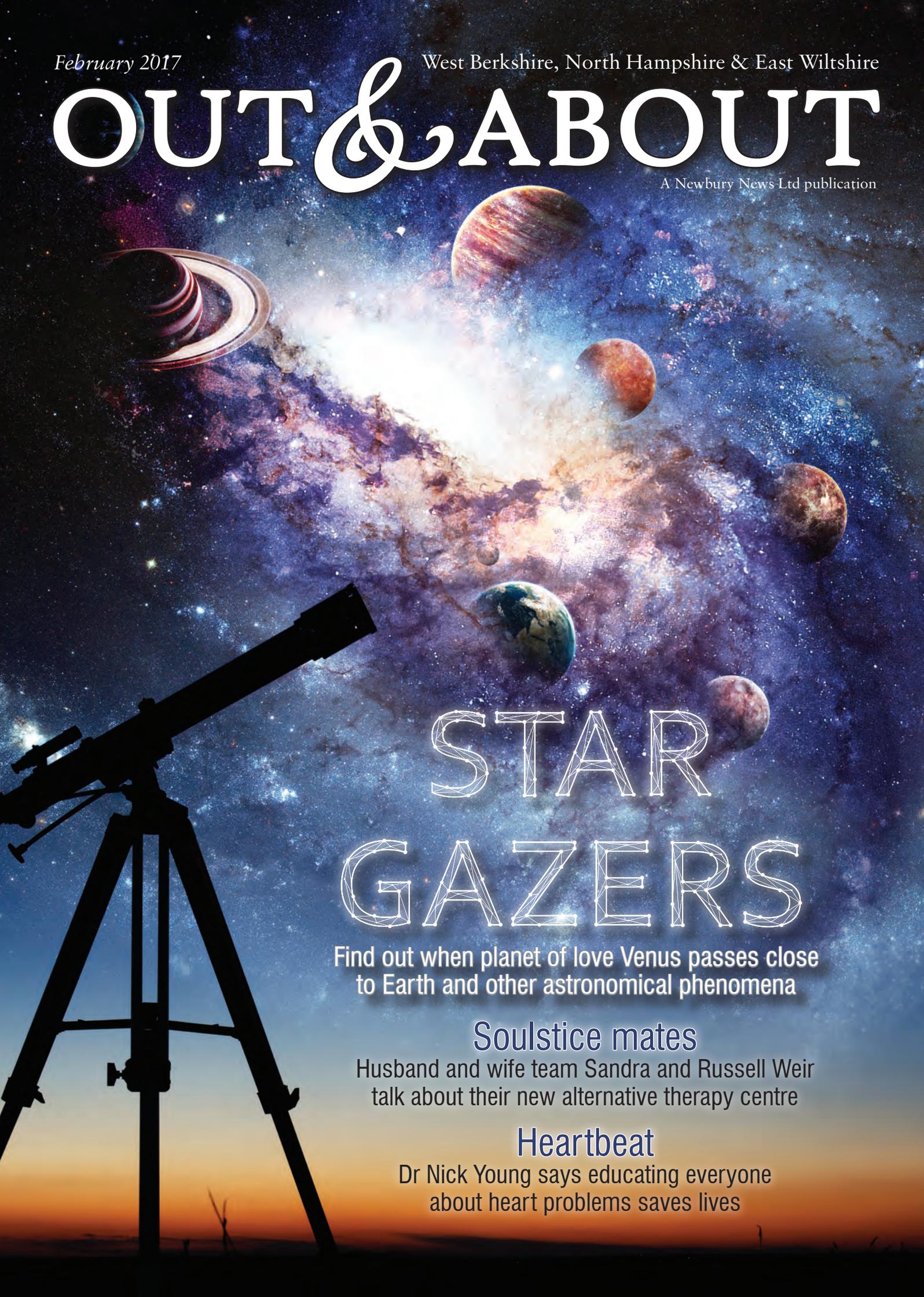


February 2017

West Berkshire, North Hampshire & East Wiltshire

OUT & ABOUT

A Newbury News Ltd publication



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Out&About

February 2017

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The Power of Pre-School

Jubilee Day Nursery and Jubilee Gems Term-Time Day Nursery based in Padworth are well-known for the quality of their outdoor learning and providing a high quality pre-school education in preparation for children starting school. But why is a pre-school education so important?

'Once seen as simply a preparation for school, what happens to young children between the age of 3 and 5 is now an important phase of education in its own right and one with long term implications for children as learners.' (Dept for Education Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Research Project, 2015)

Recent government research has shown that attending a high quality pre-school has a positive and long term impact on children's attainment, progress and social-behavioural development and continues to influence outcomes throughout primary school and beyond and has proved to be especially important for boys.

Pre-school continued to influence outcomes throughout primary school especially if it was of high quality and its influence continued during secondary school through higher attainment and better social-behavioural development at age 14. By age 16, results showed attending a pre-school predicted better GCSE results. This positive influence was greater for those who had started at an earlier age (before 3) or who had attended a pre-school of high quality. Beyond compulsory schooling, students who attended pre-school were also more

likely to go on to higher academic study, taking four or more AS/A levels.

Both nurseries place great emphasis on providing caring, safe learning environments where children are happy, nurtured and encouraged to develop and achieve their full potential. Jubilee employs a large number of staff with graduate qualifications as well as a qualified Early Years teacher for each of their pre-schools and many highly experienced practitioners. We place importance on a well-rounded learning experience which encompasses a child's physical, personal, social and emotional development.

Pre-school children have a dedicated free-flow space leading into their own garden, designed to promote and encourage independence. It's here that our highly-skilled team prepare the children for their eventual move to 'big school'. Children naturally develop at different rates and staff support them by encouraging everyone's unique talents through their in-depth understanding of child development.

Children might learn about topical festivities or enjoy visiting the dedicated 'Learning Hub' where they really start to get to grips with phonics during fun sessions with their teacher; they enjoy educational games, dance and immerse themselves in other lively activities – all of which are linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We often receive comments from primary school teachers who tell us they can recognise 'Jubilee children' for their 'confidence, independence and joy of learning'.

If you are interested in enrolling your child in either of our pre-schools and you haven't already done so, please do come and see us!

If you would like to receive a prospectus, come and visit or find out more – then give us a call. Located in Padworth (conveniently located between Newbury, Reading and Basingstoke and minutes from the A4), we provide exceptional care for babies from 3 months to children up to 5 years of age. We offer a range of packages including full-time, term-time and flexible sessions.*

Government funding is also available for eligible 2, 3 and 4 year-olds and we accept childcare vouchers.*

(*Jubilee Gems only)



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Jonathan Hopson

is a great fan of wiff-waff



The Newbury league has a wide geographical coverage, with teams from Ashford Hill, AWE Aldermaston, Inkpen, Kintbury, Newbury, Thatcham, Upton, near Didcot, West Ilsley and Woolton Hill.

They organise an annual handicap tournament, the Pembroke Cup, and the team I play for, the Woolton Hill Wombats, won it in 2013-14 and were also the losing finalists in 2014-15. At the time of writing, late December 2016, the Wombats have managed to progress to the quarter final stage of this year's competition – so fingers crossed.

A personal highlight from the 2015-16 season was managing to narrowly beat a lady player ranked in the top 100 in the UK, in a league match – not very chivalrous maybe, but a victory of which I am rather proud.

Unfortunately, the same match this year was tied at one game all, and 13 all in the third game, when I had to concede due to injury – perhaps I had over-exerted myself.

