

The Villager

Minsterworth News



Fighting the snow

By Bob Holder

March 2021

Edition 220

Dear readers,

This month lots of interest, so much to fit in! Up to 28 pages, only possible because of the advertising we now have, thanks to the Steering Committee. An electronic version of this magazine can be read every month at www.minsterworthvillagehall.org. This will enable you to follow the live links.

All items for consideration to:-

Paula Ruffley, Editor The Villager

Tel: 01452 751226

E-mail: thevillagerminsterworth@gmail.com

KERBSIDE RECYCLING MARCH 2021

GREEN & BROWN bin & caddy
(landfill) (garden)

Tuesday 2

Tuesday 16

BLUE bin & caddy
(recycling)

Tuesday 9

Tuesday 23

Please put your recycling bin & caddy out by 7am.



Contact us:

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grooming.machine@yahoo.com

Foot and Mouth Disease – Twenty years ago

We are now in the year of the 20th anniversary of another lockdown across Britain, an epidemic with many parallels, not least in the toll it took on those involved.

It was just over 20 years ago, on 19th February 2001, that a pig with suspect Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) was identified at an abattoir at Cheale Meats Ltd in Essex. The pig had come from Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland. Disease soon spread around most of the UK, including Gloucestershire, and several farms were compulsorily slaughtered out in Minsterworth. You can read more about the outbreak by following this link:

NAO Report (HC 939 2001-2002): The 2001 Outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (full report)

Many of us will remember it well, a very sad time.

Roger Blowey



On Sunday 21st March it's Census Day for England and Wales.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic Scotland have postponed till March 2022.

The Office for National Statistics is responsible for planning and running the census, this will give them a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales. The information from the census will help plan for transport, education and healthcare for local authorities.

Census Facts

The first census for the United Kingdom was on 10th March 1801.

There have been other censuses before 1801, William the Conqueror ordered the Domesday Book and it was completed in 1086. In the sixteenth century the Bishops were asked to count the number of families for their dioceses.

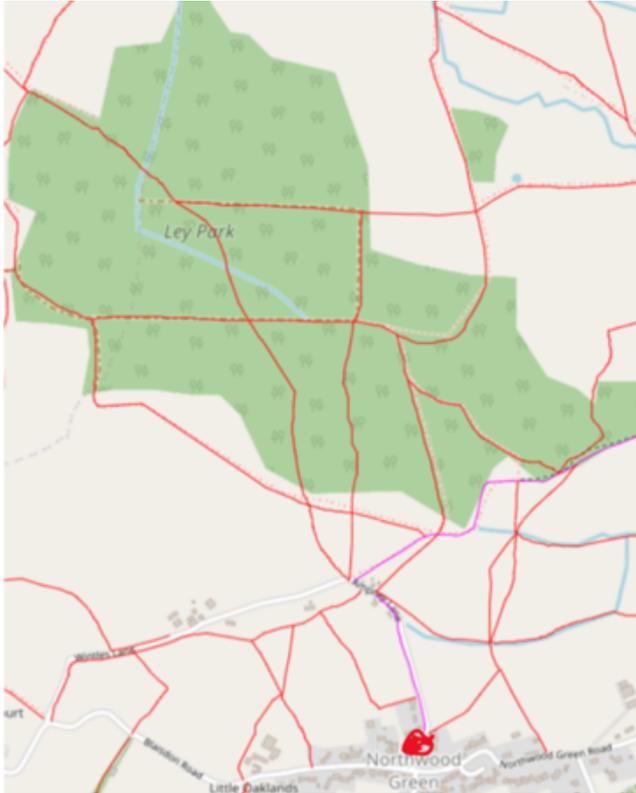
In 1911 the Woman's Freedom League, a Suffragette organisation, launched a campaign to boycott the census. They encouraged women to go to all night parties or stay at a friend's house to avoid the census.

There was no census in 1941 due to the Second World War.

The 2011 census is the first that had the option to complete online.

Go Outdoors – Dawn Ricketts

Our third lockdown is now in place. We are asked to stay local and not drive out to have a walk. This walk is not out to a recognised public beauty spot or public park. It starts from Northwood Green Village Hall. You may want to leave this walk 'til restrictions are lifted.



From Northwood Green village hall car park (red dot) turn left and walk away from the main road.



About ½ a mile down there is a footpath on the right. This image shows the entrance. Please do not park in the entrance to the footpath as this is also a bridle path regularly used by the local riding community.

