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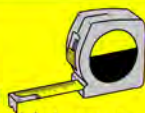
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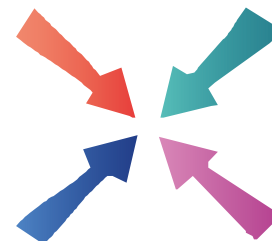
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Meeting Point

Volume 48, Number 4, January 2024

The community magazine for the villages of Olveston,
Tockington, Old Down, Lower Hazel, Awkley, Ingst, Aust, Elberton and Littleton upon Severn

From the Editor

Welcome to the first edition of Meeting Point for 2024. We wish all readers a 'Happy New Year' and, especially this year, we wish for peace and goodwill in the world.

January is the month when the Parish Players are busy preparing for their big production of Brigadoon, which we will be able to see next month. We have an update on their progress, and it is clear they are all working extremely hard.

Our wildlife article is about some short-eared owls which were spotted in Aust back in December. This article is interesting - not just about the birds themselves - but how the birdwatching community was able to gather so quickly to observe and photograph them.

We also have an interesting historical article about a local man, born in the late 1800s, whose ideas and innovations were way ahead of his time.

Marelin

Cover photo by Cheryl Miller ARPS

Meeting Point Founded in 1976 by the Anglican and Methodist churches in Olveston, near Bristol.

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Buy your tickets for 'Brigadoon'!

The curtain is about to rise on the Parish Players' 2024 production of Brigadoon at the Parish Hall in Tockington. This captivating musical tale of Scottish romance and suspense will fill your winter evenings with colour and light when it comes to the stage in February half-term, from Wednesday 14th to Saturday 17th February at 7.30pm.

Parish Players present 

Brigadoon

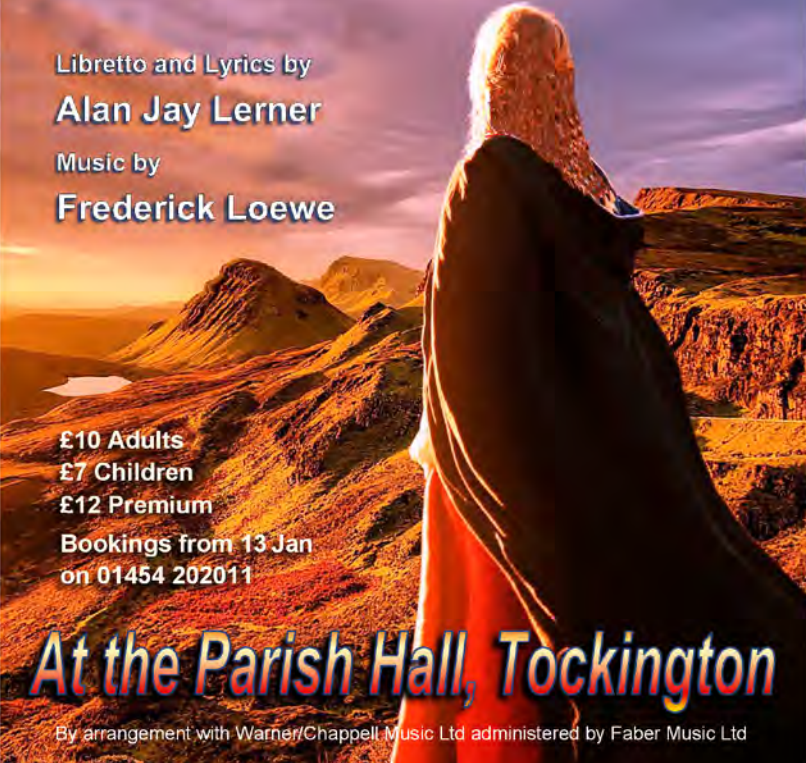
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Brigadoon was first performed on Broadway in 1947 and in London's West End in 1949. A 1954 film version starred Gene Kelly and Cyd Charisse. The stage musical was written by Alan Jay Lerner with music by Frederick Loewe – the duo responsible for 'My Fair Lady' and 'Paint Your Wagon'. Its most well-known song, 'Almost Like Being in Love', is renowned as a classic. The tale of Brigadoon is set in the Scottish Highlands, in a village literally 'lost in the mists of time'. In the 1700s, the minister of Brigadoon made a pact to protect his community, which has resulted in the village being invisible to outsiders, apart from on one day every 100 years.

It is against this backdrop that two Americans, Tommy Albright (played by Dan Phillips) and Jeff Douglas (Paul Harrod) stumble across Brigadoon on a spring day in the 1940s, with its inhabitants living their 18th-century lives. In the village, Fiona MacKeith (Emily Jones) and her younger sister Jean (Esther Beales) are with their father Andrew (Ray Hale), preparing for Jean's wedding to Charlie Cameron (Paul Dimery). We also meet Donald Ritchie (David Proud), accompanied by his son Harry (Cameron Phillips), who is in love with Jean, and so spurns the attention of Maggie Abernethy (Isobel Lambie). Meanwhile, flirtatious dairymaid Meg Brockie (Kate Coyle) wastes no time in introducing herself to Jeff, and Tommy finds that Fiona causes his thoughts to drift away from Jane, his fiancée back home (Cath Purchase). Unsurprisingly, the two Americans are completely mystified by the villagers' behaviour and attire, until Brigadoon's enchantment is explained to them by village schoolmaster Mr Murdoch (Phil Savage). But this is just the start of this musical's tumultuous story. The day's events are set to truly test Brigadoon's protective spell, as the inhabitants and visitors find their happiness and very existence hanging in the balance.