Playing regular table tennis has many benefits, including improving hand-eye co-ordination, reflexes and balance. It also helps develop mental acuity and stimulates different parts of the brain.

However, playing table tennis doesn't have to be competitive or serious and there are many non-league venues offering an opportunity to play, often for free.

Ping England is a free street ping pong festival that sees table tennis tables popping up in remarkable and surprising places, in 21 towns and cities all over England, during the summer. To find out more about the festival and where the nearest pop-up table will appear, visit www.pingengland.co.uk

If you don't already play ping pong, why not pick up a table tennis bat and give it a try?

Continuing from last month's feature where I outlined the numerous benefits of cycling, I am now turning my attention to table tennis.

Table tennis, or ping pong as it's often called, is the third most numerous participation sport in the world, after soccer and cricket, and is played by 2.4m people in the UK.

It is also the most popular indoor sport in the world, with 222 associations from countries all around the world affiliated to the International Table Tennis Federation.

Ping-pong was invented on the dining tables of England in the 1880s and was originally called wiff-waff.

The US author and celebrated wit James Thurber pointed out that ping-pong backwards, gnop-gnip, sounds much more like a game of table tennis.

My route to semi-serious table tennis started in the late 1970s, playing a few games for the Berkshire Juniors team.

After a break of around 35 years, in 2013, I started playing in the Newbury table tennis league.

In an attempt to improve my skills, from November this year, I also play in the Basingstoke league in addition to the Newbury league.

The Newbury and District Table Tennis League continues to thrive with around 150 people playing for 30 separate teams in three divisions.

To find out more visit www.tabletennis365.com/newbury



Participants at Ping Oxford 2016

Did you know?

- Table tennis was banned in the Soviet Union from around 1930 to 1950. The sport was believed to be harmful to the eyes.
- Table tennis became an Olympic sport in the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul.
- Early table tennis paddles were normally made of cork, cardboard, or wood, and covered with cloth, leather or sandpaper.
- Table tennis balls aren't really hollow. They are pressurised slightly with a gas.
- A modern table tennis match at the elite level lasts on average about 30 minutes. Top players often smash the ball at speeds exceeding 100 miles per hour.
- How many balls can two players hit back and forth in 60 seconds? The current record is 173, set by Jackie Bellinger and Lisa Lomas in 1993.
- A modern table is nine feet long, five feet wide, and 2.5 feet high. The net is six inches high.
- China, Sweden and South Korea are currently the world powers in table tennis.



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Let's do HIIT



Personal trainer Vicki Brown is the founder of LiveFitNow, based in Wash Common. For a free consultation, more information and links to online home fitness videos, visit: www.LiveFitNow.co.uk

Give yourself some love this February. As winter draws to an end and Valentine's day approaches, February is a great time to improve your health and fitness says Vicki Brown

HIIT or high intensity interval training is a popular method used in the fitness industry that you may have heard of especially in the last few months as its popularity seems to keep increasing.

It generally involves bursts of intense exercise, with rest periods and takes place over a relatively short period of time, generally 15-30 minutes, but can be as little as four.

It is an effective way of training, but it isn't suitable for everyone and you should check with your doctor before you start such an exercise programme.

It is also important when you are performing new exercises to warm up appropriately and make sure you can execute the moves safely and correctly before doing it at the intensity required for HIIT.

You may need to start with an easy routine then increase the difficulty, working up to the more challenging workouts.

Why do HIIT?

- If you don't have much time to exercise HIIT is a great way to work out, burn calories and increase your fitness levels without having to devote hours to do so.
- It prevents boredom. If you often find yourself getting bored when you train, throw in some interval training to mix it up, workout time goes quickly and the exercises can be varied.
- You will feel like you've had a workout even though it doesn't take long.
- It has been proven that doing high intensity training can increase your metabolism. It can lead to an increased production of human growth hormone for up to 24 hours after workout, so your body can burn more calories during that period.

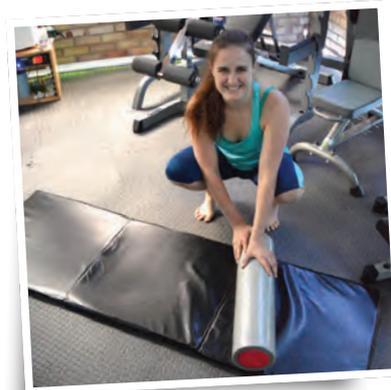
- You can do it anywhere, in the gym, at home or outdoors, the choice is yours.
- No equipment is needed. There isn't any special training equipment required. All you need, is a way to track time. Whether you want to use your watch, a stopwatch or an interval app (so you don't need to keep resetting the time) will mean you can have the appropriate effort to rest ratio.

Record your workout, exercises and times. That way you know what you can do for your next session and push yourself harder.

You want to be giving maximum effort to get your heartrate up during your work period, during your rest period your heart rate will come back down ready for the next interval.

You may find it useful to get yourself a heartrate monitor. This way you can track how hard you are working, how quickly you are recovering and see improvement in your fitness over time.

Hopefully you will give HIIT a go and try something new, for more workouts or HIIT to target your specific needs get in touch, we are always happy to help.



HIIT WORKOUTS YOU CAN TRY

Running (you can apply this to walking, bike or hills depending on fitness levels and goals).

Beginner: 20-second sprint, one minute rest (either walk or stop). Repeat 10 times.

Intermediate: 60 seconds run, two minutes rest. Repeat five times.

Advanced: Two-minute run, 30 seconds rest. Repeat 10 times.

HIIT targeting the 'Love Handles'
30 seconds on, 10 seconds rest

Mountain climbers

1. Begin in the plank position with your right knee by your chest and your left leg extended. 2. Switch your bent leg and straight leg simultaneously as if you were running and repeat

Russian twist

1. Sit with your feet hip-width apart, flat on the floor and clasp your hands out in front of your chest. 2. Lift your feet slightly off the floor, balancing on your coccyx. 3. Twist to the right without dropping your feet then return to centre. 4. Twist to the left and return to centre. 5. Repeat without dropping your feet

V-ups

1. Lie flat on the floor on your back with your arms extended straight back behind your head and your legs extended. 2. As you exhale, bend at the waist while simultaneously raising your legs and arms to meet in a jack-knife or V position. 3. While inhaling, lower your arms and legs back to the starting position

Full Body HIIT
30 seconds on, 10 seconds rest

Burpees

1. Drop to floor into a plank position from the standing position. 2. Thrust your knees toward your chest into a low

squat position. 3. Jump as high as you can from the low squat position. 4. Land in the standing position with your knees slightly bent. 5. Repeat

Squat jumps

1. Stand with your feet together. 2. Lower into a squat and swing your arms back behind you, and then quickly jump up, swinging arms overhead. 3. Land into a squat position with your feet hip width apart, and swing your arms back again. 4. Repeat as quickly as you can, jumping in and out with your feet each time

High knees

1. Beginning in the standing position, raise and lower one knee at a time as if running in place. Bring the knees to the same height as the hips and keep your thighs parallel to the ground. 2. Alternate legs and go as fast as you can.

Heel flicks

1. Start running on the spot or jogging kicking your heels towards your butt. 2. Try to touch your heels to your butt each time

Spotted dog

1. Begin with one leg and the opposite arm forward. 2. Jump in a scissor motion with opposite arm and leg backwards and forwards.

Sprint on the spot

1. Begin by running on the spot. 2. Speed up by driving with the arms and lifting your knees up high and fast.

Jumping jacks

1. Start with your feet together and your arms at your side. 2. Open your legs and bring your arms up and out in one swift motion and then jump back to the start position and repeat.

