



FEBRUARY 2024

The Valley & Valence Parish Magazine for
Winterborne St. Martin • Winterbourne Steepleton • Winterbourne Abbas • Compton Valence



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The Valley & Valence Parish Magazine for

Winterborne St. Martin
Winterbourne Steepleton
Winterbourne Abbas
Compton Valence



NEWS & ARTICLES FOR THE V&V PARISH MAGAZINE

It would be much appreciated if copy is supplied electronically as a text doc. (Microsoft Word etc.) with any accompanying images as JPEG files to the address BELOW.

ALL COPY MUST REACH ME BY 5pm on 15th (LATEST) OF THE PRECEDING MONTH
in order to be included in that issue.

ADVERTISING IN THE V&V PARISH MAGAZINE • Rates and Contact details

Current rates & specifications enquiries, and advertisement copy for each month's issue to:

Graham Herbert, 1 Cowleaze, Martinstown, DT2 9TD

Tel: **01305 889786** or email: **info@valleyandvalence.co.uk**





THOUGHTS
FROM THE
DESK (well,
sofa actually)
OF...
**A Church
Warden**

So, that was Christmas. The decorations are all packed up, (except in church where Christmas decorations can stay in place to the end of January!), Christmas jumpers put away for another year and turkey leftovers just an indigestible memory. However, besides lovely new presents and a few more pounds in body weight what else remains from Christmas? What can we take forward in to 2024?

The December edition of the Valley and Valance was full of advertisements for all sorts of Christmas events and each one of them however different involved a group of people working together to make them happen and be a success. This applies not only to the social and charity events that went on at Christmas but also to each of the church services throughout the year – it takes a community of people in many roles to keep a church running. In Winterbourne Abbas we are blessed with a wonderful community of people who support not only our church and its activities such as Messy Church but events that are entirely for the benefit of the community such as the Community Larder.

One thing many families from the Valley will take from this Christmas is photographs and memories from the Christmas party held in the church on the 10th December. Over 50 children enjoyed a visit to Santa in a beautiful snug grotto (aka the vestry!), received a gift and enjoyed lots of festive activities while adult members of the family enjoyed mulled wine and all sorts of yummy delicacies whilst socialising with neighbours and friends. The church was transformed into a winter wonderland with fantastic handmade decorations. As can be imagined the organisation of this event involved a huge amount of hard work but it involved people working together- not only to make this event happen but the best bit: it was totally funded by another community event earlier in the year – the pop up Curry Night.

So therefore I think what we can take forward into 2024 is the importance of community - it is a precious gift that we need to respect and nurture. It enables us to care for each other, establish friendships, and achieve amazing things. For those of us who are Christians it is something for which we must pray and work for because it is through the many blessings that community bestows that we can all experience the love of God.

A Happy and Blessed New Year to Us All.

Joy Parsons

Churchwarden, St Marys Church, Winterbourne Abbas



The Parishes of the Winterbournes & Compton Valence

Team Rector – Rev'd Keith Magee (07766 645135)

The Winterbournes and Compton Valence Ministry Team

Team Vicar – Vacancy (please contact one of the Church Wardens for all parish matters)

Associate Priest – Rev'd Jo Lacy-Smith (01305 889476)

Licensed Lay Minister – Allen Knott (01305 267217)

Permission to Officiate – Peter Wilkinson (01305 889077)

Organists

Nigel Power – Martinstown (01305 889910)

Peter Wilkinson – Winterbourne Steepleton (01305 889077)

Laurie Reading – for music at Winterbourne Abbas (01305 889693)

For Compton Valence please contact the Church Wardens

The Parish of the Winterbournes

There is a single Parochial Church Council for Martinstown, Steepleton and Abbas but each parish church retains its own local church committee.

Churchwardens – **Dick Corbett-Winder** (889410), **Ellie Sturrock** (07980 089470),
David & Joy Parsons (889611)

PCC Hon. Secretary – **John Crawford** (01305 889377)

PCC Hon. Treasurer – **Tom Webb** (01305 889097)

The Parish of Saint Thomas of Canterbury, Compton Valence

Churchwarden & Treasurer – **Jeremy Russell** (01308 482227)

Churchwarden & Secretary – **Peter Steel** (01308 482782)

Dorchester and The Winterbournes Team Website: www.dorchesteranglican.info

Any of the above can be approached in the first instance for Baptism, Marriage, Home Communion or just a visit and they would welcome being told when anybody has been bereaved or is ill. They have answerphones for you to leave a message.

