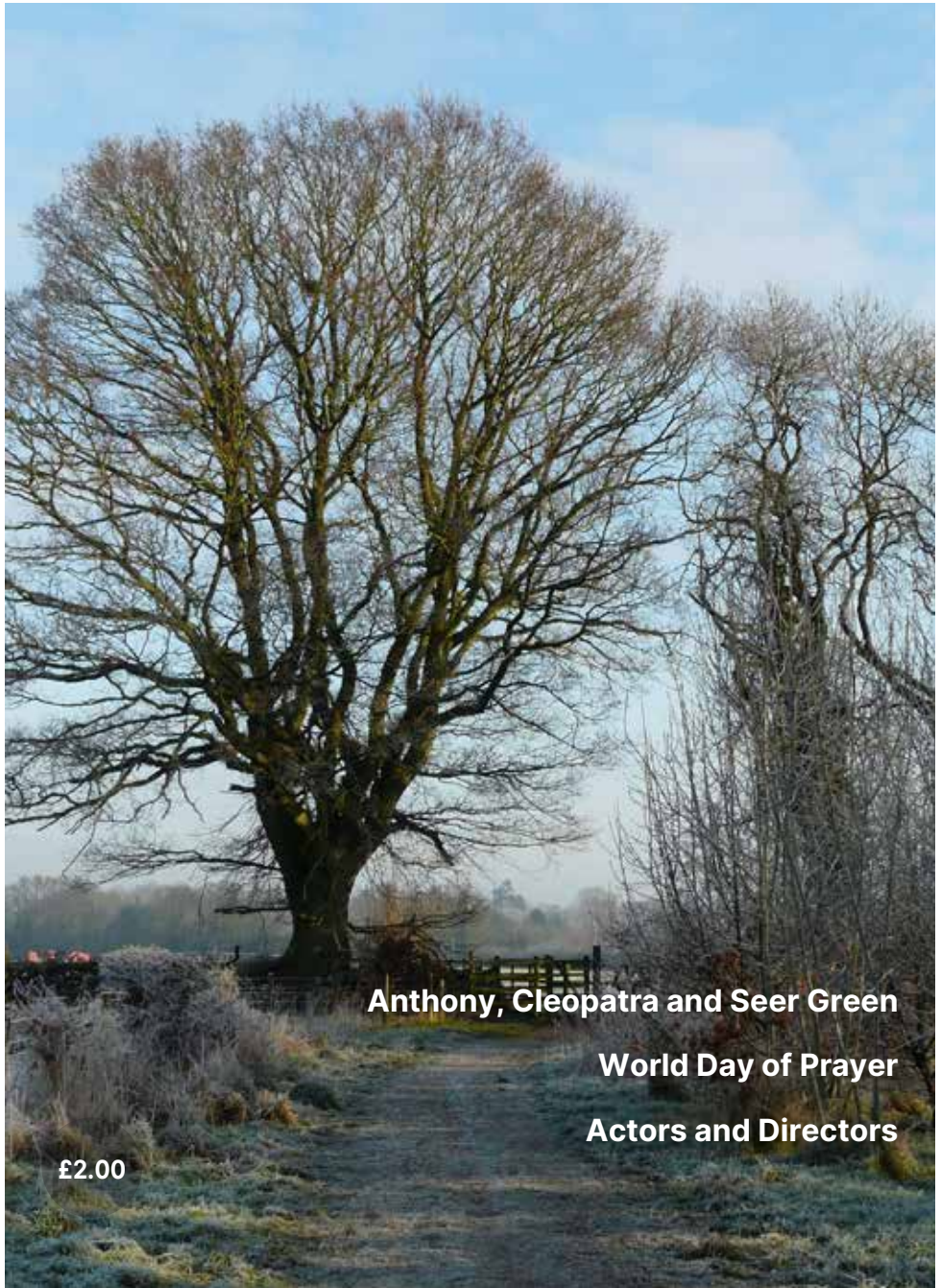


COMMUNITY NEWS

Seer Green and Jordans Parish Magazine

February 2025



Anthony, Cleopatra and Seer Green

World Day of Prayer

Actors and Directors

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Thought for the Month

Whilst you will be reading this in February, I am writing at the beginning of the year, watching the snow fall (we may have had a few more snow events since then as well.) It's amazing how quickly our village can be transformed from a sea of green to a sea of white.