Mountain climbers - see above

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It's the month of romance, but it's also cold, so why not cuddle up with your loved one in some snug sleepwear, share a box of chocolates and gaze lovingly at each other over the roses, cards, and knick knacks millions of us exchange each year on February 14th



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141 million Valentine's Day cards are exchanged annually, making Valentine's Day the second-most popular greeting-card-giving occasion.

Although no one knows for sure the exact origin of Valentine's Day, it is believed that it started in the Roman Empire around 270AD under the rule of Claudius II. During time of war, Claudius did not want men to get married because he believed it made them weak. It is said that Bishop Valentine would perform secret wedding ceremonies so the men could marry their sweethearts, and as a result he was sent to jail. Legend has it, that he wrote a love letter to the jailer's daughter, signed 'from your Valentine'. Bishop Valentine was put to death on February 14.

During the Middle Ages men and women would pick names out of a bowl and that person would be considered their Valentine. They would then wear the name on their sleeve for a week. This is where the saying 'wear your heart on your sleeve' comes from.

The oldest known Valentine's Day card is on display at the British Museum and dates back to the 1400s.

In 1537, Henry VIII declared Valentine's Day a public holiday and chose February 14 as the official day of celebration.

The first box of chocolates made for Valentine's Day was presented by Richard Cadbury to his wife in the 1800s. The box was heart-shaped.

In Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*, the Montagues and Capulets carried out their feud in Verona. Every year thousands of Valentine's Day cards are sent to Verona, addressed to Juliet.

In France the *loterie d'amour*, or 'drawing for love' was when men and women would fill houses that faced one another, and then take turns pairing off. Men who weren't satisfied with their match could simply leave a woman for another, but the women left unmatched built a bonfire and would burn pictures of the men who wronged them and hurl insults at the opposite sex. The French government banned the tradition when it got out of control.



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Newbury Weekly News



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Do you understand the acids used in skincare products?

There is such a wide range of products on the shelves that is a complete minefield to know what is going to work best for you. Victoria Lee sheds some light on the choices, along with the benefits of certain ingredients to help you narrow down the search for a product that will make a difference.

Hyaluronic acid (HA) is a gel-like water-holding molecule that is the space filler and cushioning agent that is found in our bodies already. So it is not unusual to see this ingredient in skin care products. One of the huge benefits is that, as we already have it in our system so our body recognises it and knows what to do with it.

Our bodies roughly contain 15 grams of HA and it is found in virtually every part of the body. With such a widespread occurrence, it is logical that it also has multiple functions. Scientific studies have shown that HA improves skin hydration, stimulates production of collagen in skin, works as an antioxidant and free radical scavenger, maintains skin elasticity, cushions joints and nerve tissues, has an anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory activity and maintains the fluid in the eye tissues, which may help to protect against various possible eye concerns.

Roughly one third of HA is degraded and synthesized on a daily basis. This is where the problems arise. Decreasing levels of HA are known to accompany the ageing process and it is estimated that by the time we reach our mid-40s, the synthesis of it is roughly half of that required by the body.

Alpha-hydroxy acids (glycolic, lactic, tartaric and citric acids) are found in many creams and lotions and AHAs help with fine lines, irregular pigmentation and age spots, and may help decrease enlarged pores.

A side-effect of alpha-hydroxy acids is sun sensitivity, so for that reason, sunscreen should also be used every morning.

It is advisable to start with a product with concentrations of AHA of 10 to 15 per cent. Also, make sure you ease into it. You want to get your skin used to alpha-hydroxy acids, so you should only initially apply the skin care product every other day, gradually working up to daily application.

Beta-hydroxy acid (salicylic acid) has been studied for its effect on skin that has aged

prematurely due to exposure to ultraviolet rays from the sun. It exfoliates skin and can improve the texture and colour of the skin. It penetrates oil-laden hair follicle openings and, as a result helps with acne.

Skin care products containing hydroquinone are referred to as bleaching creams or lightening agents and are used to lighten hyperpigmentation, such as age spots and dark spots related to pregnancy or hormone therapy (melasma or chloasma).

Kojic acid is a more recent remedy for the treatment of pigment problems and age spots and it has a similar effect as hydroquinone.

Retinol is a derivative of vitamin A. Here's why skin responds to skin care products with retinol: vitamin A has a molecular structure that's tiny enough to get into the lower layers of skin, where it finds collagen and elastin. Retinol is proven to improve mottled pigmentation, fine lines and wrinkles, skin texture, skin tone and colour, and your skin's hydration levels.

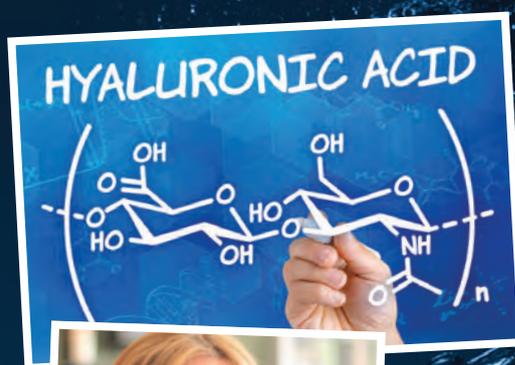
If you've heard of fish referred to as brain food, you can thank DMAE (dimethylaminoethanol).

This substance is naturally produced in the brain, but DMAE is also present in anchovies, salmon and sardines. DMAE in skin care products shows remarkable effects when applied to skin, resulting in the reduction of fine lines and wrinkles.

So there you have it – a very brief overview of the different ingredients that are results driven.

It's always best to consult a qualified professional with good training and knowledge to make sure you are using the right product for your skin and its needs.

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Peace of mind

In the hustle and bustle of Newbury town centre, Dan Cooper discovers an oasis of calm at Soulstice Wellbeing



Sandra Weir

Soulstice Wellbeing, located in Newbury Town Hall, opened in October 2016 with the aim of helping people unwind and to raise awareness of mental health issues.

Sandra Weir, who runs the centre with her husband Russell, explains: "We all work incredibly hard and lead stressful lives. So much is expected of us and that can be overwhelming.

"This is about taking some time out to relax, maybe take a class, have a massage or a cup of tea and cake and just talk or listen to music."

Sandra believes that in a world of appointments, deadlines, targets and meetings we seem to be forgetting to take time out to look after ourselves.

That is why Soulstice is such a breath of fresh air.

It might sound like a cliché, but from the moment you step inside it really does feel as though you've left all your worries behind you.

The centre offers a range of holistic therapies, including yoga, aromatherapy and massage, while visitors can also sip herbal tea or simply sit quietly and reflect in the 'secret tea room'.

Sandra and Russell have decided that 10 per cent of all profits from the secret tea room will be donated to the mental health charity MIND.

There's a personal reason behind this and why Sandra and Russell decided to embark on this adventure together.

Sandra worked for Vodafone for 17 years, but says she became tired of the pressures of a

corporate career and originally planned to take 12 months off to spend time with her husband Russell, who suffers from anxiety.

"I must admit I didn't always understand what Russell was going through," she says.

"Sometimes I used to tell him 'pull yourself together, there's nothing wrong with you', but now I know that's just about the worst thing you can say to someone with anxiety.

"Unfortunately, there is still this stigma attached to mental health and because you can't see it, a lot of people just don't understand.

"Russell calls it 'the black dog' on his back.

