make this a reality, then do please get in touch. The council was re-elected in May – thank-you for your ongoing support – and after a number of years serving in the role, Parm Khanghura stepped down as Deputy Chairman and will continue with the ever-busy Planning role. Liz Finan agreed to support me as Deputy and I'd like to thank them both for their ongoing service to the village. It remains our mission to Keep Fulmer Special. This year, as well as returning to normal activities, I hope that we will make great advances with improving the facilities in the village at King George's Field, as well as protection from crime through our cctv project.

The unified Buckinghamshire Council provides bin collections, planning, roads maintenance, schools, social care and much more, and a large part of what we do is to hold the Unitary Authority to account on your behalf. The more that you can let us know about service failings (see the list of duties for which councillor is responsible for what area, or send to me), the more we can work for you, spot patterns and demand action. The recent elections have brought three new Unitary Councillors for us to work with in this task – Guy Hollis from Denham, and Santokh Chhokar and Paul Bass both from GX. They attended our most recent Parish Council meeting and have promised to work as a team on our local priorities and I look forward to working with them. We have much to do! I'd like also to pay tribute to our previous County and District councillors – Roger Reed and Malcolm Bradford who were both very experienced representatives and extremely hard-working for Fulmer.

From Joy Morrissey MP

Recently, Her Majesty performed her 67th State Opening of Parliament, and in doing so set out the Government's legislative agenda for the coming year. There was much to look forward to within the speech such as tougher sentences for the most violent criminals, a lifetime skills guarantee, more money for our armed forces, and more money for infrastructure.

However, there is one particular area which I would like to focus on. The proposals to reform our planning system. Make no mistake our current planning rules do need to change. They discourage housebuilding on appropriate sites, which is putting young people even further out of reach of the goal of home ownership. So, I was pleased to see planning reform at the top of the Government's agenda this year.

However, whilst these reforms are overdue, they must not come at the expense of our precious green belt. In particular we must protect agricultural land and land reserved for nature. So, when this legislation is put before Parliament, I will do my all to ensure that the new reforms do not threaten urban sprawl onto our agricultural land, nature reserves and green belt. We must also make our planning laws as simple and painless as possible to allow developers to quickly build on brownfield sites.

Whilst I will push for this in Westminster, I know our newly elected councillors will do all they can to protect our green spaces locally, whilst also being pragmatic about addressing housing shortages across Buckinghamshire. Failure to do so will result in an urban sprawl from Slough and London which could easily snowball, impacting villages like Fulmer in the long term.

It is the dream of many to own their own home and as your MP I am determined to ensure that this is an attainable possibility for you all, while preserving the quality of life of those that have achieved it already.

PUBLICAN & SINNER

I recall being deeply saddened when I learned on the morning of 9 April 2021 that Prince Philip had died just four months prior to his 100th birthday. Musing over the personal sadness I felt I found this was soon replaced by a sense that such a highly principled, yet often compassionate mortal life had reached fulfilment while moving to his eternal rest.

My first meeting with Prince Philip was highly fortuitous, his future in-laws, King George VI, and Queen Elizabeth (later to become the much beloved Queen Mother) had greatly enhanced the lives of thousands of pre-war young people by founding the Duke of York's Playing Fields Association which was to become The National Playing Fields Association.

At a time in the mid -30's when a 'Keep Fit ' campaign was already absorbing the energies of young and middle-aged lives in particular, there was a great demand for space to be found which could be turned into Playing Fields and when King George ascended to the throne, Prince Philip, recently married to Princess Elizabeth, immediately took over the responsibility for the continuance of the NFPA. He promoted this with his customary enthusiasm, and it was to lead him to the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards Scheme, the Prince's Trust and the Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conferences, the latter of which I was personally fortunate enough to be chosen for the inaugural Conference in July 1956 at Oxford. This conference lasted three weeks, when 350 of us were drawn from every country in the British Commonwealth. It proved a very unique experience which has had a highly influential effect on my personal life ever since.

A magnificent banquet in aid of The National Playing Fields had been arranged for London's Connaught Rooms, hosted by The London Central Board which was the doyen of the Licensed Victuallers of the day (Pub Tenants and Managers) and chaired by the redoubtable Alderman Dyer of 'The Kings Head 'in Romford. The Guest of Honour was Prince Philip, new to being entertained by the Licensed Trade, which is a pretty formidable experience, though every banqueting custom was meticulously observed along with every convention through the controlling hands of the Toast Master attired in the guise of a Master of Foxhounds. The Guinness Managing Director of the day, Sir Hugh Beaver, had been invited to the banquet as Guinness was one of the co-sponsors of the event and I was speedily pressed into service and black tie as escort to one of Sir Hugh's daughters.

At the end of the dinner itself, Alderman Dyer was very anxious that the sponsors and other senior guests were stood in line to shake hands with Prince Philip to wish him a safe homeward passage from Holborn back to The Palace. Foremost of the line was a tall, gaunt lady in grey standing next to me. She was clearly escorting the Canon of the Church who had said the Grace before the guests took their seats. On the approach of the Duke, who was passing down the line, the lady-in grey performed an elegant if somewhat exaggerated curtsey, and then she pushed her soulmate forward so that he was well positioned for the Royal handshake. Alderman Dyer was presenting those in the line and as he came to the Canon he pointed to the dog collar and said "as you will see, Sir, the Canon is not of our Trade."

"Well, Sir" said HRH immediately, "if you are not a Publican, then you must be a Sinner." Those within earshot laughed but a sharp intake of outraged breath beside me indicated that the gaunt lady-in grey was not amused

And there is a sequel. A few years after this I was in the Chair at a banquet and Prince Philip as the Guest of Honour was sitting beside me when I reminded him of the above episode.

"Heavens" was his reaction, "I must have been much braver in those days!"

Mercifully little change was ever apparent - Prince Philip never ceased to amuse all who were around him.

Edward Guinness

ULTRAFAST BROADBAND IN FULMER

The Parish Council and some residents in Fulmer, including Chris Denza and Susie Simkins, have invested a huge amount of time and effort into securing ultrafast fibre broadband (FTTP) for the Village.

Our partner in this venture has been Home Counties Fibre Ltd, who undertook an analysis of all 287 properties in and around Fulmer and were in the process of submitting application to BDUK (Building Digital UK), to undertake this work under the Gigabyte Rural Voucher Scheme.

