

The Fulbrook News

Our Quarterly Newsletter

December 2022

Number 91



We thought that our readers would like some festive cheer for the December issue so here's a photo of Lyn Bibbings' daughter's Christmas tree with their cat Cuthbert

WANTED for publication! Please send us your articles, comments, ideas, letters, poems, whatever. This is your Newsletter – please send contributions to our email address: fulbrooknews@gmail.com

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The Fulbrook News is distributed free to every household in the village. Subscription copies are available by post at £5.00 per annum from the distribution office at Dolphin House, Westhall Hill, OX18 4BJ

Dear Readers,

Along with the warm sunshine, this autumn has given us a fabulous array of colours and plenty of leaves to gather. Whilst clearing leaves from my garden the rake gave a little resistance and on close inspection I spied some prickly needles and, yes, you've guessed it I found our resident hedgehog, now in early hibernation. Of course, I quickly made it nice and comfy again amidst its mountain of leaves to recover - fingers crossed! I trust that our valiant village cleaner-uppers managed their admirable task without interference from the natural world - they did a great job as evidenced by all the sacks awaiting collection.

Later in this issue you will be delighted with the last of Annie Purcell's diary excerpts. We thank her very much for letting us into her very contented times remembered with husband, Graham, in Fulbrook. She has taken many of us down memory lane, a reminder of the various interest groups in the village over the years.

Brian Kay has also given us an insight into his world of music viewed from the podium, which can be found on page 11. John Radcliffe has highlighted the need for us to prioritise the churchyard and an urgent plea for help with its upkeep, page 15. Our Newsletter compiler, Laurence Balbes, is a volunteer at West Oxfordshire Citizens Advice and he has included an article appealing for more volunteers – see page 16.

Bob and Pauline Warner once again treated us to a grand bonfire night, which was well attended and much appreciated. So, many thanks for their efforts to make it a success. Another November tradition is the Remembrance Day service including the laying of wreaths at the war memorial. This annual event welcomes many of us who wish to pay our respects to the fallen of Fulbrook and we thank Ian Brown for his very moving rendition of The Last Post.

On Wednesday 2nd November Fulbrook Church was packed with those of us wishing to remember a lovely lady and past resident of Fulbrook, Molly Woolley, who passed away on 11th October. We offer our deepest sympathy and condolences to David and the family. Her obituary can be found on page 8. It was good to welcome David to our newly formed Warm Welcome lunch on Thursday. The lunches will be organised to take place every Thursday in the Fulbrook Meeting Place and all are welcome.

Sadly, we must also say farewell to Jennifer Capon of Westhall Hill who died peacefully on 28th September. Her funeral was held in Fulbrook Church on 10th October and was well attended by family and villagers.

Christmas is nearly upon us and Cuthbert the kitten, featured on the front cover is eagerly awaiting Santa by decorating the tree in readiness! The Editorial Team wishes everyone a peaceful and very merry Christmas season.

Lesley Beveridge

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You can help us make Burford Bridge safer

The need for our Windrush bridge to be repaired provides a major opportunity to make the crossing safer for pedestrians. We have agreed with OCC that this could be done by using heritage bollards to guide vehicles away from the corner of the bridge on the Burford side and protect the pedestrian area. The bollards look very solid but are 'reboundable' and bounce back upright if hit.

OCC have agreed to do this work when they repair the bridge in the spring. However, as the bridge is a 2* listed structure, they need Listed Building Consent from the District. It is much easier for consent to be granted if we have examples of the dangers on the bridge, so thank you to all those who responded to our request in the last edition of Fulbrook News with your stories of trying to cross the bridge safely. We particularly noted how hard it is with children and buggies. While we don't know of any injuries in recent times, we do need further evidence from Fulbrook residents who have experienced, witnessed or heard about near-misses.

So, if you can help, please email Peter or Hugo with your name and address, the approximate date of the incident and a short description of what happened. Do say if you wish to be anonymous in any summary that we put forward as part of the case.

We need to apply as soon as possible, so please tell us your experiences right away!

Many thanks

Peter Burns, Chair, Fulbrook Parish Council
(clerk@fulbrookvillage.net)

Hugo Ashton, District Councillor for Burford Ward (hugo.ashton@westoxon.gov.uk)



FROM THE PARISH CLERK

I provide a fortnightly newsletter to all residents that wish to receive it, detailing what's going on in the village, Parish council news and anything else I think may be of relevance to you. If you would like to sign up to receive the newsletter, have something added or have any issues you would like to raise please feel free to email me on clerk@fulbrookvillage.net or send me a message or call me on 07484 178143.

Sarah Ebeling, Parish Clerk

Fulbrook Forum needs new committee members

For those of you new to our area, the Fulbrook Forum offers a chance to meet other members of our community and listen to a local speaker. Talks typically last about 45 minutes, followed by refreshments. All are welcome and no membership is required. We plan to hold about 6 meetings per year.

We normally meet in the Fulbrook Meeting Place which is at the back of the Church at 3pm on a Thursday. The present Committee members are Oliver Sharpley (Chair), Laurence Balbes (deputy chair) and Professor Peter Burns. **We need at least another 2 volunteers to join the committee.**



The tasks of the committee are not onerous. We have two planning meetings a year to plan our programme of speakers and a refreshment rota.

If you feel you can help, please contact Oliver Sharpley at fulbrookforum@gmail.com

Our Calendar

Unfortunately, our September, October and November meetings have all had to be cancelled for a variety of reasons. We hope to resume our programme in the New Year.

If you would like a reminder about a week before the meeting, please e-mail fulbrookforum@gmail.com to join our mailing list.

Oliver Sharpley

HISTORY GROUP

At our latest meeting on 24th October Anne Weir told us about the contributions of David and Molly Woolley to the village following Molly's recent death at the age of 84. They were both on the steering committee for the Village Appraisal in July 1999 which, among other things, resulted in the launch of the Fulbrook Newsletter.

Maurice Eldridge gave Robin Campbell a photo of his house, Windrush End, taken in the 1930's by Frank Parker who worked for a firm of photographers based in Chipping Norton who specialised in taking pictures of local villages.

Maurice also showed us a number of photos of an army camp for military manoeuvres taken c.1909 on the right of Westhall Hill at the village end. John Learoyd told us that he had a number of memorabilia (cap badges, army badges) that he found whilst metal detecting in this field which, at that time was owned by John Sharpley, Oliver's father.

