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April and May 2024



The Parish Magazine for Corhampton  
Droxford, Exton and Meonstoke



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## Ways to say goodbye...

There is no legal obligation to hold a funeral service at all plus it's not an easy topic of conversation, but most families should have a discussion, at some point, to decide on what sort of funeral they would prefer. It might be a very brief conversation at the pub 'I would rather be buried or cremated'... or even 'I really don't care, I won't be around' but at least it's a start.

Do not underestimate how many times we hear from bereaved families that they have been left no instructions. Funerals, broadly speaking, fall into three categories of religious, less religious and non religious. Whatever your religion, the customs and traditions of a familiar structured service can offer great peace of mind in your place of worship. Non or 'less' religious funerals have edged away from the 'very traditional' emphasising the life of the person. Either service has flexibility to add personal touches such as musical or spoken tributes.

For more information on low cost funerals, Green Funerals, Burials at Sea and advice on the many crematoriums available throughout the South of England please contact us for impartial no obligation advice.

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**James Keen**

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# The Magazine for the Meon Bridge Benefice of Droxford, Exton, Meonstoke & Corhampton with Preshaw

www.bridgechurches.org.uk

## THE BRIDGE TEAM

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Whitemore and Kate Williams.

**The COPY DEADLINE  
for the June/July issue of  
The Bridge is  
MONDAY  
6th May 2024**

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● We are all saddened to learn of the devastating illness our Hampshire County Councillor Hugh Lumby is struggling with, and our thoughts are very much with him and Natalie. Hugh has been an excellent and committed local councillor for many years, but as he tells us on page 26 he will not be standing for re-election at the May elections. Thank you, Hugh, for all the wonderful work you have done for our local area.

● Another stalwart of our community is Za Rowe, whose half century of continuous voluntary service in Meonstoke and beyond has been recognised in a major award by the Mayor of Winchester. Now in retirement, Za can look back on 34 years on the Parish Council, 13 as chair of the Board of Governors of Meonstoke School, 40 as chair of the Droxford and District Community Care Group... and much else besides, as can be seen on Page 9.

● Then there is Peter Riley who, as retiring chairman of Meonstoke, Corhampton and Exton Neighbourhood Watch, has received the Community Volunteer of the Year award from the Hampshire Police and Crime Commissioner for "tirelessly promoting the benefits of the scheme to villagers and building an extremely successful liaison with the force."

We are so fortunate to have had people like Hugh, Za and Peter working so selflessly on our behalf.

Ian Gilchrist, Editor  
07785 951063

Email: thebridgeeditor@gmail.com

*Cover photo: Nine-year-old Everly takes to the Droxford Church pulpit to read a poem as part of a recent All Age Family Service. The services were started as an experiment a year ago, and have proved remarkably successful. See page 11.*

**THE BRIDGE** is delivered free to 830 homes in Meonstoke, Exton, Corhampton and Droxford at the start of the months of February, April, June, August, October and December. If you are responsible for village activities, diaries and schedules, please email your write-ups to the Editor.



PARISH CONTACTS

Please note: local telephone numbers have the prefix 01489

**RECTOR:** The Benefice currently has a vacancy. Please contact the Churchwardens as necessary, until a new incumbent is appointed.

**ASSISTANT CLERGY:** Rev'd Canon Anthony Hulbert 878289

**LICENSED LAY MINISTERS:** *Reader:* Cathy Mathews 877804  
*Reader emeritus:* Pauline Quarendon 877392

**DROXFORD**

**Churchwarden:**

Colin Matthissen 877867

**Vice Chair:** Jeff Hooper 877406

**Secretary:** Position vacant

**Treasurer & Gift Aid Secretary:**

Harry Martineau 877213

**Organist:** John Martin 877385

**Vergers and Sacristan:**

James Matthissen 877867

**Deanery Synod Representative:**

John Symes 877643

**MEONSTOKE WITH CORHAMPTON**

**Churchwarden:** Angela Peagram 878725

**Secretary:** (via Churchwarden).

**Treasurer:** Position vacant

**Gift Aid Secretary:** Iain Gammell 878162

**Organists:**

Meonstoke: Position vacant

Corhampton: Richard Martin 07590 042197

**Sacristan:** Karen Ellis 878619

**PRESHAW**

Coordinator: Position vacant

**EXTON**

**Churchwarden & Secretary:**

Richard Pepys 878035

**Treasurer & Gift Aid Secretary:**

David Frere-Cook 877838

**Organist:** Richard Martin 07590 042197

**Sacristan:** Position vacant

Roman Catholic (Bishop's Waltham): Fr Bruce Barnes 890947

For information about Baptisms and Funerals, please contact the Churchwardens in the first instance. For weddings, please contact the Weddings Co-ordinator, Sue Wells, on [sjwells@meonwood.co.uk](mailto:sjwells@meonwood.co.uk) or 01329 834130.

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# ON REFLECTION



**How do you make sense of the Resurrection? Dead men don't rise, so why believe that this particular dead man did?**

**I came across an article the other day which I thought might be of interest to Bridge readers. I have used it below with permission.**

In St Luke's gospel (24:41) we read that: "They still did not believe it because of joy and amazement"

This is highly significant. The Gospels do not show us a group of disciples who were in a receptive frame of mind. After the crucifixion, they were in hiding, frightened and scattered.

Then suddenly, they came out of hiding and were totally different; excited, joyful. By Pentecost they were confident, with one firm message: 'You crucified Jesus, but God raised Him up!'

How did they know this? Because of direct personal experience. Some of them had visited the tomb of Jesus: it was empty. Others claimed to have seen and touched the risen Lord.

## St Andrew's Churchyard Clean-up

Saturday 13th April  
11am to 2pm

Sandwiches, IPA, Fresh Coffee  
Remembering how the old church has seen us through sad and happy times, we'll be strimming, weeding and clearing fallen branches in the churchyard.

Hoping you'll join us with your gloves and tools for a few hours.

Catherine Abbott and Jerry Carpenter.

## Did the Resurrection really happen?

Were they hallucinating? People can hallucinate in groups, when taking drugs, for example. But then each one will see a different hallucination. But the disciples all saw the same thing. Or rather, the same person. Jesus.

Were they lying? Jesus had died a humiliating death as a criminal. Perhaps they wanted to rescue His good name. So, did they pretend they had seen him?

This theory has a big problem. Their preaching led them into trouble with the authorities. They were beaten and imprisoned and some of them killed.

People will die for ideas and causes which they believe in passionately. But not for things they have made up. We might suffer for our convictions, but we will not suffer for our inventions.

What about the 'swoon' theory? That Jesus didn't die on the cross, despite terrible wounds? That he recovered in the tomb, and then escaped? That the disciples nursed him back to health?

But Roman soldiers knew when a man was dead; and there was the guard on the tomb.

Also, the events which followed simply don't fit. If the disciples had been hiding Jesus all along, they would have kept very low-key and out of the way, so that the authorities did not come after him again.

Besides, to preach that God had raised

Jesus from the dead – which is exactly what they did preach – would have been a lie.

Beatings and threat of death would soon have loosened their tongues. Inventions crumble under pressure; convictions hold fast.

Another reason for believing in the Resurrection is this: Jesus' continuing impact. Thousands and soon millions of people in every generation since have shared an inescapable sense of being 'accompanied' through life. Though unseen, they identify this presence as the Risen Lord.

Sometimes this experience of meeting Jesus is gentle and fitful. Sometimes it is dramatic and life changing.

This reminds us that the resurrection of Jesus is not just an interesting historical puzzle. It is a vital, present day reality. It brings wonderful comfort, assuring us of the central Christian truths: death is dead; Jesus is alive; God is love.

This central notion was captured, most movingly, by the great Albert Schweitzer who wrote: "He came to those men who knew him not. He speaks to us the same words: 'Follow thou me,' and sets us to the tasks which he has to fulfil for our time.

"And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the suffering which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who He is."

Have a joyful – and a challenging – Easter.

Colin Matthissen  
Churchwarden  
Droxford Church



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# A packed church joins Andy Davis for his licensing

The Rev'd Andy Davis has been officially licensed to be the new interim "priest in charge designate" of the combined parishes of Meonstoke and Corhampton, Exton, Droxford, Soberton, Newtown, Hambledon and Swanmore.

Over 300 people attended the ticket-only service at Swanmore's St Barbabas Church, with another 350 watching it online, either on the night or subsequently.

The Rt Rev'd Jonathan Frost, Bishop of Portsmouth, led the service, which included a choir of representatives



from the seven parishes.

For many months, and in some cases years, none of these parishes has had its own Minister, and his appointment is designed as a way to fill the gap.

Afterwards Andy told The Bridge: "I will be spending the first few months seeking information about how each of the parishes operates, working alongside the churchwardens and the

PCCs, to get a feel for their individual priorities.

"My role then will be to energize as many people as possible to get actively involved in their church and to form links with their local community."

**ABOVE** The Bishop of Portsmouth, Rt Rev'd Jonathan Frost, leads the 90-minute service. Andy and his wife Christine are in the second row pew, while the Mayor of Winchester, Cllr Angela Clear, is on the opposite side of the aisle. Anoushka Lee, 9, from Swanmore, in the front pew, took part, welcoming Andy at the start of the service.

**BELOW** Andy kneels to receive the Bishop's blessing. Pictures by Berty Ferrone.



## Meon Ladies get raucous

**The year has started well with two successful events to date! Once again the Ladies and friends came together at The Phoenix Inn in Twyford to test their skittles skills.**

Fortified by a delicious curry supper, it was a competitive, raucous and very entertaining January night.