If you want us to remember anything or anyone in the public prayer of the Church, we would be glad to do this as long as permission of the person involved is assured.



CRISIS & The Martinstown Advent window Trail

First, a huge thank you to everyone who created windows, delivered packs and who gave up their time to enlist participants. Secondly, another huge thank you to everyone who donated to the cause. Both are very much appreciated by myself and the CRISIS AT CHRISTMAS appeal. I would also like to thank the organisers of Carols in the Pub and the Brewers Arms for donating the charity collection to CRISIS, too.

We managed to raise £360 in total, enough to help 12 homeless people not only to a hearty, companionable Christmas dinner but with a bed for the night, health care and advice and support that may enable some to end their homelessness forever. Most of the funds raised were sent before Christmas with a smaller addition sent just after Christmas as our collection pot was available in our local shop, The Merchant of St Martin's until the 29th December.

I hope the creators of the windows enjoyed their crafting and that those who walked the trail were delighted with the results. It is such a wonderful community effort.

With love and much appreciation... **Sally Webb**

Window 5 - a snowman made by Abigail, aged 8.





CHURCH SERVICES during...

FEBRUARY 2024

SUNDAY 4TH • 2ND BEFORE LENT

10.00	Holy Communion – Winterbourne Abbas
11.00	Holy Communion – Martinstown

SUNDAY 11TH • NEXT BEFORE LENT

8.00	Holy Communion (BCP) – Martinstown
9.30	Holy Communion – Compton Valence
11.00	Holy Communion – Winterbourne Steepleton

WEDNESDAY 14TH • ASH WEDNESDAY

6.00	Ash Wednesday service – Martinstown
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SUNDAY 18TH • 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

10.00	Worship Together – Winterbourne Abbas
11.00	Children's service – Martinstown
5.00	Church@Five – Martinstown

SUNDAY 25TH • 2ND SUNDAY OF LENT

11.00	Worship Together – Martinstown
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Join us at Messy Church
 St. Mary's Church
 Winterbourne Abbas

Second Tuesday
 of the month.
 9th January
 3- 5pm



messy activities
 games
 songs stories
 and supper

Free

Made with PosterMyWall.com

Meditation @ Steepleton
 Church

*Beginners welcome
 Practiced meditators
 welcome
 The curious welcome*



7pm till 8.30 pm
 weekly on Wednesdays
 889476 or 07841776759
 untill Easter please ring
 JoLacy-Smith to check the venue

Made with PosterMyWall.com



Find us on Facebook

Did you know that the 3 churches in the Winterbournes Parish are now on Facebook?
 You can 'like' and 'follow' for news and photos from St Michael's, St Mary's and St Martin's.





Together Forever

He sat alone in his dim lit room
Watching fire born flickering flames
That danced on images of his one true love
Who'd shared in all their Christmas games.

The one he'd known for fifty years
The one he would adore
The one confined to photographs
Her death just weeks before.

The warmth and comfort of his home
Betrayed his nagging pain
The wrenching waves of loneliness
Surged again and again and again.

He sat reliving times long past
And those of closer year
Instinctively his arm reached out
As he felt her presence near

He heard a crack from a spitting log
That broke his reminiscent dream
And he would swear he heard the voice
Of his one true love, Christine.

I feel your pain, your loneliness
Yet our love remains my dear
Although no longer in your sight
My spirit is still near.

So share with me my sweetheart
As you journey on in life
I will be there, and sharing
In your worries, joys and strife.

Then the old man smiled as he calmly
thought
I've heard her voice so it will be
Not loneliness nor solitude
For now I know she's still with me.

The jangle of the telephone
Brought reality to bear
'Are you coming here for Christmas
Grandad?'
'Oh yes, We'll be there.

© Allen Knott 2023

craft with an angel Dorset Buttons



STEEPLETON CHURCH
Learn to make Dorset Buttons
On 10th Febuary from 10 am till
12.30 pm.
Refreshments
£10 to book a place please
contact wendymfrost@gmail.com

Made with PosterMyWall.com

LENT LUNCHES

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, this year is 14 February. On Fridays 23 February, 8 and 22 March Lent lunches, consisting of homemade soup and bread followed by a cup of tea or coffee, will be held in the Village Hall at 12.30pm. The cost will again be £5.00 and the proceeds, after the deduction of expenses, will be donated to the Weymouth Food Bank.