Exuberant Scottish dancing, including the famous sword dance, will be brought to you by our youthful team of dancers – Sophie Allsopp-Jones, William Elderton, Isobel Lambie, Summer Osborne and Cameron Phillips – skilfully choreographed by Esther Beales. The all-important chorus, including Kate Baldwin, Brian Brown, Cath Chappel, Helen Lever, Anne Leslie, Jane Mitchell and Richard Newley amongst others, will join the rest of the cast in providing the sublime musical performances that The Parish Players are renowned for, courtesy of Chloe Allsopp-Jones as Musical Director. We welcome Heather Collins to direct the show in conjunction with Linda Evans. Linda announced earlier in 2023 that she would be stepping down as our director after more than 20 glorious years with the Parish Players. Heather is a well-known local Director, who has crafted many productions, most recently with TMTG in Thornbury, and we look forward to working with her.

Set designer Andy Black and his construction team of Brian Brown, Rod Williams and Richard Newley have returned to create the engaging and clever scenery that we have grown to expect. We also welcome back Richard

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Churchill as lighting designer, Cath Chappel as wardrobe mistress and her husband Mike in charge of sound effects, as well as our crucial backstage team, including Cherry Proud as stage manager and Caroline Brewser leading publicity and make-up.

Everyone involved is looking forward to a joyful and memorable show week in February. Make sure you are there to enjoy it too!

Brigadoon takes place during half-term, on Wednesday 14th to Saturday 17th February, at the Parish Hall, Tockington BS32 4LQ. Curtain up at 7.30pm.

Tickets go on sale on Saturday 13th January between 9.30 and 11.00am in the Methodist Church Hall, 2 The Street, Olveston BS35 4DR. Prices: £10 for adults, £7 for children and £12 for premium seats.

After that time, tickets will be available on 01454 202011. But don't delay, as they usually sell quickly!

Follow the Parish Players on Facebook at www.facebook.com/OlvestonParishPlayers.

Some New Year Brain Teasers

1. In which sport do winners move backwards and losers move forwards?
2. Kevin's mother has three children. The first was called Alpha, the second Beta. What was the name of the third?
3. What can go up a chimney down, but can't go down a chimney up?
4. What has roads but no cars, rivers but no water and hills but no trees?
5. You are running in a race. You overtake the second person, what position are you in?
6. A boy was at a carnival and went to a booth where a man said to the boy 'If I write your exact weight on this piece of paper then you have to give me £10, but if I cannot, I will pay you £10.' The boy looked round and saw no scales so he agreed, thinking no matter what the man writes I'll just say I weigh more or less. In the end the boy ended up paying the man £10. How did the man win his bet?

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2023 Poppy Appeal

Stan Bradburn



On behalf of the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, I would like to thank everyone who contributed their efforts towards raising the fantastic sum of £7607.12 in our district of Olveston, Pilning and Severn Beach. In the present climate this is truly remarkable.

Special thanks must go to the house-to-house collectors who, every year, venture out in all weathers to do a great job, also to Rose Brown and Sue Harris, my trusted and valued assistants, and to Jim and Beryl Chamberlain for the energy they put into the Appeal in Severn Beach and Patchway.

This is my last year as Poppy Appeal Organiser, but fortunately everything will carry on as normal under the leadership of Sue and Rose - raising funds for those who serve and have served.

Public Meeting

Friday 5th January 7pm - 9pm in Olveston Parish Hall.

This public meeting is to discuss proposals for local housing developments. The meeting will be led by Olveston Parish Council, and it is hoped that representatives of the building developers involved will be attending. The meeting is open to all parishioners and will be an opportunity to learn more about future proposals in the area.

Thank You

Martin and Rachel Bisiker express their sincere thanks to all who joined them in commemorating Rodney Bisiker's life at St Mary's Church on November 23rd, 2023. The service, attended by many, served as a celebration of his life, and the positive feedback suggests that it was a fitting send-off, and certainly one that Rodney would have appreciated. £522 was donated on the day for the Motor Neurone Disease Association, a charity close to the family's hearts. Rodney has now found peace alongside his beloved Stella.

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Aust Parish Council

Council update

With no council meeting held in December, this is normally a fairly quiet time of year for the parish council. Comments have been made on several planning applications, including the proposed development of an addiction treatment centre at Whale Wharf, Littleton. At the January council meeting, councillors will be setting the budget for the next financial year. This is used to determine the 'precept', or share of council tax, which is collected on behalf of the PC by South Glos. Council. You can keep up to date with the parish council's activities via our minutes which are published on the website: bit.ly/austpc_docs.