Then, out of the blue at the beginning of March, the Government cut the allocated funding for designated voucher-qualifying rural areas from £5bn to £1.2bn per annum spread over a four-year period. This resulted in BDUK reducing the number of voucher-qualifying areas significantly throughout the UK. Sadly, that axe fell on Fulmer as one of many that no longer qualifies in the current year under the voucher scheme. This, combined with the impacts of Covid has dramatically changed the outlook for many areas desperate for FTTP. As previously stated, the Voucher Scheme covered the costs of installing FTTP to the individual properties - this would equate to circa £1,000 per household.

Without Voucher funding it is highly unlikely any ISP provider will countenance bringing FTTP to Fulmer unless the residents as a community, self-funded the installation. BDUK have designated Fulmer and Bakers Wood and several towns/villages around here as “non-qualifying” and they are the authority who decide on boundaries.

A review of Rural Voucher Scheme qualifying areas will no doubt be looked at, but no time frames have been advised.

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF HOME COUNTIES FIBRE

FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR GUY HOLLIS

"I feel privileged to have been elected as one of your Unitary Councillors. It has been a challenging 12 months or so since the four old District Councils and the County Council were merged in to one Unitary Council called 'Bucks Council' on the eve of the pandemic. As a result of this, many of the officers of the Unitary were seconded to the Covid front. It is something of a miracle that the Unitary Council was able to continue its 140 or so primary roles, utilising its £1 billion per year budget, whilst financial resources were also diverted to supply millions of pounds worth of grants and emergency relief to support businesses and community facilities as a supplement to those provided by central government.

I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to those of you who have volunteered to support our community at this time without whose help our vulnerable residents would have fared much worse during this crisis. During this time, I have continued to volunteer as a First Responder with the South Central Ambulance Service and vaccinated the odd few hundred patients at the Chalfont Community Hospital since it began to operate back in January of this year. I have also attended many virtual meetings. These have included the Southern Area Planning Committee, (covering applications that would have fallen under the old South Bucks District Council boundaries). There have been a few contentious applications and I think that we have acquitted ourselves well in defending the green belt on the one hand whilst respecting the rights of a property owner to the enjoyment of their land on the other. To that end, I have interacted as extensively and as comprehensively as possible with Parish Councils and on a one-to-one basis with many local residents.

I have also met and liaised with the Local Area Technician at Transport for Bucks to lobby him to have our drains and ditches repaired and cleared and the budget for this has now been tripled. I am aware of the issues on Black Park Lane in this respect and am pushing for Wayne Fabian to get it addressed along with your Parish Council with whom I have begun to work. We need to lobby for more funds of course and this will need time to be taken to dig down in to the work practices of TFB to see if any inefficiencies can be rooted out and to seek other sources of funding from the Community Board and Central Government and Community Infrastructure Levies/Section 106 payments on development.

There have been seminars held and attended to understand the workings of the Council, and whilst I have been a District and Parish Councillor for some 16 years, this has been useful in understanding those functions that were hitherto the responsibility of the County Council such as Social Care, Education, Roads and Transport so that we can learn who does what therein.

As a recently retired healthcare professional I was pleased to be given membership of the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee which enabled me to use my clinical experience and that acquired from dealing with NHS management at high level to challenge those departments that utilise hundreds of millions of pounds of the budget and outside agencies linked to us such as NHS England and the CCG. In particular certain high-level officials have been very robustly held to account, to ensure that the vaccine rollout was given the very highest priority.

As chairman of the Covid Reset and Recovery sub-group at your Community Board, I have driven and continue to drive the officers to get on with the job of delivering emergency aid and capital grants to your community and the others in my ward.

At full Council and behind the scenes, I am utilising my past experience of Planning policy committee workings to repeatedly press hard for the Leader and relevant Cabinet member to start to write the new Local Plan for Bucks and to ensure that firstly there is meaningful member and public input from the word go and that, secondly, we do not end up with something that gives away green belt. However, we are still awaiting the white paper from the Minister for Communities and Local Government as to what procedures we must follow and at the same time they have set us a very challenging deadline: so the sooner they lay down the procedures the better. After all, how are we to write a Local Plan that they consider to be up to standard if they won't tell us what those standards are?! To that end I have pressured our MP to approach the relevant minister to a) publish this white paper in its final version as soon as possible and b) to stop handing out undeliverable housing targets and all that is associated therefrom. In addition, I have contributed to a strong series of objections and suggested modifications to this white paper. I have also offered two new brownfield sites in Denham as part of the Council's 'call for sites' that could supply a lot of new housing without encroachment on the green belt. I have also ensured that your neighbours in Denham Parish Council have done the same and the owners of that which constitutes the largest site are also contributors. The Fulmer area is well protected by green belt and the conservation area, but we cannot afford to be complacent and so these diversions and the instigation of a new Local Plan for Bucks should help a great deal to shield our land from the worst excesses of central government planning legislation and wildcat development. I have also applied to be again placed on the Planning Committee for the south and will keep lobbying the leader to place me on any committee for writing the new Local Plan for Bucks as soon as it is established.

I have also been working with the different enforcement departments. We have seen the country outside London undergo a fall in enforcement cases of about 25%. However, in our area, cases have risen by 50% (from about 200 to 300) during the last year! One can only surmise that existing on the edge of London tempts far more people to try their luck with speculative/unapproved developments and unauthorised business activities etc. The Unitary Council is now number 3 in the country outside of London for the issuing of enforcement notices. Believe it or not, this is not a service which councils are statutorily obliged to conduct but constituents very understandably place great emphasis upon its provision. Clearly central government legislation needs to be modified to speed up the processes and increase and pass on financial penalties to us at Council. Until that occurs (if ever!), we need to look at the budget and see if there is the leeway to transfer funding to this service from another service less valued by yourselves. In addition, I have applied to be placed on the committee which scrutinises enforcement activities at the Unitary Council so am hoping to obtain a position thereon.

As far as waste management is concerned, the biggest concern has been the never-ending fly-tipping. As you are probably already aware, this usually comes from people outside the area, and I regularly go out to photograph incidents in our ward so that I can comprehensively report them on the 'Fix My Street' website although I have to say that half the time you have beaten me to it! Nevertheless, I appreciate that a report from a Councillor may carry more

weight with the officers and so will continue with this task. We all know that the Council takes a zero tolerance to fly-tipping and has a relatively impressive prosecution rate when compared nationally with other councils. However, I would like to a) investigate and if possible, instigate greater use of hidden surveillance at known and likely locations for this criminal activity and b) see officers take a robust approach to absentee landowners who do not secure their properties sufficiently to prevent intrusion by these criminals. (You the taxpayer are not obliged to have your rates used to clean up another's private property and these owners must act responsibly to do so if they have not properly secured their property so that associated health and safety problems do not fester therein or else face prosecution). I am happy to demonstrate at least four such locations in our ward but will not name names here.

