



Newsletter No 80
Summer 2023
www.osa.org.uk



OGBOURNE ST ANDREW, MAIZEY AND ROCKLEY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Summer edition of the Parish Newsletter! Inside you'll find:

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Please send contributions and ideas for articles to alexandra.hegarty@hotmail.co.uk



OGBOURNE ST ANDREW CHURCH

There is an insert in this edition explaining why we need your help. This Parish has shown its community spirit many times over the years and most recently, and brilliantly, in the resurrection of The Silks. We hope you can help with this little Project.

The Church Wardens

You can find out about church services, local church contacts, or sign up for the Ridgeway Benefice newsletter at www.ridgewaybenefice.org.

100 Club Winners

April

1st prize Janice Hetherington

2nd prize Victoria Bartlett

May

1st prize Matt France

2nd prize Roger Swan

June

1st prize Ayrton Jimenez

2nd prize Imogen Bartlett

Why not join the 100 club?

A 100 Club is a form of lottery. Subscribers pay £2 per month and are entered into a monthly draw. All profits go to Ogbourne St Andrew Church.

First prize is 75% of the available pot, while second prize is 25%. There is no limit to the number of shares held by any one person, but no individual can win more than one prize per month. The more shares you own, the greater your chances of winning! Apply to Ian Gordon-Finlayson, Treasurer, at iangf@f2s.com, to join the 100 Club or to increase your holding.

Spring Wreath-Making Workshop



At the end of March, eight of us spent an enjoyable morning at the Silks on the Downs creating living Spring Wreaths – see the picture for the result of our efforts – under the watchful eye of Emily James of Grace and Ivy Florist.

There are plans to hold more workshops in November, for Christmas Wreath making. They proved very popular last year, and as well as morning and afternoon classes, there will be a later one from 7pm - 9pm. If you are interested please email me and I will put you on the list.

Carolyn Davis davisian51@btinternet.com



Community walk for our footpaths

The first Ogbourne St Andrew & Maizey Community Walk took place on a beautiful sunny morning in the first week of June. Plucky ramblers, dressed in a bizarre selection of cross country gear, assembled with dogs and children in the bar of The Silks for coffee and reconnaissance. Maps were shared, routes planned and coffee drunk. Some nerves were expressed at the challenge which lay ahead but, at the allotted hour, we spilled out onto the pavement for a group photograph. What a motley crew we were, and passing motorists appeared aghast at the spectacle.



Undaunted however, we set off at a steady pace, which later slowed to what can only be described as leisurely and eventually almost glacial. We headed past The Olympiad, up the downland track to the top and followed the diagonal path across the fields to the top of Green Lane. Here the party split with the fitter members crossing the gallops for a more demanding hike. The weaker brethren were already feeling the lure of the pub and slunk (is that the past participle of slink?) off down Green Lane to The Silks.

Many thanks to Carys Gregory for organising the walk, providing maps, providing directions and sustaining morale. It is important that we walk our footpaths to make sure they are kept open for the future. "Use them or lose them" is our motto. As you can tell, this was a nice, gentle, social event and I would be surprised if anyone returned home, exhausted, blistered or suffering from heat stroke! Carys is intending to organise more of these walks in the future, so why not come along and join us. Think how fit we will all be!

John Hetherington





Coronation Day Celebrations



Ogbourne St Andrew and Ogbourne Maizey wouldn't let a major event like the King's Coronation slip by without putting on a bit of a bash! Dire weather forecasts, however, led to a "shall we, shan't we" dilemma for the organisers. But in the end we decided to press ahead and, for once, fortune did favour the bold!

Nicky Place, ably supported by her daughter Izzy, Salèha Pinhorn and Karen Brown, organised a fantastic afternoon full of fun and games, and they were rewarded by a good turnout, happy faces and dry

weather. Somehow the village rustled up an array of gazebos, tables and chairs where friendly locals sat around, chatted amiably and ate their Coronation teas.

There were craft activities and prizes on offer for the younger attendees, a royal quiz, a photo booth, and some extremely impressive and imaginative entries in the Coronation Cake Baking competition.





A particular high spot of the afternoon was the dog agility show, where the brave hounds of Ogbourne showed off their prowess by weaving in and out of poles, passing through makeshift tunnels etc. In a puerile moment of frivolity, the Chairman of the Parish Council also attempted the course. Whilst he performed well at weaving in amongst the poles, he had a refusal at the tunnel and was disqualified.