Woodwell Meadows nature reserve

Many of you will have enjoyed a walk at our Woodwell Meadows site, off Field Lane, Littleton, which has recently been formally recognized as a Local Nature Reserve. This is a valuable grassland habitat but has been suffering in recent years from encroachment of scrub into the previously open meadow. We are hoping to arrange for a local resident volunteer group to carry out improvement works on the reserve, in conjunction with South Gloucestershire Council who manage the site on our behalf. Any resident who might be interested in joining such a volunteer session is asked to contact the clerk (details below) or speak to Cllrs Heather Bayston or Jeremy Warren. This is still in the planning stage, but we hope to have more details in the new year.

South Glos. Local Plan Consultation

South Glos. Council is developing a new local plan, which will determine development strategy for the area over the next two decades. Future plans for new housing, industrial areas, renewable energy generation, green belt designation and many other aspects of development will be included, so it will definitely impact all our lives over the coming years.

A new phase of consultation was launched on 6th December 2023 and will be open until 7th February 2024. Residents will be able to use online, interactive maps to see what is currently proposed in your area, and give your opinions. Paper copies of specific sections should be available for those who prefer. There will also be a number of virtual and in-person opportunities to meet the team behind the plan and ask questions, including a drop-in session at Turnberries community centre, Thornbury on 29th January 4:00-7:00pm.

Unfortunately at the time of writing the information about how to view the draft plan and take part in the consultation has not yet been published, but hopefully if you look at <https://beta.southglos.gov.uk/new-local-plan/> it should



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be easy to find. Otherwise, please contact me and I will be able to give more details.

Please do take the time to have a look – the local plan is going to have a big impact on the whole of South Gloucestershire and the planning staff need residents' help to make it the best it can be.

Next parish council meeting

Our next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 13th February at 7:30pm** in Elberton village hall. Agendas for council meetings are posted on the village noticeboards at least five days before the date of the meeting and are also available on the council documents web page (bit.ly/austpc_docs). Residents are very welcome to attend.

Aust Parish Council

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News from St Mary's

Debbie Harris



Organ Recital

Friday January 26th 7pm

Following the renovation of the organ at St Mary's, we are delighted to invite Will Walshe-Grey, an organ scholar from St Mary Redcliffe in Bristol, who will be giving an organ recital.

There will also be an opportunity to see photos of the renovation and speak with the team who worked on the project. This will be followed by a haggis supper. Tickets £10

Please contact Debbie: oboe-debbie@live.co.uk

Thank You

June Robbins' nephews, Jim and John Fowler, would like to let people know that the amazing amount of £1070 was collected at June's funeral. This will be split between two causes - Dementia UK and Ward 34b Southmead Hospital.

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What's Brewing?

Jenny Newley

The History of Brewing in Bristol from the 16th to the 18th Centuries

Olveston Parish Historical Society, Wednesday 10th January 7.30pm at
Olveston Methodist Church, The Street, Olveston.



Anistatia Miller has two passions: researching the histories of different drinks - and telling people what she has discovered!

Along with her husband, Jared Brown, she has written over thirty books on the history of drink, with special emphasis on cocktails and spirits. They are recognised as industry experts. With another couple, they co-founded the Museum of the American Cocktail in New Orleans and, from 2007 to 2009, they refurbished a private

wine and spirits museum in southern France. They've written thousands of articles for US and European publications and have appeared on TV in *The Hairy Bikers* and Tony Robinson's *History of Great Britain*.

Anistatia has recently been honing her historical research skills. After a 43-year break from study, she gained an MA in History from the Open University, followed by an MSc in English Local History from Oxford.

Her latest interest is beer and brewing. She is now teaching early modern history at the University of Bristol, while finishing a PhD thesis there on the development of the early modern British brewing trade, with particular focus on its development in Bristol.



We're delighted that she's coming to Olveston to tell us some of what she's discovered so far. And she's discovered an amazing amount. Even if you're not a beer drinker, you won't want to miss this wonderful talk, chock full of fascinating facts and wonderful illustrations. You won't believe there's so much to find out about beer and brewing!

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A Local Man Ahead of his Time

Nick Fear

Harry Grindell Matthews was born in Winterbourne on March 17th, 1880. His father Daniel was a local businessman who made a respectable living from fruit and apple farming. Before her marriage his mother, Jane Rymer Grindle, had lived in the Ship Inn in Alveston, owned by her parents. The family lived in The Grove a large house in Winterbourne although in 1883 moved to Gaunts Earthcott. Sadly, in the same year, Harry's father died prematurely, and Jane was left to care for seven children.

Harry attended a private school in Alveston and The Merchant Venturers' College in Bristol. From an early age he had an interest in flight. This resulted in him carefully constructing a pair of wings which he strapped to himself and jumped out of a top story window of his home. The experiment was not a success, and he was lucky not to have suffered serious injury. He turned to the more grounded interests of electricity and in particular its use for radio communications. In 1896 he secured an apprenticeship with a Bristol electrical engineering firm.

In 1901 Harry served in the Second Boer War with the Lord Baden Powell South African Constabulary. Even in the war he was thinking of innovations, such as using electrical devices to improve military communication. His idea of using voice communication over wires, rather than morse code signals, showed that he was a man well ahead of his time. Harry was wounded twice and suffered from enteric fever which rendered him unfit for service and he was invalided home. For health reasons he settled in Bexhill-on-Sea, which was also the home of Earl De La Warr, a decorated soldier who Harry had met in South Africa. The Earl was impressed with Harry's electrical mind and became his benefactor, allowing Harry to pursue his passion as his consulting engineer.