This is an opportunity for members of our community to come together jointly to offer support to those less fortunate than ourselves. While we share a frugal lunch on one day we can provide the means for families who may otherwise go hungry to have access to food that may keep them away from starvation.

Everyone is welcome and there is no need to book. However, if you intend to join us as a large party we would welcome being informed.

Contact Cathie (889244) or Nigel (889910)





VALLEY CLUB

Valley Club News



Martinstown's very own Man from U.N.C.L.E. kept our audience gripped throughout his talk on the 15th January about Counter - Terrorism.

23 years of Alan Jenkins's career with the Police was spent here in Dorset and a substantial part of that was focused on keeping our society safe from the very real and very alarming threat of terrorism.

Alan shared with us the extent of that threat and how terrorists and potential terrorists are pursued, with dozens of attacks nationally - and some locally - having been foiled in recent years. We heard about the work done to help protect life in the event of attacks and how we are now better prepared to minimise their impact. Crucially, huge investment is also put into preventing potential terrorists being converted to a violent cause.

This was a thoughtful, highly professional

analysis that threw light on the historical, cultural and social drivers of terrorism, which was somehow both profoundly thought-provoking and at the same time entertaining. Importantly, we came away alerted to how to spot where dangers may lie and how we should act on them.

Without exaggeration, it was a tremendous talk, fluidly and engagingly delivered, made all the more real to us by Alan sharing his personal and very direct experience and we look forward to having him back before long to share other insights from his intriguing career.

Next up on the 19th February, we're looking forward to the Gold Club talk on "Gardening Folklore". Never say the Valley Club's interests aren't varied!

Chris Evans • Secretary





M A R T I N S T O W N

Garden and Craft Show

**Martinstown Village Hall
Sunday 18th August 2024**

When you are searching through your seed catalogues to decide what to grow, this is just to let you know that we will be back this year. After a much longer break than we expected, considering the years of COVID and then the refitting of the Village Hall kitchen, this Show is being planned along much the same lines as in the old days, with 'proper' classes, trophies, teas and all the usual paraphernalia.

There will be the usual competition for the greatest weight of potatoes grown in a container, so make sure you get your special seed potato in due course.

We will be holding and Coffee Morning in the Village Hall on Saturday 13th April to help to cover expenses and keep the entry fees low, so please make a date in your diary.

Look out for the Schedule to be included in the May edition of V&V and in the meantime, select those seeds that will give you the fruit/flowers and vegetables that will be winners.



Happy Gardening!



COMPTON VALENCE SNOW DROPS VILLAGE HALL LUNCHES and TEAS

Saturday 3rd Feb - Sunday 11th February 2024

COME and WALK/DRIVE through our beautiful village and see the stunning white drifts of snowdrops. (The village hall is below the church)

OPEN (WEATHER PERMITTING): 11.00am -3.30 pm Daily

To Book Please ring or email so we can cater accordingly:

Tessa Russell Tel: 01308 482227 or email: tessa@cvfarms.co.uk

Or Pippa James 01305 889338 m 07880882985 email:enquiries@dovehousedorset.co.uk

Pre booked guests will take priority as the hall is small. In bad/icy weather we may not be open. Please be considerate of our village/verges etc when parking or ring us to discuss your needs so we can advise you where to go. We very much look forward to seeing you.

CASH PLEASE

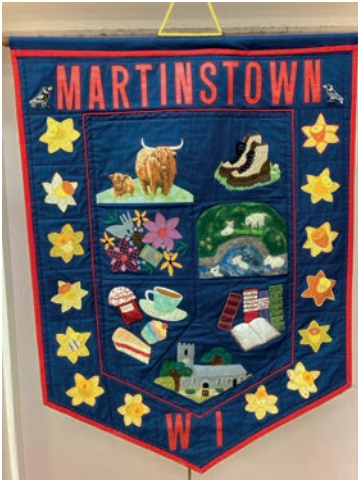




the WI

INSPIRING WOMEN

THIS MONTH'S NEWS FROM Martinstown Women's Institute



In December we celebrated the 75th Birthday of the WI in Martinstown with a combined Birthday and Christmas Party. Every member decorated a cup cake, and these were arranged to form "75". The highlight of the afternoon was the unveiling of our stunning new banner with views of the village surrounded by daffodils and some of our activities. This was the result of many months' work from some of our skilled embroiderers and crafters, in particular thanks to Lesley Usherwood and Ange Schulke who

co-ordinated and assembled the banner.