You enter the area called Ley Park, with multiple red routes through the woods. At this time of year it is welly boot time! There are no stiles just one set of metal gates to open over a small brook on one of the routes. I have never seen evidence of wild boar but deer are regularly seen here.

Some interesting factoids

The first couple to be shown in bed together on prime time TV was Fred and Wilma Flintstone.

The percentage of Africa that is wilderness is 28%. The percentage of North America that is wilderness is 38%

The average cost of raising a medium-size dog to the age of eleven is £11,735 (Still a LOT cheaper than raising a child! :-)

The first novel ever written on a typewriter: Tom Sawyer.

Q. If you were to spell out numbers, how far would you have to go until you would find the letter 'A'

Answer see p12

Minsterworth Reading Group

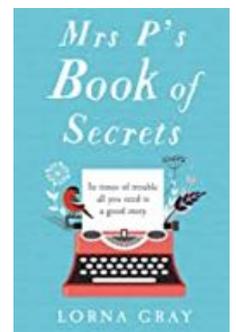
By Vicki Hewlett



The Pied Piper by Nevil Shute. This book starts at the beginning of the 2nd World War in The Alps. An Englishman, John Howard has been on a fishing holiday and is looking to return to England to avoid the impending threat of war in Europe. As he makes his way home he is asked if he can chaperone two children and take them safely back to England. He commences his journey and as it progresses he encounters various dangers and along the way he is asked to take more children to safety. The conditions of his journey become more dangerous as the impact of war takes effect. He eventually arrives back in England somewhat ragged, but

charges all safe. This book was very well received by our members and did reveal quite a few Nevil Shute fans. The character of John Howard was considered patient and responsible and typical of that time. Overall, it was a good read and some felt it was a hard book to put down.

Next, we review 'Mrs P's Book of Secrets' by Lorna Gray, it is subtitled as 'In time of trouble all you need is a good story' so that sounds perfect to read in this current lockdown.



See the list below of future books and review dates. Should you wish to join our monthly Zoom reviews please email vicki.hewlett@googlemail.com this is **always the first Wednesday of the month at 7.45pm.**

3 rd March 2021	The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman
7 th April	The Beekeeper of Aleppo by Christy Lefteri
5 th May	TBC

"I usually meet my girlfriend at 12:59 because I like that one-to-one time." Tom Ward

"I bought myself some glasses. My observational comedy improved." Sara Pascoe

"I saw a documentary on how ships are kept together. Riveting!" Stewart Francis

"I'm Learning the hokey cokey. Not all of it. But - I've got the ins and outs." Iain Stirling

The Precept – What Your Parish Council Costs You

My Council tax bill for the year 2020/2021 amounted to over £2000, which I pay by monthly direct debit payments. Of the £2000, £1500 goes to Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), £145 goes to GCC Adult Social care, £150 to Tewkesbury Borough Council, £314 to the police, and £52 goes to the Parish Council. The latter amount is known as the 'Precept', and it's what funds the Parish Council.

So what on earth does the Parish Council do with £50 of your money every year? I thought it would do me good to find out, and I hoped that you might also find it interesting. Details of the Parish Council expenditure are available on the website www.minsterworthparishcouncil.org.uk. Click on 'Parish Council', then on 'accounts', then on 'expenditure over £100', to view the main costs. Being a legal body, the Parish Council must have a clerk to advertise the notice of meetings to Minsterworth residents, to record the minutes, to maintain and update the website and to transact the business of the Parish Council. When there are several planning applications submitted, that in itself can be a considerable amount of work. There will be correspondence with Highways, planning training for councillors, and transferring information from Tewkesbury Borough Council to Parish Council members. I would estimate that we receive over 20 emails each week from the clerk relating to parish council business. We are extremely fortunate to have had Fiona Wallbank guide us as the clerk for the past 15 years. With over 20 years of experience as a parish council clerk, Fiona has a good knowledge of the 'rules' of running a parish council.