I have every sympathy for our police officers and appreciate greatly the work that they do, and I am sure that you do too but there needs to be meaningful interaction with them when an issue needs to be addressed. I am therefore keen to see your Community Board work with the Parish Council to call in the officers for meetings that are properly minuted and attended by all (Parish Council, the public and Unitary Councillors and the MP) for the sake of accountability and gravitas to ensure that we are taken seriously and at the same time are given reports which help us to keep our crime issues in perspective relative to that, which officers are confronting at the same time. I appreciate that there may be a good working relationship between TVP and some Parish Councils and NAG's, but public perception is not always as complimentary.

Now I know that this article sounds a bit like an election pitch or some such, but my honest hope is that it gives you an idea of where I am at in respect of experience and knowledge of the issues that seem to concern our community and the responsibilities which I have been undertaking on your behalf. I will do all that I reasonably can to deliver on the aspirations I have stated and those of you who know me will hopefully be able to vouch for this statement. I was born here and, although widely travelled and experienced, have always made this place my home for nearly 60 years.

As I already said, I have been a local Councillor for about 16 years and am very much looking forward to working for you and the residents of this ward.

Please feel free to contact me if you need my help with local government issues in the ward or via our terrific Parish Council so that they too are involved with your concerns. Again, thank you very much for voting for me. It's a great privilege to serve.

Yours Sincerely,
Cllr. Guy Hollis

Guy.hollis@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

FULMER CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS SPRING REPORT

As the woodlands, fields, gardens and verges in and around Fulmer emerge from what feels like a rather long and chilly winter the FCV team are looking forward to planting out the baskets, troughs and beds around the village to bring some summer colour to the centre of Fulmer. These will be appearing over the next few weeks now that the risk of frost has subsided (later than usual this year). Unfortunately, there will be no Best Kept Village competition for the send year running, however I know we are all proud of the way Fulmer is kept, so I would urge everyone to show their gardens at their best as this brings so much delight to all the residents and walkers, cyclists and drivers passing through the village.

I'd like to thank all the volunteers who continue to keep the village looking tidy through the winter months by picking litter along the roads and lanes. The amount of litter we collect on a regular basis astounds me, but it keeps Fulmer looking at its best – so thank you. And on that note, I would like to say a special thank you to Colin Moram who, over the last 30 years, has contributed an amazing amount of time and effort keeping Fulmer special. As always, there are jobs in and around the village that need attention so please feel free to get in touch (charleslawsongray@gmail.com) if you can lend a hand and some time.

As we emerge from lockdown and move into the summer we will be meeting on a more regular basis. If there is a project you feel needs attention or there's a conservation project, however small or large, that you have undertaken please let me know as it's always great to showcase our residents' achievements in the weekly Fulmer newsletter.

Thank you again for everyone's efforts; I know many of you are unsung heroes, picking a bag's worth of litter on a walk or making the extra effort in your front garden. It's all appreciated and the volunteers and I look forward to seeing you all over the Summer.

Charlie Gray
Parish Council

Well done to the volunteers and everyone that Charlie has mentioned who keep our village looking so good – Editors



News From Fulmer Infant School

The start of the Spring Term in 2021 was very strange in comparison with previous years. In January we were all very busy preparing for the new term, only to find that on 4 January, the country entered another period of lockdown and the school once more had to close.

We opened for children with Key Worker parents, but found, during the most recent lockdown, that this represented about a third of the school. We then entered a very challenging period where staff were teaching a third of their classes in school whilst, at the same time, teaching the remaining two thirds online! Fortunately, because we have a team of highly professional and dedicated staff members this actually worked extremely well and our parents doing home learning were really supportive. Like the majority of schools in Buckinghamshire, we re-opened again for all pupils from 8 March. It was such a delight to see everyone back and with lots of Covid safety procedures in place we have had no outbreaks of Covid. With a comprehensive 'catch-up' programme in place for pupils with gaps in their learning, we are confident that all pupils will be back on track in their learning before the end of term.

The Summer Term has got off to a great start and although we have not been able to host many of our usual events, raising a total of £139 for Comic Relief and developed a lot of creative flair designing book covers for World Book Day. Pupils have had great fun with our gardening projects and we currently have potatoes and broad beans growing in our planting beds. Peas and strawberries are to be planted soon.



Reception class enjoyed dressing up when we celebrated our ethnic diversity with a World Culture Day and Year 2 pupils have become internet explorers discovering the importance of our world's rainforests. All pupils have



had opportunities to develop simple cookery skills and stuffed pitta breads, cheese straws and delicious fresh fruit salads have all been made.

We also have enjoyed making Covid safety poster advising all visitors about the importance of PPE and keeping safe during the pandemic. Many of these have been put on display on our front fence for all to see and we hope you have enjoyed the children's artwork.

As summer continues we are hoping to host a simple Summer Fair and some competitive sports on our own playground. We are very grateful for the ongoing support from our parents and our local community. It is good to see Fulmer Infant School continuing to thrive and be an asset for the village.

TRACEY DOWSING & CATHY HUNT, Joint Headteachers

BLACK PARK NEWS

It has been a busy few months in Black Park with high visitor numbers continuing over the Easter period. With Covid restrictions starting to ease, it is noticeably quietening down allowing the ranger team to get on with maintenance work and repairs to infrastructure throughout the park. Across all of the country parks we manage we have had over 1.6 million visitors in the last 12 months compared to our previous record of just over 1 million, so as some of you who use the country parks regularly will have seen, parts are looking very tired and worn from the high levels of use. More visitors, in what have historically been quieter areas of the park, has led to more disturbance of wildlife, so we will be working hard over the next few months to raise awareness of what visitors can do to make sure nature still has space in Black Park and protect some of our most important wildlife areas such as the heathland.

Looking forward we will be delivering a £90,000 project to address some of the worst areas of erosion around Black Park Lake; as part of this, we will be introducing more marginal planting to increase wildlife value and to provide a natural solution to the problem.

We are also delivering a project that will be the first phase in linking our two heathland areas; this will see a further section of the top of the park adjacent to the existing heathland fenced to allow cattle to graze and heathland plant communities and wildlife to be able to move easily between the two areas. This project has been paid for with a grant from the Green Recovery Fund and will be delivered in partnership with Groundwork South; this project also provides paid work placements and training for young adults who are struggling to find employment, so you may well see the Green Team working in the park over the next 12 months too. Filming will be returning to Black Park throughout June and early July before we put another break in place until early September, full details of areas affected and path closures can be found on the country parks website an onsite signage. We also hope to restart our events programme soon, so please do check our website and social media for updates.