Unfortunately, due to illness, our January meeting had to be cancelled but we will meet again on Wednesday 14th February at 2.30 pm when our speaker will be Christine Orange on the History of Narrative Verse.

Angela Barrett - Secretary



The **Charity Group Christmas Fair** made a fantastic **£1490** for the **Dorchester Opportunity Pre-school Group**.

A big thank you to all who supported the morning and gave so generously and worked hard to make it a success.

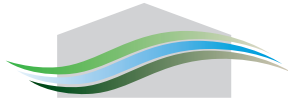
Frances Clifford

**CELEBRATION OF
DORSET FLOWER FESTIVAL
11th & 12th MAY
Martinstown Church and Churchyard**

Get involved and be part of the team, flower arrangers, creative thinkers... all are welcome. No experience necessary. Materials supplied.

Please contact **Dawn Gepheart** on **07748547708** or **Frances Clifford** on **07780441043**





MARTINSTOWN VILLAGE HALL Regular Group Meetings

MONDAY

Martinstown Playgroup	10 - 12 noon	Louisa Shephard - 07585622699
Beavers, Cubs & Scouts	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Sue Gower - 01305 889388
Monday Meeting	2:00 - 3:00 pm	Anne Tate - 01305 889506
WI Garden Club (1st Monday in month)	3:30 - 4:30 pm	Anne Tate - 01305 889506
Valley Club (3rd Monday in month)	7:45 - 10 pm	Ange Schulke - 07788858935

TUESDAY

Botanical Art (term times only)	9:30 - 12:30 pm	Pat Allen - 01308 862063
Sequence Dance Group	2:30 - 4:40 pm	Ann Matthews - 01305 889248
Badminton	7:30 - 9:30 pm	Juliet Rose - 07969292973

WEDNESDAY

Chair Based Exercise	10:30 - 11:30 am	Suzanne Fellows-Joyce - 01308 281882
W.I. (2nd Wednesday in month)	6:45 - 9:00 pm	Rosie Duke - 01305 889555
Beginners' Dance	8:00 - 10:00 pm	Ann Matthews - 01305 889248

THURSDAY

Poundbury Art Group	10:00 - 1:00 pm	Teresa Blades - 01305 889947
Sequence Dance Group	2:30 - 4:30 pm	Ann Matthews - 01305 889248
Yoga	6:00 - 7:30 pm	Gemma O'Beirne - 07821593314

FRIDAY

Keep Fit class	10:15 - 11:45 am	Suzanne Fellows-Joyce - 01308 281882
Bingo (every other Friday)	7:00 - 9:30 pm	Ann Matthews - 01305 889248

Chairperson - Jan Griffiths - 01305 889738
 Bookings - Ann Matthews - 01305 889248
 or email ronann.matthews@btinternet.com





Winterborne St Martin
PARISH COUNCIL

NEWS FEBRUARY 2024

The Winterborne St Martin Parish Council meets on the fourth Thursday of the month, we were excused a meeting in December. The minutes of the January meeting will be available for our meeting on the 22nd February 2024, meetings start at 7pm, they are held in the Church in Martinstown. Agendas and minutes are available on the website:

www.winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk

or as paper copies on the Parish Council notice board in the bus stop by the Martinstown Village Hall. In addition the Parish Council news is published on the website and the Martinstown Facebook page.

2024 is a Parish Council election year, if there are more nominees than places there will be an election if there are less there will be no election. The Council would welcome new Councillors, if you are interested get in touch with the Clerk. If you want more information about the work of a councillor or the election process just get in touch:

clerk@winterbornestmartin-pc.gov.uk

The Council has a new Clerk and her name is Victoria Badman. Victoria has settled in well and working to support all of the Council and in

particular our Chair Mark Pemberton.

The Council is continuing to lobby Wessex Water about the inadequacies of the sewage system running through Martinstown. The sewage system fails when the water table rises and the ground water leaks into the pipes of the sewage system. We hope continually lobbying and raising concerns we can be sure Wessex Water are aware of our issues and that they will continue to repair the leaky pipe work.