So back to where your £50+ is spent. The clerk's salary is a significant item, followed by insurance, subscriptions to GAPTC, purchase of occasional items such as the defibrillator installed at the Village Hall a few years ago. The bus shelters are the responsibility of the Parish Council, and have to be maintained, which is why we were so grateful for help from residents a few months ago when they were refurbished. Minsterworth park (= the old school playground) is currently rented by the Parish Council from Glos CC, and whilst it is a superb and well used asset, there are costs in grass cutting and general maintenance. The Villager magazine is funded by the Parish Council, although due to the efforts of a small subgroup, there is now sufficient advertising revenue to make the Villager self-financing. The Parish Council funds smaller items like dog 'poo bins', and Neighbourhood Watch signage and meetings, and more recently grants have been awarded to the church, the Village Hall and the Harvey Centre to help their finances during COVID lockdown, when other sources of income have almost fallen to zero. Then there are unforeseen expenses that arise, such as the recent costs (shared with 5 other parishes) of commissioning an expert report to refute the Churcham Housing proposal by Forest of Dean DC. By providing a professional and well-reasoned response to the proposal, with alternative housing suggestions, we are more likely to prevent adverse planning applications.

Parish Councillors receive no expenses or any other form of remuneration for the huge amount of time and effort that they put into various PC functions. It was not until I became involved myself that I understood what a commitment is involved.

So when you pay your £1-00 per week to the Parish Council, please look on us favourably!

RB



Tel 01452 760511

Open Weekdays 8:30am - 5:00 pm

Saturday 9:00am - 1:00pm

Closed Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays

We are located on the A48, travel from Minsterworth through Westbury on Severn, down the hill, left hand side before the garage.

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COVID -19 Restriction are in place. Only two customers in store at any time. We ask that you wear a mask/face covering (unless exempt). Use the hand sanitizer provided at entrance. Orders can be placed over the telephone for collection.

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MINSTERWORTH VILLAGE HALL

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TO BE HELD ON

TUESDAY, 23rd MARCH 2021 AT 7.30 P.M.

The Trustees wish to invite you to attend the Village Hall AGM.

This year the structure of the meeting will be a little different and will be held virtually via Zoom.

If you are interested in joining the meeting, please let Julie Fisher have your name and email address by mid-day 12th March, to ensure that the Zoom logon details, minutes of the May 2019 AGM and the Agenda for this AGM are sent to you. Any questions for the Trustees to be pre-advised to:

Julie Fisher by mid-day 12th March

Please join the meeting and let us know what you think.

In these challenging times, your views are even more important to the Trustees and to the future of your Village Hall.

[julie dawn fisher@hotmail.com](mailto:julie.dawn.fisher@hotmail.com)

Tel: 01452 750562

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March Fish and Chips

THURSDAY, that's 11th March

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Fish and chips continue on 2nd Thursday each month until further notice.



Minsterworth & District Royal British Legion

Whilst we are, at the moment, still unable to hold our monthly meetings, as indicated previously, if there are any British Legion queries regarding Minsterworth and District please do not hesitate to contact your local representatives.

Take care everyone, all the very best to you all.

Terry Bourne – President
Minsterworth & District R.B.L.

Military History

March 1 st	1942	Battle of the Java Sea
March 20 th	2003	Assault on the Al Faw Peninsula
March 28 th	1941	Victory over the Italians at Cape Matapan

"Is the spring coming?" he said. "What is it like?"...

"It is the sun shining on the rain and the rain falling on the sunshine..."

— Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

MINSTERWORTH

MINSTERWORTH IS A MAGICAL PLACE
IT IS WHERE I LIVE
NEAR TO THE RIVER SEVERN
SEVERNBORE CAN BE SEEN
THE RIVER HOLDS MANY SURPRISES
ELVERS ARE CAUGHT AND SOLD
RAMBLING WE DO
WHILE WALKING THE DOGS
OVER THE STILES
RIVER VIEW AT ITS BEST
THIS IS WHERE I LIVE
HOME SWEET HOME ...

Ollie Panting's Acrostic poem was written as part of his lockdown learning.
See how the 1st letter of each line makes a word. Why not send in your own Acrostic poem to:
thevillager@gmail.com by 10th March & your poem will appear in print in The Villager.



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Come and Celebrate!



Easter at St Peter's



Good Friday
2nd April 7pm
Readings and
meditation

Easter Day
Sunday 4th
April 11am
Holy Communion

20th March 10am
Church Yard Tidy
Up - refreshments
served!

All events subject to Covid restrictions that are in place at the time.

200 CLUB

The result of the February draw was as follows:-

£50 No. 135 Mary Cooper

£20 No. 001 Felicity Karger

£10 No. 097 Denise Williams

NO FLOWERS – SEASON OF LENT

Answer to 'factoid' on p4

A. One thousand

My Easy Peasy Lemon Cheesecake

This is my cheesecake recipe that's easy and delicious!

Preparation time 15 minutes.