Finally, two of our long serving rangers Andy Stevens and Ben Davidson have moved on, so there will be several new faces in the team over the next few months.

Tim Williams, Team Leader Country Parks
Communities Directorate
Buckinghamshire Council

LOCAL PLAN TO HELP PROTECT BURNHAM BEECHES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

As local residents and regular readers will know, Burnham Beeches is a nature reserve of international importance. The pollarded trees, their associated wildlife (some of which is very rare), and the habitats of this ancient woodland, have resulted in its designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserve and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – the latter being the strongest protection the woodland is afforded, as part of a network of the best examples of each habitat type across Europe. SAC status means that any plan or project in the vicinity must demonstrate that it will not negatively impact on the ‘integrity’ of the protected habitat. This applies to a range of projects, from our own work within the Beeches, to industrial developments that might emit polluting chemicals, and local plans relating to the development of the surrounding area. The last category applies to the local plans for Buckinghamshire Council and Slough Borough Council and to any neighbourhood plan produced by the Parish Council.

Around ten years ago, the City of London started to work with Natural England and the Environment Agency to help (the former) South Bucks District Council fulfil its obligations in relation to the local plan under the Habitats Regulations, focussing on three areas: water quality; air quality and the impact of recreation pressure. To assess where any pollution to water courses could impact the Beeches, the catchments of all streams flowing into the SAC were mapped. Subsequently, development guidance was produced stating that no planning consent will be given for building within 10m of these water courses and that ‘Sustainable Urban Draining systems’ will be required within the catchments. Vigilance is still needed; the guidance does not prevent all pollution events, as occurrences of overflowing sewerage in Farnham Common in recent years has proved.

Burnham Beeches has some fantastic lichen communities, and some rare species. Lichens are great indicators of air quality, and the communities found at the Beeches could be threatened if air nitrogen levels increase. Local industries like Slough Power Station have to carry out air quality evaluations but the greatest potential issue associated with the local plan is traffic pollution; if the plan caused significant increases in traffic on roads in and around the Beeches, it could raise pollutant levels and impact on the lichen communities. After carrying out modelling to predict changes in traffic and key pollutant levels, it was established that the increase in traffic expected as a result of the plan was not sufficient to require action.

Burnham Beeches is not the only SAC situated close to urbanisation, nor in its large levels of visitors. However, it has been calculated that it has more visitors per hectare of any SAC in the UK, and that is before current extraordinarily high levels. Burnham Beeches is designated for its habitat rather than any specific species. It is difficult to establish how much visitor pressure is detrimental to the trees because they are long-lived, static organisms and any impact may not be seen for years, perhaps decades. We therefore undertook several studies and they showed a decline in tree health and impacts on soils in areas of higher visitor pressure. All parties therefore accepted that the additional houses proposed in the local plan, and their associated additional recreational pressure, would detrimentally impact the beech trees in the woodland; mitigating for this was the next step. Visitor surveys have established where our visitors live, how they arrive, how frequently they visit and how long they stay, and by using models used at other SACs, it was determined that a zone of 500m around the

Beeches, within which no further housing would be permitted, was required. Residents living outside the 500m zone are also predicted to be frequent visitors, so developers for each new dwelling in a zone between 400m and 5.6km from the Beeches will pay a contribution towards agreed projects to mitigate the impact of visitors to the nature reserve, including additional interpretation and a Ranger who will focus on raising awareness of the impact of visitors and encouraging less damaging behaviour. Buckinghamshire Council is working on a Local Plan for the unitary area, but guidance from Natural England indicated action was required immediately to avoid a detrimental impact on the nature reserve, so they produced, consulted upon and adopted a supplementary planning document setting out the evidence and mitigation strategy. We are also working closely with Slough Borough Council and Natural England to ensure development within Slough complies with the Habitats regulations.

The Beeches is such an important place for people, but there is a legal requirement for us to ensure that the rare habitats, trees and the species that depend on them, are not destroyed by the very people who love to visit them. It is our duty to ensure that the Beeches remains a special place for people and wildlife for centuries to come and we are doing our best to fulfil that obligation.

Chris Morris, Senior Ranger
Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

News from South Bucks Riding for the Disabled

Over the past few months, we have been guided by COVID guidelines like every other organisation. As a sports facility for disabled we have continued to provide riding and horse interaction opportunities for a few of our riders. We have had a reduced service for as an organisation we took into consideration the health of our riders, volunteers and staff. We offered riding to those participants who could independently or with some family support mount, ride and dismount without help from our volunteers. Over the coming months we will be opening up more and be welcoming back our more disabled participants. During this time the staff have been working hard ensuring that the horses are kept fit, and where necessary given extra training so they are ready for when more riding takes place. We have a new pony, Freddy, now in training. He has a lot to learn. At 13.2 he will be great for our smaller riders. With many of our riders having grown whilst in lockdown we are now struggling to “horse” many of our older riders. We have been searching for suitable horses and ponies but have not found what we are needing. Ideally, we would like one or two who are 14.3 – 15.2hh. We are interested in loan, gift or buying suitable horses. If you know anyone who could help, please contact us on 01753 662796 and speak to Di Redfern or Gem Hall. We have also been loaned a lovely large pony River, who in his former life competed in para-dressage. He will be a school master for some of our more advanced young riders as he enjoys a quieter life with us. Normally at this time of year we are gearing up for taking our riders out to the Regional show and hoping that they will qualify for the National Championships. As with many other activities there have been changes and this year we will be competing virtually; video recording the young people doing their countryside challenge or dressage test and then sending them up to be judged against other riders from the south region. We will know by July if any of our riders have qualified.

Theresa Drake Volunteer Coach

PRIZE WINNER

Now that the 'Black Horse' is properly open and in full swing, more new patrons will notice the unusual pillarbox in golden hue, instead of the usual post office red. It should be remembered that:

In twenty-twelve, the letterbox turned gold,
To mark a feat equestrian
That won a brave girl Gold.
The winner was Miss Christiansen
A Paralympic rider, renowned for skill and pluck,
For the winning of that medal
Required much more than luck.
So Fulmer and its Riding School
Rejoiced in winner's fame
And Villagers shall remember that
Sophie is that girl's name

KEN PETERS

REPORT FROM FULMER SPORTS & COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (FSCA)

Like most organisations King George's Field had to stay closed for much of the past year due to Government lockdowns. However, with the club now open, Gerrards Cross & Fulmer Football Club has been thriving with over 230 boys and girls playing every week. As the football season nears its end Fulmer Cricket Club will be playing throughout the summer with most of its games at home. Please feel free to come a long and have a drink in the bar while watching the match on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. Through the summer months tennis can also be played. You are very welcome to hire a court at an hourly rate. Coaching is available for individual lessons too.