The repair to the stonework of the Sheep Washing Pool is nearly complete, the final work will be done when there is a little less river water in the South Winterborne. There will be a meeting shortly with our grass cutting contractor if there are issues you would like the Council to raise please do drop Victoria an email so we can raise it at the review meeting.

The Council continues to work on the ownership of the Reading Room at the east end of the village to ensure benefit to the parish. It's a surprisingly detailed and technical investigation but if you want to know more please come to the next Parish Council meeting. You will be most welcome!

Councillor Andy Daw

**MARTINSTOWN VILLAGE HALL
100 CLUB DRAW**

Compton Valence • December 2023

£100 Christmas Bonus Melinda Fletcher
£25. Alec Stuart
£10. Timothy Chick
£5. Imogen Chalker

Compton Valence • January 2024

£25. Fielding Family
£10. Mhairi-Skye Tweed
£5. Chris Roberts

Martinstown • December 2023

£25. Jan Griffiths
£10. Karen Barret
£5. Sam Pascal

Martinstown • January 2024

£25. Christine Mooney
£10. Margaret Ashworth
£5. Finlay Simmonds



Winterbourne Abbas & Steepleton Parish Council

Hello – we have decided to use the Valley and Valance Magazine to share with you what your Parish Council is focusing on in respect of our two villages. This will be the first of a regular bi-monthly update going forwards.

Our main area of focus in 2023 has been:

Copyhold Lane, Winterbourne Abbas: In June, together with local villagers and landowners, we received a notice from Dorset Council relating to an application made in 2005 to “upgrade” this public bridleway to a Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT). This application has taken an incredible 18 years to reach the “top of the pile”.

Whilst a BOAT is now not permitted, we understand that a possible outcome is a change to a “restricted byway” which is very similar to a bridleway but horse drawn (not motorized) vehicles would be allowed to use it in addition to walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Dorset Council have undertaken extensive historic research right back in the 1800’s to back up this possible outcome.

Along with the landowner and many locals, we made a formal objection in August based on evidence, local memories and our own research. We also asked Dorset Council to rule the application null and void as the historical maps and record extracts used were incorrect. If the application is passed, we will object to the order and the matter would be finally be decided at a public inquiry. We should like to thank local residents, Chris Loder MP, Roland Tarr (Dorset councillor) and the landowner for their assistance and support.

National Highways (A35): We had a “walk through meeting” with the new route manager during the summer and we are now getting far better response to the various issues. At long last work on the highway ditch at the rear of the Steepleton Water houses has started. The pavement along the forecourt of the filling station is going to be resurfaced. Highway drains have been cleared and further investigations are being carried out. We understand that funding is in place for average speed cameras to be installed in the A35 villages although we have not been advised when they will be operational in Abbas.

We have joined the newly formed A35 Parishes Group and attended their first meeting in the autumn. The group will gather information on the mainly common issues relating to villages on this busy trunk road and will hopefully have greater

influence on National Highways than individual parishes.

Flooding: Prolonged rainfall during the last months of the year caused flooding of roads and surcharging of drains in both parishes but as far as we are aware, no serious property flooding. The stream in Steepleton was cleared by the parish council in October and some areas by volunteers in Abbas. National Highways have given an undertaking to carry this out in Abbas in the future once the water levels have reduced. Sandbags stocks are being replenished when required.

Wessex Water: Following a meeting with their staff in the summer, we continue to correspond with Wessex Water regarding the main sewer that runs from Abbas via Steepleton to the east end of Martinstown where it is pumped up to Dorchester. Winterbourne Abbas, like Martinstown, suffers from surcharging of the sewers by surface water. The flooding at the end of the year completely submerged sections of the sewer.

Bus Shelters and village seats: The bus shelters and village seats in both villages were refurbished during the summer months. Although Steepleton no longer has a bus service, school children still use this shelter and the village noticeboards are also in these shelters. Battery PIR lights have been installed

Speed Indicator Device (SID): Our solar powered SID in Steepleton continues to work well. A possible new site between the road junctions at Steepleton Ponds at the east end of the village is being tested by Dorset Council’s speed awareness team. The SID is moved by volunteers between the two sites every 6 weeks.