"For many people with anxiety it feels like there's a cloud hanging over them and a lot of people lose interest in the things they love. They have absolutely no energy and don't know how they can get through the day.

"Sometimes people find excuses not to have to go out or do things.

"There's the physical side too, such as the panic attacks, sweating and heart palpitations. It can be incredibly frightening.

"For some people, they can just wake up feeling anxious and for others there are certain triggers, like something in their childhood or even something silly like an argument.

"All you can do is try and encourage someone with anxiety, don't tell them to pull themselves together or keep asking what's wrong.

"For Russell, music really helps and he's very passionate about it.

"Meditation also helps, just being able to sit quietly and relax.

"What's nice is that people have told me they can sit on their own quietly at Soulstice and not feel weird or like they are being judged.

"After I left Vodafone, Russell and I attended a lot of meditation classes together and we also got our Yorkiepoo, Bert. It is a breed which really helps people with anxiety."

Little did Sandra know that this career break would ultimately lead her on the path to a new venture.

She says: "I'd always been interested in holistic therapies and massage so I went for it and trained and passed my exams to do both.

"I'm now fully-qualified in aromatherapy and Swedish massage, as well as Indian head massage. A lot of it you learn on the job as each client is different."

After her training she rented out a treatment room at Lotus Spa in Newbury and quickly built up a loyal following.

She then rented a room at Mission Hair and Beauty, before turning her attentions to starting her own business with Russell.

"There is not enough awareness of mental health in Newbury and we both wanted to do something that helps people."

After talking to Sandra for a while, I decided it was time for me to find out just how beneficial the treatments on offer were, so I opted for an Indian Head massage.

During the 15 minute pre-treatment consultation, Sandra asked me a range of questions about how I was feeling and what I wanted from the treatment.

She then asked me to smell a variety of essential oils, all from Neal's Yard Remedies in Parkway, Newbury, and asked me to pick what I liked most.

An essential oil is the natural fragrant essence extracted from flowers, leaves, bark, roots and berries and each of the oils is given an 'action' which highlights its main benefit.

I picked out cedar wood, frankincense and clary sage – all of which, apparently, are designed to relax.

"It has been scientifically proven that essential oils carry health benefits," says Sandra.

I can testify to that because as soon as she applied the mixture of oils to my face and started the massage I instantly felt myself slipping into a state of deep relaxation.

Sandra explained that we have more than 350 pressure pits in our faces alone and that applying pressure to those points could help us relieve tension and relax.

As she continued to massage my head and face, with soft music playing in the background, I genuinely couldn't remember the last time I had felt that relaxed.

In fact, at one point, I'm pretty sure I fell asleep. I apologised to Sandra, but she assured me that it was quite normal and that she actually took it as a compliment.

After my treatment, and feeling a bit dazed, I stumbled over to the secret tea room – a quirky area featuring music and film memorabilia – where Sandra offered me a choice of different flavoured Yogi teas.

Yogi Teas developed from the 3,000 year-



Methodology X is one of the centre's most popular classes

old Indian Ayurvedic teachings about the balance between body, mind and soul.

In 1969 Yogi BhaJan – a pioneer of this holistic yogic lifestyle, which encourages people to live a happy, healthy and conscious lifestyle – came to the west, bringing his knowledge of Ayurveda with him.

He shared his wisdom of Ayurveda and yoga with his students while serving them an aromatic spice tea blend, which they affectionately named 'Yogi tea'.

It was first sold in Europe in the 1970s, and from 1987 under the official brand name YOGI TEA.

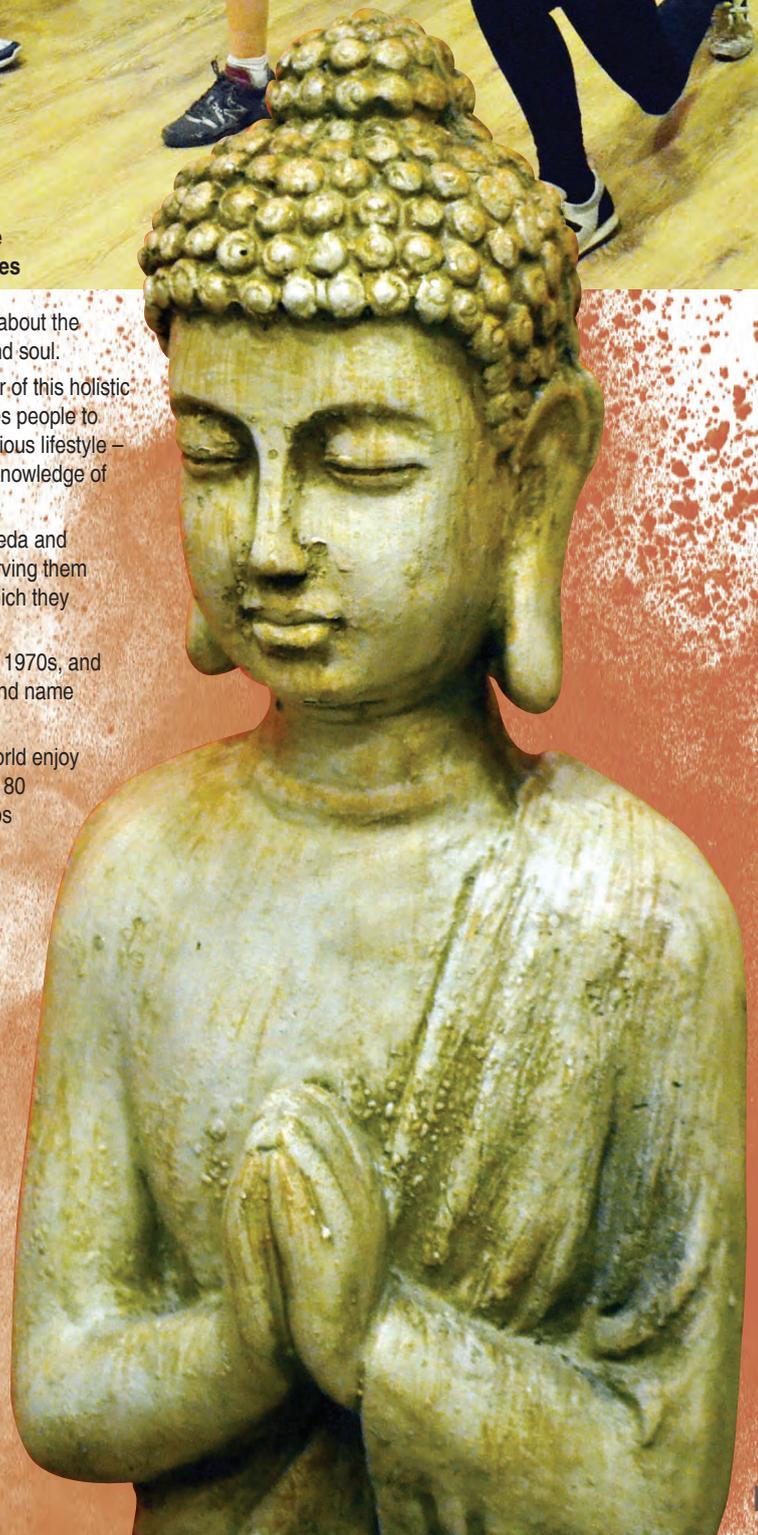
Today, people all around the world enjoy the special blends of more than 80 selected organically-grown herbs and spices that give the 44 varieties of YOGI TEA.

I visited Soulstice in December, so I tried the herbal Christmas Tea, which contained a mixture of cinnamon and star anise.