Harry frequently visited his mother in her home at Friezwood, Rudgeway, until she died in 1910. He boarded with the William's family at Churchill House in Olveston. Here he met a daughter of the household, the delightful Katy Beatrice Williams. She worked as a barmaid in The White Hart Public House, owned by her grandfather Edward Organ. The couple fell in love and married in June 1904 at the fashionable Temple Church in Bristol. They set up home in Churchill House.

Harry's inventive mind became tuned to wireless waves, although he invented other useful devices along the way. In 1909 a device for automatically righting an out-of-control aircraft came from his work. In 1910 he built and flew a wireless controlled airship at the New Passage Hotel, Pilning. A year later he

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set up an experiment to communicate between Beachley Pier and the New Passage Hotel in Pilning - a distance of three miles. His work led him to invent a device, which he called an 'aerophone', which allowed wireless ground communication with an aircraft in flight. His fame, spread by press reports, led to him giving demonstrations to the King, Prime Minister and military officials. A company was set up and, supported by eager investors, Harry was able to continue his experiments. Patents were applied for inventions to ensure he was credited with them and received any payments due for their use.

Harry rode a motorcycle and - ever the showman - sometimes parked this in Olveston on its back stand with the engine running. To the delight of onlookers, he used a device to remotely switch off the engine - which unfortunately had the same effect on other nearby motor vehicles. The military authorities took a keen interest in it.

In 1911 a demonstration of his aerophone went sadly amiss when he caught several government officials dismantling his device to examine it. He cancelled the demonstration and insisted they leave the field. His trust in the British Government had been sadly weakened. In 1912 he successfully made a radio broadcast from Black Rock in the River Severn to Dalston in Hackney, 110 miles away.



With the outbreak of the Great War Harry found himself in demand. An attempt to design an aerial torpedo for anti-zeppelin patrols was unsuccessful, altitude, electric and explosives did not seem to mix. In 1915, prompted by a government competition, Harry designed a radio-controlled torpedo for the navy. Called 'Dawn' this was a small torpedo shaped boat controlled by a beam of light over a range of five miles. The exact details of how this worked are still classified, but it involved using a chemical element called selenium. Harry was awarded a £25,000 prize (£2,123,275 today) from a grateful government. The Admiralty was enthusiastic about the invention

and became even more so when Harry proposed making a similar aerial craft for attacking an enemy in the air. A side product of the work was a device which could explode mines, or any explosive device, using wireless. Harry produced a radio-controlled torpedo with a range of eight miles. The best German torpedo at that time had a top range of eight hundred yards. In 1917

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Harry conceived an idea for detecting submarines underwater. Experiments were carried out at New Passage, where Harry now had a laboratory. To many at the time these devices were akin to science fiction, but Harry was making them science fact.

Harry's personal life suffered, and in 1920 he and Katy divorced. The grounds given by her were practical desertion for over two years and adultery. Three years later she married farmer Joseph Staley of Lower Woodhouse Farm in Tockington. She died in 1935 aged 55 and is buried in St Mary's Church, Olveston. Harry's life moved on and his inventions fascinated a world that was experiencing scientific innovations which many could never have imagined. Then came something which was to affect Harry more than any other of his inventions and be associated with him to this day. Harry had created something which used invisible forces to fantastic effect, something which could have the possibility of destroying whole cities. His 'Death Ray' was unveiled to the public.

Part two to follow.....



Olveston and Tockington WI

Wishing all Meeting Point readers, and our WI members, a peaceful and happy New Year.

January's WI meeting includes a talk about 'Almondsbury and the Princess' given by Tom Sanday, and we are all intrigued to find out more. In addition to our regular monthly walking, stitching and reading groups, we have a visit to the Gloucestershire Energy from Waste Facility organised in January. This trip is so well subscribed that more of us are going in February.



Olveston and Tockington WI meet at 7.30pm on the second Tuesday of the month at the Parish Hall. If you would like to join us, please contact Angela Green on 01454 615222 and scan the WI QR code to find out more about joining the UK's largest women's membership organisation.



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January's Film

Monday January 1st, St Mary's Church, Olveston

In one of the best lines in The Simpsons' history, Homer Simpson makes a toast: *"To alcohol, the cause of – and solution to – all life's problems."* This very funny 2020 film looks at a theory that alcohol in the blood makes problems seem smaller, and creativity increases. We know it well: after the first glass of wine, the conversation lifts and the possibilities open up.

Martin is a high-school teacher who feels old and tired. His students and their parents want him replaced to improve their results. If Churchill won World War II in a dense fog of whisky and champagne, what could the strong drops do for Martin and his students? In the beginning this seems to be working and results are rising. It becomes clearer and clearer that alcohol can generate great results in world history, but then.....

This film is highly rated by both IMDB & Rotten Tomatoes. Doors open at 7pm and the film starts at 7.30pm prompt. This is a community event, and everyone is welcome, and admission is free (do feel free to leave a donation). Tea/coffee and licensed bar.

NB We are not permitted to name the film as part of our licensing agreement.