In February The Bucks Head hosted the Ladies for a social gathering and planning session.

With 18 of us gathered, there were many ideas for our Spring and Summer programme including a Thai curry evening at

The Flower Pots in Cheriton, a trip to see Arundel Castle's famous tulips in bloom, and a summer garden party. And watch out for the return of the Pig Races, some sparkling wine tasting, and even a BBQ when the sun starts shining.

Interested in coming along? Have an idea of something fun to do? The aim is to bring people together, and we'd love to hear from you! Contact us for more details or to be added to our WhatsApp group.

Claire Ablitt 07712 221752.  
Laura Northwood 07799 413351

**Stuck for something to do? See the Events Diary on page 43**



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# Za Rowe receives Mayor's award for her 50 years of community service

Half a century of devoted village community service by Meonstoke's Za Rowe has been recognised with a major award from the Mayor of Winchester.

Za – or to give her full title Lady Alexandra Rowe – was nominated for the award by Meonstoke and Corhampton Parish Council, whose citation included: *“There has been no significant village event that has been delivered in her 50 years in the village without the guiding hand of this selfless member of our community, to whom much is owed.”*

Among her achievements have been:

- Serving on the Parish Council for 34 years, including ten years as its Chair, with one of her many successes being the securing of the low-cost housing development at Bridgemead.

- For 13 years, until 2007, she was chair of Meonstoke School's Board of Governors, during which time pupil numbers rose and the school was awarded Beacon status.

- There, she also led a team, with Michele Waktare, to convert a temporary classroom into what is now the thriving Meon Valley Preschool, and later received an HCC Don Allen award for her “Outstanding contribution as a School Governor.”

- She recently stepped down after 40 years as Chair of the Droxford and District Community Care Group which provides volunteer drivers to help people without transport to attend medical appointments.

**Parish Council Chair Jerry Pett told The Bridge:**

“Whenever there has been a need to galvanise the community into action to celebrate a major village event Za has been to the fore: her blueprint for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 2012 was invaluable to the Platinum Jubilee team 10 years later.

“Whilst on the Parish Council, the need

for good, affordable rented housing in the village became a passion for her. In particular she pushed hard to ensure that the properties at Bridgemead were allocated to our own villagers rather than simply become part of the Winchester stock.

“Later, she was the prime mover in securing an expansion of the Bridgemead site through dogged tenacity to fight through all the bureaucracy that the local authority could muster against her. She was also pivotal to the Oxendown and Millside shared ownership house schemes.

“She also became Church Warden in a period of turbulence in the Benefice – although as the present incumbent would, I am sure, accurately point out, that turbulence has never really subsided!

“Then, of course, there was her role in the Community Care Group, of which she was chair for many years.

“Za was diligent in ensuring that every new resident of our villages was welcomed personally and offered every help to settle – whilst never missing an



The Mayor of Winchester, Cllr Angela Clear, presents Za with her award certificate.

opportunity to promote our wonderful school to those who might have carelessly thought they could buy a better education for their children elsewhere!

“Many will also remember the floods of late 2000 in Bucks Head Hill.

“Za led a working group of the Parish Council to make the Bucks Head secure, and to learn the lessons of the deluge such that the effects of later floods on the village have not been nearly as severe as they might have been.

“So we thank Za for all that she has done for us over the years and what a joy to see her achievements recognised by the Mayor of Winchester!”

*And Za's reaction:*

**“Yes, looking back on it, I do seem to have done rather a lot; I had actually forgotten about some of it.**

**“While it is good to be recognised I couldn't have done any of it without the support of some wonderful friends in the community, and of my husband Patrick.”**

## BODY CONTROL PILATES CLASSES

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### Droxford Village Hall

1.45 - 2.50pm - Mixed Ability

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# One year on, the Family Services are thriving

It was a year ago that Droxford Church introduced the informal Family Services. Since then they have been attracting an average of 60 villagers, often including as many as ten children.

Joanna Selwood is one of the organising team. Here, on its first anniversary, she looks back at its success.

Twelve months ago a small team of volunteers from Droxford and Meonstoke came together to devise services which would be shorter than the tradition Church of England ones, without communion, and which would explore a different theme each time, for example Forgiveness, Peace, Love, Friendship and Prayer, to name but a few.

The services would aim to be inviting, communal and informal, with live music, readings by children, and with an uplifting and inspiring message.

Since then we have enjoyed visiting speakers as well, which have included Matthew Dampier, Head of Droxford Junior School, talking about how the school children learn about the environment.

Gill Edmunds, formerly of Hampshire Wildlife Trust, has talked to us about global and local wildlife decline.

Her daughter Melanie who works for the Royal Society for the Protection of



The band, led by Cathy Mathews on viola, comprises talented children as well as adults. *Back row, left to right, Gill Edmunds, Janet Phillimore (partially obscured - sorry Janet!) and Sally Keighley. Middle row, Edie, Natasha Martineau and Frances Keppel. Front, Lauren, Polly and Jeff Hooper.*

Birds, gave us a fascinating insight into her work, and explained how we can all make a difference in protecting our environment.

Her husband Dominic had some great tips, too. For instance ways to help nature in our gardens, such as avoiding the pesticides, mowing less, and choosing flowering plants rich in nectar for bees. You can see more of his tips on the poster in the church porch!

The services have a wonderful community bonding feel, as afterwards we chat over warm croissants, homemade cakes and chocolate church mice.

Children are invited to learn how to make crafty things to take home - we've made feathered dove decorations, origami, pom-pom animals, and wooden treasure chests filled with treats.

Anyone who plays an instrument at any

level is welcome to join in with our very own band of players led by Cathy Mathews - the youngest violinist being just eight. All the musicians are from our surrounding villages and sound amazing playing all together!

We would like to say a big thank you to Droxford's Nick and Christine Capon who kindly purchased a plush carpet for the Children's Corner at the back of the church.

Thank you also to Ros Collins who for many years has been responsible for the variety of toys, books and displays in the Children's Corner - it is such a welcoming space within Droxford Church for youngsters.

Thank you also, as always, to the brilliant Droxford Bellingrings who loudly call all to worship before each service.

More and more villagers are attending each time, so if you haven't been along yet why not give us a try? They are held on the third Sunday of the month, and we would love to see you there!

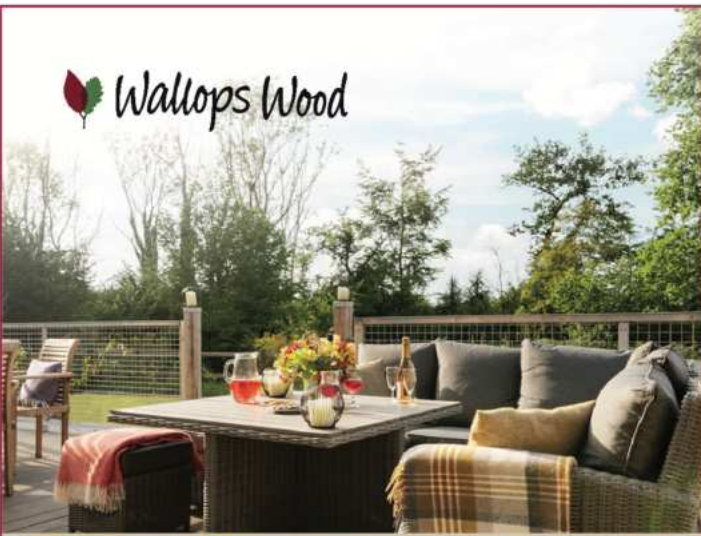
Joanna



LEFT: The youngsters enjoy making crafts, while right, everyone enjoys tea and cakes afterwards.



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# Anyone for Parliament?

If, like me, you have more than a passing interest in politics, possibly even thinking of becoming a politician yourself, and your local MP invites you to attend Parliament for a tour, you jump at the chance, right?

Well, that's what I did on a dark Monday morning in January, leaving Corhampton and heading down to Bishops Waltham Square to get the coach to London.

On boarding the coach, I had to ask if this was "Flick Drummond's coach party" as for a moment I thought I had boarded a Saga Holidays tour! Perhaps all the young people were at work, or maybe when we reach retirement age we all love a coach trip!

We parked up at Victoria Embankment at 10.50am and took the short walk to the visitor's entrance and passed through airport-like security before arriving in Westminster Hall, where we were instructed by our guide, Sarah, not to take any photos during the tour, which was disappointing!

Sarah was a fount of knowledge, regaling us with how our democratic system came to be, the history of the modern parliament, and the order of the building and rebuilding that has taken place over the centuries.

The tour included a visit to both chambers, the Lords and the Commons,



but because this was during a recess we were unfortunately unable to see any live proceedings.

At the Lords Chamber we had to stand in front of the benches as we were told that only elected Lords had the privilege to sit!

That said, we were told that a public bill must undergo five steps in each House of Parliament – first reading, second reading, committee stage, report stage and third reading – before the two Houses resolve any differences between them and the bill receives royal assent to become an act, and law.

## *A fascinating tour, but what an antiquated place!*

This is not a system where decisions are made quickly and the original intent and what comes to pass may end up poles apart.

The Commons is smaller. Although we elect 650 MPs, there are only 427 seats, due to a decision made by Churchill when the chamber was reconstructed, as he said not all MPs would be in the Chamber routinely at the same time, and he was proven right!