This got me thinking about the whole theme of transformation. Throughout December the village was transformed and looked beautiful with all its Christmas decorations, bringing joy and light in the darkness. New year's resolutions are often a way of trying to encourage a transformation of some kind... I made two resolutions this year and on day 7 I've kept them... not sure how well I will be doing by February, maybe ask me if you see me! There's a Bible verse that says "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of

your mind." (Romans' 12:2) I wonder what a renewing of your mind might look like in 2025? Maybe it is embracing a new mindset, breaking old habits, or striving to become the best version of yourself. Transformation isn't always easy, it requires courage, resilience, and the motivation to not just take that first step but to persevere in the direction you want to travel. Whether transformation in 2025 is in body, mind, spirit or just in being a year older, I am sure that there are family, friends, community and faith groups that can help, support and cheer you on! As individuals and as village communities may we embrace the transformation we initiate, and that which we see around us, and see how it can benefit our lives and the lives of those around us.

Janna Holder - Children and Families Minister - 07764 490960



Photo: Matt Graveling - One Tree Field Seer Green

Church and Community Organisations

Vicar

Rev Jez Carr rev.jezcarr@gmail.com
07916 559151

Primary working days: Wed, Thurs and Sunday

Rector of the Benefice

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01494 872097 07590 123603

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Linda West

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andrew@seergreenscouts.org.uk

Seer Green Brownies

Carole Wharrier 07977 423555

Eight O'Clock Club

Monica Sado 01494 677851

Girl Guides

Brenda Orr | District Commissioner 01753 887209

Jordans and District Rotary Club

Brian Westwood | Secretary 07885 579442

Jordans Horticultural Society

Emma Pegram 01494 874574
Shan Liu 01494 730312
Faith Key 01494 870039

Jordans School

Holly Swain | Head Teacher 01494 874217

Jordans Music Club

Marion Pell | Chairman 01494 872875

Jordans Village Hall Office 10.00 - 1.00

Chris Jenkins | Booking Secretary 01494 875177

Jordans Village Lunch Club

Catherine Robinson 01494 873193

Jordans Village Nursery School

Julie Leonard 01494 875603

Jordans Picture House

Alan Sealy/Box Office 01494 873205

Jubilee Hall

David Howkins 01494 857760

Jordans Quaker Meeting House and Centre

Nina Liebenberg | Warden 07962 105305

Little Ducklings Nursery

Kelly Bartley 01494 677190

One Can

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Seer Green Allotments

Barry Richardson / Chairman 01494 673407

Seer Green Baptist Church

Rev Louise Gilbertson 07983 882260

Seer Green Bridge Club

Irene Machin | Secretary 01494 676321

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Seer Green and Jordans Society

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Seer Green Lunch Club

Gill Roberts 01494 677281

Seer Green Parish Council

Liz Bates | Parish Clerk 01494 874233

Seer Green Pre school

Kirsten Pole | Manager 01494 677190

Seer Green Football

- United (juniors) Tim Wyatt 07833 246819
- FC (adults) Art Anderson 07919 027351

Seer Green Village Choirs

Jane Smith 07759 841205

From the Editors

We hope that you enjoy Community News this month and that it gives you inspiration for the year ahead. Maybe going to the Seer Green comedy night, maybe attending Women's world day of Prayer inspired by women from the Cook

Islands, getting involved in our many clubs and societies, maybe planning your garden or vegetable growing or booking an outdoor opera?

Enjoy whatever you do in February.

The Editors

Next Month's Magazine

Please send all contributions for the **March** issue to: **editorseergreen@gmail.com** by **7 February 2025**. Diary dates for the next two or three months would be very welcome.

Articles should be **300 words max** and in WORD (.doc or .docx format) and photos should be jpeg format, preferably 300 dpi.

Please note any items submitted may be edited for space, content or style.

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Contact us

Holy Trinity website www.seergreenandjordanscofe.org

Church Wardens and General Enquiries Janine Dunnell 07525 322955

Front cover: *The path between Seer Green and Jordans* by Jim Newport

Toddlers in the woods

How we celebrated the wonderful season of Christmas on a cold Friday morning in December and how we now look forward to celebrating the arrival of Spring in about a months' time.

But between now and then how we welcome all preschool children of any age, each along with an adult in tow, from our villages of Jordans and Seer Green - or having a close association with our villages. Getting outside first thing in the morning is therapy itself on these cold winter mornings for young and old alike and as I always say - feeling cold is not about the weather, simply about what we choose to wear!