John also showed us a piece of a tiny Neolithic axe that he found in Widford.

Anne Weir confirmed that the History Group records have now been transferred to the new Burford Archive in Swan Lane.

Our next meeting will be at 7.30 pm on Monday 23rd January 2023 at Triggers House, Meadow Lane. We would like to increase the size of the Group, so if you would like to learn more about the history of our village, please come and join us.

Laurence Balbes

CHRISTMAS CRIME PREVENTION

Hello there, my name is Alex Griffith and I am one of the new PCSOs joining the West Oxfordshire Neighbourhood Team. I will be covering Bampton, Burford and Carterton and the surrounding villages. I am based at Carterton Police Station but if you see me out and about, feel free to stop me whether it is just a passing hello or for a chat about any going issues you need advice on.

As the nights draw in, we are entering the winter months and we at Thames Valley Police want to give you some advice on crime prevention for yourselves and your properties for this time of year.

As we enter the festive season, you may be more likely to be out of your property visiting relatives or loved ones and enjoying festive events. This can mean your property could be a target for potential thieves. One way to deter potential opportunists is by having lights on in your house. With the cost of living crisis ongoing, the idea of leaving all your lights on is far from ideal. However, one recommendation we have is to purchase a plug in timer. These timers can be set for certain lights in your property to come on at a certain time, making it appear that someone is home, and making your property less of a target as thieves as less likely to hit lit houses.

Whether it's locking up for the night or going away, if you have any security systems, locks, CCTV or outdoor security lights, now is the time to check that these are all in working order. Whether one of your security light bulbs is out or one of your CCTV cameras has been knocked and now doesn't focus on the desired area, the last thing you want is to realise that there is a fault in them when you need them most. Even small things such as locks on doors and windows are vital in crime prevention.

Christmas gifts, whether it be a new 55" flat screen TV, new iPad or phone for the kids or some new kitchen equipment, the disposal of the packaging for these high value items can give opportunists an idea of the items that are now in your property. One way of disposing of the packaging is to fold/rip up the packaging and only put it out for the bin men the night before your collections. When it comes to bin collections, if you are away while your bins are collected, make sure a neighbour or friend brings your emptied bins back into your property, as empty bins left at the roadside can give opportunists an idea that nobody is home.

Christmas is a time for giving and caring. Now is a prime time to check in with neighbours and make sure they're doing okay with everything that is going on in the world these days. It might be that you need to check they have relevant crime prevention methods in place or it may be a case of bad weather preventing them from leaving the house so they need you to pop to the shop for some essentials for them or you may be the only face they see due to family living far away. Just remember that showing of care towards your neighbour may go a long way in their eyes.

I hope you can take away something useful from this short write up on crime prevention methods. Finally, if you need any non-crime related advice, my email address is alexander.griffith@thamesvalley.police.uk

A huge thank you from the Editorial Committee (and a request for help)

The editorial committee would like to send a huge thank you to The Burford and District Society (B&DS) for their generous grant towards the funds of our Newsletter.

I am the Fulbrook representative on the B&DS committee and at a recent meeting I told them about our rather difficult financial situation with revenue from advertising, which is our main source of income, having fallen in recent years

while our costs have risen, following which they agreed to give us a very welcome grant of £100.

We also welcome donations from readers who value the Newsletter and would like to help us. Please send a cheque payable to Fulbrook Newsletter to our treasurer Laurence Balbes at Meadow Way Cottage, Meadow Lane, Fulbrook, Burford OX18 4BS or send the money directly to our TSB bank account; sort code 30-91-43, account number 00074712 using Donation as the reference. Thank you in advance.

Laurence Balbes

Here is the latest poem from our resident poet John Hoyle:

We get what we deserve

The long term option calms the mind
Of brief lives on the brink:
And "rest in peace" is carved, we find,
For those it hurts to think

Peace, like the desert, clean and dried,
Fulfils the sifting sand.
So dunes of souls, death satisfied,
Slow march across that land.

And of the two states known to man
There's only one will serve:
As long term options only can
We get what we deserve.

John Hoyle



This has been a packed and exciting autumn for the FaB WI. Alongside our regular monthly meetings we are taking a place firmly at the centre of the wider National Federation of Women's Institutes world. It is a matter of great pride to our Institute that we have in our history one Chair of the National Federation of Women's Institutes, Sylvia Gray. Locally she was the influential owner of the Bay Tree Hotel, was President of Burford and Fulbrook WI from 1951 to 1957, Oxfordshire Chair from 1951 to 1954 and National Chair 1964 to 1974. We are one of the country's oldest WIs and this year we are again on the national stage.

Throughout the months, I have been writing about the FaB WI in the Bridge, I have always tried to emphasise not only our local activities but also give a flavour of the wider national organization and especially its power as a lobbying body. Each year, the national WI selects a topic of current national or international interest that it feels it can be a power for good in promoting. Resolutions are put forward by individual members from across the country and the Resolution selected each year is chosen by voting across the entire national membership.

This year our amazing President, Jennie Craven, was so inspired by these previous campaigns that she decided to put together a proposal for a Resolution based on a topic close to her heart - Water Security. Putting together sufficient information to back up an idea is no easy feat and it takes a considerable amount of time in research and investigation. Not only did Jennie submit her idea but out of the 48 put forward this year, hers has been shortlisted to the final 4 to be voted on by the entire national membership of 190,000 women. We are so proud of Jennie and this is a fantastic achievement for FAB WI. It will be a hot topic of conversation at our December 13th meeting when we will enjoy a Christmas Quiz with Festive Fare and decide on the winner of our annual 'Rose Bowl Challenge' of Christmas bauble decorations.

Proposed Resolution: -

'Save our water – every drop matters'.

As global temperatures rise, there is a risk drought will become more frequent in the UK. This will place increasing strains on the UK's water supply and endanger our natural world. The NFWI calls on government and water companies to work together to develop robust plans that would ensure the UK's long-term water security, including addressing water leakage from pipes. The NFWI calls on WI members to take immediate personal actions to value and conserve water.

We do not have a physical meeting in January but we do have an on-line get-together and a social get-together for a New Year's Dinner locally. In February Jennie Craven is giving a talk titled 'Hearts, Minds and Treks up Mountains' – intriguing! Then in March we have fun with a Beetle Drive following our AGM.