To accompany my tea, Sandra offered me a cake – but this wouldn't be Soulstice if it was any old cake.

These were delicious vegetable cakes, from Blackberry Cottage, Ashampstead.

Blackberry Cottage is an award-winning business set up by Kate Saunders, that





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Gillian Durrant visits Soulstice Wellbeing



Dan Cooper relaxes in the secret café

develops cakes using vegetables, including aubergine and spinach.

I opted for the chocolate torte with aubergine, which was absolutely delicious and surprisingly indulgent, given the fact it was technically one of my five-a-day.

After a chilled hour-and-a-half, I thought I'd better do something and went over to observe a class called Methodology X.

As it is a class run solely for women, I was unable to take part, but I did observe.

Methodology X is a high-intensity workout created by world-renowned personal trainer Dan Roberts.

It combines circuits with yoga and has been used by supermodels and Hollywood stars who want to tone up and shape up.

The class is only available in the US, Manchester, London – and now Newbury.

It has quickly become one of Soulstice's most popular classes and there is already a waiting list.

Another new experience was awaiting me, however, as Sandra had signed me up for a Hatha Yoga class.

The word "hatha" can be translated two ways: as "willful" or "forceful," or the yoga of activity, and as "sun" (ha) and "moon" (tha), the yoga of balance.

Hatha practices are designed to align and calm

your body, mind and spirit in preparation for meditation.

I felt self-conscious, but I needn't have worried. Ria Ingleby, who took the class, instantly made me feel at ease and, fortunately for me, there were two other men there – one of whom had only tried yoga once before.

Ria is the founder and coach of 'nourish a better you', which endeavours to inspire, empower and support men and women to nourish the best version of themselves.

We started with deep-breathing exercises and Ria explained how we should be kind and look after ourselves.

Then it was on to the poses. Before the class I would have thought a 'baby cobra' was a half pint of beer and a 'sun salutation' a greeting to the fireball in the sky.

I found some of the poses a bit difficult, especially 'the swan' I found a bit difficult, and after an hour-and-a-half I was tired, but strangely refreshed.

We finished by closing our eyes and breathing deeply again before Sandra made us a 'greener colada' – a smoothie containing kale, banana and coconut water.

I left Soulstice feeling refreshed, energised and happy.

"You'll sleep well tonight," said Sandra as I walked out of the door. She wasn't wrong.

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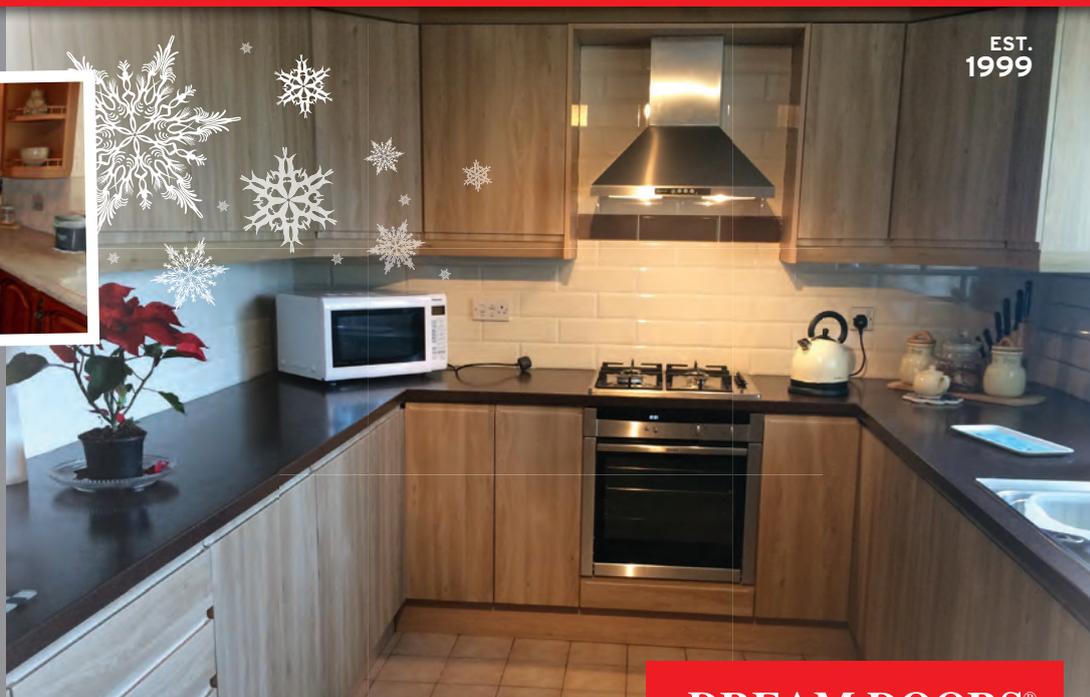
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Heartbeat

Thoughts of February turn to affairs of the heart and the prospects of love on Valentine's Day. While the month is noted as heart month and officially marked as American Heart Month, the passion for heart safety locally is kept going throughout the year by Heartstart Thatcham. John Herring talks to the charity's founder Dr Nick Young



Heartstart Thatcham's first session

Hearthstart Thatcham has been going from strength-to-strength since it was officially formed nearly four years ago.

What started as an idea to provide people with basic life support skills has exceeded all expectations and grown into a charity spanning West Berkshire, with one mission in mind.

Scheme coordinator Nick Young is clear about their aim: "Our goal is simple, to make a difference, to save lives.

"This won't change, but the way we achieve it is always evolving.

"It is done through raising awareness and educating as many people as possible, with talks and practical training on emergency life support skills and to deploy defibrillators, the tools required in the ultimate medical emergency – a cardiac arrest."

For Dr Young, the charity's work is, quite literally, close to his heart.

Months after establishing Heartstart Thatcham, he was rushed in to the coronary care unit at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading to have his heart shocked back into rhythm. He now lives with a heart condition, medication and a defibrillator in his chest.

"Having been through that I can appreciate just how vital these skills and equipment are, but also without the skills of the South Central Ambulance Service team and CCU staff I would not be here to train others," Dr Young said.

It brings a sense of comfort to know that the skills supplied by Heartstart Thatcham have been used in real-life emergencies by instructors and trainees.

While he could not discuss the finer detail of the incidents, Dr Young said people had been able to put skills to use, ranging from placing a person in the recovery position to calling 999.

"Knowing the skills have been used and have made a difference makes everything worthwhile and the team proud."

The first beats of Heartstart Thatcham started when Dr Young held public meetings and exhibitions six years ago in a bid to try and find the right people to cover all roles of the organisation.

Dr Young said that he wanted a scheme that provided vital life support skills to people quicker and cheaper than other first aid courses available.

HEARTSTART
THATCHAM



Nick Young has a PhD in Electronic Engineering and taught engineering and computing in HE and FE for a number of years. He is now an independent web developer and IT trainer.

His interest in local history started when his grandfather would tell him what various places around Thatcham and Newbury used to be like. He has since given numerous talks on local history and has published four books on the subject, with more on the way.

He got into first aid after taking his first course in 2000.

He has been volunteering in the local community for a number of years – he was vice chair of Thatcham Vision, is involved with Thatcham Festival, set-up the Peter Allen Memorial lectures, which raise money for the British Heart Foundation, and has also been chair of Thatcham Historical Society.

"We wanted to give people the basic skills that they could use to cope in an emergency to support a casualty until professional help arrives and to make this available to as many people as possible.