Huge thanks to Nicky for organising the event, to all those who helped set up the gazebos and man the stalls and to the Parish Council for funding the event. An enormous thank you also to Margaret and Alex Matthews for the loan of their orchard, and to Marian Blakeney for moving her sheep and lambs for a couple of days so we could be there. And, of course, to all those who came along and joined in. The day was rounded off by drinks in the Silks, as is becoming traditional. A good time was had by all!





History Group Update

The History Group has held its first meeting in The Silks, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) followed by a slide show of old photographs. The slide show was thrown open to everyone in the parish and we had standing room only!

Amongst the audience were three brothers with strong connections to the building, when it was known by its original title of The Wheatsheaf: Barry Priest and John Harris who at different times were licensees, and Roger Harris who was born in the pub and spent his formative years there. Between them they have contributed greatly to the history we have been accumulating and are memorialised by their graffiti on the external walls! Several of the long-standing village residents gave additional information about events, people and buildings shown in the slides. An excellent convivial evening in the pleasant surroundings of the pub! We will discuss the best way to build on this event, so please watch this space.

We are aware that there have been a few glitches on the Group website recently (www.osahg.org.uk), but blame Google for changing their file security. That is still to be fixed but we are also looking to change the hosting, given the high cost of our present provider, so the website may disappear for a short period. Please bear with us, we will succeed!

Bruce Fox (01672 512867), Ogbourne St Andrew Parish History Group



News from the Silks – Your community pub

The Silks on the Downs is continuing to face tough trading conditions and we are operating in a very challenging environment. You won't have been able to escape the ongoing headlines about the impact the cost-of-living crisis is having on the nation's pockets and pubs, including ours. The good news is that people are continuing to come to our pub and have a great time. There's just not enough of us turning up to help us weather the economic storm, however tightly we control our margin and costs.

What do we need from you?

First, use it or lose it! We need more of the community using the pub. We know times are hard, but we also know that the challenging environment surrounding us will pass, and if we don't hang onto the pub now, we won't get a second chance. Please consider the pub for your family outings, Sunday lunches, meetings with friends, drinks, or even a quick weekday lunch dash while home working. To book a table at The Silks, book online at silksonthedowns.co.uk/contact, email hello@silksonthedowns.co.uk, or call 01672 205604.

Second, tell everyone about it. As we've said before, personal recommendation is always the most effective. Please tell friends, families, colleagues about us; review us on TripAdvisor or Google; and share on social media.

Third, volunteer to help. Our committee has worked so hard to raise the money to re-open and run the pub, and we now need some fresh blood to help us continue. Please consider joining the pub committee. We also need volunteers to help keep the pub running and looking good. Specifically, if you can give some time (even just an hour a month) to DIY, gardening, bar work, marketing, please contact info@octypus.org

Community Benefit Plan

As a community pub we are required to maintain and develop a community benefit plan to ensure that the pub serves the broader interests of the community. Following the survey carried out in 2020, the original plan was built on 5 pillars, many of which have been delivered – the provision of a defibrillator, local walks and bike routes to promote healthy activities, information on our history and heritage, and accessibility for all, which includes a community café, a book club and special community events. We now need volunteers from the community to help with re-assessing needs and creating/coordinating more activities which use the pub as a base.

The Parish Council are lending their support with this, so if you have ideas for activities which can use the space or if you would like to be involved in the running of the community benefit plan, please get in touch with Nicky Place or members of the Community Benefit Society management committee at info@octypus.org. The committee can arrange for keyholders to be available to provide access and trained volunteers to run the bar/coffee machine if needed.



The
SILKS
on the Downs



**COUNTRY PUB
& DINING**

- Locally sourced fresh cooked food
- Excellent range of drinks
- Legendary Sunday roast
- Beer garden

Community owned since reopening in 2022 means all profits generated are used to improve the pub and its offering or to support community initiatives



Open Wed – Sat
12pm-3pm & 6pm-11pm
Open Sunday
12pm-5pm



Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to be the first to know about our regular events and offers



Book online:
www.silksonthedowns.co.uk

Contact us:
hello@silksonthedowns.co.uk
01672 705 064

Community Benefit Coordinator

As you know, we were fortunate enough to get a grant towards re-starting the pub as a Community Pub. One of the conditions of this funding was that we should be able to demonstrate benefit to the wider community of re-opening the pub. And, sure enough, a number of clubs and activities focused on the pub have grown up since The Silks re-opened.