There we learned of the meaning and tradition of the State Opening, of Black Rod, and of the Division Bell which sounds for eight minutes when members are called to vote by going to the appropriate room, quite literally 'voting with their feet'.

Flick then walked us through an Order Paper for a Committee that she was currently involved with, and I was staggered at the amount of printed

material involved. Do we not live in a modern digital era? Not in this place it would appear!

She also told us a little of her life and experience in politics and of her hopes of re-selection following the boundary changes so that, if

re-elected, she can continue the work she came into parliament for, which she explained was to reform the education system.

The tour complete we were free to visit the café and shop for souvenirs before boarding the coach for our return.

I am not entirely sure what I had expected to see on this trip but what I observed was a cold, often dark monument to the history of democracy in this country, lost in tradition and with dated ways of working, full of its own self-importance, and blissfully unaware of the reality of the



world outside.

Being someone who has had a fleeting notion of standing for Parliament, thinking I could make a difference, I came away with the knowledge that this was just a folly. I would want to vote on principle, beliefs and values, and not just follow the party-line. Personal agendas, self-importance and sheep-like toeing the party-line seem to be what it takes. So much for democracy!

I am glad, though, that I went. I learnt much about the history and heritage of our political system, but it left me saddened and disheartened, and with the sense that it isn't fit for purpose anymore.

Tradition is great where it serves and adds value but, with a modern system of government, couldn't so much more be achieved? In my opinion an overhaul is desperately needed.

Still, I enjoyed the trip, and if you are interested to learn the history of Parliament and how it works I would urge you to sign up while you can.

Flick's team organise them every couple of months and, as the current polls are not encouraging for her party, should she unhappily lose her seat at the general election, our next MP may not offer the same opportunity.

**Jeremy Drew**



**To apply to join Flick's next coach party to Parliament phone 0207 219 8018 or email flick.drummond.mp@parliament.uk**



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# Fancy learning something new?

**Good day all. Another month passed. And another reminder of your Meon Valley U3A monthly activities.**

April showers? As I write it seems as if it will never stop raining! But better news: on **Tuesday 2nd April** at 2pm we have **“Timber framing for beginners”** offered by **Penny Copeland**. Penny has spoken before with great expertise.

On **Tuesday 16th April** at 2pm we have

a speaker new to us, but well known on the professional circuit- **Glen Duggan** speaking on **“Orchids, terrorists and kidnapping in the Darien.”**

**Tuesday 7th May** at 2pm brings us to our last lecture for the season: **“Who was Henry of Blois?”** by **Tony Kippenberg**. His power point presentations are a work of art and something to behold!

Everybody is welcome. Guests will

receive an especially warm welcome. Our current record is 20 guests who pay £2 to defray speaker costs. The venue is **Wickham Community Centre**. Tea and biscuits are provided after the talk, and we always have pre-loved books for charitable sale.

**Lyndon Palmer, Chairman**  
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## Help count the votes at the May elections

The Returning Officer for Winchester City Council has vacancies for overnight count staff and welcomes applications from members of the public to be part of the team of casual election staff on Thursday 2nd May.

- From 21:00 for approx. 5 or 6 hours
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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE MEETING OF PARISHONERS (ANNUAL PARISH MEETINGS/APM) & THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETINGS (APCM)

MEETING	PARISH OF CORHAMPTON & ST ANDREW, MEONSTOKE	PARISH OF EXTON, ST PETER & ST PAUL	PARISH OF DROXFORD, ST MARY AND ALL SAINTS
DATE	21 <sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2024	28 <sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2024	21 <sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2024
APM VENUE AND TIME	CORHAMPTON CHURCH 11.45	EXTON CHURCH 11.45	DROXFORD CHURCH 11.15
APCM VENUE AND TIME	CORHAMPTON CHURCH 12.00	EXTON CHURCH 12.00	DROXFORD CHURCH 11.30

The election of churchwardens will be conducted at a meeting of parishoners (APM) immediately preceding the APCM and in accordance with the provisions of Sections 4 and 5 of the Churchwardens Measure 2001.

All those who are on the civil parish electoral roll or church electoral role are entitled to attend and to take part in the elections of Churchwardens for that parish. Only those on the respective Church Parish Electoral Roll are entitled to vote at the APCM.

The church electoral roll will close on the 28th day before the annual meeting, and the new electoral roll of the eligible electorate (names only) for those meetings will be published no later than 15 days before the meeting, on the noticeboard nearest the main door of each church.

There is no need for the current

electorate to re-register in 2024.

Rev'd Andy Davis is hoping to make an appearance at all three of our APM/APCM meetings, and is very much looking forward to meeting everyone, though it might prove difficult for him to get to the Meonstoke and Corhampton meeting, because it is the same morning as Droxford's which he is chairing.

Please would you consider standing as Churchwarden or PCC member? Application forms for completion will be available in our churches from 6th April. Please return them to the Churchwarden for your Parish, and bring a copy with you.

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**Many thanks to:**

■ **Barry and Anita Heard** for their bush trimming and grass cutting around the hall - Barry has been doing this for over 25 years!

■ **Michelle Kempster** (similar timescale!) for her heroic work of clearing the autumn leaf fall from the 64 trees off the car park and tarmac surfaces;

■ And to **Joe Gordon**, tree surgeon, and his team from Hambledon who have trimmed some of the trees to keep the gutters clear, and then “knee capped” all the bushes around the Main Hall. Looking smart now!

**The Meon Valley Orchestra** has celebrated another highly successful year of rehearsals at the Meon Hall – they rehearse every Thursday morning, and

# Meon Hall news



regularly provide concerts and contribute music to local events. If you are interested in joining the MV Orchestra and playing a range of classical and other music, please contact Annabel Armstrong 01489 877130.

If you are interested in hiring the Meon Hall, please email the bookings office at [meonhallbookings2@yahoo.com](mailto:meonhallbookings2@yahoo.com) or leave a message on 01489 877916.

## 200 Club monthly prize winners February: Nicki Pendry March: John Grunstein

*A huge “Thank you” to everyone who has joined The Meon Hall’s 200 Club in 2024 – at the time of going to press 325 people have joined.*

*This is a tremendous annual membership number for the 200 Club which was started over 40 years ago to raise money for The Meon Hall.*

*You may win one of the cash prizes during the year, but just as importantly, by joining the 200 Club you are helping the Management Committee to keep the Meon Hall up to date, and well equipped.*

*With the money raised so far this year, £3,250, we have been really successful in demonstrating community support for The Meon Hall so that we can press on with making grant applications for urgent work and purchases of new equipment.*

*If you would like to join the 200 Club to help the Meon Hall committee’s work, please contact James Morrice on [jamesmorrice99@gmail.com](mailto:jamesmorrice99@gmail.com), or leave a message on 01489 877916*



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### Droxford Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday 9th May  
7pm Droxford Village Hall

All Town and Parish Councils in England are required by law to hold an Annual Parish Meeting (APM). The purposes of the meeting are for the Parish Council, County and District Councillors and other organisations to report to residents on the work of the respective Councils during the preceding year, planning matters, finances, future projects and any specific issues of note locally.

The Parish Council is considering a number of projects to improve facilities in the village and is very keen to seek the views of residents regarding priorities.

We would also welcome new ideas from the community that can be considered by the Parish Council.

Attendance at the APM has steadily dwindled over recent years. We would like to reverse this trend and also to know that we have the support of residents for

works that we consider will improve the quality of life for villagers.

Do please take this opportunity to hear about our work over the past year and importantly, to have your say.

It will help us to ensure that wherever possible we reflect the priorities of our residents in spending your precept.

Janet Melson



## Save the date

Corhampton & Meonstoke  
Annual Parish Assembly  
7.30pm Wednesday 10th  
April

At the Meon Hall, Meonstoke

The annual Assembly is an informal meeting for residential electors of the parish to hear reports from parish, district and county council representatives, and to discuss items relevant to the parish which may be taken forward by common consent.

Light refreshments will be available afterwards.



# Desert Island Discs

## 10. Amy O'Toole

Amy has been head teacher at Meonstoke and Soberton/Newtown Schools for just six months, yet in that time she has endeared herself to pupils and parents like with her modern, friendly approach to children. Here she looks back at her life and chooses the six records she would want with her on the mythical desert island.



Amy with daughter Eliza and fiancé Simon

I was born in London's East End, and my childhood was idyllic. I was so lucky to have such wonderful parents. My dad was a skilled tiler. He worked on some important jobs, tiling Tottenham Court Road tube station for instance and the QE2 swimming pool.

Mum was a nurse at Great Ormond Street Hospital, and later a support assistant in a school, later becoming a Deputy Head of House at Brune Park in Gosport.

Both my parents were also foster carers and they went on to take special guardianship of one of the children they had fostered. Mum was the most wonderful, loving, kind nurturing person, and I think it was from her that really I got my passion for looking after children.

### 1. Karma Chameleon – Culture Club

As a five-year-old I loved this record, playing it over and over again, because it was so catchy. I have vivid memories of being in my parent's back room and dancing to it with my younger sister, Charlotte. I remember loving the colourful clothes worn by the people on the cover of the album.

It was around this time the family moved to Gosport, and there were some wonderful teachers at my primary school, especially Mr. Eldred, who taught me for my final year.

I was in Year 6 when I lost my grandad and it was a very sad time for me, and Mr Eldred was very kind and looked after me to make sure I was okay.

It made such an impact on me to think that here was a teacher who cared

enough to realise I needed a little bit of extra looking after. That, I think demonstrated the power a teacher can have and how important they can be.