We have normally held the Fulmer Family Fun Day in May but this year we will be holding our community event on Sunday 8th August. We are hoping to have many of the activities we have had in the past at this event with a few additions as well. Other activities which we are planning to have during the year include opening the bar on Friday nights from June 25th, potentially holding the Fulmer Fireworks night on Friday 5th November, a village quiz night next January and a race night in March.

Currently, the club is involved in a long-term development plan to improve the facilities and offer the community new and exciting activities. One part of this is developing the parking area at the far side of the club to alleviate parking on Fulmer Common Road. Other steps are to improve the playground and to renovate the building the girl guides have vacated. These are just a few of the plans. With the excellent response we have had from the village survey we are well placed to set in motion a club which will offer far more exciting opportunities to our community.

Andrew Nealon, General Manager, 07879 404745
FULMER CRICKET CLUB

www.fulmercricketclub.com

We are looking forward to another enjoyable and successful year

Early season

We started the season with our regular fixture at Little Marlow on 17 April and, in a nail-biting finish, managed to win with 4 balls remaining. Since then, we have been on the losing end of things but have had a lot of fun. You cannot write about cricket without mentioning the weather. The winds from the north made the first few matches chilly but only one match has had to be cancelled through rain and that was Saturday 8 May. From 15 May we will be playing at King George's Field every Saturday and most Sundays until 18 September, which is away to Wendover.

Despite the cold weather the ground looks in excellent condition with the square being the greenest for some years. It should provide quite a bit of help to the bowlers. Paul and Derrick continue to do a lot of work to create a ground and square which FCC can be proud of.

Outdoor nets are taking place on Tuesday evenings, weather permitting, from about 5:30pm.

New Players Welcome

We have excellent playing facilities and are a very friendly Club. New players, of whatever standard, are always welcome. Please refer to our website for contact details www.fulmercricketclub.com or come along to nets on a Tuesday evening.

Bar and Spectators

As mentioned above we will be hosting a lot of matches at home and spectators are most welcome. For the moment, the bar is open from about 1pm until about 7pm, for take away drinks in bottles and cans. The fixtures are all listed on our website www.fulmercricketclub.com

PETER BOX

News from Stoke Poges, Wexham & Fulmer Horticultural Society

Annual Plant Sale

The Horticultural Society's Annual Plant Sale was held at the Rose and Crown pub in Hollybush Hill on 24 April – a beautiful sunny day. There was a record turnout and a record amount raised, £1200, which goes towards the cost of hiring the huge marquee which houses the exhibits at the Annual Show. Those who attended wore masks, used the sanitisers and were required to social distance. Everyone enjoyed being out in the sunshine, meeting people and being at a community event, the first held in Stoke Poges since lockdown. Very many thanks to all those who grew and provided plants, to all those who donated cakes, bread or biscuits for sale and everyone who came to buy. We are grateful to the Rose and Crown for providing a perfect venue for an event which had to be held out of doors.

Sunflowers to shine again

The Society is again distributing sunflower seeds in the three villages Stoke Poges, Wexham and Fulmer to bring joy and delight as we, hopefully, move away from Covid 19. I wonder who will grow the tallest sunflower this year! Contact Bev Nealon bevnealon58@gmail.com Mobile: 07872 918936 for further information

Saturday 24 July 12.30 – 5.30 Annual Show

To be held in the grounds of The Stoke Poges School, free parking on Bells Hill recreation ground SL2 4EG. The show is a traditional community event enjoyed by people of all ages, who come to see the exhibits in the huge marquee, hopefully, hear the band, visit the stalls and enjoy afternoon tea or a beer. It has been held every year since 1884 with the exception of World War I and World War II years and 2020, COVID-19. Many people who have moved away from Stoke Poges use the show as an opportunity to come back and meet up with friends and family. The show schedule has been printed and is available from Andy McDonald, Show Superintendent, on request to andyrmac65@gmail.com or 07484 745779. Copies will also be available in the Post Office and the Co-op in Stoke Poges

Hopefully, people who bought plants at the Plant Sale will use them to beautify their front gardens and enter for the Trophy for the Best Front Garden in the three villages. These gardens not only give satisfaction and pleasure to the owners but also bring joy and delight to all who pass by and make our villages much more attractive for everyone.

During lockdown many young people may have started to take an interest in gardening. Please encourage anyone you know to enter for the Edward Guinness Cup for 16-30 year-olds by them letting us know what they have been doing. The winner of the cup also receives a £50 token to purchase something that would further his/her/their knowledge of gardening. Our bursary is still available. As a result of the donations received from the Fulmer iris project, the Stoke Poges, Wexham & Fulmer Horticultural Society is offering a bursary each year of up to £200 for applicants aged between 16-25 residing in Buckinghamshire and Berkshire who wish to pursue a career in horticulture and gain the skills and knowledge requisite for entering and progressing within the profession. Priority will be given to students following a horticultural course lasting one or more years and grants might for example go towards fees, research, travel in connection with a course, or other costs associated with a course to

support individuals to gain accredited qualifications. Contact Jon Homan by email homanhome@gmail.com for further information and an application form.

Volunteers please

We would be delighted to have new volunteers to join the committee and/or help with the Show. Please contact Ruth Rooley on ruth@rooley.com or 01753 648040 if you are interested. We have introduced family membership for families of two adults with children up to age 18, or 25 if in full time education, £15.00. Other membership categories are individual £8, two adults in one household £12. Membership entitles free entry to the Show and other Society activities.

Co-op Community Fund

Donations from the Co-op Community Fund are making a significant contribution towards the cost of putting on this year's Annual Show. Please consider becoming a Co-op member. When you buy selected Co-op products and services 2p for every pound spent goes towards your Co-op membership account, they give the same amount to support your selected local community charity. Co-op members must confirm/reconfirm their choice of charity for every new period of funding. Please support the Stoke Poges Co-op and nominate the Horticultural Society, Charity number 283786 as your charity. All monies collected between now and October will go towards the Annual Show in 2022. Co-op members can choose a charity by signing into their membership account or calling the membership helpline on 0800 023 4708.

RUTH ROOLEY
<mailto:ruth@rooley.com>
01753 648040



NEWS FROM PINEWOOD STUDIOS

On 19 May, the Work and Pensions Secretary Thérèse Coffey MP and Minister for Employment Mims Davies MP, visited Pinewood Studios, to officially launch Pinewood Group's Kickstart Scheme, and meet one of the eight participants who have joined them on a six-month long placement. The Kickstart Scheme is a government initiative aimed at combatting long-term unemployment for young people, a section of society hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides funding to create six-month job placements for 16-24 year olds on Universal Credit, with over 20,000 in work since the scheme launched last year – and an average of 400 starting their Kickstart placement every day over the last month. Pinewood is one of a number of organisations taking part through a Kickstart gateway administered by the BFI.