Defibrillator: Our defibrillator located at the service station in Winterbourne Abbas is regularly checked and the national database updated.

Website: We update our noticeboards in the bus shelters and website on a regular basis. The website can be accessed via Dorsetforyou by entering <https://www.winterbourneabbassteepleton-pc.gov.uk/home>

Meetings: We meet on the third Monday every two months starting at 7.00pm, in the rear room of the Coach House Inn, Winterbourne Abbas. Residents are very welcome to attend and raise any issues that the Parish Council should be made aware of.



The **MILEATERS** out and about...

...from Athelhampton by Cathy Seigal



After days of icy weather and continual rain it was an especially resilient and hearty group of ten Mileaters and three dogs who set out on a six mile walk one Tuesday in early December. And how glad we all were that we made the effort. Because it really was not as muddy as feared and it was just very good to be out walking again after far too many days stuck indoors.

We parked at in the car park of beautiful Athelhampton and after crossing the road turned up the lane beside the small church there and climbed steadily through beech and oak woodland to fields with beautiful views down the valley to Tinctleton. We stopped by a small poignant stone monument in memory of one of the sons of the owners of nearby Clyffe House, killed in France in 1940.

Re-entering woodland we followed a broad track through woodland for two miles, finally taking a left which took us down through the tall conifers of Southover woods and heath to join a track which, after fields and a long sunken track (which is in late spring has its sides covered in wild flowers) reaches Park Farm House and a pretty walk by the river to return to the church.

Lunch was at Athelhampton where we were welcomed and quickly served with hot drinks and tasty food.

Choral Services and Musical Events at St Peter's Church, Dorchester during February

On Sunday 11th February at 10.30am, our monthly service of Choral Eucharist features Michael Haydn's 'Missa brevis in C' (MH52), Tallis's 'If ye love me' and Duruflé's 'Ubi caritas'. All are welcome to this free service and for refreshments afterwards.

Our monthly service of Choral Evensong takes place on Saturday 24th February at 4.30pm. The music includes Purcell's 'Thou knowest, Lord', Buxtehude's 'Magnificat' and the 'Nunc Dimittis' by Amy Beach, Richard Seal's 'Preces & Responses' and the anthem 'Like as the hart' by Herbert Howells. All are very welcome to this free event and we hope you will join us for a glass of wine afterwards.

You can keep up with events via our website: www.dorchesteranglican.org.uk/musicatstpeters or by following us on social media: Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/musicatstpetersdorch> - Twitter: @musicatstpeter - Instagram @musicatstpetersdorch





Recycling, Rubbish & Garden Waste Collection Dates

FEBRUARY 2024*		For more information contact: www.dorsetforyou.com/recycle	
1st (Thursday)	- rubbish and food	8th (Thursday)	- recycling and food
15th (Thursday)	- rubbish and food	22nd (Thursday)	- recycling and food
29th (Thursday)	- rubbish and food		
14th (Weds)		28th (Weds)	
	- garden waste		- garden waste

* Correct at time of printing.

Winter Youth Cricket Softball training for Y3 & Y4

Sundays 4-5pm

7th January - 31st March

Martinstown Village Hall
Coach: Henry Lewis
Equipment provided!



BOOKING LINK IN THE COMMENTS!

Winter Youth Cricket Hardball sessions for U9s - U13s

Wednesdays

3rd January - 27th March

St Osmund's School, Dorchester
Coaches: Henry Lewis & Stuart Dawson



DETAILS & BOOKING LINK IN THE COMMENTS!



VILLAGE OUTING to ROSEMOOR

*Great Torrington, Devon
65 acres of stunning RHS gardens*

Thursday, 20th June
Coach £17 Entrance to Gardens £12.85
RHS Members free

Pick up at bus stop by village hall at 8.45 am prompt
 Leave Rosemoor at 4.15 pm, arriving back around 6.30 pm

Trip organised by Martinstown WI - **All welcome**
 For tickets contact :
 Lesley Pemberton 889643 lpemby@hotmail.co.uk
 Angela Barrett 889628 angelabarrett@uwclub.net





Circle Suppers 2024...



Martinstown Circle Supper group has been raising money for charity through hosting suppers and organising fund raising events since 2016.