Chilling time minimum of 4 hours or overnight.

Ingredients

150g Digestive Biscuits

80g of Butter

50g of Demerara Sugar

400g of Cream Cheese (Philadelphia)

800g (2 cans) Condensed Milk

Grated rind and juice of 6 Lemons

Decorate with seasonal fresh fruit



Method

Crush the digestive biscuits into crumbs.

Melt butter in a saucepan and add the biscuits, mix well and turn into a 20cm (8inch) loose bottom cake tin. Press the biscuits firmly onto the base and cool.

Put the cream cheese into a bowl or food processor and mix until soft, add the condensed milk and mix until smooth. Mix in the lemon rind and juice. Pour the mix over the biscuit base and smooth, chill in the fridge for a minimum of 4 hours or preferably overnight.

Katie Panting

HISTORICAL SNIPPETS AROUND MINSTERWORTH

Much of our attention these days is focussed on the building of new houses that's going on around the village, but it is worth reflecting on the fact that Minsterworth has a good number of surviving, very old, houses which have been around for centuries.

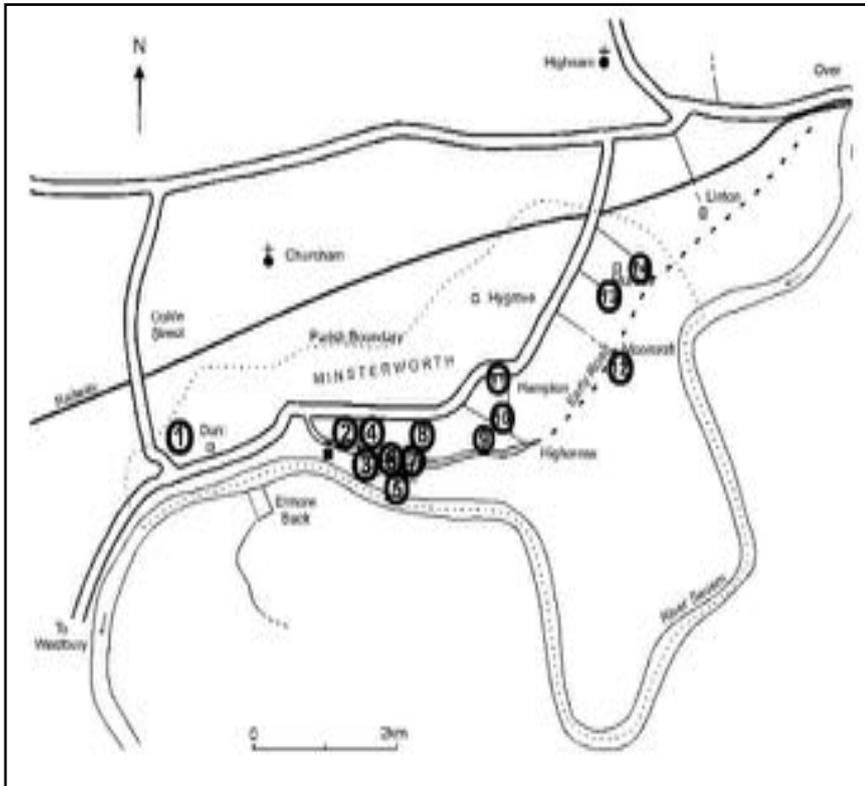
The earliest survey of Minsterworth Manor done in 1757 appears to show as many as 63 properties in the parish. Most of these have long ago disappeared or been built over by new buildings but there remain well over a dozen notable largely timber-framed houses, three of which (The Appletree, Mermaid Cottage and Moorcroft House Farm) are original cruck-built properties dating back originally to the 15/16th centuries, possibly earlier. The rest are of the later box-frame type dating from the 17/18th centuries. In a couple of cases (Minsterworth Court and Upper Moorcroft Farm) the timber framing has been faced with brick, obscuring the old work from view; in a few others, substantial parts were totally re-built with brick. Almost all are Grade II listed.

Back in 2010, the Victoria County History foundation provided funds for an expert survey of architecturally significant old buildings in Minsterworth. A resulting report was produced and the details listed below are derived largely from that report. All this information is openly available from on-line sources.

Listed here are fourteen houses (numbered 1 to 14) with a brief description for each. There is also a sketch map of Minsterworth showing roughly where each of the numbered properties is located.