Minister for Employment Mims Davies MP said: *“Pinewood Studios is putting our young people centre stage, helping them break into the UK’s world-renowned TV and film industry through the Kickstart Scheme. This is a prime example of how our Plan for Jobs is helping young people gain the valuable experience and skills needed to thrive in work.”*

Joy Morrissey MP for Beaconsfield commented: *“Pinewood Studios is a key employer within my constituency, and I am deeply encouraged to see that they are supporting young people, living locally to gain valuable work experience in an exciting industry.”*

Paul Golding, Chairman, Pinewood Group added: *“Helping young people to develop their careers is an important priority at Pinewood. The Kickstart Scheme is an excellent initiative that we are pleased to be supporting. I am committed to ensuring it is a success for all those who join our programme and I look forward to welcoming them to the studios”.*

Ben Roberts, Chief Executive of the BFI said: *“We’re delighted to be the Kickstart gateway for Pinewood Studios, as well as a number of other screen and creative organisations around the UK, enabling them to offer much sought-after employment and training opportunities to young people in their local area. The Kickstart Scheme is an exciting new addition in our aim to ensure the future success of the UK’s film industry by investing in skills and individuals regardless of background.”*

Pinewood Group have joined the nationwide Kickstart Scheme by employing eight young people. The successful candidates were referred by local Jobcentre Plus within Buckinghamshire; they will start at the studios in June. Pinewood Group have offered the largest number of placements to date out of the organisations from the creative industries brought together through the BFI gateway. The positions with Pinewood Group are in a number of departments – Operations, TV Studios and Post-Production. In its role as Kickstart gateway, the BFI supported Pinewood Studios’ application to the scheme, administers funds from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and is providing wrap-around support and training delivered by The Skills Builder Partnership to help the young people settle into the world of work and prepare for the next step beyond the Kickstart programme, including applying for jobs, CV writing, interview skills, leadership and teamwork.

On Friday 3 September, Pinewood Studios is hosting a screening for NHS Bucks in the Pinewood Gardens as a token of our appreciation for all the hard work and dedication the NHS has shown to us all this past year. We’re putting together a 2-3 min ‘Thank You’ film to

play to the NHS staff before the screening starts and really hope that Fulmer, as part of the local community, might consider being included. Below are some of the ways you can contribute towards the film:

- Send a short quote to include on screen.
- Send in a picture; a photograph, a hand drawn picture, a video clip which depicts how the NHS has helped you or your family over last year.
- Send in video clips with individual, groups, teams, co-workers, school classes, drama groups all saying the simple words 'Thank You'

If you wish to take part, all materials need to be sent by 30 July to comms.marketing@pinewoodgroup.com. Video clips should be sent in MP4 or .MOV format and all pictures as jpegs. Anyone sending us materials for inclusion in this thank you piece for the NHS must complete the attached release form and send back with the footage. Thank you in advance for what we hope will be a lovely tribute to the key workers across the county.

The cinema at Pinewood will be opening sometime in the Autumn – no exact date at present.

ANOTHER PYGMALION

During the late '80's and early '90's, Jennifer, my well-remembered wife, was manager of a large National Trust shop that occupied the entire premises of The Blewcoat School, once a charitable institution, situated at the junction of Petty France and Buckingham Gate, in London. Her area manager was a blonde, good-looking young man, well-dressed, charming and successful but lacking a certain elegance of elocution on occasion. He and Jennifer had long had a professional but very friendly relationship so it came about that he felt able to seek from her some guidance to round-off his enunciation. All went well until, like Eliza Dolittle before him, came the moment of shock.

Some time later Jennifer, given to verse, wrote the following account which you may enjoy

“LEAST SAID

Who succeeded when others failed?
Who's rising to the top?
Who created La crème-de-la-crème
National Trust Christmas Shop?
Who went on trading when trading was dead?
Who beat them all at their game?
Who was it took on this challenge and won it?
“Tell me,” said the Director “What is his name?”
A voice full of pleasure then answered,
In tones very clear and well-bred
“Thank you, kind sir for your praising,
It was I, I done it”, he said.

Jennifer (d 2018) & Ken Peters

ALL AT SEA

During my gap year before university, I signed on for a round voyage in a cargo ship to West Africa. The ship belonged to the famous Liverpool shipping company, Elder Dempster Lines. The experience was highly educational.

I sailed as one of four cadets, sharing the midshipmen's quarters. I went as a cadet purser employed to help with the ship's paperwork while the other three were training to become deck officers. My different role made me something of an outsider, all the more so as they were building their careers while for me the voyage was a one-off. The morning after we set sail the Purser gave me some office work which was to keep me busy till we reached Sierra Leone two weeks later. But the task was straightforward and I'd finished it soon after passing Holyhead. What should I do next? 'That's it, sonny, nothing else for now – best go and kip till Freetown'. Instead, I joined my fellow cadets working on deck. Their boss was the Mate (or Chief Officer, to give him his official title). He was a friendly man called Shanghai Wallace; it was said he'd perpetrated some misdemeanour in Shanghai and switched to Elder Dempster's to restart his career. He was delighted to recruit an extra pair of hands and I was quickly put to work.

Shipboard work followed the old military motto 'if it moves, grease it; if it doesn't, paint it'. My first job, by now somewhere between Cork and Milford Haven, was to check the wire-carrying blocks of the derricks, taking them apart, greasing the innards, and reassembling. Painting was mainly around the accommodation and funnel. One day the Mate decided it was time for the new boy initiation test. Handing me a brush and pot of silver paint, he pointed to the floodlights on the masts' crosstrees. The point of the floodlights was to deter boarders when we reached the Bonny River in Nigeria. They caught all the weather and needed repainting every voyage. On this occasion the Mate waited until the ship was rolling in heavy seas off Finisterre. 'Up you go, lad'. So up I went, about 40 ft. The lights were at the ends of the crosstrees, quite a stretch from the top of the mast. Vertiginous even on a calm day, holding on with one hand while trying to paint with the other without dropping the pot. The rolling compounded the challenge. I found I could flick paint straight into the sea on the port side, then very soon afterwards to starboard. The sailors' hymn came to mind 'Eternal Father, strong to save/Whose arm doth bind the restless wave...O hear us when we pray to thee/For those in peril on the sea'. At least I passed the test; my beer that evening was on the Mate's tab.