The FaB WI meets on the second Tuesday of each month in the Warwick Hall at 7.30 p.m. and warmly welcome visitors to all of our meetings. We are keen to attract new members, so please come along and try us. For further information please visit our website thefabwi.org.uk or FB page search 'The Fulbrook and Burford WI (FAB WI)' or contact our President, Jennie Craven, on thefabwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk or Mobile 07710 103015.

Angela Weller (a FaB WI member)

Fulbrook News and Views

From the Editorial Team.....

In this issue we include a tribute to Molly Woolley who has died at the age of 84, an article from Brian Kay on his View from the Podium, a message from our District Councillor Hugo Ashton, news from The Carpenters Arms and much more....

The purpose of Fulbrook News and Views is to highlight issues or interests within the village. For this to work successfully we need contributions from as many readers as possible. As you can see here, these can be of a serious, flippant or humorous nature. Please contribute!

A Secret History of Fulbrook - Passing Through

For all of us, coming home to Fulbrook usually means coming across Burford Bridge and knowing we are home when we see the Fulbrook sign on the right after we have come up Cotland Hill. However, the actual boundary between Burford and Fulbrook is in the middle of the River Windrush, so the northern half of the bridge is in Fulbrook and you are safely home a little sooner than you think! A bridge has spanned the river Windrush here since at least 1322, and there was a constant tussle between Burford and Fulbrook about who was responsible for repairs until, in 1891, the County Council accepted the duty. The most spectacular damage was caused in 1944 when a Sherman tank crashed through the eastern parapet on the Fulbrook side, and it took a whole day to dislodge it from where it landed, stuck between the bridge and the river bed. Since then the bridge stood firm and strong as it had been extensively rebuilt - until earlier this year that is, when there was an only slightly less spectacular accident causing extensive damage to the western parapet. You will be pleased to know that the County Council has again accepted its responsibility for the bridge and it will be closed to traffic for 2 days in April 2023 to enable repairs.

As traffic - originally horse drawn - drove from their business in Burford, which was a wool trading and coaching town, along the turnpike road through Fulbrook towards Chipping Norton, they would pass the Carpenter's Arms, which originated in the 18th century. The bay window on to the road looks remarkably like a toll-keepers vantage point, and it is thought that they would be stopped here to pay their tolls. So if you book that table for your next meal, don't forget to look out of the window and imagine yourself stopping the carriages and demanding payment. It is likely that the Carpenter's also functioned as a 'trade club', a forerunner of the early trade unions. At least one landlord, Charles Jones, was a prominent local carpenter and timber dealer and so that is where the name comes from.

If refreshment had not been taken in Burford (for either the drivers or the horses) then travellers could also stop at the Mason's Arms which was a pub on the Shipton Road, just past Beech Grove, but more recently made a residential dwelling. The Mason's Arms can also be traced back to the early 18th century and was likely to have been a 'trade club', but for stone masons - it later also incorporated a village shop. Above the fireplace in the bar there was a whip rack for use by customers driving carts. Legend tells the rather macabre story that the cart that was transporting the bodies of two local highway men, Tom and Harry Dunsden, who had been executed for their dastardly deeds in Gloucester, stopped at the Mason's Arms for the cart crew to have a rest before tackling the hill up to the gibbet tree at Capp's Lodge, where they were to be gibbeted - displayed in iron cages.

Nothing so sinister is likely to happen in Fulbrook today - but think on as you drive through this seemingly unassuming village we call home, about what things would have been like 200 years ago.

MOLLY WOOLLEY 11th December 1937 - 11th October 2022

Many of us have our own memories of Molly Woolley and if asked to describe what she was like, we would be in much agreement because Molly was Molly. She met everyone in the same gentle, loving, thoughtful way. A principled person, Molly was someone who cared deeply for society and especially for her community. She was active throughout her life trying to make the world a better, fairer, kinder place for all. Molly was someone who smiled a genuine smile of greeting when you met, who was generously hospitable if you visited and groaned with delight at David's jokes as she plied you with tea and cake.



Coming from both Welsh and Irish forbears, Molly was born in Hampton, Middlesex in 1937. Loyal and sensitive, Molly made friendships for life at every stage. Cherishing those friendships is a mark of the loving person we mourn.

Molly and David married on 23rd April 1962 and by this time Molly had achieved a BSc degree from Manchester University (where she was also a strong member of the Scout and Guide Club, having been a Queen's Guide) and determined to become a Probation Officer. She gained plenty of life experience before qualifying by running a Settlement in London's East End which was linked to Toynbee Hall. Aged 21 this was quite a challenging start to professional life, but David says 'she was in her element'! She followed this with her Home Office training for the Probation Service and began work as a Probation Officer in the Black Country.

Molly's and David's family, Hilary, Alan and Catherine, were born between the years 1965 and 69 when Molly was quite content as a stay at home mother. By this time the family had moved to Raynes Park in Surrey. A good number of us date our friendship with Molly and the family from 1975 when David was appointed to teach Chemistry at Burford School. They threw themselves into involvement in the community of the school and for Molly especially into village life in Fulbrook. Their home in Chubbs Close had an ever open door.

Molly took on the organisation of the Evening Adult Education classes at Burford school, encouraging people to take part, learn new skills or practise others. Having run the Centre for several years, she gained enough confidence to apply to Westminster College, Oxford, where she achieved her PGCE qualification in primary learning and was ready to teach. The head of Burford School suggested that Molly joined the Special Needs department where she taught and lovingly supported children (and colleagues) until she retired in 1994. Being a good listener, Molly was a sensitive counsellor to many people. Molly was very much involved in numerous projects in Fulbrook, the village she loved. Prominent among these was her commitment to the Sunday School.

It is inconceivable that any narrative of Molly could avoid referring, however incompletely, to her faith, an integral part of her being. Certainly Christ was her guide and inspiration and fired her passion for social justice and the work of Amnesty International which she wove trustingly into the rituals of prayer and communion. Her's was a practical religion. With others, she ran the Fulbrook Sunday School for many years, expanding its activities into summer games in the North-Lewis field and pancakes, macarons and mayhem in Chubbs Close, as well as an annual nativity play with a difference. In Fulbrook, Quiet Prayer in the church on Thursday evening could not be missed without first ensuring that it would be covered and she delighted in the development of the Taizé group and in its joyous reception.