1. **Tudor Cottage.** House radically modified in the 20th century but an earlier timber-framed building has probably stood on the site since at least the 16/17th centuries. Not listed.
2. **Tithe Cottage.** 16th century. Now only one wing surviving from what was once a larger cross-winged property. Close studded timber framing on first floor wall suggests a high-status residence.
3. **Minsterworth Court (medieval range).** 16th century timber-framed with 17th century jettying at first floor level (lower level now over-built with brick and render).
4. **Lyn Paddock.** Late 17th century.
5. **Mermaid Cottage.** Late 15/16th century cruck cottage, extended in the 17th century.
6. **Snowdrop Cottage.** 17th century.
7. **Street End Cottage.** Mid-late 17th century.
8. **Lower Moorcroft Farmhouse.** Early mid-18th century. Brick built.
9. **Old Pound Farm. 17th century.** Main building with cross wings. Altered in the 19th century.
10. **Pound Cottage.** 17th century.
11. **Appletree Inn.** Building contains the remains of a late 15/early 16th century cruck-framed 2-bay open hall house. Extended in later centuries.

12. Moorcroft House Farm. Quite large 15th, possibly 14th, century timber (cruck framed) and brick-built house with later extensions. Evidence suggests originally a medieval hall house from 14th century.



13. Murcott Farm. Main range of brick constructed in the 18th century but abutting on to a cross wing of 16th century date.

14. Upper Moorcroft Farm. Substantial timber framed building from the 16th century. Refaced in brick apart from east side where original close studded timber framing is still visible. 20th century extensions.

[Not included above are Chapel Cottage, Craycroft and Old Beams; all three have interesting earlier origins but modern modifications means they are not listed. Also missing are Hygrove House, the later wing of Minsterworth Court, Hampton Farm and the fish house in Duni, all of which are important and Grade II listed buildings but are of later (mainly 18th century) date.]

TM-S

**Home grown TOMATO PLANTS advance warning!
for unheated glass, available – April
for outside – May**



**£1 each, all proceeds for
Minsterworth Village Hall
Details to come out via Mailchimp**

Paula

Minsterworth Creatives – ‘Making Felted Creatures with Denise Luckman’

Our Village Creative this month is the lovely Denise Luckman who has lived in Minsterworth for four years. You may know Denise from her walks with her little dog Barney, or rather Denise walks and Barney is transported in his pram!

Denise began crafting from wool to create felt animals and figures a couple of years back. Denise has always loved making things but over the years work got in the way of making (sounds familiar!). Retirement has given her the time to explore new crafts, and a TV programme on felting inspired her to have a go. She explored further, joining on-line groups and tutorials via Facebook and purchasing equipment on Amazon, though a local farmer has donated wool which Denise was able to prepare herself and make a sheep.

Denise suggests starting with a kit (available from Amazon) whereby all materials and instructions are provided. Now an experienced felter herself Denise has built up her own collection of tools including very sharp needles (plasters are always on hand!) needed to turn the wool into felt. Apparently you can wear finger protectors though she doesn't do this, preferring to feel the wool as it turns into a unique crafting medium. Denise prefers to use carded Perendale wool.



Denise will work from photos and has happily had a go at making an assortment of animals including a rocking horse. She's also crafted witches for Halloween, and floral wreaths for Christmas. In making a 3D creature she first makes an armature, a simple wire hape on which to add layers that will create the basic form of the figure. Layers of felt are then added to give the required colours and textures. Denise says her work is very addictive. And while the final works are stunning, they are often the results of up to 70 hours of work and effort. A fact we need to consider when looking at the price of any art or craft piece.

Like many village creatives, Denise has used her time crafting but (like all of us) is looking forward to the lifting of restrictions and being able to share her work to a broader audience. As we headed into Lockdown 1 we were about to launch a Craft Club at the Village Hall. Denise is keen to be involved and to share her work with us, leading a session on felting.



Continued on p16



In the meantime, she is happy to work to commission so do contact her if you see something you'd like her to make. She says she'll have a go at anything!



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GLORIOUS GLOUCESTERSHIRE VIEWPOINTS

With spring approaching, and hopefully the end of lockdown getting closer, I thought it might be worthwhile listing our favourite Gloucestershire viewpoints. There was a time when we would try to visit each one at least once a year. Due to changed circumstances that's no longer an option, but we still manage to get to several. I'm going to list a few each month. Try to get



to at least some of them before the leaves appear, because the view is often better then. You will, of course, need a nice sunny day.