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Tony Gardner

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Short-Eared Owls

Paul Godwin

At Old Passage (Aust Warth and Northwick Warth), between November and February, there is a chance that you will see Short Eared Owls. This is when Britain's resident breeding birds from the uplands of Scotland move south in winter and are joined by migrating birds from Scandinavia and Iceland. Their preferred winter habitats are rough grasslands and coastal marshes, where there is an ample food supply of voles and rodents. They are known as nomadic, meaning that they will only stay in a given area for as long as there is a significant food supply. So, they may quickly move from one area to another and may not return to the same area each year if food supplies are insufficient. This nomadic life cycle also means that there is a lot which is not understood about the Short-Eared Owl, including the population size - although there are believed to be around 1400 breeding pairs in the UK. Short Eared Owls made the BBC national news at beginning of December, when a large influx arrived from Scandinavia, probably the result of food shortages brought on by poor weather conditions.



When they do arrive, there is quite a stir amongst birdwatchers and in an age of social media the word spreads very quickly. I heard that some owls had been seen at Old Passage towards the beginning of November and when I went down one Saturday, I was stunned to see what must have been over 100 birdwatchers and photographers. Some people had travelled down from the Midlands and mid Wales, as well with many coming from other areas such as

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Somerset and the Forest of Dean. There were some comical scenes as the owls moved from one side of the road to the other, along with 100 people trying to observe them. I met some very committed and interesting people and learnt a lot about different bird watching sites in our wider area, as well as some fantastic photographers with some zoom lenses which I'm sure could have taken a photograph of a sparrow over the estuary in Newport. I went down on a regular basis for just over a week, where on one occasion I saw three owls and, on several other occasions, just a single bird. At the time of writing, I believe that there may still be occasional sightings and you can search on: avonbirding.blogspot.com or thebirdsofsouthgloucestershire.co.uk.

Some key characteristics of the Short-Eared Owl are its cold piercing yellow eyes, which are framed by dark feathers, a blunt dark head contrasting with a pale body, a white trailing edge to its wings and a barred tail. Its flight is very buoyant due to its large wings and low body weight. Its flight pattern is known



as 'quartering' which is a mix of flapping and gliding at low level as it patrols quite large areas up and down the estuary banks. When it is in the proximity of prey it hovers and then drops to gain its kill. It is also an owl which nests on the ground in a shallow vegetation covered scrape. It can be seen in daylight and especially the twilight hours around dawn and dusk.

It was a very beautiful bird to observe in flight and I feel quite lucky to have taken some photographs in what was at times some quite tricky weather and light conditions. There was no guarantee of seeing the birds and many of

the watchers did not. You really have to 'put the hours in', but I felt it was worth it and really hope that these wonderful birds of prey will remain this winter and return again next year.






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News from Tockington Manor School

We are proud to announce the welcoming of Tockington Manor School as part of the Clifton College Education Group. This is a significant milestone for the continued success of both highly respected and successful educational establishments. Whilst the individuality of the schools will continue to be celebrated, our coming together brings strength, stability and opportunity.

The journey to this announcement began in 2021 when Clifton and Tockington recognised the tremendous opportunities for both schools mutually to benefit from the expertise, facilities and support brought by coming together. Many discussions have taken place since those early days, and we are very grateful for all the hard work that has gone on behind the scenes to get us to this exciting announcement.

Thornbury Volunteer Centre

With Christmas a distant memory and the long dark nights stretching out in front of you, why not consider volunteering in your local community? There are many reasons why people volunteer. For some, volunteering can be a route to employment, or a chance to try something new which may lead to a career change. For others, volunteering is a chance to meet new people, make new friends and make a difference to the lives of others. Thornbury Volunteer Centre can provide you with information and support on volunteering opportunities in the local area which best suit your needs, skills and time available, whilst making sure that you find volunteering an enjoyable and worthwhile experience.

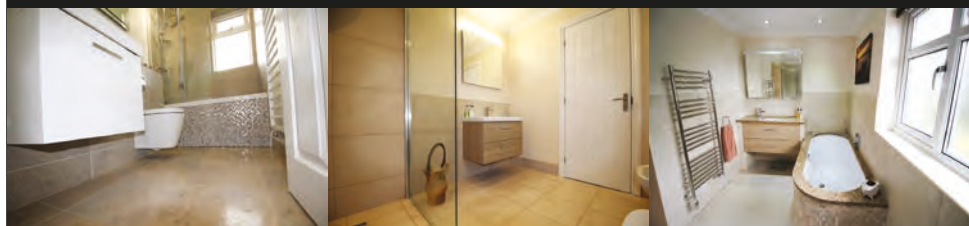
We are contacted regularly by groups and organisations that are seeking to recruit volunteers from all walks of life, levels of expertise (from none to highly skilled) and time available. Age, gender or disability is not a barrier to volunteering. Anyone who is able to spare some time, from an hour a week to once a month or just on a one-off basis, would be warmly welcomed by someone in the community. Volunteering is a valuable experience that benefits all parties.

To find out more please contact Thornbury Volunteer Centre on 01454 413392; email; mail@volunteer-thornbury.co.uk website; www.volunteer-thornbury.co.uk; twitter; @thornburyvc or Facebook; [thornburyvolunteers](https://www.facebook.com/thornburyvolunteers).