In order to keep track of these activities and to encourage more activities into the future, I have agreed, as a member of the Parish Council, to take on the role of Community Benefit Coordinator for The Silks. If you are involved in any activity which is associated with The Silks and is potentially of benefit to the community, please let me know. If you have ideas for a new society, club or activity which could fit the bill please get in touch to let me know. There may even be some help available to support you!

You can contact me on lloyd_nicky@hotmail.com or contact the members of the Community Benefit Society management committee at info@octypus.org

Nicky Place

Please send contributions and ideas for articles to alexandra.hegarty@hotmail.co.uk



Marlborough Open Studios

It's that time again when artists open their studios to you.

This year Jane's studio (23) at Bramley, Main Road, will be open on the first three weekends of July. She will also open midweek on Wednesday the 12th July 10.30am - 5pm, and an evening opening on Friday the 14th from 6pm - 9pm.

Details of all artists taking part around the County can be found in the Art Trail brochure which is available in The Silks, or from various venues around Marlborough.



Jane Fox

Voter ID: do you know the new rules?

From 4 May 2023, voters have to show photo ID at polling stations to be allowed to vote in local elections and by-elections. From October, this rule will also apply to general elections.

What documents can you use as photo ID?

Documents you can use include passports, photocard driving licences (not paper driving licences), and Older or Disabled Person's bus passes. You can check the full list on the electoral commission website. If you don't have an accepted form of photo ID, or you're not sure whether your photo ID still looks like you, you can apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate. You don't need voter ID to vote by post.

Make sure you're on the register

Don't forget: to be able to vote, in person or by post, you need to be on the electoral register. To register online, you need just five minutes and your National Insurance number, or you can fill out a paper form and send it in by post.

See the electoral commission website www.electoralcommission.org.uk for more information, or contact the Wiltshire Council Electoral Services team at County Hall in Trowbridge on tel. 0300 456 0112, email elections@wiltshire.gov.uk.

£2 bus fares now available till October

The Government's £2 single bus fare promotion has been extended once more and will run until end October. Find bus times online at:

www.connectingwiltshire.co.uk/getting-around/bus



Wonderful Winterbournes: Restoring the Og

Winterbournes are a unique and defining characteristic of England's rare chalk streams. They comprise the upper reaches of the river and are characterised as the sections of channel that only flow, temporarily, once the chalk aquifers have become recharged after autumn and winter rainfall. These ephemeral streams typically emerge during late winter or early spring as narrow ribbons of blue, wending their way through the rolling chalk valleys. As spring turns to summer, the stream bed begins to dry up and the winterbournes gradually recede, blending back into the landscape.

A varying winterbourne cycle

Although the cycle is predictable there is natural variability; in a dry year some winterbourne sections might not flow at all, and in a wet year they may flow almost all year round. Dry winterbournes can often look more like a path or a track than a river, but don't be deceived; they are a hive of ecological activity and can be amongst the most biodiverse zones in the whole river system.

Winterbournes are the powerhouse of our chalk streams. The moment they start to flow water species colonise and drift downstream to supply the rest of the river system with new organisms. Conversely, they transition into an entirely new habitat once water levels drop, and the riverbed begins to dry. They support a diversity of species, depending on how much water is present. For example, as the water recedes specialists like caddisfly larvae, usually restricted to floodplain ponds, move into the temporary pools in the river. As those pools dry up mud beetles arrive to graze on the rotting algal material left behind. Other species have adapted to living in the same part of the river regardless of the state of flow. For instance, some specialist stonefly and mayfly nymphs are only found in winterbournes and some beetles have evolved to inhabit river sediments which experience repeated inundation.

The River Og, our own winterbourne

The perennial headwaters of the River Og are found at Bay Bridges, upstream of which the river becomes winterbourne. Like many chalk streams the Og has been modified over the centuries and parts of the channel have been moved and straightened to suit the human activities of the time. Upstream of Ogbourne St Andrew the river has historically been diverted to the edge of the floodplain to create a water meadow system that would have enabled the farm to 'drown' the meadow and produce an early flush of grass. However, with the old water meadows long since redundant this reach of winterbourne remains constrained to an artificially straightened channel running alongside the A346.