"Thus we provide short training courses for free."

Heartstart Thatcham was officially formed in May 2013 and became one of Mike Cole's chosen charities during his year as the mayor of Thatcham.

“
the ideal of a
nation of lifesavers
could soon be
achieved if every
child left school with
basic first aid skills
”



Children at Thatcham Park School learn more about Heartstart

It started with the modest aim of educating at least 100 people a year with emergency life support skills.

What the team thought was an ambitious target has since been far exceeded, with more than 750 people trained in just under the four years since the charity was formed. This does not include the talks given to thousands of people across West Berkshire and further afield.

While Dr Young said the country had come a long way in educating people with these vital life-saving skills, he feels that a lot more could be done.

“If we had to choose just one thing that we as a team think would make the biggest and longest lasting impact it would be to get the basic first aid skills taught in schools, not as an option but made compulsory.”

This ambition is supported by the British Heart Foundation, which aims to make the UK a ‘nation of lifesavers’.

A foundation report from 2014 said that survival rates of cardiac arrest patients in the UK lagged behind other developed countries and areas, including Norway’s 25 per cent.

Similarly, Norway is one of several European countries to teach cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in schools.

Nineteen US states have passed laws making CPR a high school graduation requirement, while several Australian states have made it mandatory. Survival rates are more than double those of the UK when a comparison is made.

Dr Young said that the ideal of a nation of lifesavers could soon be achieved if every child left school with basic first aid skills.

He pointed out that the basics could be taught in as little as one hour and suggests how elements could be integrated into the curriculum; heart attacks into biology, choking into home economics, and the recovery position in a drama class, for example.

“Many schools do already do this and we are actually working with several of them to ensure pupils learn these skills – not just skills for life, but skills to preserve life.”

It may not be surprising to learn that one of Dr Young’s favourite memories of his work with the charity was when he demonstrated on a Resusci Anne at a Thatcham Park School fete.

“I put one hand on the Anne to start CPR and within seconds I had a dozen children around me with their hands on the Anne doing CPR with me, wanting to save her!”

“Children always make it memorable and have little fear; it really is the best time to educate people.”

There have been plenty of other heart-touching moments, including people donating to the charity in memory of loved ones and the funds being invested in defibrillators.

“At the launch event for the device you then get to meet some of the family and that is very touching.”

Heartstart Thatcham’s drive to install the potentially-lifesaving devices in as many places across West Berkshire as possible is perhaps its most notable and noble goal.

Indeed, it has been involved in the installation of 37 defibrillators in two years, starting with the milestone device at the Henwick Worthy Sports Ground in October 2014.

Other highlights include becoming a registered charity, one of only two Heartstart schemes to do so.

The Thatcham scheme has close ties to the British Heart Foundation and was one of the first to introduce practical sessions using an automated external defibrillator (AED); a move that other groups soon followed.

Dr Young is keen to praise the Heartstart team, saying that the charity’s training sessions and fundraisers would not take place without the dedication of volunteers, businesses and friends and family.

This pride extends to his nephews who have completed a Call Push Rescue (CPR) course through Heartstart and one receiving an award for his work with the charity.

The tireless work of the charity’s team across Thatcham and West Berkshire was recognised with a civic award from Thatcham Town Council in 2015.

But for Dr Young and the team the greatest recognition is that people across the district have been armed with the knowledge and vital skills that can make all the difference in an emergency.

And while the skills are vital, there is always the hope that they will never have to be used.

For more about Heartstart Thatcham and to sign up to a course visit www.heartstartthatcham.info or call 07810145690.



RESUSCI ANNE

Resusci Anne is the world’s most famous life-sized doll and fondly dubbed the most kissed woman in the world. Modern day simulation training for today’s healthcare professionals owes much to this iconic manikin and it is estimated that 300 million people worldwide have been trained in CPR on Resusci Anne.



CARDIAC ARREST OR HEART ATTACK AND WHAT TO DO

While a cardiac arrest and a heart attack are both linked to the heart, they are different conditions and must be treated correctly.

“A heart attack is effectively a plumbing issue and a cardiac arrest is electrical,” Dr Young explains.

Most people recognise the heart as a pump pushing blood around the body but it should be remembered that it is a muscle that cannot rest.

Muscles need a supply of blood but when blocked or restricted the heart struggles and starts to die. This is a heart attack.

What to look for: chest pain spreading to one or both arms, breathlessness, sweating, nausea, dizziness.

What to do: The casualty should be taken to hospital as soon as possible.

Call 999.

Make them comfortable by placing them in a ‘lazy w’ position – on the floor leaning against a wall with knees bent and head and shoulders supported – and reassure.

Monitor and reassure.

There are also electrical pulses that tell the heart when to beat. These can go wrong and cause a cardiac arrest.

What to look for: The casualty will collapse and either not be breathing or not breathing normally.

What to do: Call 999. Remember be calm, tell the operator where you are. Put phone on loud speaker.

Starting CPR, you in effect become their heart and keep the blood pumping around the body. Do this with 30 chest compressions at a rate of one and a half to two compressions a second followed by two breaths. If possible, find someone to take over administering CPR if you become too tired or until an ambulance arrives.

If available use a defibrillator.

LIST OF DEFIBRILLATORS

The Heartstart Thatcham team has been busy installing defibrillators across the district. Wanting to protect residents in as many places as they can they have covered Calcot to East Woodhay.

Defibrillators installed and maintained by Heartstart Thatcham:

Swift, Hambridge Lane
Holybrook Community Centre
Kennet Shopping Centre
Cold Ash Parish Office
Henwick Sports Ground
Frank Hutchings Community Hall
Moorside Community Centre
Nature Discovery Centre
Parkway Shopping Centre
Peach’s stores, Bucklebury
Willow Close, Newbury
Bradfield Village Hall
Thatcham Memorial Hall
Victory Room, Bucklebury
Brimpton Primary School
Newbury Railway Station
Bladebone Inn, Bucklebury
The Willows School, Newbury

The team also has its own device that is taken to every event they put on as well as training sessions. Three are internal and all but two are available 24/7.

Defibrillators installed and either handed over or installed on behalf of a third party:

Thirtover Gird Guides, Cold Ash
St Joseph’s School, Newbury
Tigers Nursery, Henwick
Tigers Too, Station Road, Thatcham
Newbury Parkrun, Greenham
Loddon Vale Indoor Bowling Club, Basingstoke
Best Western Hotel, Calcot
Theale Parish Office
Volunteer Pub, Theale
Holybrook Centre
Theale Primary School
Theale Post Office
Theale Charity Shop
East Woodhay Village Hall
Kennet School
Spurcroft Primary School
Woolton Hill Church Hall
The Bell, Aldworth
St Nicolas’ School, Newbury
Half of these are internal.



WHAT IS A DEFIBRILLATOR?



The small box containing two pads can make a big difference when it comes to saving lives.

As Dr Young explains: “When a casualty goes into cardiac arrest their heart will initially be in an arrhythmia known as ventricular fibrillation (VF). Essentially none of the cells in the heart know what they are doing.

“Much like a computer it needs to be reset and that is just what a defibrillator does, it stops fibrillation. This is done by passing a controlled electric shock across the heart; this shock stuns the heart and the theory is then the heart will start to beat normally.

“It may be that several shocks are needed but once switched on the defibrillator will tell you what to do. It is smart enough that unless the casualty is in VF it will not allow a shock to be delivered.”





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toptipples

by James Allen



Traveller's Tales

This month I will be talking about exploring the wine regions close to Adelaide and about the good things that Aussie wine-making has done.