Another job was wielding a chipping hammer to remove scale from the main deck ready for repainting. A hands and knees job, under the tropical sun, no fun at all. We were delighted when the job was taken over by a stowaway found hiding in a locker soon after we left Freetown. Taking over the ship's wheel made for a welcome change of pace. The job was normally done by the sailors, but I was given a chance to earn my Ten-Hours-on-the-Wheel certificate. I nearly failed. After the first hour the Mate took me out to the wing of the bridge to show me the ship's wake stretching behind us. Instead of the required straight line it wove its way from side to side like a drunk leaving a bar room brawl. The trick was to hold a steady course on the gyro, minimising wheel movement, but I had been overcompensating. To rub my nose in it, the Mate calculated the cost of all the extra fuel I had used. Fortunately, the next nine hours went better.

After Freetown our main unloading ports were Lagos and Port Harcourt in Nigeria. Both were memorably busy and noisy, and very hot. They were jammed with lorries, known as mammy-wagons. Some had slogans along their sides, mostly in the local language, Yoruba, but one was in English: HONESTY IS DE BEST POLICY – TESTING, TESTING... At the time I smiled but the scale of Nigeria's later corruption made it a chilling harbinger of the future.

As well as Yoruba the locals spoke pidgin English. The word for food and eating was 'chop'. Another useful word was 'palaver' meaning trouble; 'ah, he make much palaver' was a frequent cry. I liked the way verbs of motion were prefixed by 'go'. So 'I move' became 'I go move', and 'I go' became 'I go go'. More bizarre was 'I come' turning into 'I go come'.

At Lagos we were to unload a consignment of 400 bales of high value cotton piece goods (CPG) from Manchester. Most cargo was counted onto the quay by a shoreside tally clerk but for CPG the company required an extra tally by the ship. The task was given to me. Down the ladders I went to the bottom of 5 Lower Hold, instructed to record each bale's unique number. The gang of dockers loaded the bales into rope netting slings ready for lifting by the winchmen manning the derricks. I got a fairly frosty reception, but they soon thawed and the glares became banter and laughter. They were particularly keen that I should get them some duty-free cigarettes and I can still remember the Yoruba they taught me for this: 'jowo dami fuma'. Meanwhile the enclosed space of the hold felt airless and the temperature was about 120F. All the time I was trying to note the number of each bale. Finally, with the last sling unloaded, I climbed the ladders back to the Purser's office. He took my list – and looked aghast. My tally added up to 365. 'We've lost 35 bales?! Not possible, 400 were loaded in Liverpool'. Was this to be the biggest CPG loss in the company's history? At that point the shoreside tally arrived. The total was 399. So only one missing – phew! But the Purser hadn't finished. Even one short was unacceptable, so he went through the tally to identify the missing number. He then found this very number on my list – there it was, one of my 365. Happiness! At least for the Purser. But to this day I remain embarrassed that the poor tally clerk was penalised for his 'serious' failure whereas all I had to do was buy the Purser a couple of beers.**

From Lagos we sailed on to Port Harcourt, some 40 miles up the Bonny River, part of the Niger delta. The port was full, so for several days we lay at anchor in the river. Mangrove swamps stretched away on both sides. On the Sunday we had a day off, so some of us decided to explore the creeks. We lowered a lifeboat and set off among the mangroves. Suddenly we were in a clearing, looking at lots of locals on the bank with huts beyond. The village head man beckoned us ashore and had enough English to offer hospitality: 'You like cup of tea?' Yes please, we said, baffled by the thought of a cuppa in such alien surroundings. He clicked his fingers and the next we knew a youth had climbed a palm tree and coconuts were raining down. The head man brandished his machete, removed enough of one end to reveal the milk inside, and handed them round: 'here, this is cup for tea'.

After Port Harcourt we returned to Lagos to load timber and cocoa and palm oil for the UK market. Then came the voyage north. We cadets used to join the junior officers in the bar before dinner, more watching than chatting. Often in a group setting someone becomes the butt of people's banter. On this voyage the target was a rather serious Fourth Engineer. He seemed to take everything in good heart – until suddenly he didn't. We were quietly passing the Canaries when he exploded. 'You lot, you've been taking the Michael out of me all voyage and there's something you need to know, (pause) there's (pause) no more Michael left'. The last word was almost a scream. As he stomped off, the rest of us became fearful. Ships can

become highly claustrophobic, and the older hands were well aware of times when a shipmate had turned suicidal and jumped overboard ('going over the wall'). The Fourth's fellow engineers went to the rescue, the teasing stopped, and for the rest of the voyage he had no need to buy his beer.

Back in England I realised I had grown up by very much more than the three months I had been away. I had lived life at the sharp end, felt the rigours of manual labour, had my first experience of people from such very varied backgrounds, experienced living in a closed shipboard community, learned something of the world of ships and seafarers, gained a worm's eye view of international trade – and learned much from making an ass of myself among strangers. Perhaps most memorably of all, I'd had my first experience of the tropics, the heat and humidity, the smells and noises, the fatigue and short fuses. And I'd encountered some of the fascinating people who live there.

Nicholas Barber

* another dialect was ships' language. The cadets' accommodation was not a room with a floor, ceiling and walls. As mariners we lived in a cabin with a deck, deckhead and bulkheads

** Many years later I discovered that during the early weeks of WW2 the future Labour Chancellor, Denis Healey, had been told to count the railway wagons going through Swindon and had been wrong by far more than my effort in Lagos. Moral: accurate counting is far harder than one might expect.

Thank you very much Nicholas for sharing such interesting memories – Editors



COVID 19 SCAM ALERT - Be aware that opportunists and criminals can take advantage of the elderly and vulnerable who are self-isolating. Anyone being offered 'kindness' from cold callers by way of running errands, collecting prescriptions and doing shopping should not accept services from strangers who may ask for cash up front, a credit card and its PIN, or gain trust simply to execute a more elaborate scam. E.g. to access savings. Most people offering to help elderly people in their neighbourhood are genuinely kind, honest and caring. The elderly self-isolating will be stuck for food, supplies and someone to talk to if they don't have friends, family or a nearby neighbour that they already know.

If everyone makes contact now with their nearest elderly neighbours WHO THEY ALREADY KNOW and gives them their phone number and offer of help for when they need it, it will reduce the chances of them accepting help from a stranger who may turn out to be an opportunist, confidence trickster and thief. Please share. Helpful comments are welcome.