### 2. Relight my Fire – Take That

This record came out when I was in Year 6. The girls in my class were much girlier than me, and they'd learned the song and were dancing to it. I wanted to join them, but they said I couldn't dance with them because I didn't know the song.

So, not one to be beaten, I went home and listened to it repeatedly until I knew every single word. The following day I went in and said I know the song so now I want to be in the dance! We had lots of fun and performed it in an assembly for the school.

### 3. Everything I do – Bryan Adams

I think I was about 11 or 12 when this record came out. It was a song I had on repeat, probably driving my parents mad! I have always been a romantic and I was hopeful that one day I would be loved by someone as much as Bryan Adams clearly loved whoever he might have been singing to!

At secondary school I became passionate about drama and theatre arts, becoming a member of every drama club going, and taking singing lessons. I even did some operatic training with a wonderful music teacher, Mrs Winter.

I loved singing and I still sing. My voice is not as strong as it once was, but I'll still have a go in the karaoke if the chance comes about!

### 4. Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy – Bette Midler

College was a dream and my favourite time in education prior to becoming a teacher. We created and performed shows regularly throughout my time there. One of my favourite performances that sticks in my mind is a dance piece that I performed with two friends to this record.

At College received a distinction in my GNVQ Theatre Arts course, an A-level in English Literature and an AS level in Dance. I went on to London Metropolitan University to achieve a 2:1 in Theatre Arts and Direction.

I felt I then needed a break from education, so I decided to go and live in Spain for a summer season, leaving in April and returning in the November. I went out there with just a very small suitcase and a backpack, and worked behind a bar. I spent the time when I wasn't working dancing, singing, performing and swimming in the sea. I had a great time. It really was the most carefree six months of my life.

The time came when I had to return to Gosport and earn some proper money to be able to resume living in London. Once I got back to London, I secured a job as an usher at the Prince of Wales Theatre in



Shaftesbury Avenue. Mama Mia was playing at the time, and I must have seen it well over a hundred times. I knew every word and dance move and used to perform it quietly at the back of the theatre as the show was going on.

I then found out that if you had a degree you could work as a supply Learning Support Assistant in schools. So, I registered with a company and started working across a number of schools in east London.

I was then offered a long-term contract at Shaftesbury Primary just off of Green Street. It was during this year that the deputy encouraged me to apply for a teaching course. The school supported me through my training and then took me on once I was fully qualified.

During this time, I met my first husband, got married and became pregnant with my daughter, Eliza.

### 5. This girl is on fire – Alicia Keys

The next few years were tricky as finances were tight and after losing a baby my marriage broke down. Eliza's father left us and if it had not been for my incredible parents and sister, I do not know how we would have got by.

At the time 'This girl is on Fire' became a bit of an anthem for me and my daughter Eliza. I was determined that I would bring her up to be kind, brave and independent. I used to sing this song for me and for her, and I am very happy to say that she has indeed grown up to be all these things.

I am also pleased to say she's got the performance bug as well, doing a lot of lot of singing and dancing, and she was in Swanmore College's recent production of Cats, which was incredible!

In 2016, I was offered a secondment to Rogate Primary School, which had gone into special measures. The head teacher had left with immediate effect and they asked me to take over for a term while they found someone permanent.

I was told not to do too much, but that is not really my way, especially when I could see how easy it would be to make some important and effective changes. I ended up staying at the school for two

and a half years until I had managed, with the support of a team of staff and governors, to get the school out of special measures and back on the trajectory to a good grading.

I then took up a Headship at East Meon Primary School in September 2018 where I enjoyed five fantastic years, leading the school with a brilliant team of staff.

I was then appointed Executive Headteacher of the Meon Valley Federation which is made up of Meonstoke CE Infant School and Newtown/Soberton Infant School.

As soon as I walked in, I knew this was where I was meant to be, and that it was the right decision. I feel so blessed to have been so warmly welcomed by the parents and the community.

My philosophy of teaching is that it has to start with love. You have to love the children. Far too many people get into teaching who don't really like children. But you have to care about them as individuals, not look on them as just another child.

As far as discipline is concerned I never use the word 'naughty.' If a child is struggling with behaviour, it's often because they're trying to tell you something, and it's our job as the adults to try to figure out what that is and help them with whatever it is that they're going through.

### 6. The Joker and the Queen - Ed Sheeran and Taylor Swift

I met my fiancé, Simon, in February 2018, when I was on a night out in a pub in

Petersfield with some friends.

He was sitting with some others, dancing in his chair to the live band. I told him "If you're going to dance you have to come on the floor and do it properly!"

I expected him to say no, but instead he got up with me and took me for a spin on the dance floor. Afterwards we exchanged numbers and started going on dates.

I introduced him to my daughter and he has since taken on the role of her Dad brilliantly. We both feel extremely lucky to have found him and to have him complete our family. I am thrilled to say that we are getting married at the end of this year – I can't wait to be Mrs Randell!

We have been spending a good deal of time planning the wedding recently but we were really struggling to find a song for our first dance. Then, one day, he came home and said, "I've found it. I've found the song for our first dance."

I thought he was going to suggest something ridiculous, but he said 'I've got to play you this song, The Joker and the Queen. The song, the music and the words are just beautiful.'

He was right. It made me realise that I had definitely found my person that I want to grow old with! It is now 'our song'.

Life is now very much about the three of us being together and planning the next adventure for us to take on.

We all feel very, very blessed to be living here and to be part of the Meon Valley community.

## And those four important Desert Island questions...

### ■ How would I cope as a castaway?

I love camping and you have to be quite resourceful as a teacher. Having said that, I could never kill anything for food so I might get very hungry!

### ■ If I could only save one record?

It would definitely be Girl on Fire. It is an anthem in our house!

### ■ The book I would take:

I love fantasy books so I would either

take The Hobbit or the Harry Potter series... Order of the Phoenix if I could only take one!

### ■ My luxury item:

A photo of my family – Simon, Eliza, my parents and my siblings. They are the bedrock of my life and have made me the person I am today. If I could see their faces I know I would find a way to survive and find my way home.

# Why we garden

As an RHS trained gardener in the Meon Valley and a Droxford resident for the past seven years, I'm taking over from John Owen, who has been writing these articles for 20 years, and I'll be sharing some of my experiences from the other side of the fence.

So, after the eighth wettest winter on record, I am sure, like me, you are just glad to be out in the garden again. So keen to get out that you may not even consider why we garden at all.

The humble garden lays its roots from necessity, the need to provide food for yourself, your family and even your community.

It was a fundamental and essential part of everyday life. For some, the garden gradually took on a more ornamental nature as wealthy individuals were able to use their gardens as symbols of their excess, and so the gardens that we know and

love today were born.

The function of the garden has changed over time and in times of real need, like during the World Wars, gardens were used as makeshift allotments to help nourish a starving nation.

As we come to the present day, we have a very different relationship with our gardens.

We may allocate a portion to the production of fruit and vegetables but it's more for the experience of the freshness of the produce than the need to have access to fruit and vegetables.

It has become an extension of the home – a room well-used that requires the same level of design as any internal room if not more as we must contend with ever changing weather conditions and continual maintenance.

It is also a sanctuary from the stresses of day-to-day life; the flowers and shrubs represent living ornaments, and tending to these is more for our own wellness and that feeling of being immersed/a part of nature.

Why we garden, what we garden and



where we garden is unique to all of us.

I began gardening, I believe, due to my father's love of his allotment, and his love was directly taken from his Uncle Arthur who lived in Worksop, Notts.

My father would take us on family holidays where we would inevitably 'detour' to see my Great Uncle and his allotment; the size of a small field with deep, dark soil perfectly tilled where every vegetable conceivable stood to attention in rows that were so precise, it would make a Roman architect proud. It was his therapy.

It has been my therapy and now even the NHS are offering 'green prescriptions' for people to improve their wellbeing by spending time in nature.

Simon – The Tudor Gardener



## April and May are all about mulching

It has been common practice for many decades to add chemicals to your garden to 'add' essential nutrients back to the soil. This is not the only way.

Like us, the element plants need most is water, and with hotter, drier summers it has become more important than ever to preserve this precious commodity.

The best thing you can do for your garden is to minimise competition for the plants and keep them well hydrated. Put a

2-3 inch layer of mulch (well-rotted manure, garden compost, leaf mould or even bark chippings) down on recently weeded and watered soil.

This will provide an evaporation barrier, and as the mulch decays the water will take those nutrients to the roots and become a slow feed for your plants.



# Droxford and District Community Care Group

DCCCG is a local community group, linked to the Good Neighbours Network, that provides transport to hospitals, doctors, dentists and other health specialists.

If you are unable to access your medical appointment, we have a team of volunteer drivers who are willing to help.

To access this service please phone one of our Transport Coordinators, who will do their best to find you a driver: **Chrissie Butler** 07865 517484 (Meonstoke), or **Rosie Hoile** 07901 978796 (Droxford).

To help us arrange a driver, please give as much notice as possible. But please note this is NOT an emergency service.

For further information, please contact **David Keighley** chairman, on 07736 799262.

## Urgent Treatment Centre

The UTC at Petersfield is an alternative to the Emergency Department for both children and adults. It provides treatment for minor injuries and illnesses that are urgent, but not life threatening, and is open between 8am and 8pm every day and all year round.