Creating a new wet meadow habitat upstream at Ogbourne Down Farm

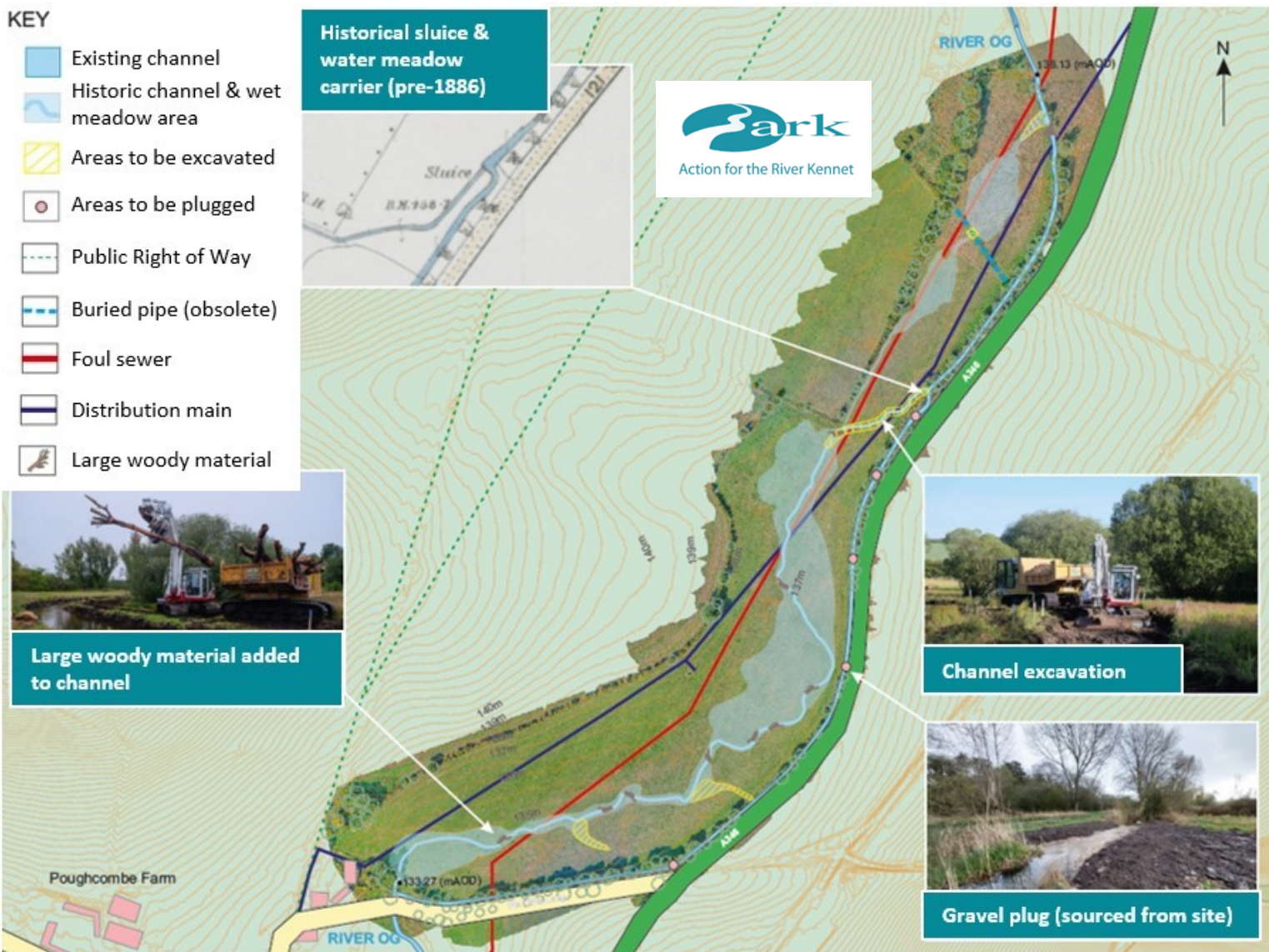
There is often little or no visible evidence of what the chalk streams of today might have looked like before the man-made modifications of the past took place. However, at



Ogbourne Down Farm there are a few relics of 'paleo channel' still intact. This, along with support from the farm, has provided a rare opportunity to restore a significant reach of winterbourne and create new areas of wet meadow habitat.