Layer up and come out into The Centenary Clearing in Crutches Wood, Jordans and join us.

Ali Cork - alicork686@gmail.com - 07803 139079

Toddlers in the Woods Friday mornings 9.15 - 10.15ish during term time



World Day of Prayer

This is a global Christian movement that involves people from many denominations and languages. Each year, women from a different country prepare the content for the church service. It is celebrated worldwide on the first Friday in March.

The 2025 World Day of Prayer, using the theme '*I made you wonderful*' from Psalm 139, comes from the Cook Islands and will be held on Friday **7 March**. In Seer Green and Jordans we are celebrating at the Baptist Church at 11am and the service is followed by a soup and bread lunch.

The Baptist Church and Holy Trinity invite you to join us. We will recognise that God created each one of us with great attention and loving care. We are unique and special, and should cherish all aspects of who we are and of those around us. God created us, God knows us, God is with us. We will reflect on this through songs, stories and prayers prepared by the women of the Cook Islands.

All are welcome. Please contact Janice Richardson on 07985 766697 or Janine Dunnell on 07525 322955 if you'd like to come, and please let us know of any dietary requirements. If you would like to help with making soup, serving lunch or reading short passages or prayers, do get in touch.

Janine Dunnell



February Charity of the Month



WYCOMBE
HOMELESS CONNECTION

Charity of the month

From January through to the end of March 2025 our winter night shelter will be open.

People who would otherwise be sleeping on the street across south Buckinghamshire at the most dangerous time of the year will have the opportunity to have a hot meal, a warm bed and a warm welcome instead. Our staff team will be working hard to find our guests homes for good.

More volunteers are urgently needed.



Homes for Everyone

Prevent anyone from losing their home

ZERO tolerance to leaving people on the street

A big Holy Trinity 'Thank you' to Alison Davies and Carole Campbell

Alison and Carole took over organising the distribution of Community News when Jenny Scott moved to Devon. With the distributors they have done a wonderful job making sure that everyone who subscribes to the magazine gets it delivered each month. Carole and Alison have made the system more streamlined and easy to follow. They are both quietly efficient and impressively competent and it has been a

delight having them as part of the Community News team. However, they have both decided that it is time for new challenges. Tanya Williams has offered to take over organising the distribution and we are very grateful to her and excited that she has joined us. Janelle Stevenson, the Holy Trinity administrator, will be managing the subscribers who pay using the QR code. Thank you, Janelle and Tanya.

Sue Puttergill



Picture from the left Carole Campbell and Alison Davies

Holy Trinity Services in February

2 Feb	10.00am	Morning Praise
	3.30pm	Families @ 3.30
6 Feb	10.30pm	Midweek Communion
9 Feb	8.00am	Book of Common Prayer Communion Service
	10.00am	Holy Communion Service
16 Feb	10.00am	Morning Praise
23 Feb	8.00am	Book of Common Prayer Communion Service
	10.00am	Holy Communion Service

You are most welcome at all our services. Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion is a quiet service best for adults; all ages are welcome at Holy Communion and Morning Praise at 10am; and Families at 3.30pm is a relaxed service aimed at younger families.

Donations to Holy Trinity

If you would like to donate to the work and upkeep of Holy Trinity Church there are many quick and easy ways to do so -

Go to our website:

seergreenandjordanscofe.org and scroll down the homepage to 'Online Giving' and follow the link.

Or go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/4hx7cyzx>

Or you can activate our Online Giving page by using the QR code opposite.

Donations in cash/cheque may be delivered to our treasurer at 58 Chalfont Road.

If you can Gift Aid your donation, please add your name and address.

If you would like to join our planned giving scheme, please speak to our treasurer Audrey Hardy on 07342 652707 or

chardyseergreen@aol.com



Baptisms, weddings and funerals

Wedding

21 Dec A Christmas wedding Amy Bullock and Robert Goodall were married on 21 December. Congratulations!



Jordan's Founders Supper

The Founders Supper is held in February each year to commemorate the anniversary of our village's birth. It is held on the closest Saturday to the 15 February being the date in 1919 when the first bricks of the village of Jordans were laid and the building, The Cottage in Seer Green Lane, began.