Last year our chosen charity was Dorset Family Counselling Trust and as well as the suppers we organised a clothes swap, an auction and an Abba evening. In January we celebrated the start of our ninth year with a launch and presentation evening hosted by committee member Roelie Newman and her husband Phil, and were delighted to hand to Ros Miller, CEO of the Family Counselling Trust a cheque for £7550. Ros told the group that this donation would directly aid up to 30 Dorset children and their families this year to receive counselling and emotional support.

We then launched our fundraising for our 2024 chosen charity, Dorchester Poverty Action, which gives financial help, to individuals and families who live within the postcodes DT1 and DT2. Wendy Hilton, Chair of DPA attended the evening and spoke movingly about the desperate and ever increasing need for financial support many experience in these difficult times, and how something as simple as a grant to replace a washing machine, repair a car

L to R back row: Martinstown Circle Supper Team: Lilly Evans, Roelie Newman, Stuart Nuttall, Cathie Seigal, Marian Palmer and Trudy Braithwaite (holding cheque) with Rosalind Miller (CEO Family Counselling Trust)

or provide new school shoes can make such a difference.

We have eighteen suppers already in the diary for 2024 and we have two fund raising events ahead. The first is a Garden Fete in the lovely setting of the Manor in Martinstown on Saturday June 22nd, thanks to Lilly and Chris's Evans generosity, and a Rock and Roll evening in November.

Villagers from Martinstown and throughout the valley have always been great supporters of our events and we are so thankful to you for last year, and in anticipation of 2024. It's too late to join the supper rota for this year (though there is always 2025) but if you would like to help out with our garden fete, maybe by offering to run a stall or help on the day, or by simply putting the date in your diary now, that would be wonderful.

And a huge thank you from me and the Circle Supper Committee

Cathie Seigal • 01305 889244





Web: greenmartinstown.org.uk Email: greenmartinstown@gmail.com

Save the Date! Sunday March 10th 1.30 – 3.30 Community Meeting, Martinstown Village Hall. Tea and Cake. More to follow but it is exciting!

Save Another Date! Green Martinstown Members Meeting at the Manor House, February 29th 7.00pm Drinks and Nibbles as usual. Please make it if you can as it is about the exciting news mentioned above!

Positive News for the beginning of 2024! (taken from Positive News magazine)

The ‘Right to Grow’ in Hull

Hull City Council unanimously adopted a motion to give local community groups, charities and neighbours a formalised ‘right to grow’ on public land. The council will produce a map of the land it owns that is suitable for growing on and will support people who want to grow food on it to overcome practical obstacles such as insurance and irrigation. Helping with food resilience, growing locally saves on transportation and is wonderful for community building.

RSPB

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is running a 2 year pilot scheme giving free entry to 16 – 24 year olds. The RSPB has about 200 reserves and the average entrance fee is £6. Dorset’s Arne reserve on the edge of Poole harbour is beautiful and well worth a visit. If you haven’t been before now it makes a family outing more affordable.

The Beginning of the End of Built-in Obsolescence?

Many items these days are impossible to repair and obsolescence is built into the design. What a waste of resources. Now, though there are companies who respect such finite resources and are making laptops, vacuum cleaners and mobile phones that are easily repaired, have instructions on how to do so and have readily available parts. Good for them!

With an ever-growing awareness of the negative impact on the planet human consumption has, there are companies, like Patagonia the outdoor clothing firm, who are will repair their products for free. Good for them, too!

Also, there are some businesses who have ‘Nature Guardians’ – a member of the board or executive committee who represents and speaks for the Natural World. This ensures that every decision made has to take into account the impact on the planet, bringing sustainability, regeneration and care for the Earth to the forefront. Good for them, as well!

Kenya’s Tree Planting National Holiday

On November 13th last year Kenya declared a national holiday in order to plant a target of 100 million trees. Each citizen was encouraged to plant 2 trees each – supplied by the government. There is a plan to plant 15 billion trees by 2032. Drought has been of huge concern over recent years and trees can play a crucial role in maintaining ecosystem balance, enhance biodiversity and sustain the livelihoods of people and communities.



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The Fairfield Ash by Martin Usherwood

We moved into Fairfield at the end of May 2015. Those of you who were residents then will remember that the frontage was all wall and large fence panels. We parked our cars on the tarmac and grassed area. After a week we received a letter telling us that we were upsetting some of the residents but this could be easily remedied had we a mind too. Not wishing to upset our neighbours or incur costs we chose to create a driveway.