CRICKLEY HILL COUNTRY PARK - THE SAXON CAMP AT BIRDLIP

Go up the A417 to the Air Balloon roundabout, keeping in the left lane. Go straight across, turn immediately left towards Leckhampton, and then after approx. 100m take the next left over the cattle grid to enter Crickley Hill Country Park. Drive up the hill, and through the open grassland where if you are lucky you will see the Belted Galloway cattle. From the top of the hill you will pass through a small area of woodland, and into a car park on your right. This gives you by far the best views if you want to remain in your car. Alternatively, drive on a little further, and go down a slope into the lower car park. There is more room here, but you can't see as much from your car. Both car parks are fee paying. There are many very good short walks, one of which starts next to the visitor centre (probably COVID closed) and is a flat tarmac path up to the information board displaying details of the Saxon camp. Remnants of the camp are still visible. I read the board most times we go there, and apparently, there is evidence of habitation in this area for over 4000 years. It amazes me that anyone would want to build in such an exposed position! The ground is surprisingly dry even after quite heavy rain.

The views back over Gloucester, Robinswood Hill, Chosen Hill, May Hill and the Forest of Dean are just superb. On a very clear day, you can even see the Brecon Beacons 57 miles away. Try to arrive just before sunset. Some evenings the colours are magical!

RB



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We recently completed updating the kitchen at Minsterworth Village Hall

BEFORE



AFTER



Gardening by The Severn – A scented garden all year round

We long for the warm summer months at this time of year. I can't give you the heat, but the heady sweet smells of a summer garden can be achieved. You can have year-long scent in your garden with the right planting. We have inherited a number of beautiful, sweet smelling plants in The Naight garden. One of the wonderful discoveries is that we have scented flowering shrubs for every month of the year.

Most winter flowering shrubs have almost inconsequential flowers but they make up for that with their scent. Three shrubs that have been perfuming the Naight garden from December through to February are:

Lonicera fragrantissima: Winter honeysuckle is one of my favourites. It flowers from late December to early March and has the most beautiful smell and delicate creamy white flowers.

Sarcococca confusa, common name Christmas box: A low growing glossy evergreen shrub, with the strongest perfume which flowers from December to February. I have discovered a new Sarcococca, Winter Gem, a dwarf plant suited to smaller gardens. It can be grown in a pot, perfect for placing outside your front or back door.



Mahonia: Dramatic architectural evergreen shrub, glossy dark green, holly like leaves with sweet smelling yellow flowers.

The Naight also has many varieties of **Daphne**; a marvellous scented shrub with 50 species to choose from with evergreen and semi evergreen plants. Different varieties flower from spring to winter. Daphne bholia has pale pink flowers and the distinct sweet scent can be smelled all winter.



Spring is starting to explode all around us. As the snowdrops disappear from the river bank they are replaced with nodding daffodils, followed by pink frothy cherry blossom. **Prunus Amanogawa** (Japanese flowering Cherry) has a beautiful sweet scent. As do many of the plum and damson blossoms starting to flower.

Spring bulbs are also a great source of scent: Hyacinths, lily of the valley, narcissus and bluebells. Often seen as old fashioned but let's not forget lilac (*Syringa*) with approximately 20 species of this shrub in every shade of purple, pink and white. They start flowering from mid spring to early summer. **Syringa x hyacinthiflora** bears fragrant purple flowers from mid spring.

Continued from p19

Happily before we know it, summer will be here once again. My favourite scented shrub **Philadelphus**, mock-orange will be anointing the garden with its scent of orange and Jasmine. There are around 60 species of this shrub from 3-20 ft tall. Another wonderful summer shrub is **Elaeagnus angustifolia**, Quicksilver: Beautiful silver leaves with yellow scented flowers produced from silvery buds. Then there are the roses but let's keep those for another day.

Marie-Clare Mawle

Amazing Spaces in Minsterworth



George Clarke, best known for the Channel 4 TV show *Amazing Spaces*, is standing beside the A48 absent-mindedly picking at my neighbour Anne's hedge.

In a moment he'll finish his phone call, stop defrocking the local shrubbery and help me lay out a dozen or so old doors and windows that he says remind him of his childhood at his grandmother's house.

It's late September 2019. George, with his film crew, has come down to inspect what's left of Ken and Joan Jordan's old shed and to see what can be done with the treasure trove of items we were bequeathed when we moved into Wayside in 2015.