'Retirement' is not an adequate description of Molly's life once she had left employment, but rather she moved into a continuing stage of being busy, fulfilled and outward looking. Much of Molly's time was taken writing letters to prisoners of conscience on behalf of Amnesty International. Molly loved people and was always interested in their lives, their concerns and what was important to others.

By 2012 things were calming down a little. All three children had left home and, although Molly and David took great delight in seeing the family and befriending their grandchildren, the house had become rather too

big they decided. So Carlyon, their new home in Chipping Norton, became Molly's home for the rest of her life where she and David created the same warm and cheerful family atmosphere as there had been at Chubbs Close. When illness took over her mind and her body, Molly's nature never changed. She smiled to the end of her life, continuing to be the gentle, modest, loving person she had always been, but with the strongest convictions about values and how life should be lived. Most of all she cared for David and her family who, more than any of us, will miss this unique and special lady.

Rest in Peace Molly.

Happy Fulbrook Memories

In the last few issues we've been following Annie Purcell's lovely journey through some of her memories of life in Fulbrook. Here, in her last contribution, she includes extracts from her diary from September 1988:

Fulbrook Diary, September 1988.

In her book, "From The Valleys To The Spires" Sharon Jenkins writes: In 1926 many Collieries across South Wales closed resulting in a huge depression, and young men leaving to work elsewhere. Two such young men, Tom Richards and a friend, sleeping rough and getting lifts, made their way to Cowley where an American Motor company called Pressed Steel was opening and sure enough jobs were available.

In the summer of 1927 there was very little work. To save money Tom and his friend rented a hut in a field belonging to Reg Johnson. Hearing that he was a singer, Reg asked Tom to help him form a concert party, and this is how it all began, the Cowley Male Voice Choir was formed. These young men sent for other family members and by 1936 around 2000 had migrated from the Garw to Cowley. It was at the 50th AGM in 1978 that a proposal to change the name of the choir to The Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir was passed unanimously.

By September 1988, my darling husband Graham had been a member of the Choir for seven years, and for his 60th birthday I decided to arrange a special party with family and friends, and the Oxford Welsh Male voice choir, without his knowledge. It was hard work keeping it all a secret, Harvey stored all the drinks in his air raid shelter and Gladys hid the birthday cake in her kitchen. With kind permission from Brian Alexander I borrowed the Church tables and chairs. The caterer hid all the crockery in the airing cupboard, and a coach was hired for the choir.

The day dawned with the sun shining brightly. My stepsons Andrew and Michael whisked Graham away for a flip in a Tiger Moth, so that we could proceed to get everything ready for his return. Family and friends were all safely inside the house the choir were standing all the way up the stairs and along the gallery. As the boys returned with Graham and entered the room, the choir sang Gwahoddiad. It was such a special moment and moved some to tears. It was indeed a very special day, with much laughter and chat and Graham joining the Choir to sing in the garden.

However it was not without its mishap. On checking the ladies working in the kitchen, I asked why the kitchen door was closed on such a beautiful day. "Because of the smell " they replied. Investigating I realised to my horror that it must be due to our septic tank needing emptying. Perhaps waiting to erupt, explode, a fountain in the garden quite unlike any other. I felt cold thinking about how many friends and family were here, and managed to keep calm for the rest of the afternoon until such time as the coach arrived for the Choir to leave.

As soon as it was appropriate, I rushed to Harvey's side and explained the situation. He promptly went home and returned with rods etc. Thankfully Graham, Harvey and the boys saved the situation. I found a seat and a glass of Champagne.

On October 4th 2008 an evening of song was given by the Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir in Fulbrook Church. With the concert nearing the end of its performance the Choir invited Graham, who had now retired, to join them in singing Cwm Rhondda. The evening proved to be a great success and raised over £400. A Cheque for £210 was presented to the Mulberry Bush School Standlake as their share of the proceeds, with the balance going to St James The Great Fulbrook.

June 2000

Many of us will remember the wonderful production of Benjamin Britten's Noye's Fludde, which was performed as a Millenium Celebration in St John The Baptist Church Burford on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd June 2000. It was instigated by the Cotswold Children's Choir who provided the backbone to the production, but there were numerous residents of Fulbrook involved in the cast, set design, costumes, props, publicity, sponsorship, and much more. It engendered an amazing community spirit and many will remember a spine-tingling moment following a rehearsal, when a huge rainbow appeared over the Church.

Fulbrook Fellowship, 2005-2006.

Committee: Christopher Rose, Molly Woolley, Nora Thomas, David Foster, Ann Purcell.

13th October 2005: "Bird Photography in Oman" by David Foster.

10th November 2005. "The Red Cross Story" by David Alexander.

2nd November 2005. "Nuclear Non Proliferation" by Garry Dillon.

The 2003 Invasion of Iraq was the first stage of the Iraq war. Titled Operation Iraq Freedom, it began on the 19th March 2003. Garry's Rank with the UN was Director and Leader of of the IAEA Iraq Action Team. Phase one was to search and destroy remove or render harmless any material that could be used in the development or production of nuclear weapons. Phase two was to design and implement a long term monitoring system to detect any attempt by Iraq to re-establish nuclear weapons capability.

Fulbrook Fellowship 2008-2009

Committee: Christopher Rose, Helen Hyslop, Tricia Picking, Ann Purcell, David Foster, Anne Vessey.

2nd October 2008: "Child of the Cold War" by Dr Tibor Zsuppan.

This was a most interesting talk, giving insights into Hungarian history and the relations of that Country with Russia and with her neighbours.

4th December 2008: "Christmas Fare" by John Harrington

The highs and lows of producing and selling Christmas cakes, pies and puddings. John had been involved in marketing for one of the biggest bakeries in the country. It was interesting to hear about the ups and downs of producing millions of cakes and puddings and pies for the Christmas market.

It was an honour and a privilege to have served on the Fulbrook Fellowship Committee. I retired in 2009. It has not been possible to mention everyone, and all events, and I apologise if I have caused offence in any way.

Sadly in 1997 just before Christmas, because of my darling Graham's declining health we moved to a smaller house in Bourton on the water.

Annie Purcell.