In order to achieve this, we would have to take down the Ash tree at the front of the property. The tree however, had a Tree Preservation Order from the 70's. The Ash had very large and heavy branches, 10m plus in length which overhung the road, our garage and a well-used footpath. The tree's trunk divided into three sections just six feet off the ground and in high winds it flexed causing low down stress fracturing.

We applied to have the tree felled. The tree seemed to sense our plans and decided to seek revenge. We woke up one morning to find that a 3m section of wall had been pushed over by the roots. Our application was turned down and we were told to re-build the wall around the roots, being careful not to damage them. Six months later we received a decision which upheld the original decision. The tree punished us by separating the joints and bending pipes in our mains water supply requiring a new system to be installed.

We were given permission to cut back 20% of the length. Our tree surgeon duly undertook the work and reduced the length by 2m. I kept the branches to be used as firewood in the future. A letter arrived from WDDC telling us that there had been a report of a breach of planning permission. A Senior Officer came out to make an inspection and gain evidence for possible prosecution. I was able to show him the 2m long branches. He picked up one which was over 3m long but soon put it down when I pointed out it was Silver Birch! He left telling us that he would write to us soon to give us his decision. We are still waiting to know if we are to be prosecuted.

It appeared the tree had forgiven us and liked its new haircut. The tree was gaining a well-rounded shape once again. It was a few months later that we first noticed a sizeable branch at the top of the tree looked in a poor state. Later, the extremities began to lose their leaves early and it peppered the driveway with small twigs. Our suspicions were confirmed by a Tree Surgeon and a Tree Officer, the tree had Ash Dieback. If left, the disease can spread to nearby trees and the wood becomes brittle. If it reaches this stage Tree Surgeons refuse to climb trees because of the danger. The tree had to come down as sadly it was dying.

Our Tree Surgeon did a good job taking down the tree to ground level. By counting the annual rings, I was able to work out the age of the tree which turned out to be 69yrs old. The house was built in 1951 replacing the row of cottages that burned down a few years previously. I met a Mr Ralls, who on the night of the fire he was thrown from an upstairs window into the arms of his older brother. I was able to supply him with photos and information from Margaret's book.

Back to the tree. We hired a digger and a stump grinder to remove the soil from around the tree and grind the exposed roots. The digger did a good job in removing several tonnes of soil and exposing the roots. We had absolutely no idea that the root would be so large. It was 2m in height and 3m in diameter. I tried hitting the stump with a 1kg maul. The tree had other ideas rebounding the strike, nearly catching me on the head. The hired stump grinder took one look at the stump and gave up.

I was finding it difficult to work on the front because of the well intentioned and freely given advice from passers-by. This ranged from "You'll never shift that", "Have you thought of copper nails", "Try Creosote", "Try Round Up". To our absolute horror eight people genuinely suggested we use dynamite to blow up the stump! We instead engaged Andrew, a Kiwi, who was confident that he could do the job. His machine came on the back of a car trailer and was another ferocious beast with a huge power unit. I went back inside to finish my breakfast only to be shaken when he started up the big diesel engine. The funny thing was that the 'monster' was remotely controlled by a small controller the size of a Kit Kat. It soon made mincemeat of the tree but the tree had not finished yet having one last laugh at our expense. We were left with a small mountain of mulch several tonnes in size. We mulched our own beds with a good layer but we were still left with tonnes of mulch. This had to be removed before reconstruction work could begin.

Along came the good people of Martinstown, the Dynamiters, the Copper Nailers and the Creosoters, with their bags, wheelbarrows, car boots and trailers. Within a few days it was gone. I pitied one couple who came to fill several bags just as the heavens opened. So, the non-diseased part of the tree has been put to good use. Some of the wood was donated to be made into objects to be sold for charity. As for the majority of the logs we are sitting here now in front of a roaring fire, beating back the best that Storm Ciaran can throw at us. These are some of the most expensive logs we have ever burned. (don't ask how much all of the above cost) We are sure we can hear each log laughing as it disappears up the chimney.



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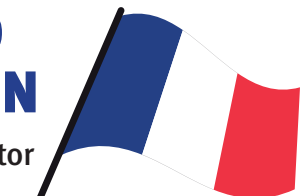
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