Having just come back from South Australia, I'm going to have a look at the mighty Barossa and McLaren regions. But let's start with some technical stuff.

Did you know?

The temperature in the fermenting vessel can get up to 35°C, blood temperature? When it does so, however, lots of the fruit flavours and aromas get lost. The wines end up hot, flat and tasteless. A big problem for a country like Australia, which is hot anyway.

The amazing solution to this problem was to adopt industrial refrigeration techniques. Now, the winemakers can control the ferment temperature to between 20-30°C for reds and 7-16°C for whites, which are the ideal ranges. What's more, the Aussies have adopted machine-harvesting and then extend that to picking at night so that the grapes arrive cool in the winery. So next time you are drinking that fruity Aussie wine... offer a quick thank you to their smart technicians!

Tasting wines in South Australia

This is both free (mostly), easy and definitely enjoyable. It's a great experience to move from one winery 'cellar door' to the next and compare the wines tasted. Most cellar doors also have restaurants or bistros attached. Sit, eat, drink and enjoy the view. Fantastic!

Two considerations. Firstly, remember to use the spittoons if you are doing a winery tour. Secondly, if tempted to buy remember that prices at the cellar door are top whack, but you are paying for a great, a fun experience.

McLaren Vale

Originally only surveyed in the 1830s, it was producing grapes for Seaview and Hardy's wineries in the 1840s. Now a protected area to stop encroachment by the Adelaide suburbs in the north, McLaren Vale is bounded to the south and east by the Hills and to the west by the sea. This is prime Shiraz country, where 50 per cent of the crush is from this grape variety. There are nearly 100 producers in McLaren Vale.

My top tip would be for d'Arenberg (especially for older, mature wines, and Wirra Wirra).

Barossa Valley

First settled in the 1840s by German refugees from Silesia, the Barossa is some 40 miles northeast of Adelaide. Lying on high ground, its potential for grape-growing was quickly identified. Like the McLaren Vale, it too is dominated by Shiraz. In fact, it has some of the oldest commercial vineyards with Lot 1 in Tanunda having been planted by Johan Fiedler in 1847... amazing. Barossa Shiraz also features heavily in Penfolds classic Grange Hermitage, but at \$850 per bottle you may need a bank loan.

Top wineries abound in the Barossa. My tips would be Yalumba, a family-owned winery, for consistency and style, Ch Tanunda as an amazing place (with super wines) and for a smaller grower try Charlie Melton, who makes classy reds.

Try his Nine Popes, a Chanteauneuf-style wine. Terrific.



REDHEADS VIN'ATUS TEMP GARN GRACI £12.99

From the tiny RedHeads wine studio team in the Barossa, this red combines a trio of Spanish grapes. Yet the playful Vin'atus (its name means 'wine games') is Australian through and through with its dark, brooding cherry fruit and toasty spice length.

LA CURIO THE NUBILE GSM 13 £17.99

Over the years, this GSM red has scored 90+ points from many critics. It's from Adam Hooper, in McLaren Vale, who tracks down the very old vines – 80 years old in fact – for this power packed red, then crafts it every step of the way. Magnificent, dense and long.

REDHEADS CORROBOREE SHIRAZ 15 £13.99

Last vintage 'Wine of the Show' in London and New York, this vintage Gold and Best Value awards in China – we're very proud of this rich, smoky, berry red. It's from RedHeads in the Barossa and premium Koonunga fruit.

All available from Laithwaites

Let's do brunch

There's nothing quite like a lazy weekend and heading out for brunch. And while most people think brunch is a US import, it was actually popular in England in the 19th century. Hilary Scott looks at places where they serve up this combination of breakfast and lunch



Bill's

The pancakes are often what draw customers to Bill's in Market Place for brunch.

Nestling between bananas and strawberries and dripping with maple syrup, or just the plain bacon and syrup version, they are a crowd-pleaser.

But there's also porridge, granola and full English, with plenty of meat or the vegetarian version, which dishes up hummus and guacamole with its poached free range eggs, tomatoes, mushrooms, sweet chilli sauce, basil and toast – and both versions are £8.50.

For those who don't want anything cooked, Bill's bread basket is toast, mini croissant, mini pain au chocolat, mini pain au raisin, almond chocolate butter and Bill's jam, for £4.95.

Liquid-only breakfast lovers can have the Super Greens Smoothie with kale, spinach, mango, apple juice and coconut water for £4.25 or Bill's do a French champagne at a reasonable £ 6.50 a glass. In summer try the peach and mint iced tea, £2.95.

Bill's serves breakfast and brunch until noon on weekdays and at weekends until 1pm.

16-18 Market Place,
Newbury RG14 5AZ
(01635) 528511

[www.bills-website.co.uk/
restaurants/newbury](http://www.bills-website.co.uk/restaurants/newbury)



The Newbury

It's 'bottomless' at gastropub The Newbury in Bartholomew Street at weekends – that is, it's £5 for unlimited prosecco at their Bubbles and Brunch days.

So, while you top up on the fizz your plate is bottomless too.

The unlimited brunch goodies cost £15 and it's a real slap-up feast with a choice of pancakes, waffles, a breakfast burger, a full English and more.

There's a two-hour window to glug your bubbles and munch the brunch – on Sundays from 10-noon and pick your two hours from 10-1pm on a Saturday.

Owner Pete Lumber says: "Brunch is very popular and we fill up quickly so we recommend booking. "Children are welcome too and we can do a children's brunch for half price."

The Newbury opened in 2012 and was formerly The Bricklayer's Arms. It offers real ales as well as meals using local artisan produce.

The Newbury, 137 Bartholomew Street, Newbury RG14 5HB
(01635) 49000

www.thenewburypub.co.uk



Saddleback Farm Shop

What's handy about having a weekend brunch at the Saddleback Farm Shop is that afterwards you can pick up some goodies from the shop, deli or butcher's.

We love the menu served from 8.30am until noon weekdays and Saturday and from 10am until noon on a Sunday.

There's a host of delicious dishes, from a simple dry cured farm bacon roll, made with flour from Wantage, for £5.95 or full breakfast at £8.95 with home-made farm chipolatas to Eggs Benedict or Eggs Florentine.

The eggs used are free range, and there are veggie and gluten-free options and the bread is local. Little ones can feast on the Piglet's Menu, which includes beans and toast.

The shop is on the farm run by the Whidborne family for more than 60 years. In addition to the arable business, the farm at Brightwalton has 100 acres of woodland and almost 100 acres of grassland.

The woodland and parts of the arable rotation are managed as a pheasant and partridge shoot. This gives the shop a ready supply of wild venison, pigeon and rabbit, as well as pheasant and partridge when in season.

Brightwalton RG20 7HR
01488 638806
www.saddlebackfarmshop.co.uk



Coppia Club

It's cheers to the Mimosas, Bloody Marys and hot skillet pans at The Coppia Club in Sonning, which is housed on the ground floor of a former Elizabethan inn.

An extensive brunch menu is served Saturdays and Sundays from 10am-4pm and one of the specials is a full English in a skillet.

Executive chef Matt Fanthorpes says: "The skillet is £9.45 and consists of two fried free range eggs, sausage, dry cured streaky bacon, Spanish black pudding, field mushrooms, roast tomato, Heinz baked beans and toast.

"The reason we do a skillet is that it stays hot – I hate eating breakfast and halfway through it's gone cold and congealed."