BRIAN KAY'S VIEW FROM THE PODIUM

Libby Purvis wrote an article recently in *The Times* about the lack of singing in schools and she mentioned that the previous weekend she had sung – as she does every year – in the Really Big Chorus annual performance of the *Messiah* at the Royal Albert Hall, which gives her a regular choral fix for the year! She mentioned what a special pleasure it is to be among more than 2000 singers, unknown to each other, but bound together by the sheer joy of singing.

As it has been my good fortune for the last twelve years to conduct this remarkable annual event, I was delighted at her championing of the occasion. It is quite unlike anything else and remains one of the great highlights of my year, every time. Pre-pandemic we would assemble 4000 singers, which – even in the vast space of the Albert Hall - limited audience space to a little over a thousand enthusiastic followers. Inevitably it's taking time to build back to that sort of number, with people still feeling a little nervous about being in the middle of large gatherings. But if you are prepared to take the risk – and we do all have to learn to live with Covid, as it's not going away – then the rewards of either singing in or listening to such a spectacular gathering of musicians are tremendous.

And this ties in nicely with two other occasions which have continued to keep this old timer busy 'on the podium' recently. As part of the same organisation which runs the Really Big Chorus (see www.trbc.co.uk for details!) a selection of members sang their way up the Rhine from Nuremberg to Amsterdam in early November, ending with a performance in a wonderful church in Edam (where the cheese comes from!). There's something very special about fifty or sixty singers coming together at the beginning of a week, previously unknown to each other (though we do have some regulars) and forming a choir within the space of a few days, having a lot of fun and then achieving something very positive musically.

As I write (mid November) the Burford Singers are busy preparing for an evening of music by that globally successful and much-loved composer John Rutter, whom I am privileged to have known as a close friend since we studied music together at Cambridge University way back in the swinging sixties. It has been a great joy to spend our rehearsal weeks on John's irresistibly tuneful music. He is, of course well known for his Christmas carols, though there's far more to this extraordinary musical genius than that, as our programme will clearly show.

So all in all, it's been a busy time. And if the government and those responsible for the education of our children and grandchildren can't see the massive benefit, both musically and socially, that singing brings in the enrichment of our lives, then the future of music across the board is in serious danger and great moments like those described above could become just a memory. Perish the thought.

Brian Kay

Message from your District Councillor

I have now been your District councillor for six months. I am still learning the ropes, but I am finding it a very interesting experience so far. Let me describe the three relatively distinct aspects to my role – responding to local needs, contributing to the committees where I am a member, and becoming involved in the wider functions of the Council.

Local needs come to my attention when residents contact me over a particular issue, or matters arise at town or parish meetings. The individual's concerns are often about planning aspects (perhaps a delay in having their application or query dealt with), concern with disturbance from a building site (not much the District can do about that, sadly), help with social housing or the siting of a waste bin. Issues at a parish level tend to be about broader issues, such as funding for projects, safety measures on the bridge over the Windrush, the Coles Field planning appeal, and keeping the HGV question alive. In general I have found officers to be responsive and helpful to my queries on a constituent's or parish's behalf.

My committee work is dominated by planning aspects on the Uplands Planning Committee. Large scale projects, and those where town/parish councils have raised objections, come to the committee with an officer's recommendation for us to approve or reject. Rejection must be based on strong policy grounds. Prior to most monthly meetings, we have a site visit to familiarise ourselves on the issues on the ground. This is particularly important when assessing the impact on neighbours, which is not so easy to see from a plan.

I am also on two scrutiny committees which cover a wide range of financial, operational and environmental issues. We receive presentations from our delivery agencies (Ubico and Publica) as well as from outside bodies such as Thames Water and the Environment Agency. The committees are a forum to offer advice to Cabinet when they consider the matters or reports in question. In my experience so far, these committees operate pretty effectively and are predominantly non-political.

And finally, my experience of the Council in operation. I have attended one Cabinet meeting out of interest. It was held in Charlbury not Woodgreen - alternate monthly Cabinet meetings are 'on the road' to make it easier for members of the public to attend and see how Council operates. These are the main meetings where decisions are taken and there is a strong emphasis on openness.

At full Council meetings there is both confirmatory business, and real debate on motions. For example, at the October Council meeting, there was a motion to express support for the private member's Climate & Ecology Bill being promoted through Parliament currently, and to write to our MP Robert Courts, urging him to support the Bill. This is where politics comes into play – having ascertained that he did not intend to support the Bill, the Conservative Group voted against the motion en bloc, without apparent consideration of whether this is what their constituents might have wanted.

Hugo Ashton, District Councillor for Burford, Fulbrook and Taynton
hugo.ashton@westoxon.gov.uk or 0771 2490517

14th December 2022

Singe we Yule: A Musical Portrait of a Medieval Christmas with Sarah Deere-Jones

This hybrid lecture will be held at the Warwick Hall, Church Green, Burford, OX18 4RZ at 11am and via Zoom. Please be seated by 10.50 for notices of upcoming events.

Bookings can be made via the website (www.theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk). Visitors are welcome, space permitting, for a suggested donation of £10.

Coffee is available in the Warwick Hall.

For more information contact publicity@theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk

To learn more about The Arts Society Cotswolds and to keep abreast of any additional activities, please log into the website www.theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk.



Friends & Benefactors of the Burford Tolsey

You are cordially invited to become a Friend or Benefactor of the Burford Tolsey by donating £10 or £25 respectively per person per year. If you are also able to complete a Gift Aid declaration, this would also enable us to receive an extra 25% from the Government.

As a small thank you, you can enjoy (1) **Monthly e-News** – our magazine with locally focussed articles, (2) **'Artefacts'** – our twice-yearly e-update for Friends & Benefactors, (3) **'Free'** participation in local projects and (4) An additional **discount** for subscribing to the Tolsey Talks Complete Series.

Benefactors will also be invited to an Annual Benefactors Reception. To join and 'Gift Aid', please go to www.burfordtolsey.org/join

Self Guided 1 hour Burford Walking Tour



Fulbrook News readers, together with visitors to the Town, can now download their own self-paced circular walk around Burford of just under 1 mile (1.4 km) to discover many of Burford's most interesting buildings, for £4.99 (pay online).