This year the 15 February falls on a Saturday so 'Welcome Jordans villagers' to an evening of yes nostalgia, but paramountly of fun and laughter while eating delicious home cooked fare. Ticket sale date to be displayed in Jordans Village Community Store. Don't miss out!



The Cottage Jordans

Ali Cork

Would you like to subscribe to Community News?

January is the time to subscribe to Community News for the year, but we have made it easier to subscribe at any time now, so if you missed the January subscription date you are not too late.

New subscribers can use the QR code to sign up and pay for their 2025 Parish magazine, at a discounted cost of £15 for 10 editions, rather than £20.

Just scan the QR code, click subscribe, add a 10 edition subscription to your cart and checkout! Your details will go to the

distribution team and the magazine will arrive at your door each month (subject to address in Seer Green/Jordans).

If you are not happy using a QR code then just email us at editorseergreen@gmail.com and we will sort it out.

The Editors



Our Living Village: Anthony, Cleopatra and Seer Green!



This coin was struck around 32-31BC, probably in Patras, Greece. It is the earliest evidence of Roman culture from our immediate area. It is a Mark Antony silver denarius: on the front is a galley and the inscription 'Coin of Antony augur one of the Triumvirs organising the Republic;' on the reverse is a legionary eagle between two standards, and 'Legio II,' his 2nd Roman Legion.

The Romans did not invade Britain until AD43, so what story does this coin tell?

Following Julius Caesar's assassination in 44BC, Mark Antony defeated the conspirators, and he and Caesar's favourite, Octavian (the future Augustus), became the two most powerful men in Rome. Antony aligned with Cleopatra, thwarted Octavian's ambitions and civil war ensued. This culminated in the Battle of Actium in 31BC, one of the largest naval battles in the ancient world. Octavian won a crushing victory and Antony and Cleopatra faced a showdown in

Alexandria the following year, but both committed suicide rather than face being paraded as Octavian's prizes.

Antony maintained a private mint which travelled with him, enabling him to secure loyalty by regularly paying his soldiers. To build his 'war chest' he produced 25 to 35 million coins; a volume so huge that Antony's legionary denarii comprised around 20% of all denarii in the Roman Empire 100 years later. They were also of inferior silver content, so there was no incentive for the imperial government to recall them!

The 2nd Legion were later used by Claudius for his invasion of Britain; they established their base at Alchester, near Bicester. In 2021 this coin was found near to the Roman Road between St Albans and Silchester, which passes through Hodgemoor Woods.

Nigel Rothwell - ourlivingvillage@hotmail.com

www.ourlivingvillage.org

© The British Museum Portable Antiquities Scheme

News from Jordans School

Jordans School has been given a David Attenborough School for Nature award by 'Making their school a little wilder'. Congratulations!

They are going to be very busy this half term

- Yr 2 go to Roald Dahl Museum in Great Missenden.
- Parents have a fundraising Quiz Night.
- There is a Science Day.
- On 14 February the children have Valentine's Day Mufti.

Volunteer Treasurer needed to join the Shop Committee

Join our vibrant and friendly team of staff and volunteers at JVCS. The shop is a social hub and essential to village life and needs your help for its continued success.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide regular financial updates to the Committee
- Monitor cash flow
- Ensure financial compliance
- Help to ensure the shop remains financially sustainable

For further information or to join our friendly team please contact:

Angela Hamme - 07774813515 - secretary@jordansvillagestore.co.uk

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Seer Green Gardeners

- If you haven't already done it, now is the time to tackle a rampant Wysteria: - your efforts can pay handsome rewards in greater and more prominent flowering. While it's leafless, you can easily understand its structure and decide on which parts to remove. There's a great video on the RHS website to help.



- Prune any shrubs which have flowered during winter along with hedges and climbers such as ivy or Virginia Creeper - it's important to do this before birds start nesting in them.
- Later in the month, cut back deciduous ornamental grasses to allow spring growth through.
- If you're a broad bean lover, sow them this month so they're well ahead before the blackfly arrive. Parsnips and salad onions can also be sown directly into the soil.
- Winter is a good time to tidy up ponds. Remove weeds from around the edges, and scoop out any leaves that have fallen in and sunk to the bottom. Don't remove them completely - lay them at the edge of the pond so any pondlife caught up in them can escape back into the water.
- The following seeds benefit from early sowing: Cosmos, Kale, Sweet Peas, Tomatoes and Salvias.