We can help with problems such as:

- Sprains and strains • Suspected broken limbs • Minor head injuries • Minor scalds and burns • Skin infections and rashes • Feverish pain • Eye problems • Abdominal pain • Emergency contraception.

Patients are encouraged to call 111 first before arriving as they will be able to take note of your symptoms and advise you on the best service to help.

If you need to be seen at the UTC, please book an appointment via NHS 111 as this will reduce your waiting time on site.

Patients who go directly to the UTC without calling 111 will be clinically assessed by a triage nurse or other health professional, and will only be prioritised for treatment over booked appointments when clinically necessary.

**Petersfield Community Hospital, Swan Street, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU32 3LB 023 8231 9000**

MEONSTOKE, CORHAMPTON & EXTON

# Church Fête

St. Andrew's Church Green  
Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2024  
12:30 to 4pm

AMAZING CHINESE AUCTION • FUN & GAMES

DOG SHOW • BOTTLES • BBQ

TEA • ICE CREAMS • BEER & PIMM'S

DUCK RACES • PLANTS & PRODUCE

JAMS & PRESERVES • CAKES & COOKIES

TOYS • TOMBOLA • BRIC-A-BRAC

SOAPS, SCENTS & SCARVES • TUG OF WAR

• LIVE MUSIC •

Car parking at Meon Hall

## POP-IN

*It was so good to see so many people at the February Pop-in. A record 21 villagers came to chat and enjoy coffee and cake. Dates for your diary - Wednesday 3rd April and Wednesday 1st May, 10.30 to 12 noon at St Andrew's Church. All welcome!*

### Community Library

A plea! Please no more books or jigsaws at the present time. We have no more space! Another plea! In future, just fiction books please and no non-fiction.

It would be greatly appreciated if the books could also be in reasonable condition – we have had to throw some away that were falling apart and the pages were extremely brown with age!

Linda Foot

The Bridge team would like to say a big thank you to Diana Arthur for her six excellent years voluntarily looking after the magazine's finances and, now that she has stepped down, we are pleased to welcome Sue Marsh who has taken over.



Friends of Droxford Church present

# D Day 80th Anniversary



## Programme Of Events

Thursday 9th May. A talk on Droxford Station and D Day by Tony Williams in the church 7.30 - 8.30 pm including refreshments. Tickets £12 each.

Wednesday 15th May. The 2017 Churchill film, starring Brian Cox, in the village hall. Doors open 7 pm with film 7.30 pm. Licenced bar and light refreshments available. Tickets £6.

Thursday 23rd May. A talk on Churchill in the Meon Valley by Lord Ben Stoneham in the church 7.30 - 8.30 pm including refreshments. Tickets £12 each.

Saturday 1st June. During the Country Fair, Steam Train rides in the churchyard and a heritage video of living history in the church. Suggested donation £1 per ride.

Sunday 2nd June. A Tea Dance, with the fabulous Amy Baker, performing hits from the blitz, live in the village hall 3 - 6 pm including tea and cake. Tickets £20 each.

Learn to dance to the songs of the 1940s, lessons led by Jacquie Keighley, an English National Dance Champion, in the village hall on Monday 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th April and 6th and 20th May, all lessons 7.30 - 9.00 pm. Tickets £45 for 6 lessons.

Tickets can be purchased online [www.jumblebee.co.uk/dday80thanniversary](http://www.jumblebee.co.uk/dday80thanniversary) or Wilfrid's Café in the Annexe to the church.



# Celebrating a momentous local event that changed the world

**Did you know Droxford played a crucial role in the planning of D- Day?**

On 2nd June 1944, Churchill travelled on a special train to Droxford to meet Eisenhower, de Gaulle and other allied leaders preparing for D-Day. Churchill's train was parked at Droxford Station because it had the longest sidings in southern England and was close to a deep cutting to provide cover in case of an air raid.

Friends of Droxford Church have organised a programme of events to mark the D-Day 80th Anniversary. The programme includes two talks and a film (each on Churchill and/or Droxford Station) throughout May, culminating in a Tea Dance on 2nd June. We've also organised a series of six tea dance lessons starting this April.

Tickets are available at [www.jumblebee.co.uk/dday80thanniversary](http://www.jumblebee.co.uk/dday80thanniversary) or from Wilfrid's cafe in the annexe to the church. Needless to say, all events are intended to raise funds to support Droxford community.

Come and learn about our shared local history and be part of history for the future.

**Sally Sturt, Trustee of Friends of Droxford Church**



**LMS 798, the Royal Saloon used by Churchill for his secret visit to finalise the plans for D-Day. The carriage was hidden in a cutting a quarter of a mile up the track from Droxford Station. Photo by Hugh Llewelyn.**



**Churchill gathers for the meeting with other allied leaders including Generals Eisenhower and Smuts. For many years the photo was believed to have been taken at Droxford Station, and hung in the bar of the Hurdles Inn, but has now been proved to have been taken at Ascot.**



**The station as it was at the time. Photo by S C Townroe.**

**FRIENDS OF DROXFORD CHURCH PRESENT**  
**D DAY 80TH**  
**ANNIVERSARY**  
**TEA DANCE**

*With live performance from*  
**Amy Baker**  
*Singing hits from the Blitz! Dress up and step back in time!*

*Sunday 2nd June 2024 3.00 - 6.00 pm*  
*in Droxford Village Hall*  
*Tickets £20 per person including tea and cake payable online*  
*<https://www.jumblebee.co.uk/teadance>*  
*or from Wilfrid's cafe in the annexe to the church*  
*More information contact Clare Hooper 07974 577970*

# Villagers to bring the 'Swing Riots' to life

The story of two 18th Century Droxford farmers who protested against brutal working conditions and were severely punished for it, is to be re-enacted in a major drama to be written and performed by local villagers.

Jesse Burgess and Charles Bryant were among hundreds of Hampshire farmers in 1830 whose harsh life and low wages left them barely able to feed themselves and their families.

In addition, while the recent advent of mechanical thrashing machines was freeing them from a slow and laborious process, it was putting many of them out of work altogether.

So using sticks, hammers and axes to destroy the machines, they joined hundreds of other agriculture workers across the southeast in what was to become the largest movement of 19th Century social unrest.

The authorities quickly fought back, showing no mercy. Bryant, aged 20, was sentenced to three months hard labour, while Burgess, 37, was actually transported to Australia.

The protests became known as the Swing Riots, the 'swing' believed to be a reference to the swinging stick of the flail used in hand threshing.

The drama production will be in the hands of Portsmouth-based Liz Weston, one of the UK's leading community-based arts practitioners, with the actors devising the script themselves as they progress through rehearsals.

Says Liz, "We will be re-enacting the appalling conditions these two agriculture workers had to endure, how they lived, what they ate, how much they earned, and what Droxford was like at the time. We will make all these historical facts come to life."

Three weeks ago Liz held a preliminary gathering in Wildrid's Café to meet the villagers who had expressed an interest in being part of the drama.

The performance is scheduled for



September. More would-be actors are still required. If you are interested in joining the group you are invited to the next meeting at the café on Thursday 11th April at 7pm.

A farmworker smashes up one of the new mechanised thrashing machines which, because they required fewer people to operate, threatened to put him out of work.

## Hugh and Natalie Lumby invite you to the MORRICE PLANT AND CAKE SALE

*Proceeds to go to:  
The Valley Preschool, Community Care Group,  
Meon Valley Orchestra, Meonstoke Toddler Group*

Saturday 18th May  
From 10 am to 12 noon

In the garden of  
MANOR HOUSE  
HIGH STREET, MEONSTOKE

*Donations welcome, please for  
Plants; Cakes; Jams;  
Toys; Books; Raffle*

Coffee, tea, soft drinks  
Free entry to the garden  
If wet, still at Manor House - be prepared!





# Thank you, Mary!



**James and Mary at last year's Droxford Country Fair**

This year the Droxford Fair is Saturday 1st June from 12 noon. The committee is always looking for new 'recruits' to join in with making this event one of the 'stand out' Fairs of the summer! Make new friends, be a part of your village!

This year you have a new Chairman. I have taken over from Mary Hornby-Patterson who has stepped down after 20 years of being involved with this quintessentially British village event.

Everyone involved in the Fair would like to thank Mary for the wonderful work she has done in making it such a huge success over the six years she has been Chair. Comments from the committee include:

■ *"We are full of admiration for how she chaired the meetings, pulled the different parts together... and for her positivity and gorgeous smile."*

■ *"She always has a smile on her face and has worked tirelessly on making the Fair a real highlight of the village calendar."*

■ *"Mary soon convinced me that the Treasurer role would take up 'no time at all,' and, just like that, I had succumbed to Mary's modus operandi, as many before me had done so. The success of the Fair is a testament to Mary's passion, commitment and leadership."*

Mary, we have been honoured to work with you on this wonderful village event and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your commitment over the years.

We look forward to your continued support, serving Fair goers at the Bar!

If you would like to take part in the organising of the Fair, text or call me on 07814 977740, or contact me at [jameskeen4446@gmail.com](mailto:jameskeen4446@gmail.com)

**James Keen**

## Toy and book swap events have saved £8,000 paying for new ones

Six months ago Droxford Parish Council put out this message:

*"Do you have cupboards full of toys your children no longer play with? Or books you no longer read? Instead of buying expensive new ones, why not come along and swap them for free!"*

Since then four swap events have been held – one of toys and three of books – which have resulted in an estimated saving - had the items been bought new - of more than £8,000.