Burford Tolsey Archive – Volunteers Needed

We've made excellent progress, and are now in a position to start to erect storage racks, fit bookcases and other office equipment with a view to being able to soon being able to start to receive items that are currently being stored elsewhere in Town in houses, garages, cubby holes often at risk of deterioration. Every item will need examining, recording, sorting and safely storing with a view to eventually being photographed and shared 24/7 via online access.

This is an exciting next phase for the Tolsey Community Archive but if we are to achieve our ambitions we need to welcome additional new volunteers to expand our existing small, but perfectly formed, team of helpers. If are able to spare some time to assist us, Clendon Daukes would love to hear from you 01993 823533. Full training will be given and you can look forward to working in a warm, modern, purpose built central location in Swan Lane and meet other new similar minded friends. We are looking to commence our work in September which will be in advance of the official opening of the Archive.



Thursday 26th January at 7.30pm

OXFORDSHIRE v NAPOLEON, Julie Ann Godson

Many men from Oxfordshire were involved in the international struggle against Napoleon. In this talk Julie Ann Godson will introduce you to eight Oxfordshire sailors on board Nelson's flagship "Victory" at Trafalgar, and then to a Woodstock rifleman on the field at Waterloo.

Thursday 23rd February at 7.30pm



GREAT DOLLS HOUSE & its life and times, Susan Ashton

Discover the story the Burford Tolsey Museum's famous doll's house, that is modelled on the Great House in Witney Street and hear about the life and times of Regency high society, that it portrays. During this talk you will learn about the people who modelled this remarkable representation of The Great House in Witney Street. Sue's father, Roger Warner, was a leading and respected antique dealer in Burford and donated his collection of Burford ephemera to the Town and hence the Tolsey Museum arrived.

The talks, which last 45 minutes plus 15 minutes Q&As cost £5 per talk/household, can be purchased on www.burfordtolsey.org/events.

Peter Martin petermartin@btinternet.com, www.burfordtolsey.org

HELP NEEDED

The Church of St. James the Great has been here for the comfort and solace of all villagers and visitors for many years, however it does not have a Sexton to look after the Church Yard. This job falls on the shoulders of our Church Warden who is long past the age of retirement.

Even if you don't want this job perhaps you could help? The upkeep of the Church is a heavy job for an old man! The ivy needs pulling off the gravestones and the Garden of Remembrance needs attention, plus the removal of branches and brambles etc and it generally needs a tidy up.

If you have a spare moment do just wander along with a pair of secateurs! Or contact John Radcliffe on 824044.

Can you help look after my dog?

We are looking to hire someone to look after our 1 year-old Havanese (small dog) while we go on the occasional holiday. He's a social dog so can't be left alone for long. As a bonus, he'd love it if you had a dog too, as he's very playful! Please call Jean for more info 07950 694639.

Jean Smith, Westhall Hill

COFFEE MORNING – AN UPDATE

There will be a **Christmas Coffee Morning** in the Meeting Place at the back of the Church on Thursday December 15th 10.30am. Please join us for a cup or two of coffee, some convivial conversation and maybe a special seasonal treat!

For various reasons I am unavailable to run the event for the first three months of 2023 so there will be a break over the winter. There will be more information in the March newsletter about future plans.

Thanks to all my regulars for turning out over the past year and especially to David Foster and to Joy and Ron Howlett for all their help.

Gilly Kay (823193)

WELCOME PACKS

If you know of someone who has moved into the village and would like to receive copies of the Fulbrook Village and Burford and District WELCOME PACKS, please could you let me know either by phone on 01993 823260 or by email to nicolahillmanart@yahoo.co.uk. Thank you.

Nicola Hillman



Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire opens up new opportunities for volunteer advisers to provide vital support in the community

Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire is looking for volunteers from all kinds of backgrounds to support local people with their problems. Issues might include debt, housing, benefit and employment problems. With the increase in the cost of living, the need for more volunteers to help people is vital.

The West Oxfordshire charity supported 8,823 people last year to help resolve their problems. Every week the charity gives free, independent and confidential advice from trained advisers.

Volunteers are often looking for new ways to gain valuable experience and enhance their skills, or to enjoy the opportunity to work with and meet different people. They find it rewarding to support local people and make a difference to their lives.

Right now, Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire is looking for volunteers to become advisers. This involves taking calls, responding to web chat, meeting clients face-to-face, and working with colleagues to provide the best support possible for people who contact us. Each adviser works with each client to understand their individual needs, then, with professional support from qualified and experienced supervisors, undertake research to find the best advice to give.

A comprehensive training programme will be given. Generally volunteers are asked to contribute at least 8 hours per week, which can be done flexibly either in the central Witney office, our HUB on Station Lane, Witney, or even from your own home.

Citizens Advice volunteers come from all walks of life and choose to volunteer for a variety of reasons. They include students; people getting back into work after career breaks; people with part-time jobs; carers; and people who have retired. People simply need a desire to help.

Teresa Archer, Chief Officer at Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire said:

“Our wonderful volunteers are the heart of our service - the work we do to support people in the community simply would not be possible without them.

“As a volunteer, you’ll learn about a range of issues affecting local people, like debt, housing, benefits and employment. We provide all the training and support you’ll need to work with us to help people solve their problems.”

“It’s a challenging but highly rewarding role. If you’re keen to build on your skills and do something that really makes a difference, we’d love to hear from you.”

Tim, a volunteer at Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire said:

“I find that at Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire you get all the benefits of what you loved at work without any of the things that made Monday mornings such a hang-up. Like sales targets! And commuting! Now I personally get to do more of what I knew I should have been doing more of all along...like helping other people that aren't as lucky as me. I've found it an enjoyable place to work with lots of interesting challenges along the way.”

To find out more and apply, visit citizensadvicewestoxon.org.uk or contact training@citizensadvicewestoxon.org.uk



NEWS FROM FULBROOK CHURCH and a Warm Welcome to All

The Church of St James the Great is a small but very friendly congregation church that welcomes all comers. There is a service on most Sundays at 9.30am (see the schedule below). The church is open during the hours of daylight, whether you want to look at the lovely ancient Norman building which dates from 1120, to feel the peaceful atmosphere or to pray quietly. **Please come and find us, you will always be very welcome.**

Since the last newsletter we have celebrated Harvest Festival and Remembrance Day in the Church and village. A big THANK YOU to everyone who made donations of food to Harvest Festival - a large and splendid array of tinned and packet goods, along with fresh apples and pears from gardens in the village, was displayed in church for the service and subsequently taken to the charity Besom, in Witney. Besom is a Christian charity that bridges the gap between those in need and those that want to give - whether it be time, goods or money. The name Besom comes from the bundle of twigs to make a broom - a symbol of their intention to 'sweep away suffering'. The donated goods that we collected for harvest festival were put into food parcels for those who are struggling - after illness or accident, with the cost of living or in an emergency situation. They also collect furniture, baby clothes and children's clothes in good condition.