Work starts in July

Action for the River Kennet (ARK) have been working with the landowner and the Environment Agency to develop the proposals and works are planned to commence this July. ARK will be on site with contractors for three weeks until the beginning of August. Once completed, the restoration will see the river returned to a more natural course, allowing it to meander through the historic 'paleo channel' and spill out across the meadow as it might have done centuries ago.



ARK will look forward to bringing you more news on the restoration project at Ogbourne Down Farm later in the year but if you are interested in finding out more about what is happening, please feel free to get in touch with me at: rupert@riverkennet.org

Rupert Kelton Project Manager, Action for the River Kennet (ARK) www.riverkennet.org

Please send contributions and ideas for articles to alexandra.hegarty@hotmail.co.uk



Shakespeare's **THE
COMEDY
OF ERRORS**

www.rainorshine.co.uk



Pack your bubbly, chairs, and picnics and witness the comical confusion and chaotic capers of Shakespeare's hilarious masterpiece!

**In the garden at Maizey Lodge, Ogbourne Maizey,
Marlborough SN8 1RY**

Wednesday 26th July 2023

Performance starts 7.30pm (whatever the weather!)

One interval of 20 mins.

Gates open from 6.00pm for picnics. Bring your own chairs.

Bar/coffee/ice creams/W.C./parking

**Tickets: Adults £16.00 Children (under 16) £8.00
Family £42.00 (2A 2C)**

Tickets in advance only 01672 – 512125 / maizey50@gmail.com

Performance in aid of KHARPP - Support Ukraine



The Kharkiv & Przemysl Project (KHARPP)



This year the Maizey Outdoor Theatre performance is supporting KHARPP (The Kharkiv & Przemysl Project).

KHARPP was founded in spring 2022 by Alex Thomas and Ada Wordsworth, who saw a need to simultaneously support Ukrainian refugees arriving into Poland and those who had stayed behind in the frontline eastern city of Kharkiv. At that time, tens of thousands of refugees were coming over the border into Poland daily, whilst Kharkiv was besieged by the Russian army and enduring relentless bombardment. Since then, KHARPP has maintained an unbroken presence on the ground helping refugees in Przemysl (Poland). In autumn 2022 they launched “KHARPP Repairs”, an ambitious programme to repair and rebuild homes and public buildings providing essential services in formerly occupied or frontline towns and villages in the Kharkiv region. As of January 2022, KHARPP had fully or partly repaired over 130 homes, as well as two medical clinics and one care home for the elderly and disabled. In the first half of 2023, KHARPP is aiming to repair a further 250 homes, in addition to a number of public buildings.

Since its inception, KHARPP has also been acquiring used ambulances in the UK and delivering them to frontline paramedics in northern and eastern Ukraine. It has successfully handed over eleven ambulances to date. Currently, KHARPP is working on purchasing a “blood bus” for the Kharkiv region. Blood is currently in chronically short supply in Ukraine, so boosting the capacity to donate and deliver blood around eastern Ukraine is a top priority. If you would be interested in sponsoring the blood bus, or to find out more, please email

contact@kharpp.com or you can donate to the cause at kharpp.com.



An example of KHARPP’s efforts is the work completed on the windows at the medical centre in Slatyne, which has continued to serve local residents throughout the war. Along with the roof completed by another charity, the restoration of these windows brings the clinic one step



A short “tail” about a country cat named Bob

A year ago, I arrived downstairs one morning and was surprised to see that the mince pie I'd left on the work surface, in a bowl covered with cling film, had been eaten. I then spotted that our cat's wet food and biscuit bowls were both empty and a half pouch of cat food had been clawed open and eaten. I had a vain hope that it might be our lovely cat, Crackle, who had disappeared 10 years ago – who had found his way home again!

After another “break in” the following night, I set up my wildlife camera in the kitchen. Sure enough the intruder visited again, and was caught on video. It was the tabby cat with white paws and a stump for a tail, that we had recently spotted around the neighbourhood.

I put a note on the village community Facebook page to see who he belonged to – the only response was that he had visited other houses, and there was even a photo of him sat comfortably on the windowsill indoors at The Forge! But no one claiming ownership. I contacted the vets, posted on other local community Facebooks and put a piece, with photo, in this newsletter – still nothing!