Look out for our new brochure arriving through your letterbox. It has details of all our events and growing competitions this year.

Sally Ash for Seer Green Gardeners

Jordans and District Rotary

What a busy month December was for Jordans and District Rotary Club. It started with the Seer Green Santa Dash held up on the Recreation Ground in association with Seer Green Scouts. We had 96 runners attempting 1K, 3K or 5K including a very special visitor attending for the first time many beating their 5K record times from last year. The £800 raised will be split between The Scouts for their trip to Switzerland, Seer Green School towards the new kitchen and The All Together Community in Chalfont St Giles towards the fortnightly held afternoon teas for seniors held in the Youth Group Hall.

Two weeks later we held a Christmas Carol concert with Christmas afternoon tea at the Amersham Fair Organ Museum - an absolute gem of a venue, which raised just short of another £500. Then the month culminated with 3 days of accompanying Father Christmas in his sleigh driving him around the villages of Jordans and Seer Green to meet all the children; raising £1292 for the charity Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Jenny Owen



Rotary Santa Dash

News from Seer Green CE School



Welcome to 2025 and wishing all the readers a very Happy New Year from all at Seer Green CE School! This term's challenges started on the first day of term with a picturesque snowy day, increasing the children's excitement and setting a magical tone for the term ahead.

I would like to thank all our parents for their generous donations to One Can Trust in lieu of ticket charges for our nativity and music concert. Your contributions demonstrate our school's value of kindness and that we remember those less fortunate, particularly during this time of year. The children performed beautifully, and we were so proud of them all.

Our choir's recent visit to Beaconsfield Heights Care Home was met with a warm reception, fostering intergenerational relationships. We are eagerly anticipating future visits and developing our relationship through letter writing to the residents.

Our choir will also participate in the Beaconsfield Choir Concert later this term, showcasing their musical talents.

As we look forward to the lengthening days, we have a broad array of experiences planned for our children. These include educational visits to Eton College and Maidenhead Synagogue, as well as participation in Young Voices at Wembley Arena. Such diverse experiences significantly contribute to our pupils' cultural and academic development.

As a team we remain dedicated to providing a nurturing environment that encourages growth, learning, and community engagement. As we progress through this term, I am confident that our pupils will continue to thrive and make us proud of their achievements and compassion.

Laura Morel - Head Teacher



8 O'Clock Club



For the 8 O'Clock Club, Christmas 2024 started on November 28 - 24 members enjoyed a tasty, seasonal meal at Beaconsfield Golf Club – there was lots of chat and laughter. Whilst having a good time we did give thought to those less fortunate than ourselves. Nearly £100 was raised, by donations, to buy Christmas treats for the food bank.

Talks resume on Thursday, **February 6** 2025 at 8pm

“Tea - the Journey from Bush to Cup” Giles Oakley and Mark Lawson - Tea Tasters @ Two Spoons Tea. Packets of tea will be available to purchase (cash, cheque or card)

March 6 “A Wistful Eye - The Tragedy of a Titanic Shipwright” Denise Beddows

Seer Green Baptist Church £4 (cash) admission includes tea/coffee.

All welcome.

Photo: Tea plantation

Coffee Shop

A meeting place for the community



Monday Mornings
10.30am to 12.00noon
Seer Green Baptist Church

Jordans Biodiversity

Saturday **8 February** 10-1pm - hedge maintenance on the hedge along the Seer Green Footpath. There is no obligation to stay the whole time.

We are so very grateful to everyone who volunteers at our work events. You are many different ages and abilities but always bring enthusiasm for the project and passion for the natural world! Newcomers welcome! We try to ensure there are tasks suitable for all abilities and encourage breaks, chatting and cake eating! Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult and no dogs please. Do let us know if you can come along so

that we make sure we have enough equipment and refreshments!

These activities are kindly supported by Bucks Community Board and Chilterns National Landscapes but there is more to do. If you are able to support the work on Manor Farm Field north, please donate to: **Jordans Biodiversity Group**, Account no **52891630**, Sort code **23-05-80**. We are very grateful!

Contact us on Instagram @jordans_biodiversity_project or email Jordansbiodiversity@gmail.com

Emma Pegram



Wildflower seeds sprouting in Jordans biodiversity field

Jordans Picture House

Our programme into the New Year

We look forward to welcoming you again!

On Friday **February 14** we shall screen "The Old Oak".