The idea came about in September when the council's clerk, Ailsa Duckworth, successfully applied for funding offered by Hampshire County Council to encourage waste prevention and recycling.

"We began with a toy swap using the grant towards the hire of the village hall, the costs of advertising and to provide free refreshments," says Ailsa.

"Villagers brought along a total of 350 toys, ranging from small items such as Lego to larger toys such as scooters, and we felt it had been so successful we decided to hold three more swap events, focused on children's books and cookery books.

"And in total we've managed to swap well over 1,200 items, many of which might otherwise have ended up in landfill. It's also saved people a lot of money from buying new ones.

"But the scheme isn't just about recycling and waste prevention. It's also a way of getting people together and involved in the community, particularly villagers who are elderly or vulnerable who may feel isolated, and we can help provide a support network for them."

# The mysterious disappearance of Buster Crabb

On Monday 13th May, author and historian Giles Milton will be talking to us about *"Lionel (Buster) Crabb – Cover Up Ministry of Secrets."*

He will be supported by branch member and former Royal Navy Mine Clearance Diving officer, Commander Julian Malec OBE RN.

Lt-Cdr Crabb vanished on 19th April 1956 while diving on a reconnaissance mission on behalf of MI6 beneath the hull of the Soviet cruiser *Ordzhonikidze* in Portsmouth Harbour. Aboard the cruiser was Russian President Nikita Krushchev who was on a diplomatic visit to Great Britain.

Seven weeks later fishermen discovered a headless and handless corpse in a rubber diving suit off Chichester Harbour, but it was not



**Lt. Cdr Buster Crabb. A headless corpse was found. Was it his?**

possible at the time to identify the body as Crabb's, nor ascertain if, how or where he died.

Some 10 years later, a skull was found on a beach near Portsmouth but, again, no positive identification could be made.

Conspiracy theories abounded about



**ROYAL BRITISH LEGION  
Droxford Branch**

the nature of his mission, ranging from being attacked and killed by Soviet divers, to the effects of long-term alcohol and tobacco abuse.

Giles Milton is a successful writer and journalist who has sold over one million books in UK and in 25 different languages.

His talk will begin at 7pm in Droxford Village Hall and non-members are welcome to attend.

There will be a cash bar from 6.30 and the talk will be followed by a curry supper available for those that book, £15 payable in cash on the night.

Non members wishing to take supper, please email [robmunroscott@aol.com](mailto:robmunroscott@aol.com) a week beforehand.

## So much litter!



Dawn Fielder with me on the right.

When I'm out walking my dog along the country lanes I find I'm noticing more and more rubbish strewn about.

I find it quite upsetting to see our lovely villages spoilt in this way so decided to try to do something about it.

I and two friends, Susanne West and Dawn Fielder, armed ourselves with litter pickers, hi vis waistcoats, gloves and rubble sacks.

Walking around Meonstoke and the A32 layby we collected bagfuls of discarded fast food items, sandwich wrappers, drinks bottles and cans plus all manner of other weird and wonderful items including a long forgotten council 'ice' warning sign.

If you'd like to join us in keeping our villages clean and tidy please come along to our next pick. We're usually out for about 90 minutes and all help gratefully received.

Look out for the next invite on the village WhatsApp.

Cheryl Jensen

**Need a decorator? Find one on Page 4, and say you saw them in The Bridge**



# Droxford Village Hall events

The main event at the hall this winter was of course the village Quiz Night run by Quizmaster John Martin.

Over 75 villagers came along forming teams of six to answer a wide range of questions on different themes set by John, some fairly easy, some more of a challenge!

As always the final music round was one of the most enjoyable. John has not lost his touch!

Alison Thomas joined us to run the raffle which raised £238 for the flower ladies who arrange such beautiful flower arrangements in the church.

Half way through the evening

everyone enjoyed a good chilli supper prepared and served by members of the village hall committee.

A big thank you to all the committee members who worked very hard to prepare for and host the event.

All the profits from the event go towards running the hall.

Our thanks to everyone who attended and made it so special.

Tim Crowfoot

## Film night

Wednesday 24th April

**The Great Escaper**  
(rated 12A)

starring Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson



In 1944, near-nonagenarian Bernie Jordan (Michael Caine) is sad to miss out on an official group outing to the D-Day anniversary in France. Encouraged by wife Rene (Glenda Jackson), he sneaks out from his care home and goes on one last big adventure to cross the Channel, while reminiscing about his wartime experiences.

7.30 pm doors open at 7 pm

Tickets £6, Licensed bar and Refreshments available

## 200 Club winners

January: Terry Crowfoot

February: Colin Evers

March: John Smith

## Droxford History Group

Thursday 25th April

Talk by Guy Liardet about the Meon Valley Archeological and Heritage Group 7.30 Droxford Village Hall

Thursday 30th May

Visit to the Solent Sky Museum

## Soberton and Newtown Local History Society

Thursday 11th April

Talk: Tony Kippenberger on the history of Bishops Waltham 7.30 Rookesbury Hall

Thursday 30th May

Talk: Don Bryan on the history of Hamble. 7.30 Rookesbury Hall

## Droxford school wish list has 'exceeded all expectations'

After asking the local community to help fund equipment for Droxford School lessons, head teacher Matt Dampier says he has been "completely blown away" by the response.

The school created a wish list on Amazon, with items ranging from a £5 book to a £35 weighted laptop, and including pens for marking, and plasters for the first aid kit.

Mr Dampier said, "When we started the scheme we weren't sure how successful it would be, but in fact we have been inundated! It's really made a difference. For instance, our science teacher Miss Barnett now has all the equipment she asked for. She told us 'It's just like Christmas!'"

"But our wish list is still by no means exhausted. There's still a pressing need for everyday items such as ballpoint pens, Pritt sticks and self-adhesive labels; whereas at the more expensive end we would welcome vacuum flasks for the children to keep their drinks warm, electronic spelling correctors and children's story books.

"If you would like to help provide these, please visit our wish list at [amzn.eu/09G0kab](http://amzn.eu/09G0kab)."

# HAMPSHIRE COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

## Hugh Lumby: Meon Valley Division

[hugh.lumby@hants.gov.uk](mailto:hugh.lumby@hants.gov.uk)



**This will be my last column in The Bridge. At the time of writing I have just stood down from Hampshire County Council. The by-election will be on May 2nd to elect my successor. They will then serve until the following May, when all seats at the county council will be up for election.**

My reason for resigning early is related to my health (apologies for those seeking a more salacious reason!). You may be aware that I have been experiencing voice issues for some time. This has now been diagnosed as a form of motor neurone disease; the primary effect so far is that my voice has gone.

I have received great support but the reality is that it is an increasing struggle; hence the reluctant decision to step down, to allow someone else to perform the role.

It has been a huge privilege to be your county councillor. It has also been a genuine joy. Everyone has been so welcoming, issues have been discussed and solutions found in a thoroughly civilised manner, often with great humour as well. If only all politics was like that!

Thank you all for the support and advice you have given me and allowing me to serve our communities over the last few years.

Hampshire County Council is a vast undertaking. Its budget for the next financial year covers £2.6 billion of public spending on the delivery of important local services to Hampshire's 1.4 million residents.

Much of that expenditure is not visible to many, for example children's and adults' social care. There's also an £880.6 million capital investment programme over the next three years, including more school places and improving roads and bridges. Even after three years it feels very daunting.

Locally, the main concerns relate to flooding, speeding and potholes. The weather we have experienced recently has not helped and at some point the local flooding needs to be addressed. Reduced ditch clearance is an issue here, as seen in Droxford. One of my last emails as councillor was to highlight (again) the need for

solutions for the flooding by the Bucks Head and the broken bridge in Meonstoke.

The average speed cameras I have campaigned for on the A32 and the A272 have had an impact on the number of antisocial bikers in the area but speeding is still an issue. I worked hard within the council to see its new 20 mph policy developed and approved; parish councils will need to consider how this might be implemented locally. It will be interesting to see if any consensus can be reached on this.

Other ongoing road issues include the road going through the River Meon between Brockbridge and the Droxford Mill (tests are still taking place) and the use of Police Station Lane and Union Lane as a rat run.

The council are looking at whether new signage or other interventions are necessary here. Having brought focus to these issues, it will be for my successor to finalise solutions.

Potholes are a perennial challenge, with the weather exacerbating the problems. The extra investment in repairs to the county's 5,500 miles has made an impact. Personally, I believe we have too many roads and could with turning some locally into



**Fellow Councillor Neil Bolton and I down at the U189 crossing in Droxford.**

green routes, free of traffic.

Other challenges include public transport provision and the possible change to the number of council tips as I have discussed before.

I have used my county councillor grant scheme to support projects across the division. I have enjoyed the wide range of projects that have applied for support, which have ranged from urinals to bus shelters and war memorials, from scout and youth groups to playgrounds.

This year's local grants have included safety training for the River Meon conservators, and goalposts in Droxford.

I must give a shout out for the Droxford fire station, where many locals have served. Having spent some time on the Fire Authority, I have learnt about what a tremendous local resource this is, and I am in awe of our local firefighters.

Many thanks again for all the support and feedback over the years. I'm proud of the progress made but aware of the challenges to come.

I am so grateful for having been given the opportunity to serve and represent our communities.

Thank you again!