There is always a box in the church (and it's is open every day) where donations of tinned and dry goods can be put - please donate something if you can. Besom is the local charity that we regularly support with money and goods, and we are so thankful to everyone who has given to this cause. If you want to know more, or have furniture, clothing or time to give please see their website: witneybesom.org

The War Memorial in the village was where the Act of Remembrance took place on November 13th. All villagers are welcome to gather to remember those who have died in the village in Wars and conflict. About 50 villagers attended with about 35 going on to the church service that followed. We are very grateful to Ian Brown who played the Last Post on his bugle to mark our two minutes silence in prayer and thought for those who gave their lives to save others.

December and CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Everyone is very welcome at each of these services, and to meet and chat with others afterwards over coffee and biscuits. The Church in Fulbrook is for the whole village - do come and share the joy of Christmas with others for the Carol Service or for the advent services - a warm welcome awaits you.

4th December - TAYNTON. No service in Fulbrook	9.30am	A service for all those from the parishes of Burford, Fulbrook, Taynton, Swinbrook, Asthall and Widford. In Taynton Church.	
11th December - Advent 3 Fulbrook	9.30am	Morning Prayer. BCW	Rev'd Dick Farr
18th December - Advent 4 Fulbrook	9.30am	Morning Prayer BCP	To be led by members of the congregation
24th December, Carol and Crib service -suitable for families	4pm	Carol Service Lessons and Carols ALL WELCOME	Rev'd Tom Putt
25th December - Christmas Day	9.30am	Morning Prayer	Rev'd Dick Farr



BURFORD SCHOOL

Burford School News

There has been a great deal to celebrate and much progress has been made, as a result of great endeavour, over the last two months of the new academic year. In the past couple of weeks alone, our students have participated in several enriching trips and events which have taken place alongside fantastic learning opportunities in the classroom and a significant number of sports fixtures.

Some of the brilliant events that our students have recently participated in, such as our Year 11 mock interview event, would not have been possible without the tremendous support of the local community. Indeed, this event aimed to give our students greater confidence in expressing themselves and interacting with others in an interview context, which is key preparation for their futures. Students had the opportunity to undertake an individual fifteen-minute interview with business volunteers, gaining valuable interview experience within a relaxed environment. Huge thanks must go to these volunteers who offered their time and expertise to support our students and made the day such a success. A fantastically wide range of organisations, many locally based, and sectors were represented. These included, amongst others, Meech International, Nielsen, Cottsway, and Oxford County Council. If you would like to support our students at any of our future careers-related events, please do contact our Careers Leader, Mrs Haines at h.haines@burford.oxon.sch.uk

Call to all Old Burfordians

Are you an Old Burfordian or do you know someone that is? If so, be sure to sign up for our newsletter at burford.oxon.sch.uk/school/alumni/get-in-touch. After the disruption of the pandemic to our alumni events calendar, we hope to revitalise and build on our existing alumni network and share exciting future alumni events with you, as well as school developments and alumni news, through our soon-to-be relaunched Burford School Association newsletter.

Old Burfordians can also discover more Burford School Association news and connect with other Old Burfordians on Facebook (@burfordschoolassociation), Twitter (@burfordalumni), and LinkedIn (Burford School).

It is always a pleasure to welcome Old Burfordians back to school to share their experience and knowledge with current students, whether providing valuable first-hand insight into different careers, talking about apprenticeships or university life, or even sharing personal challenges and how they have overcome them. If this is of interest, please contact us at alumni@burford.oxon.sch.uk

Burford School's refurbished cricket pavilion which we re-opened for our first alumni event and which is used for our annual MCC match:



North Cotswold Arts Association

Wednesday 8th February 2023:

'Mixed Media in Flower Painting' and book signing by Susanna Bailey, Warwick Hall, Burford, 2-4pm.

Wednesday 8th March 2023:

A Workshop 'Spring Flowers in a Flowing Lost/Found Style' by Local Artist Charmaine Williamson, Warwick Hall, Burford, 2-4pm.

Wednesday 12th April 2023:

AGM and fascinating update on Kelmscott Manor, William Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites by Fiona Rossington, Warwick Hall, Burford, 2-4pm.

News from The



The nights have drawn in, we've had the fires lit for months; mainly to combat the bonkers cost of energy; and the pub smells of mulled wine and pine. Christmas is drawing ever nearer and we're feeling very festive with parties actually able to go ahead this year. We're looking forward to Carols @ The Carps which was a roaring success last year, if you haven't already booked make sure to as it is a bookings only event. Tom's creating homemade s'mores again and plenty of them as they were hugely popular and of course we will have plenty of mulled wine and merriment. Tickets are £15 and include mulled wine, cottage pie or a vegetable pie, carols and a small donation to Fulbrook Church who are holding their carol service on 24th December.

Times are very unnerving with the cost-of-living crisis and we would like to thank everyone in Fulbrook and the surrounding communities for your support as many small businesses like us rely on your patronage. For this reason, we are cutting back in some areas that don't directly affect the guest experience which includes Christmas cards which we always deliver with Leo and Max each year.

Last Christmas Day saw the pub packed with Fulbrookians and their families and we are looking forward to seeing many of you again this year. We will open our doors at 11am and head home to our families at 1pm.

Boxing day we will be shut as it is a Monday and the kitchen will be open as usual from the 27th until New Year's Eve when we will be feasting at 7pm. Kicking off with canapés and fizz followed by a 5-course dinner menu, and fizz and fireworks at midnight. The menu is available on our website and we will always cater for any dietary requests and needs.

RETURN OF THE SUNDAY ROAST – for one day only. New Year's Day sees the return of Tom's increasingly sought-after Sunday Roast. Bookings will be available from 12-4pm so make sure to get ahead of the mob as we're expecting lots of people.