Coronavirus-related scams include:

- people claiming to be able to arrange a COVID vaccine for a fee. The NHS is the only organisation which has access to the vaccine, and will never ask for money
- sales of fake products such as face masks, supplements, anti-virus kits and sanitisers, which may be harmful or simply never arrive
- bogus healthcare workers who try to gain access to your home by claiming to offer testing for COVID-19
- people pretending to be from charities offering to do shopping or carry out cleansing tasks
- emails asking for donations to the NHS.

Always check the credentials of people or companies who contact you. Take your time before deciding to part with money or information and if possible, seek advice.

Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators

Brian Weild – weild@btinternet.com

Kate Robinson – kathryn@westmeathcapital.com

ALFIE, THE FAT CAT

A visit from Hilary, a woman of great importance employed by the RSPCA to inspect possible locations and owners for the homing of their cats, was where it all started. She was the first hurdle to overcome. The process of adopting Alfie was a long and tedious procedure. Anyone who has gone down the route of adopting a real human being has to be a hero. It all began with the equivalent of an 'online dating' procedure used by the participant of 'Tinder' and the like to find your ideal partner (in this case, cat) by swiping to the right, or possibly the left, until an ideal match is located.

This was 12 years ago, so the process was illuminated on a large cumbersome computer the size of a microwave. Our only criteria were that the new member of the recently bereaved family (Monty was gone, buried and deeply mourned) had to be male, ginger and BIG. Lo and behold! The very first moggy to appear on the screen was 'Elvis' – accompanied by the description 'a big softy'! Big ginger Elvis fitted the bill perfectly, and even after perusing the entire 'cat category' on the website, there was no other contender. Elvis was temporarily residing in a very exclusive cat kennels near Fleet awaiting a suitable home, having been sent there by his original owner because she couldn't afford to keep feeding him. He ate a lot. After a desperate plea to Geraldine (the cat manager) there was an anxious journey to said establishment to meet and greet Elvis with a view to possible adoption. With a name like that, how could there be any doubt? Geraldine had been begged and bribed to reserve him, but that had been curtly rejected with the reply that there were certain procedures involved and that he might already be snapped up by someone who'd passed the criteria. This was mandatory until a home visit and lots of paperwork had been completed. It's a pity that 'online dating' isn't as thorough as the RSPCA.

On arrival, the brisk greeting from Geraldine was that he was "still here". A journey through the corridors of cat land began, both noisy and heart-breaking, as Tiddles, Spice, Tommy and Bert were all passed and rejected until Elvis was in sight. It was not surprising that he occupied the largest of their enclosures as he was absolutely HUGE. More like a tiger as he padded along the branch of a tree. He was housed on his own because, apparently, he had a habit of devouring all available food in sight before other occupants had a chance. Then came the long awaited 'Reserved' sign on his cage and the deed was done, dependant on the aforesaid procedure of inspection that would seal his fate. Hilary (from Wales) but currently from Wexham, came and gave the place and owner a thorough 'once over'. This was forensic, in the manner of the CID investigating a crime. No stone was left unturned, but she finally announced to great relief that he'd be a 'very lucky pussy cat'!

All went well and his arrival was eagerly anticipated. There was one thing wrong however, and that was his name! Although his iconic namesake and heartthrob of 'Blue Hawaii' was magnificent, somehow it just didn't suit a cat. Consequently 'Alfie' was born and has remained to this day. Alfie's brush with the perilous Fulmer Road came several years later when he decided to cross over and inspect the building work being done at Fugelmere Grange. After many hours calling his name and searching the ditches and drains throughout the village the conclusion was that he'd gone missing, probably with fatal results.

Thank goodness that part of the RSPCA package had included micro-chipping, and there followed a much-anticipated call from a local vet to say that he was in their care after being picked up by a motorist who'd witnessed him being flung into the air by a 'hit and run' maniac just in front of him. He was in pretty bad shape, and his rescuer had considered the possibility of keeping him until the vet presented the estimated bill for his extensive injuries. Weighing in at approximately 9kg the vet declared that although badly injured Alfie's size and weight had saved him. Indeed, witnesses had declared that he's virtually 'bounced' off the car!

Alfie is still with us 14 years later and bigger than ever and has never again ventured onto the road. He now spends most of his time lying on a bed or stretched across the corridor or over a hot pipe, stubbornly insisting that everyone recognises his importance and authority, forcing everybody to negotiate his presence.

Long Live Elvis!

SUSIE MATTHEWS



CHARIVARI

This was a 'Punch' line, if you'll forgive the awkward pun – awkward because the word as you will be quick to point out really means "A cacophonous mock serenade" but it is used to describe a collection of odds and ends. ("Yes, Willy, I know the word 'anthology' is more accurate") but that suggests items of substance – what follows isn't. It is a collection of characters and passages all patiently waiting to be used in a Fulmer summer concert or Christmas party play not yet written. ("Willy, I know they couldn't all be included in one play but that's not the point, that is why they are 'patiently waiting'").

MAIN CHARACTERS

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Wild Bill Hiccup | A cross-eyed gun-slinger |
| Wyatt Burp | Risky when his finger is on the trigger |
| Cardinal Sin | A red robe to a Bull, previously noted for being a loose Canon |
| St Francis of Assiezure | A man filled with passion to get to grips with nature |

SUPPORTING CAST

| | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Celia Leak | A plumber's daughter |
| Willy Dooit | Sometime stuntman |
| Anna Gram | Totally confused |
| Polly Math | Too clever alround |

EXCERPTS

"I say Charles, have you read the Book of Galoshians by Noah Sark? It's a DIY guide to flood defence".

"Ah, ha!" said the Count with relish." "Ooh, saucy with it," said the pretty maid.

Bertram: "I shall be intoxicated by your presents."

Elfrida: "Dear Betram, so you love me after all"

Betram: "Oh, er, I was rather thinking of the cases of Scotch that you sent me"

Harold: "Mother, meet William Codpiece, known to his friends as"

Mother: (hastily) "I'm sure 'William' is nicer, and who is this?"

Harold: "Oh, Malcolm Makepiece. The two of them together make a perfect combination

Diedre: "I don't think I've met your new friend?"

Henry: "No, but he's just come from Ma's"

Diedre: "I'm disappointed. I thought men from Mars had big heads, little legs and were all green"

Henry: "Well just look at Nigel, fits the bill but doesn't travel well"

Victoria: "Oh, Albert dear – I felt the earth move"

Albert: "Really? Well that must be old Chandlers Wobble"

(Look it up – it happens)

KEN PETERS

Photo by Allen Taylor on Unsplash



{ “THAT’S IT, THEY NEED
SEPARATE ROOMS”

NEED TO UPSIZE? WE’RE EXPERTS AT THAT }

Hamptons
THE HOME EXPERTS