# Meon Bridge Benefice Services

## April

Thur 4th	10:00 Said HC	Droxford
Sun 7th	10.30 Sung Eucharist	Meonstoke
	18.30 Evensong	Exton
Thur 11th	10:00 Said HC	Droxford
Sun 14th	10.30 Sung Eucharist	Droxford
Thur 18th	10.00 Said HC	Droxford
Sun 21st	09.00 Said HC BCP	Exton
	10.00 Family Service	Droxford
	10.30 Mattins	Corhampton
Thur 25th	10:00 Said HC	Droxford
Sun 28th	10.30 Sung Eucharist	Exton

## May

Thur 2nd	10.00 Said HC	Droxford
Sun 5th	10.30 Sung Eucharist	Meonstoke
	18.30 Choral Evensong	Exton
Thur 9th	10.00 Said HC	Droxford
	19.00 Deanery HC	Hambledon
Sun 12th	10.30 Sung Eucharist	Droxford
Thur 16th	10.00 Said HC	Droxford
Sun 19th	10.00 Family Service	Droxford
	10.30 Sung Eucharist	Corhampton
Thur 23rd	10.00 Said HC	Droxford
Sun 26th	10.30 Sung Eucharist	Exton
Thur 30th	10.00 Said HC	Droxford

We are very dependent on securing the services of retired and other priests for many of our services. Please check on the website [www.bridgechurches.org.uk](http://www.bridgechurches.org.uk) and the pew sheets for any late changes to this schedule.

## From the Registers

Funeral  
Meonstoke Church  
8th March  
Judith Tarmey, aged 79

ENTRIES IN BY: 12TH OF EACH MONTH

COST: £2.50 PER TICKET

OPEN TO: ANYONE OVER 18

**FODS**  
Friends of Droxford Junior School

# LOTTERY

All money raised will fund equipment, resources, activities and events this school year for all Droxford Junior School children.

scan to apply for FODS lottery tickets

Or click to go to: [FODS Lottery ticket form](#)

## £50 MONTHLY CASH PRIZE

If you have any questions, please contact us at:  
[friendsofdroxfordschool@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofdroxfordschool@gmail.com)

Registration number:  
LOTTERY43 22/01146

CAKE, COFFEE  
AND A GOOD  
GIGGLE

Please come with your friends to our  
**MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING** at  
Rookesbury Village Hall on  
Friday 10th MAY  
From 10.30 to 12.30.  
Coffee, tea, savouries, biscuits.  
Cakes for sale. Please support this fantastic  
charity!  
A Ladies Lunch Group Initiative



# Meon Valley Community Bus Services Timetable

## Meon Valley Community Bus Association

*An all volunteer service*

Mondays, 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Friday to FAREHAM	3rd Friday Each Month to HEDGE END	4 <sup>th</sup> Friday Each Month to WATERLOOVILLE
0900 West Meon Thomas Lord PH	0900 West Meon Thomas Lord PH	0900 West Meon Thomas Lord PH
0903 Warnford Village Hall	0903 Warnford Village Hall	0903 Warnford Village Hall
0908 Exton The Shoe PH	0908 Exton The Shoe PH	0908 Exton The Shoe PH
0910 Meonstoke PO & Stores	0910 Meonstoke PO & Stores	0910 Meonstoke PO & Stores
0914 Meonstoke Pound Cottages	0914 Meonstoke Pound Cottages	0914 Meonstoke Pound Cottages
0921 Droxford Square (PARK & RIDE)	0921 Droxford Square (PARK & RIDE)	0921 Droxford Square (PARK & RIDE)
0925 Brockbridge The Hurdles	0925 Brockbridge The Hurdles	0925 Brockbridge The Hurdles
0930 Soberton Village Hall (PARK & RIDE)	0929 Soberton Village Hall (PARK & RIDE)	0929 Soberton Village Hall (PARK & RIDE)
0933 Webbs Green War Memorial	0933 Webbs Green War Memorial	0933 Webbs Green War Memorial
0936 Soberton Heath Chapel Road pond	0935 Soberton Heath Chapel Road pond	0936 Soberton Heath Chapel Road pond
0938 Soberton Heath Bold Forester PH	0938 Soberton Heath Bold Forester PH	0938 Soberton Heath Bold Forester PH
0940 Newtown Rookesbury Hall (PARK & RIDE)	0940 Newtown Rookesbury Hall (PARK & RIDE)	0940 Newtown Rookesbury Hall (PARK & RIDE)
0945 Hundred Acres	0945 Hundred Acres	0957 WaterlooVILLE Waitrose
0957 Fareham Library	1007 Hedge End Marks& Spencer	1005 WaterlooVILLE Sainsbury's
1002 Fareham Sainsbury's	<b>Return:</b>	<b>Return:</b>
<b>Return:</b>	1200 Hedge End Marks& Spencer	1200 WaterlooVILLE Sainsbury's
1200 Fareham Sainsbury's		1205 WaterlooVILLE Waitrose
1205 Fareham Library		

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0909 Droxford Square (PARK and RIDE)	0909 Droxford Square (PARK & RIDE)	Warnford George and Falcon 1221*
0915 Meonstoke Pound Cottages	0916 Meonstoke Pound Cottages	Corhampton 1224*
0919 Meonstoke PO & Stores	0921 Corhampton	Pound Cottages 1229*
0921 Exton The Shoe PH	0924 Warnford George and Falcon	Droxford square 1236*
0926 Warnford Village Hall	0945 Petersfield Square	Brockbridge ( The Hurdles) 1301*
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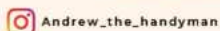
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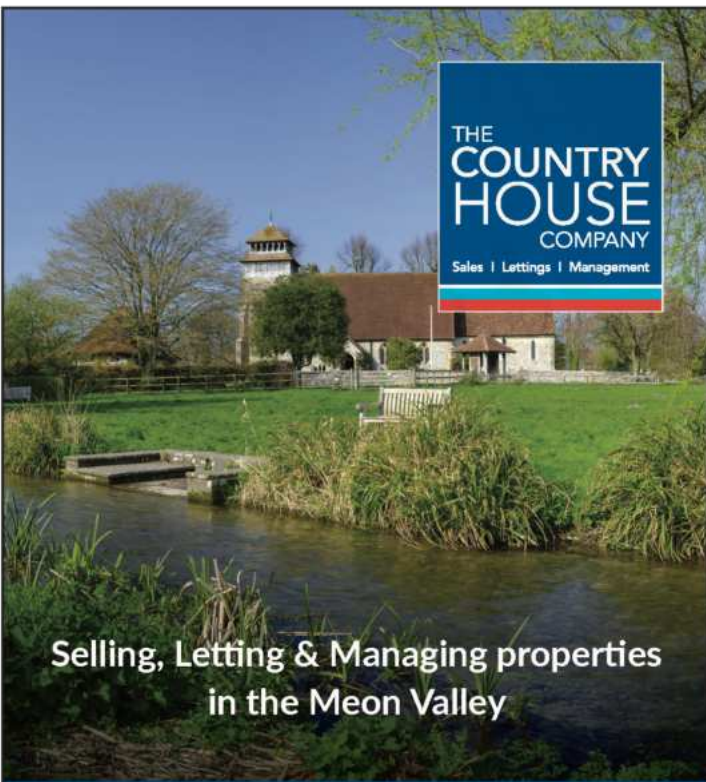
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<b>Droxford</b>	
Clerk/RFO: Ailsa Duckworth	07720 092072
<b>Exton Parish Meeting</b>	
Secretary: Juliet Reed <a href="mailto:julietreed@outlook.com">julietreed@outlook.com</a>	878450

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES

<b>Adult Services:</b>	0300 555 1386
<b>Children's Services:</b>	0845 603 5620
The above are open Mon to Thur 8.30am to 4.30pm	
Out-of-hours number:	0845 600 4555

## WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

<b>Central Meon Valley (including Droxford):</b>	
Malcolm Wallace <a href="mailto:mwallace@winchester.gov.uk">mwallace@winchester.gov.uk</a>	
Frank Pearson <a href="mailto:fpearson@winchester.gov.uk">fpearson@winchester.gov.uk</a>	
Danny Lee <a href="mailto:dlee@winchester.gov.uk">dlee@winchester.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Upper Meon Valley (including Meonstoke, Exton, Corhampton and Preshaw):</b>	
Neil Bolton <a href="mailto:nbolton@winchester.gov.uk">nbolton@winchester.gov.uk</a>	
Jerry Pett <a href="mailto:jpett@winchester.gov.uk">jpett@winchester.gov.uk</a>	

## DROXFORD VILLAGE HALL

Bookings: Mrs Terry Crowfoot	877631
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## THE MEON HALL, MEONSTOKE

Bookings: Position vacant.	
<a href="mailto:meonhallbookings2@yahoo.com">meonhallbookings2@yahoo.com</a>	
or if not on email, by phone	877916
For details of charges and general information see <a href="http://www.candm-pc.gov.uk/the-meon-hall">www.candm-pc.gov.uk/the-meon-hall</a>	

## LOCAL SURGERIES

The Park, Droxford	877588
Doctor's Lane, West Meon	01730 829666
Lower Lane, Bishop's Waltham	892288
Houghton Way, Wickham	01239 833121

## COMMUNITY CARE TRANSPORT COORDINATORS

(Please ring only between 9.00 am and 6.00 pm)	
Droxford: Rosie Hoile	07977 096586
Exton, Meonstoke & Corhampton: Chrissie Butler	07865 517484

## URGENT TREATMENT CENTRE

Petersfield Community Hospital, Swan Street, Petersfield GU32 3LB	023 8231 9000
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## DROXFORD VILLAGE COMMUNITY WEBSITE

Local events and activities: [www.droxfordweb.co.uk](http://www.droxfordweb.co.uk)

## CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Wellhouse, 2 Brook Street, Bishops Waltham	03444 111306
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## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH Crime Reporting

**CALL 999** only for the following reasons:

- If a crime is taking place, or has just happened;
- If you have immediate concern for someone's safety, including a medical emergency;
- If you see a traffic collision involving injury or danger to other road users;
- Or if you see something suspicious that requires immediate attention. The more information that you can provide, the better.