Doors open at 6.45pm and the Programme starts at 7.30pm.

The Old Oak (15)

Cast: Dave Turner; Ebla Mari; Claire Rodgers. Director: Ken Loach

The future looks bleak for the last remaining pub, The Old Oak, in a village of north east England, where people are leaving the area as the mines are closed. Houses are cheap and available thus making it an ideal location for Syrian refugees.

<https://tinyurl.com/ykb8dh69>



On Friday **February 28** we shall screen "The Color Purple".

Doors open at 6.45pm and the Programme starts at 7.30pm.

The Color Purple (12A)

Cast: Fantasia Barrino; Taraji P Henson; Danielle Brooks. Director: Blitz Basawule

A woman faces many hardships in her life but ultimately finds extraordinary strength and hope in the unbreakable bonds of sisterhood.

<https://tinyurl.com/3khsyrae>



How to buy tickets

(Adults £8.00, U15s £5)

Online: Go to www.jordanspicturehouse.co.uk

See "Programme and Buying Tickets"

Jordans Box Office: Alan Sealy

alan@janetsealypartnership.com 01494 873205

Seer Green Box Office: Gill Pettman

gillyp4@btinternet.com 01494 678050

Jordans Picture House Committee



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Valentine's Day

Also known as Saint Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine.

Where does Valentine's Day originate from?

It was originally a Christian feast day honouring a martyr named Valentine. Valentine was an Italian from the 3rd-century who was imprisoned by the Romans for trying to help Christians who were persecuted at that time. He also helped Roman soldiers, who were forbidden to marry, by marrying them in secret Christian ceremonies. He was jailed for his crimes. Legend says he restored sight to a blind girl, the daughter of his jailer. Valentine is thought to have written the jailer's daughter a letter before he was executed, signing it "Your Valentine". The day became associated with romantic love as early as the 14th and 15th centuries through the poetry of Chaucer. Now it is celebrated in many countries of the world.



*You're my funky Valentine.
You always make me feel so fine.
My favourite love, my best, my friend,
And that is why I want to send,
A poem to thrill you to your socks,
A poem that sings, a poem that rocks.
A poem to spin you on your head,
(unless you'd like a kiss instead!)
And if that's not enough for you -
I'll up the score - and give you two!
(Or three or four or eight or nine)
for you, my funky Valentine.*

Anon



*You're the syrup on my pancakes,
You're the sugar in my tea.
You're the icing on my cupcakes,
You're the sweets in life for me.
You're the chocolate on my ice cream,
You're the sweet grapes in my wine.
You're everything I love in life,
Will you be my Valentine?*

Anon



Carol Wright

*You're sucrose, you're glucose,
You're fructose and more,
From your head to your feet...
Which are stuck to the floor.
You're Hershey's, you're Snickers,
You're sweet English Toffee.
If you spit in my cup,
You'll just sweeten my coffee.
I love you so much
That I'm getting frenetic,
But I can't even kiss you,
'cause I'm diabetic.
By Kenneth J. Miller*

*Facebook says I'm single
But that's not really true.
My heart belongs to someone,
And that someone is you.
We'd make a great couple,
Jealous folk would hate us,
So please give me a reason
To update my status.*

Anon



Photographs always welcome

We are sent some wonderful photographs for Community News and try to use as many as we can. If you like taking pictures around Seer Green and Jordans do send them in to editorseergreen@gmail.com and we save them and use them at the right season.

This is a picture of the School House in Seer Green in snow and another of Chalky Field Jordans on a frosty day both are taken by Nigel Morgan.

Thank you

The Editors



Dates for your Diary

Thurs 6 Feb 8pm	8 O'Clock Club Tea the Journey from Bush to Cup – Tea Tasters @ Two Spoons Tea
Fri 7 Feb 7.30pm/8pm	Seer Green Comedy Night
Sat 8 Feb 10am-1pm	Jordans Biodiversity Group Hedge Maintenance
Fri 14 Feb 6.45pm/7.30pm	Jordans Picture House The Old Oak
Fri 15 Feb	Jordans Founders Supper
Fri 21 Feb 6.30pm/7.30pm	SG Gardeners Great Village Quiz
Fri 28 Feb 6.45pm/7.30pm	Jordans Picture House The Color Purple
Thur 6 Mar 8pm	8 O'Clock Club A Wistful Eye - The Tragedy of a Titanic Shipwright - Denise Beddows

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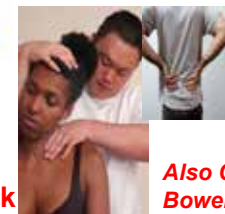
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Actors and Directors part 2

I worked on four films directed by Ken Russell. They were *Savage Messiah*, *Mahler*, *Tommy* (the rock opera) and *Valentino*. Amongst Ken's other film credits were *The Devils* and *Women in Love*. Ken was a demanding director, always seeking perfection and he could be a fiery and difficult person to work for. He could also be amusing and, on occasions, a bully.