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Crafts at Tockington Community Café

Our first 'chat and craft' session took place at December's First Friday Community Café in Tockington Chapel. We welcomed Jenny and Emma from The Ark Bus (www.thearkbus.org.uk), who led a session for adults to have a go at felting, free of charge. Participants really enjoyed making Christmas decorations. Jenny and Emma loved the Chapel as a venue for crafting activities and will be back at a future event – watch out for updates.

We welcome people or groups to run craft or other activities at the Community Café, so please get in touch if you have any ideas, via TOCS.friends@gmail.com.

The next First Friday Community Cafés at Tockington Chapel will be on Friday 5th January, Friday 2nd February and Friday 1st March at 10.00-12.00. Children and dogs are welcome. Tea, coffee, squash and delicious cakes are always available, cash payments only please. We thank everyone who has donated a cake so far – they are always appreciated.

The café is a community event. You would be welcomed as an occasional helper, perhaps with a group of your friends. Please get in touch at TOCS.friends@gmail.com. We donate the proceeds to the Methodist Church in exchange for free use of their building, which is a valuable hub for the Tockington community and currently needs the community's support.



Sharing the Caring

Winter Warmer Lunch

Methodist Church Hall, Thornbury
Monday 22nd January at 1.00p.m

St Peters Hospice Severnside Support Group would be delighted to welcome you to our Winter Warmer lunch, which will be cottage pie and crumble followed by tea/coffee. A vegetarian option will be available.

Tickets are priced at £10.00 per person and are available from the St Peters Hospice Shop, High Street, in Thornbury, from 5th January 2024, Or you can pay on the door. Please support St Peter's, your local Hospice.



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Ukrainian Storytime

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Please tell your Ukrainian family, friends, and colleagues, about Zoya, a Ukrainian teacher, who will be in the library every Monday at 4pm to share stories and reading from the Ukraine.

Lego Club

Every Saturday 9.30am (free)

Listen to a story or some poems, then create your own Lego masterpieces and display them in the library for your family and friends to see.

Rhymetime

Every Monday and Friday 9.30am-10am (free)

Have You Read...? A book group for everyone

Friday 5th January 2pm-3pm

Come and enjoy a reading group with a difference! No set novel to read. Just drop in for an hour for refreshments and a chat.

Computer Support One-to-One

Every Thursday 9.30am, 10.30am, 11.30am

Book a session with our computer volunteer for IT and digital support.

Have Your Say

Consultation on how to implement spending reductions on Library Services in South Gloucestershire. The proposals presented in the consultation will have an impact on the way libraries in South Gloucestershire operate.

Please spare 5 minutes to pop into your local library to and fill in a consultation form and tell us what your local library means to you and how you prefer to use the library services, we would really appreciate hearing your opinions. Please return your completed response to the library or post to the address at the end of the form.

Alternatively you can read all the details and submit your response online at www.southglos.gov.uk/librarysavings-consultation

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The Severn Whalers



The Severn Whalers are rolling up at The Ship, Bristol Road, Alveston on Friday 19th January at 7.30pm. A gathering of shipmates has been convened by the Armstrong Arts Group to keep the music going and the smiles on our faces!

The Severn Whalers is a North Bristol based shanty and sea song group, which performs predominantly in the area along the banks of the River Severn.

2023 was a fantastic year featuring highlights such as singing on the main stage at Falmouth International Shanty Festival, a first trip to the amazing Festival du Chant de Marin in Painpol France and recording a CD.

Tickets are £10 from AAGThornbury@gmail.com

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Friends of St.Mary's

The prize winners in the December draw, held on 7th December 2023 were:

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£50	343	Mr B Arkell, Olveston
£25	223	Mr R Panes, Olveston
£25	535	Mrs J Pillinger, Yate
£20	205	Mrs G Olewicz, Ceredigion
£20	603	Dr E Saunders, Olveston
£20	153	Mr A Heming, Alveston
£20	398	Mr C Fairhead, Oldbury on Severn
£20	664	Mrs L West, Olveston

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A Maths Puzzle for the New Year

Jan Winter

Welcome to 2024! This is an opportunity to try an old favourite puzzle which uses the digits of the year to create sums.

Can you use 2, 0, 2 and 4 (all of them, in any order!) and any of the four operations +, -, × and ÷ to make 10 sums with the answers 1 to 10?

You can also use powers – for example, $2^0 = 1$ or $2^4 = 16$.

You are not allowed to put two numbers together, eg. 24, so you can't make $24 - 20 = 4$.

Here's one to start you off: $(2 + 2) \div 4 + 0 = 1$

You may like to go further and see how many of the numbers from 1 to 100 you can make. You'd need to allow more operations – for example factorials ($4! = 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 24$) or decimals ($.2 = 1/5$). You can decide on your own rules! But you must use all four digits and no others in each answer.