We moved our cat's food upstairs at night – right next to our bed – but that didn't deter him, and the noisy cat fight on the landing in the early hours made us realise we needed to try and resolve the problem quickly. A new microchip recognising cat flap was the answer! But we couldn't get one to fit the gap the old one would leave – even with “a special cat flap adaptor”. So it was a new back door – sharp intake of breath at the cost – but peace of mind for us and our cat, Pop.

Over the next few months we saw Bobtail (as I had named him) passing by a few times (and asleep in our gazebo on one occasion). We also noticed that the large rabbit population in our field had diminished, since he had assumed the role of head of rabbit clearance! Early in October

we noticed him hanging around our stables sometimes, so we put a fleece blanket on the bales for him and a bowl of biscuits. I set the wildlife camera up again to check who was eating the biscuits – mostly Bobtail, but also the infamous Tigger Wright and a black and white cat, who I believe lives at Poughcombe Barns.



Disappearing through our cat flap



Discovering a new cat flap has been put in



Snug in his new igloo

When Isobel in Church Lane heard that Bobtail was living in our stables, she donated an Igloo that her cat Milo, had rejected. With said Igloo in place on the bales, the wild-life camera revealed Bobtail giving it the “once over” before snuggling down inside.

The weather turned very wet at the end of November, and I thought Bobtail might like some wet cat food (to save him going out hunting in the rain!). He was out of his igloo in a flash, and gobbling the food faster that I could

squeeze it out of the pouch. Since then I’ve fed him twice a day, and now, although still very keen, he now eats steadily rather than gobbling it all. He also enjoys a late supper at Isobel’s, apparently.

Since I’ve been giving him the wet food, not surprisingly, I’ve become his best friend. A couple of days after I started this regime, I sat down next to him and nervously stroked him – I need not have worried, he was soon purring happily, which was music to my ears!

Carolyn Davis



Enjoying the sun outside his new home

Open Farm Sunday at Maisey Farm Sunday 11th June

This year, Open Farm Sunday was hosted at Maisey Farm near Rockley for the first time, with an emphasis on nature and the environment, and the work that the farmers do for wildlife, birds, flora and fauna. It was fascinating to see what is going on to protect the Downs for us all.

Maisey Farm is an arable farm that sits atop the Downs at 700 ft, and is owned by Jilly and Ken Carter. The site boasts a nature reserve, a chalk pit and two beautiful ponds.

Over 500 visitors joined in with butterfly, pond and foraging walks, met ducks, sheep, chicks and an owl, enjoyed tractor rides, ate fabulous food from the 2nd Marlborough Scouts and Padfield Porkies, and found out more about all the very special organisations and businesses in our area working to protect nature and farming, including the Marlborough Downs: A Space for Nature, NFU Wiltshire, the Wiltshire Ornithological Society, Devizes Young Farmers, Fee’s Bees, and many more.

Find out all about this, and many other events through the year, on the **Marlborough Downs: A Space for Nature** website.



For your Diary

More information on planned events can be found inside this issue, or see the village website: www.osa.org.uk

Sat-Sun 1st & 2nd, 8th & 9th, 22nd & 23rd July: Jane Fox, Bramley, **Weekend Studio Openings** (Marlborough Open Studios)

Wednesday 12th July, 10.30am - 5pm: Jane Fox, Bramley, **Weekday Studio Opening** (Marlborough Open Studios)

Thursday 13th July: Six Course Tasting Menu at The Silks on The Downs (evening only) - booking essential

Friday 14th July, 6pm - 9pm: Jane Fox, Bramley, **Evening Studio Opening** (Marlborough Open Studios)

Wednesday 19th July: Quiz Night at The Silks (*moved from usual last Weds of the month slot to avoid clashing with Og Maizey play*)

Wednesday 26th July, 7.30pm: **Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*** performed by The Rain or Shine Theatre Company in the garden at Maizey Lodge.

Tuesday 1st August, 10am - 5pm: **Community Café** at The Silks

Wednesday 2nd August: Silkworms Book Club, The Silks

Tues 22nd August: Family transient art event, Rockley. For more info, contact Marlborough Downs: Space for Nature

Wednesday 30th August: Quiz Night at The Silks

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Join the Facebook Community page to stay connected, offer help, ask for help or to simply chat.

Look for 'Ogbourne St Andrew, Maizey and Rockley Community'.



Please send contributions and ideas for articles to alexandra.hegarty@hotmail.co.uk