Ken loved designing long, very complicated, camera shots, whereby the camera and the actors were constantly moving around. For a camera crew these could be very difficult shots to execute perfectly. On the first film, *Savage Messiah*, I quit within the first two weeks. I was the first assistant cameraman (focus puller) on the film. My job was to keep the film in focus.

Early on in the second week I screwed up on one take and I asked if we could do another take. Ken flew into a rage and I decided that I wouldn't put up with this for another eight weeks, life was too short. I had a good reputation within the industry so getting another film to work on wouldn't be difficult. I went to see the producer and told him I was leaving the film. Ken, by this time, had calmed down and apologised. After that our working relationship became warm and friendly.

One day on *Savage Messiah* we were filming under some railway arches near Blackfriars Station and Ken invited the camera operator and me to lunch. His driver took us to a pub Ken knew well that was nearby. Ken didn't order any food just 3 tankards of his usual. Up came three glass bottomed pewter tankards each holding a pint of champagne. A very liquid lunch!

The famous Russian ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev played Rudolf Valentino the silent movie star of the 1920's in the film *Valentino*. Rudolf, like Ken, was also a very temperamental person to work with. One day whilst filming on one of our biggest sets Rudolf and Ken had an artistic argument over how a scene should be played. They began shouting at each other and suddenly Rudolf left the stage and returned to his dressing room. Ken, likewise, left the stage via another door and went to his office. The producer had to delicately go from one to the other trying to placate them and get them back on the set. Neither would budge. Meanwhile on the set the rest of the crew were sitting around laughing at the antics they had just witnessed. Filming is very expensive and when you have over fifty highly paid crew sitting around doing nothing on an expensive set in an expensive film stage it's enough to give a producer a nervous breakdown.

Eventually after almost two hours both agreed to return to the set but neither one would agree to be first. The solution, both would enter the stage via different doors at exactly the same time. Two assistant directors with walkie talkies were sent to escort them back to the

stage and on a count to ten they came onto the set. They came face to face, grimaced at each other for a split second then both burst into laughter, hugged each other and we were back to work.

Eddie Collins



Ken Russell seated Eddie Collins second from the right.

Janet's Book Reviews



The only New Year's resolution worth making is to read more!

Glorious Exploits – Ferdia Lennon

You're going to have to trust me on this one, but this unique book was my favourite read of last year.

Set in Syracuse in 415 BC during the Athenian wars, this is the tale of 2 potters, Lampo and Gelon who decide to stage a Euripedes play using the Athenian prisoners as the cast, in a quarry where they're being held captive.

I know – bear with me!

This wonderful book is funny, refreshing and totally character driven. Lampo is one of the best characters I've experienced, he has so much heart, and grounds the story by presenting a relatable character who would be as at home now as in 415 BC

Please give it a go – a wonderful book, perfect for book groups as well

The Party – Tessa Hadley

A novella so not too heavy to hold in bed!

The story of two working class sisters with very different characters, in post war Bristol eager to experience life. They both attend a party where they meet a group of young, wealthy, "posh" drunk young men. Despite being unimpressed by them, they decide to meet them at their home – a night which changes them both.

Sparingly written, the author packs a great deal into this novella exploring class, social norms, marriage and gender in post war Britain.



The Second Chance – Charlotte Butterfield

A light easy enjoyable read

Nell has always known the date she's going to die as she was told by a psychic. She has lived her life embracing adventure and hedonism, choosing fun over laying down roots. When the fateful day comes, she sends 5 excruciatingly honest letters to family and past loves knowing she won't be around to face the consequences. Yes you've guessed it – she doesn't die as planned so she has to face her 2nd chance at life, broke and homeless with those who loved her knowing her true feelings.