Update on the Armstrong Hall

Thornbury Town Council, as trustees of the Armstrong Hall and Cossham Hall, held a public meeting on 7th December to explain what is happening about the venues, which were closed in 2020, and outline their plans for recreating a vibrant performance venue for Thornbury. There are three options:

- To demolish the Armstrong Hall and build a new one on the same site incorporating the Cossham Hall and the Museum within an enhanced facility. This requires the raising of several million pounds of funding.
- To re-open the existing hall after carrying out essential repairs to the fabric and services. The plan is to reopen the Cossham Hall in the near future while remedial work on the Armstrong Hall is completed in a second phase.
- To extend Turnberries, building a theatre on adjacent land. Money raised from selling the Armstrong Hall site, including the Cossham Hall and the Museum for redevelopment would help pay for the Turnberries development, reducing the amount of fund raising required. A new home will need to be found for the Museum.

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For each option a working group has been set up to develop a timescale and a cost estimate and report to the Trustees in March. Then the Trustees will map out a way forward. Contact: j.murray@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk

Coming up in Thornbury in February

.....

Severn Valley Quilters

Severn Valley Quilters are showing an Exhibition of members' work on Saturday 17th February, 9.30am – 4pm at Thornbury Methodist Church Hall, Castle Court, Thornbury, Bristol.

Mark Pickles from the Sewing Studio in Bath will have a stall selling his fabrics and sewing items. We will also have a sales table of various items and books; Tombola; Refreshments will be available. Cash only, please.

Proceeds will be donated to Cancer Research UK
Parking available nearby. Disabled Access
Admission £3, cash only please (accompanied children free)
Contact for queries: severnvalleyquilters@gmail.com



Where is Mrs Christie?



A one person play, written by Chris Jaegar, revealing the amazing story of Agatha Christie's own mysterious disappearance. All aspects of Mrs. Christie's life as author, mother, daughter, wife and literary celebrity are explored with waspish wit. In true thriller style, all will be revealed.

The performance takes place on Saturday 24th February 2024 at 7.30pm in Thornbury Methodist Church Hall, High Street. Tickets are £15 from AAGThornbury@gmail.com.

More information about both events will appear in February's Meeting Point.



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Yours Faithfully

Rev'd Dr Simon Edwards

Olveston and Tockington Methodist Church

I'm sure that at some point you have played with playdough. You can buy all sorts of accessories to make playing with the playdough even more enjoyable; in one cupboard in our house there is a playdough barber, a playdough dentist and even a playdough sweet factory! Of course, the same thing happens to the playdough at the end. Once you are finished with it, you squeeze it all together again and put it in the tub. Whatever it was that you made, whether it was good or bad, is gone, and the playdough is ready for the next time it is brought out of the cupboard.

As I created and drilled playdough teeth recently with my children and then put it all back into the tub, I thought that perhaps we need to remember that we can forget our past failures and mistakes, we can forgive those who have annoyed or hurt us. We can, to think of the playdough, squeeze it back together and get ready to create again. We can let go of all the annoyance, the hurt and start again fresh. It reminds me of the Lord's Prayer, "*forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.*"

To really have a new start we need to forgive and be forgiven, to know that God forgives our failings, to know that others forgive us and to be people who forgive. It's all a bit like playdough, because when you have squeezed and squashed it back together, you can't see what all the bits were. That's what true forgiveness is – not being able to work out what the issue was once forgiveness has come. Not remembering it and bringing it up in an argument. Simply not remembering it anymore, and that's what God does with all our mistakes.

So, as we are near to the beginning of a new year, let us each have a fresh start, knowing that we are forgiven, but also knowing that we can forgive. But also remember that a fresh start from God, his forgiveness, is available each and every day.





People Can't Work Without Tools!

For many years, **Thornbury Rotary Club**, has been involved in the shipment of tools to areas of the world that desperately need them for self-sufficiency. The UK based charity, 'Tools with A Mission' works tirelessly, gathering donated tools, refurbishing them, sorting them, packing them into trade tool kits and despatching them to African countries where there is extreme poverty. Thornbury Rotary acts as a hub for collections from around the community. The trade kits and training are targeted at agricultural workers, builders, carpenters, electricians, motor mechanics, workshops, etc. The principal countries are:

Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi

So, if you have tools you no longer need (including working computers, sewing machines, and knitting machines) please contact Rotarian

Robin Cole-Morgan on 01454 414281

He will arrange to pick up the tools and take them away at a time that suits everyone.

Great opportunity to declutter!

Big thank you!



For more information about TWAM, please visit <https://www.twam.uk>

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Church News

ST MARY the VIRGIN, OLVESTON

Jan 7	10am 6pm	Holy Communion Evensong	Rev David Moss Rev David Moss
Jan 14	10am 6pm	Morning Prayer Holy Communion	Rev Ann Lloyd Rev David Bone
Jan 21	10am 6pm	Morning Prayer Holy Communion	Janet McBride Rev Ann Lloyd
Jan 28	10am 6pm	Holy Communion Evening Prayer	Rev Ann Lloyd Janet McBride

Every Saturday in Term Time, 'REFRESH', 4.30-5.30 - Fun, relaxed church for families, all welcome.

Every Wednesday, Holy Communion, 10am. NB. Clergy may change.