**CALL 101 or, preferably, use [www.Hampshire.Police](http://www.Hampshire.Police)** to report crimes that are not in progress; suspicious people or vehicles, and non-urgent reporting such as anti-social behaviour, suspected drug use or damage to property.

**ALSO, after contacting one of the above,** please contact your local Neighbourhood Watch, as detailed below.

► <b>DROXFORD</b>	<a href="mailto:droxfordnhwchair@btinternet.com">droxfordnhwchair@btinternet.com</a>
High St.	Mel Rankins <a href="mailto:melrankine3@gmail.com">melrankine3@gmail.com</a>
Sheep Pond Ln.	Matt Avison <a href="mailto:mattavison@hotmail.com">mattavison@hotmail.com</a>
Dundridge Ln. E	Colin Richardson (chair) 07711 058744
Midlington Hill	Claire Francis <a href="mailto:claire.francis1209@gmail.com">claire.francis1209@gmail.com</a>
Swanmore Rd.	Ruth Butler <a href="mailto:ruthb635@gmail.com">ruthb635@gmail.com</a> 07818 404177
Midlington Rd.	Louise Hudson <a href="mailto:hudsonlouise111@gmail.com">hudsonlouise111@gmail.com</a>
South Hill W.	Tony Hoile (dep. chair) 07506 849443
Union Ln.	Lynne Dumbrell <a href="mailto:Lynnejdumbrell@outlook.com">Lynnejdumbrell@outlook.com</a>
The Park	Jacqui Ready <a href="mailto:jaxready61@gmail.com">jaxready61@gmail.com</a>
Northend Ln.	Colin Richardson (chair) 07711 058744
Chestnut Rise.	John Whittaker 877788
Mill Ln. and S.Hill E	Sally Sturt (dep. chair) 07767 301095

## ► MEONSTOKE, CORHAMPTON and EXTON

To exchange information about suspicious or criminal behaviour in Meonstoke, Corhampton or Exton, please use the **CM&E Crime-Watch** WhatsApp group. If you are not already a member and wish to join, please text the Administrator, Peter Riley, on 07702 863954. You can also use the **Meonstoke Chat WhatsApp**.

Residents in Exton should also report incidents to their co-ordinator, Sue Robertson, on 878545.



## April

**Tuesday 2nd** Yoga, APM, Meon Hall 7.30  
Droxford Village Hall 6pm

**Tuesday 2nd** Yoga group Meon Hall 9.30am

**Tuesday 2nd** Badminton, Meon Hall, 7.30pm

**Wednesday 3rd to 6th** Portchester Brownies stay in the Meon Hall

**Wednesday 3rd** Pop-In St Andrew's Church 10.30 to 12

**Wednesday 3rd** Pilates with Hannah Plom, Droxford Village Hall 1.45

**Friday 5th** Pilates with Charlotte Graetz, Droxford Village Hall 9 to 10 and 10 to 11

**Tuesday 9th** MV Arts Society lecture "Mexican Painting" Meon Hall 10.40

**Tuesday 9th** Badminton, Meon Hall, 7.30pm

**Tuesday 9th** Yoga, Droxford Village Hall 6pm

**Wednesday 10th** Pilates Group, Meon Hall, 9.15am

**Wednesday 10th C & M** Parish Council's Annual Parish Assembly, Meon Hall 7.30pm

**Wednesday 10th** Pilates with Hannah Plom, Droxford Village Hall 1.45

**Wednesday 10th** C&M Parish Council

**Thursday 11th** Meonstorks Toddler Group, Meon Hall 9.30am

**Friday 12th** Pilates with Charlotte Graetz, Droxford Village Hall 9 to 10 and 10 to 11

**Saturday 13th** St Andrew's Church clean-up 11am to 2pm

**Tuesday 16th** Yoga group Meon Hall 9.30am

**Tuesday 16th** Badminton, Meon Hall, 7.30pm

**Tuesday 16th** Yoga, Droxford Village Hall 6pm

**Wednesday 17th** Pilates Group, Meon Hall, 9.15am

**Wednesday 17th** Pilates with Hannah Plom, Droxford Village Hall 1.45

**Thursday 18th** Meonstorks Toddler Group, Meon Hall 9.30am

**Friday 19th** Pilates with Charlotte Graetz, Droxford Village Hall 9 to 10 and 10 to 11

**Monday 22nd** Scottish Reels, Meon Hall 8pm

**Tuesday 23rd** Meon Valley Arts Society Special Interest Day "Tate Modern," Meon Hall 10.00am

**Tuesday 23rd** Yoga, Droxford Village Hall 6pm

# Events Diary

**Tuesday 23rd** Yoga group Meon Hall 9.30am

**Tuesday 23rd** Badminton, Meon Hall, 7.30pm

**Wednesday 24th** Film: The Great Escaper, Droxford Village Hall 7pm

**Wednesday 24th** Pilates Group, Meon Hall, 9.15am

**Wednesday 24th** Pilates with Hannah Plom, Droxford Village Hall 1.45

**Thursday 25th** Meon Talk by Guy Liardet on Meon Valley Archeological and Heritage Group, Droxford Village Hall 7.30

**Thursday 25th** Meonstorks Toddler Group, Meon Hall 9.30am

**Friday 26th** Pilates with Charlotte Graetz, Droxford Village Hall 9 to 10 and 10 to 11

**Tuesday 30th** Yoga Group, Meon Hall 9.30am

**Tuesday 30th** Badminton, Meon Hall, 7.30pm

**Tuesday 30th** Yoga, Droxford Village Hall 6pm

**Wednesday 1st** Pilates Group, Meon Hall, 9.15am

**Wednesday 1st** Spring Plant Sale, Droxford Village Hall 10am

**Thursday 2nd** Meonstorks Toddler

## May

Group, Meon Hall 9.30am

**Friday 3rd** Pilates with Charlotte Graetz, Droxford Village Hall 9am to 10 and 10 to 11

**Tuesday 7th** Yoga Group, Meon Hall 9.30am

**Tuesday 7th** Yoga, Droxford Village Hall 6pm

**Wednesday 8th** Pilates Group, Meon Hall, 9.15am

**Wednesday 8th** Pilates with Hannah Plom, Droxford Village Hall 1.45

**Thursday 9th** Polling Station, Meon Hall (Local Govt and P&CC Elections)

**Thursday 9th** Talk: Tony Williams on Droxford Station and D-Day, Droxford Church

**Thursday 9th** Droxford Parish Council Annual Parish meeting, Droxford Village Hall 7pm

**Friday 10th to 12th** Winchester Scouts & Cubs camp on the Meonstoke Recreation Ground

**Friday 10th** Pilates with Charlotte Graetz, Droxford Village Hall 9 to 10 and 10 to 11

**Tuesday 14th** Meon Valley Arts Society "Roman Mosaics" Meon Hall

10.40am

**Tuesday 14th** Yoga, Droxford Village Hall 6pm

**Tuesday 14th** Badminton, Meon Hall, 7.30pm

**Wednesday 15th** Pilates Group, Meon Hall, 9.15am

**Wednesday 15th** Pilates with Hannah Plom, Droxford Village Hall 1.45

**Wednesday 15th** Film: Churchill, Droxford Village Hall 7pm

**Thursday 16th** Meonstorks Toddler Group, Meon Hall 9.30am

**Friday 17th** Pilates with Charlotte Graetz, Droxford Village Hall 9am to 10 and 10am to 11

**Saturday 18th** Plant and Cake Sale, Manor House, Meonstoke High Street, 10am to 12

**Monday 20th** Meon Hall Management Committee, Meon Hall, 7.30pm

**Monday 20th** Scottish Reels, Meon Hall 8.00pm

**Tuesday 21st** Yoga Meon Hall 9.30am

**Tuesday 21st** Badminton 7.30pm

**Tuesday 21st** Yoga, Droxford Village Hall 6pm

**Wednesday 22nd** Pilates Group, Meon Hall 9.15am

**Wednesday 22nd** Pilates with Hannah

Plom, Droxford Village Hall 1.45

**Thursday 23rd** Talk: Lord Ben Stoneham on Churchill, Droxford Church 7.30pm

**Thursday 23rd** Meonstorks Toddler Group, Meon Hall 9.30am

**Friday 24th** Pilates with Charlotte Graetz, Droxford Village Hall 9am to 10 and 10am to 11

**Wednesday 29th** Pilates with Hannah Plom, Droxford Village Hall 1.45

**Tuesday 28th** Yoga, Droxford Village Hall 6pm

**Thursday 30th** Droxford History Group visit to Solent Sky Museum

**Friday 31st** Pilates with Charlotte Graetz, Droxford Village Hall 9am to 10 and 10am to 11

## Further afield

**Saturday 15 June** Froxfield Choir performs Duke Ellington's Sacred Concert at Holy Trinity Church, Privett, 7.30pm.

The choir will be singing alongside the Brass Breakout Jazz Orchestra. Tickets £18 available from One Tree Books, Petersfield, or Ticketsource.

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