On moving in, we knew we had big shoes to fill, as well as a big veg patch to tend to. However, from rediscovering original 1960s wallpaper to trying our hands at plum chutney and cider making, turning Wayside into our home has been an adventure.

The *Amazing Spaces* show is centred around trying to do things yourself and, if you can, re-using old items you have at hand.

Continued on p21

Continued from p20

The original workshop - built by Ken himself in the 1970s - had seen better days, but it was filled with a veritable collection of old wood, tin roofing, the odd giant circular saw, vintage lawnmower and numerous tools, axes and butchers' cleavers - things young children are automatically drawn to when you're not looking. Above all, the windows stood out as something we could re-use.

Twelve months and two lockdowns later the new shed was finally finished. The bit that I'm most fond of is looking out through the bullseye windows at the garden. By reusing the old features, not only have we attempted to reduce waste and add character to our build, but with a lick of paint and some putty we have given the windows a new lease of life and they will hopefully go on to be appreciated by another generation.

George seemed to like them and hopefully Ken would have approved. All I have to do now is work out what to do with his old doors.

George Clarke's Amazing Spaces, Series 10, episode 4 can be viewed on All 4 www.channel4.com/programmes/george-clarke-amazing-spaces-box-set/on-demand/69776-008

Tim Clark



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Spring life on a local farm

By Allie Dowding



Spring marks its arrival on the farm with the lambing and then the calving



With the warmer weather the cows and young cattle can move to new grass



Tractor work on the ground also begins in the Spring. On the left the field is being ploughed ready for planting maize seed and on the right, the grass is being cut for silage in late spring.

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SEVERN BORES in MARCH 2021

There are no really big bores in 2021 but there are some 3* ones in March and again in April.

		time	tide (m)	prospect
Tues 30 th	Mar	10:03	9.9	***
		22.25	9.7	***
Weds 31 st	Mar	10.42	8.8	***

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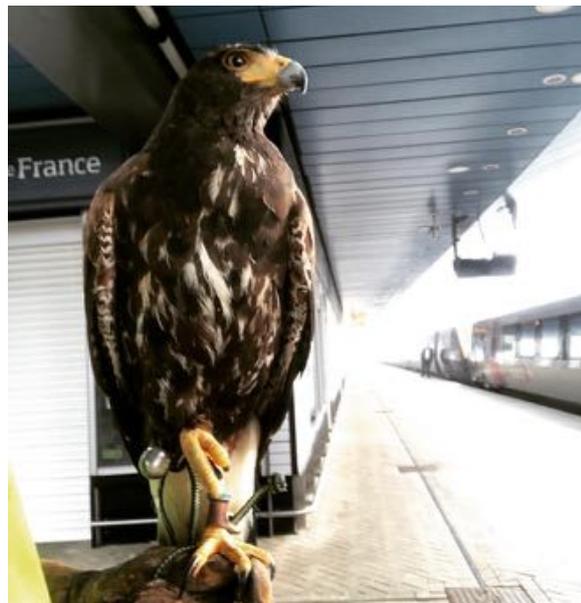
Falconry in the fields of Minsterworth

By Chris Bullock

You may have been walking down on the riverbank by the church and seen a hawk or two hopping between the trees with the sound of bells behind them - these are Arty and Millie, a pair of female Harris' hawks. They and I practice the profession and sport of falconry, which is an ancient method of training wild birds to work and hunt alongside humans; it dates as far back as 1700BC and the methods of training and basic husbandry haven't changed for thousands of years. It's said to have originated in the Middle East, but Chinese art shows that it may have been around for longer than that. Falcons have historically been used as status, as well as trading items, and for hunting for food - apparently knights would take their birds on their travels to ensure they'd be well fed!

Fun fact: the apostrophe in "Harris' hawk" is not a typo! Ornithologist John James Audubon gave this bird its English name in honour of his friend Edward Harris.

These days Falconry birds are captive-bred so wild populations are untouched. Harris' hawks are native to the southern parts of North America down. They're approximately the same size as our local buzzards.



Harris' Hawks Arty and Millie, working at Bristol Temple Meads and Reading stations

Having spent time volunteering at the International Birds of Prey centre in Newent and working for a national pest control company, I was lucky enough to have a chance to specialise in Falconry in my work, which is something I'd wanted to do for a long time.

Over the last 2 years I've spent most of my time training the hawks- I got them fresh from their parents at 14 weeks old. Their 'full time' job is in Urban Bird Control - we travel around the county and surrounding areas to clear nuisance birds from public places.