If we don't see you over the festive period, we would like to wish you all a fantastic Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Ryan, Siobhan, Tom, Leo & Max



NEWS FROM THE FULBROOK MEETING PLACE

The FMP is the space in the Village that is used as a village hall as we have no other community building. It is located in the back half of the church and is there for everyone to use. However, in common with other ancient buildings (our church dates from 1120, so is 900 years old!) it can be a little on the chilly side. So this winter the FMP is going to be heated all day every Thursday to provide a warm space for village meetings and events.

We are calling this **WARM WELCOME THURSDAYS - and events are open to everyone in the village who wants to come. Please do venture across the threshold to find a Warm Welcome awaiting you.**

Every week

9am - 10am. Keep Fit class - join the group for gentle aerobic, balance and stretching exercises to music. Please ring Pat Ferrett for more information 01993 822892.

12.30 - 2pm. Lunch of soup and a roll, cake and tea/coffee. No need to book - come and enjoy lunch and a chat with others over a hot home-made meal. There is no charge for this but donations are welcome.

Every month

10.30 - 12pm Coffee, chat and biscuits. The next coffee morning is on December 15th and will be followed by lunch - you are welcome to come to either or both! In the New Year coffee mornings will be on the third Thursday of each month. Please contact Gilly Kay or Lyn Bibbings for more information. Gilly - gillykay.kay@btinternet.com for the December morning or Lyn Bibbings for those in the New Year. Lyn - 01993 823640.

Other meetings that periodically take place are the Fulbrook Forum, the Parish Council meetings and the Parochial Church Council.

THE FMP is also available to rent (at very favourable rates) to villagers for parties, meals etc. There is a small kitchen, tables and chairs, WC available. Please contact Lyn Bibbings for any information about the FMP or events 01993 823640



BURFORD and DISTRICT SOCIETY

After a gratifyingly well supported programme of talks and events throughout the year, and a record high number of members, December is when we catch our breath. By tradition, we do not meet this month.

But to whet your appetite for our 2023 programme, here are some early visual clues to some of the exciting events that you can look forward to next year:



We will start with our eagerly anticipated AGM, on the 21st February which no doubt will generate its legendary excitement and volatility. Every year, somewhat similar to the Running of the Bulls in Pamplona, otherwise staid members of the community, are seen to morph into adrenaline junkies who are prepared to throw themselves in front of others in their desperation to seize a place on the committee, such is the demand for such highly sought after roles.

We anticipate the anticipated rush for seats and relentless scramble to join the committee, could be more intense due to the attraction of the subsequent talk. This will be given by our erstwhile WODC County Councillor, **Derek Cotterill**, entitled **'From Cocoa Tins to Glass - the rapidly changing world of communication'**.



You can guarantee your place by clicking on 'Events' on our website, (see below). Additionally, you can gain an unfair advantage over others, if you are interested in possibly volunteering to join the committee, by contacting me on 01993 822769.

Memberships, which run for a calendar year from the 1st January, will shortly fall due for renewal. Once again, despite rising costs etc we will be pegging our fees at £10 per person, for five talks, an annual visit and a free garden party. Your prompt renewal of subscriptions would be much appreciated. New members are warmly welcomed and can download an application form from our website.

Peter Martin, Chairman

peteremartin@btinternet.com

www.burfordanddistrictsociety.co.uk

Here's the latest recipe from our resident chef Peter Burns:

Lighter Christmas Pudding

Along with sprouts, Christmas pudding comes in for some mixed reviews, with smaller and younger members of the family refusing to indulge the Victorian passion for this traditional, dark, suet laden Christmas treat. Whilst they may sing "*Oh, bring us some figgy pudding and a cup of good cheer!*" they won't eat it when it arrives! (It doesn't help that it has been described as a cross between fruitcake and haggis!) That said, fear not dear reader, I have a compromise: a lighter, more modern and less Dickensian version that should have all ages and culinary persuasions tucking in. Perhaps what matters most during deepest, darkest December is not the precision and execution of said tradition, but rather the sentiment it embraces.

Ingredients

- 150g sultanas (maybe try golden sultanas for an even lighter touch?)
- 50g dried apricots
- 100g raisins (maybe try golden raisins?)
- 50g mixed peel (or maybe dried cranberries instead)
- 100ml rum
- 100g unsalted butter plus extra for the basin
- 125g light brown sugar
- 1 zested lemon
- 2 large eggs
- 125g plain flour
- 50g fresh white breadcrumbs (freeze slices of white bread, cut them into cubes, whizz them in a food processor)
- 1½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1½ tsp mixed spice
- 1 small cooking apple (peeled, cored and finely chopped)

Method

- **STEP 1**
 - Tip the sultanas, apricots, raisins and mixed peel in a bowl, and pour over the rum. Stir, cover and soak for at least 3 hrs or overnight.
- **STEP 2**
 - Butter a 1-litre pudding basin and line the base with a small circle of baking paper.
 - Beat the butter, sugar and lemon zest in a large bowl using an electric whisk - until pale and fluffy.
 - Beat in the eggs, one at a time, then stir in the flour, breadcrumbs and spices.
 - Fold in the rehydrated fruits and peel, their soaking liquid and the apple. Spoon into the prepared basin, pressing it down firmly with the back of the spoon.
 - Cover with a sheet of baking parchment, then a sheet of foil, and secure with kitchen string.
- **STEP 3**
 - Put an upturned plate in the base of a large pan and sit the pudding on top, then fill the pan with water until it comes halfway up the side of the basin. Alternatively, put the pudding in the top of a lidded steamer and cover.
 - Steam for 2 hrs 30 mins, *ensuring the water doesn't run dry!* Remove the pudding from the pan and leave to cool completely.
 -

- **STEP 4**
 - Uncover the cooled pudding and wrap in a clean sheet of foil.
 - *Will keep in a cool, dry place for up to two weeks, or the freezer for up to three months.*
 -
- **CHRISTMAS DAY**
 - Steam the pudding for 1 hr 30 mins. Turn it out onto a large plate and drizzle with brandy, darken the room and set light to it *flambe* style!
 - Serve with pouring cream or custard

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21st December – Carols @ The Carps

5.30-6pm start £15 per ticket includes:

Mulled wine, cottage pie or vegetable pie, carols & a £1 donation to the church

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