Contact: Rev David Moss, 01454 415190; email: mossds@gmail.com

CHAPELRY OF ST JOHN, AUST

Jan 14	10am	Morning Prayer	Trevor Cook
Jan 28	10am	Holy Communion	Trevor Cook

Contact: Trevor Cook, 01454 618442

Church Wardens: Jenn Dickens 632312 and Jon Burnett 633835

ST MARY DE MALMESBURY, LITTLETON-ON-SEVERN

Jan 14	9am	Morning Prayer	Rev Ann Lloyd
Jan 28	9am	Holy Communion	Tracey Black

Contacts: Tracey Black 417660 and Tim Pyper 416422 /07802 419451

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, ELBERTON

Jan 14	9am	Morning Prayer	Judith Heybyrne
Jan 28	9am	Holy Communion	Judith Heybyrne

Contacts: Judith Heybyrne 616725

Church Wardens: Catharine Gunnery 413225 and Cheryl Meredith 411065

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS), Thornbury

Contact: Chris Willmore, chriswillmore@blueyonder.co.uk

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OLVESTON AND TOCKINGTON METHODIST CHURCH

Jan 7	10am	Tock Ch	Morning Worship led by Christine Jones
Jan 14	10am	Olv Ch	Morning Worship led by Rosalie Doyle
Jan 21	10am	Tock Ch	Covenant Service led by Rev Dr Simon Edwards
Jan 28	10am	Olv Ch	Morning Worship led by Ken Thomas

Contact: Rev Dr Simon Edwards 418176,
simon.edwards@methodist.org.uk

THE VINE House of Prayer, Pilning Street, Awkley BS35 4HL
Meeting at 11am every Sunday and on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month at 2.30pm.

Contact: 07512 917229, email: thevine_awkley@hotmail.com

THE OASIS CHURCH, OLD DOWN
Services at 6.30pm every Sunday. All are welcome.
Contact: Neil Mobbs, cnmobbs@hotmail.com

AUST EVANGELICAL and LITTLETON EVANGELICAL CHURCHES
Contact: esther@thebamfields.co.uk

RC CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING, Thornbury -
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Diary Dates for January

Information believed to be correct at going to press.

1 Mon	NEW YEAR'S DAY Monday Movies	7.30	S+M
2 Tues	Over 60's Coffee Morning every Tuesday Citizens Advice every Tuesday 10-12 Macular and Low Vision Group Thornbury Art Club, studio painting, every Tuesday RBL Women's Section Severn Vale Flower Club	10am 10am 10.30 1.30 7.30 7.30	DGCL TTH TMH SMCH DGCL SMCH
3 Wed	Table Tennis every Wednesday Thornbury Art Club, studio painting, every Wednesday OPHS: History of Brewing in Bristol	7pm 7pm 7.30	OPH AMCH OMC
4 Thurs	Thornbury Farmers' Market Coffee Shop 'Good Afternoon Choir', every week Thornbury Art Club, studio painting, every Thursday	9am 9-12 1-3 1.30	S+M URC SMCH
5 Fri	First Friday Community Café. Haven Memory Café Public Meeting: local housing development proposals	10-12 10.15 7pm	TMC URC OPH
6 Sat	Park Run, Mundy Playing Field every Saturday	9am	
8 Mon	Men's Walk and Chat Group, meet Tockington Green Severn Vale Flower Club, demo	9.30 2pm	SMCH
9 Tues	Thornbury Memory Café WI	10.15 7.30	TMH OPH
10 Wed	Pantomime until Saturday	7.30	CTK
11 Thurs	Coffee Shop	9-12	S+M
12 Fri	Haven Memory Café	10.15	URC
13 Sat	Coffee Morning at Olveston Methodist Hall, 2 nd & 4 th Saturdays 'BRIGADOON' tickets go on sale	10-12 9.30	OMH OMH

16 Tues	Thornbury Memory Café	10.15	TMH
18 Thur	Thornbury Farmers' Market Coffee Shop	9am 9-12	S+M
20 Sat	Coffee Morning	10.30	OMH
22 Mon	Men's Walk and Chat Group, meet Tockington Green	9.30	
23 Tues	Thornbury Art: Club Night & demo Olveston Parish Council meeting	7.30 7.30	SMCH QAMP
24 Wed	Alveston History Soc: Coal Mining in the Bristol Area	7.30	AMC
25 Thur	Coffee Shop	9-12	S+M
27 Sat	Coffee Morning	10-12	OMH

KEY:

AMC - Alveston Methodist Church, AMH - Alveston Methodist Hall, CS - Castle School, CTK - Christ the King, DGCL - Daldry Gardens Community Lounge, EVH - Elberton Village Hall, OC - Oasis Church, Old Down, OMC - Olveston Methodist Church, OMH - Olveston Methodist Hall, OPH - Olveston Parish Hall, QAMP - Queen Alexandra Memorial Pavilion, Old Down, S+M - St Mary's Church, StMT - Thornbury St Mary's Ch, SMCH - St Mary's Church Hall Thornbury, TCC - Turnberries, TMC - Tockington Methodist Church, TMH - Thornbury Methodist Church Hall, TTH - Thornbury Town Hall, URC - United Reform Church

Contact details for any clubs or organisations in the Meeting Point area can be found in the Meeting Point Directory on the community website: www.olvostonandaust.com. If you would like to update your organisation's details, please email: meetingpointsecretary@olvostonandaust.com

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