How would we reflect on a 2nd chance? This highlights the importance of making the most of every day.

Janet Stewart

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Opera, picnics and popping corks!



As I look out of my kitchen window, snowflakes are gently drifting down from a darkened sky, turning the lawn white. It's winter, but on an evening such as this, my thoughts can easily turn to balmy, warmer days, and summer season operas. My husband and I are fans of live opera, and, for many years, we have been regular attendees at various Summer Festival Opera venues in southern England. Summer Festivals are synonymous with beautiful gardens, men wearing smart dress suits, elegant ladies wearing 'those outfits kept for special occasions' coupled with a buzz of excitement, the laughter of good friends, delicious picnics and the popping of champagne corks.

Summer Festival Operas are characterised by long mid-opera outdoor picnic breaks and indoor theatres. Fortunately, venues provide marquees with tables providing shelter from inclement weather.

Summer Festival Opera began in 1934 at Glyndebourne Sussex. Others followed with Garsington Stokenchurch in Buckinghamshire, Grange Park Surrey, Grange Festival Hampshire, Longborough Gloucestershire, Neville Holt Leicestershire and Holland Park London. Waterperry and Bampton, both near Oxford, have outdoor theatres and picnics before the opera begins. In September, there is Fingest Great Barn Opera set between High Wycombe and Marlow.

Opera festivals support charities, including working with schools, prisons and local community projects. Sylvia and Charles Crowther of Fingest Opera ensure that all income raised goes to two charities, 'Child Bereavement UK' and 'Action Medical Research for Children'.

Festival operas all have websites, with information about the new season, including ticket prices and when to book.

Seer Green is an excellent location for accessing these opera festivals as a day trip. For ourselves and friends, nothing beats indulging in inspirational music, sublime singing and glorious venues. For one short day you are transported to a place where troubles can simply fade away.

Festivals mentioned in this article are those which we frequent. There may be others. If there are, please share!

Robert and Valerie Baty

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The Maharajah's Well

The Chiltern Society sent us this piece about areas in The Chilterns that can be explored by bike but I am sure you can visit any way you wish.

The area north of Henley-on-Thames

The country house called Greenlands is situated on the north bank of the Thames about two miles downstream from Henley. In 1871 it was bought by the descendants of the founder of the newsagent and stationery company W H Smith & Son, and remained their home until 1946.

It then became the headquarters of the Administrative Staff College, renamed Henley Management College in 1991. In 2008 a merger with the Business School of Reading University created the new Henley Business School. The buildings are clearly visible from the towpath on the south bank of the river, which is easily accessible by bike.

Stoke Row is the site of a well with an unusual history. During the 19th century, Edward Reade, who was from a wealthy family in Ipsden, spent many years working in India. He was involved in a project to sink a well for a village in Benares, where he told the local Maharajah that the area of the Chilterns where his family lived also sometimes suffered from drought conditions. In recognition of the work carried out in India by Reade, the Maharajah provided funds for a well to be sunk in the village of Stoke Row,



together with a cottage for the well-keeper and a cherry orchard, which provided a source of income to pay the upkeep of the well. It was opened in 1864 and remained in use for over 70 years. The canopy of the well on top of the cast iron machinery is decorated with a gilded elephant, which was repainted in 2008. It's visible from the main street and costs nothing to visit (maharajahswell.org.uk)

The Chiltern Society

Library Flex

This is Buckinghamshire's new library model which will introduce technology to increase opening hours and enable customers to use library services without staff being present during quieter times. Staff will then be available to offer assistance and answer enquiries at busier times.

The new way of operating will see opening hours in our local Beaconsfield library increase by 23% from June. Amersham Library will pilot enhanced opening times with the library open seven days a week from 7am to 9pm on weekdays and from 7am to 7pm at weekends, an increase of 129%.

The decision to adopt Library Flex follows an extensive 10-week consultation which ran between July and September last year. The consultation sought to understand demand for library services and the need for staff assistance across the different sites.

Two of the key topics raised in the consultation included queries on safety during the times when staff would not be present and how the new model would address inclusion for those with additional needs. To address concerns about safety, new arrangements will include enhanced live monitoring of CCTV, upgraded fire and intruder alarms, occupancy management, electronic locks and safety information to be available in a range of formats including video, QR and braille.

Comments and suggestions from disabled individuals and groups have been particularly helpful in ensuring facilities are inclusive.

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