Continued on p26

Our most famous site by far is Bristol Temple Meads train station, where the wild pigeon and gull populations are causing serious damage to the old Victorian buildings. As well as gulls attacking people trying to steal their sandwiches, the mess they cause is keeping the site cleaners very busy!

We attend sites two or three times a week and the hawks act as a natural deterrent. In the wild most animals have a natural predator, so we train the hawks to tolerate the busy surroundings and use those natural instincts to move groups of birds away to a place they see as 'safer'. Over the year the nuisance birds learn there's a regular danger so the following season they choose to nest elsewhere. Studies have also shown substantial gains in farming production following natural bird control methods throughout the season.

Outside of work the girls have a good life. Breakfast usually consists of quail or locally sourced rabbit and thanks to the local farmer they're allowed to spread their wings in the fields around the village. We try to fly most days and not much puts the girls off weather wise (especially this time of year!). We'll often see the local buzzards having a look at what we're doing- and recently a young male Kestrel has been showing his face! We especially like seeing the locals of Minsterworth while we're out, if ever you see us please feel free to come and have a (socially distanced) chat and closer look at the hawks.



At home the girls have a large pen with plenty of perches to sit in the sun during the day. Overnight they have their own mews to keep warm, dry and out of the elements. Life pretty much revolves around them and I certainly appreciate the surroundings we're in, as that allows me to do something I love.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank my father, who's supported me in building the housing and keeping the hawks, the neighbours on both sides who tolerate the occasional squawks and the local farmer for letting us fly in his fields. Thanks also to Mrs Ingham and The Villager, and all that took the time to read this article.

We offer pest and bird control services to cover all types and species, as well as building and solar panel proofing, surveys and general advice. We'd also like to start Falconry and 'Hawk walk' experiences, which are possible to do in a safe and distanced way. If either are something you or someone you know may be interested in, by all means contact Chris on 07946 753411, and you can find more photos and videos at @101aerial on Instagram.



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What do you call
a train full of
chewing gum?

**A chew-chew train
of course!**

The San Francisco cable cars are the only mobile National Monuments.

$111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987, 654,321$

Now, that's just weird! :-)

Q. Half of all Americans live within 50 miles of what? A. Their birthplace

HELPFUL COMMUNITY LINKS

The Parish Council website - agenda, minutes, councillors etc

<https://minsterworthparishcouncil.org.uk/>

The Village Hall website - www.minsterworthvillagehall.org bookings, recent events

Minsterworthmatters Face Book website – news, local produce etc

<https://www.facebook.com/MinsterworthGlos/>

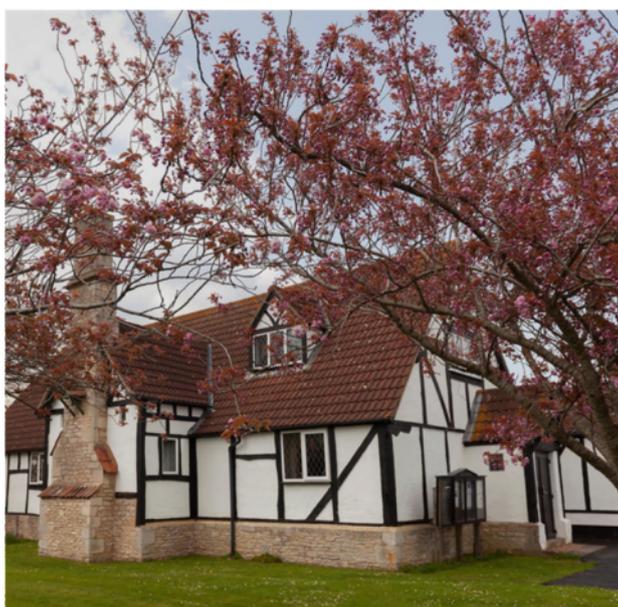
St Peter's Church - <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/14101/> services, events

Minsterworth Matters App - join by texting Roger Ingham, 07525330364 immediate village interests

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Welcome to Minsterworth Village Hall

Why not plan your next event with us?

The village of Minsterworth can be found on the A48 to the west of the City of Gloucester, on the north bank of the River Severn, nestled between the Cotswold Hills and the Forest of Dean.

**At the heart of the village is
Minsterworth Village Hall.**

This website is for Minsterworth
Village Hall activities, clubs and events.

www.minsterworthvillagehall.org

e-mail minsterworthvh@gmail.com

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