The Coppia Club has taken the top sellers from its breakfast menu and turned them into a brunch offer that ranges from cult classics mashed avocado and eggs to its best-selling pizzas.

It also does a three-egg omelette which Matt praises. He says: "We use free range eggs from Riverways Farm in Twyford.

"Our other ingredients are top-notch – good quality pork sausages from our butcher and dry cured bacon, and our bread comes from the Flour Station in North London fresh every day.

"Ultimately, breakfast is so personal to people, we try to minimise that by having standout dishes.

"I've deliberately swerved away from Eggs Benedict because I think everyone does it but you will find plenty to like on our menu."

The Coppia Club, The Great House, Thames street, Sonning, RG4 6UT.
0118 921 9890

www.coppiaclub.co.uk/sonning

Did you know? Punch magazine wrote that the term brunch was coined in Britain in 1895 to describe a Sunday meal for 'Saturday-night carousers'

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Check out: www.cakenest.co.uk



CAMPBELL COOKERY

We've all fallen in love with John Campbell's The Woodspeen restaurant but if you've not tried a course at its state-of-the-art cookery school you should. They are a perfect gift for the foodie in your life and you can choose between shorter evening courses or fuller, day-long courses.

For example, in March they have:

Bangers and Mash, £95, March 3 (evening)

Pastries and Desserts, March 9, £195 (full day)

Butchery, March 11, £185 (full day)

Steak Night, March 16, £95 (evening)

A full diary of courses is online and you can also see video demos.

Call 01635 26507 to book or go online: www.thewoodspeen.com/cookery-school



CHEERY TIPPLES

Of course, a home-made gift for your loved one should be a real winner.

Fruit-infused vodkas are so easy to make and you don't need to wait ages until they are ready. The rule is generally two cups of chopped fruit to two to three cups of vodka and then infuse for three to five days.

Here at O&A we love blueberry-infused vodka which takes on a lovely violet hue.

Simply crush the blueberries and transfer to a sterilised bottle or even a jam jar, adding any juice left on the chopping board. Cover with the vodka, seal and leave in a dark place.

Give it a shake each day then taste after three to five days.

If you think it's ready, strain the liquid, discard the fruit and strain into a new jar or bottle.

If you want a sweet tippie, more like a liqueur drink, add some simple sugar syrup (sugar dissolved in water) at the first stage.



HOOK & LINE & SINKER

They say the way to a man's, or indeed a woman's, heart is through the stomach. If you want to catch your Valentine and reel them in, then what better way than to prepare a special meal – Simon Rhodes offers some mouth-watering suggestions for a perfect romantic evening

Firstly, set the mood with some low lights, easy music and some scented candles.

The secret of a great meal is in the preparation, so remember to give yourself plenty of time.

Start with sourcing a nice bottle of wine. I am fortunate to be part of Cobbs Farmshop and they have a great selection of wines, including their own home-grown award-winning sparkling white.

Make sure it is suitably chilled or aired.

Then, why not start proceedings with a few oysters?

Try some different accompaniments like finely chopped ginger, soy sauce and wasabi, or tabasco and a squeeze of lemon or lime, chilli and fresh coriander or experiment with different combinations.

The flavours will explode in your mouth and will give you something exciting to talk about.

As a starter, try something simple like pan-fried scallops with fried chicken livers.

The scallops should be nicely seared on both sides. Serve with a little rocket salad and use the juice from the livers with reduced port and butter as a dressing.

Shredded apple livens up this dish as the sweetness of the apples contrasts with the chicken livers and scallops.

As for the main course, be adventurous with tuna served with new potatoes and a fresh salad.

To get the perfect tuna heat a little rapeseed oil in a pan until it's very hot. Season the tuna steaks with rock salt and cracked black pepper and fry rapidly for about a minute on each side, remember good tuna tastes sublime when it's pink in the middle.

Why not try something different in the salad like mango or pineapple, maybe some fresh coriander, roasted pine nuts or sesame seeds?

Make the salad with an assortment of different leaves beforehand and add a simple dressing at the last minute so as not to spoil the leaves.

Dessert should be simple and prepared beforehand.

Crushed meringues, with frozen summer fruits (defrosted, naturally), Greek yoghurt and chocolate pieces make for a simple and delicious dessert.

Finally serve up some special cheeses with flavoured biscuits or crackers.

Remember keep the conversation positively light, don't talk about politics, knitting patterns or what your opinion of the greatest ever England football team is. Keep music and food the main topic of conversation and you won't go far wrong.

Maybe next month I should be starting my new column as an agony aunt...



I am fortunate to be part of Cobbs Farmshop and they have a great selection of wines including their own home-grown award-winning sparkling white



About the author

Simon Rhodes owns:
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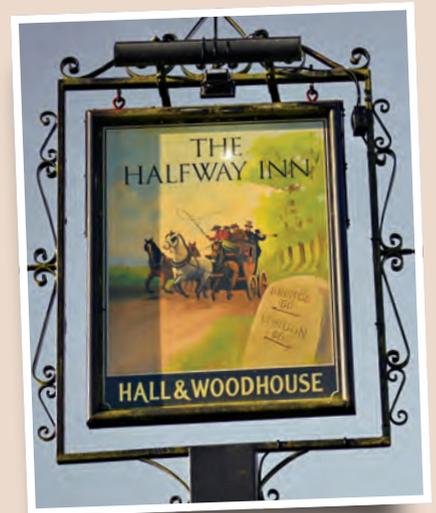
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ROYAL OAK, ECCHINSWELL RG20 4UH

Big food from a pub with a big heart

The Halfway Inn offers a welcome respite from the winter chill and a feast of warming food. Trish Lee ventured in from the cold to savour the atmosphere and fine food offered by James and Magda Gallery.



On the coldest night of the year so far, crunching across freezing car park gravel, the warm glow of The Halfway Inn was most inviting.

Stepping inside, the welcome was equally warm, with a blazing log fire, flickering candles, sheepskin-strewn armchairs and chef James Callery there to greet us.

And so it must have been centuries ago for the weary travellers who stopped off at the 18th-century oak-beamed coaching inn on the A4 Bath Road, half-way between London and Bristol.

However, James and his Polish wife Magda have now created a more contemporary, cosy ambience, with a quirky collection of designer knick-knacks and more than a nod to the past in the upholstered period chairs set around polished wood tables.

The restaurant is at the same time spacious and, because of the individual table settings, intimate. The theatrical décor is down to Magda; “she’s the interior designer,” says James.

We settled on a window seat in the bar with a glass of sauvignon blanc from the pub’s collection of South African Rickety Bridge wines to peruse the menu.

A row of cookery books were propped along the sill – just a selection from 460 in the pub – and in the background, pianist Roger tickled the ivories of the baby grand.

A convivial host, 36-year-old James is Inkpen born and bred. The self-taught chef has been in the business since he was 16, but was first bitten by the cooking bug when, as part of his front-of-house training, he had to spend a month in the kitchens, and since moving to The Halfway eight years ago, he’s never looked back.

He has just returned to the helm after a two-year sabbatical on another project, with his son Kris starting front-of-house last year. The oldest of the rest of his young team of six is just 23.

The Halfway offers hearty English food with a twist and takes pride in creating dishes from scratch, from the Polish sausages made



Wild mushroom risotto balls with a blue cheese sauce



Pan-roasted salmon in mussel and lentil marinara



Slow-cooked lamb



Lemon posset and custard tart

to a recipe of James’ father-in-law – ‘Eddy’s bangers’ – or the salmon and ribs they smoke themselves, to their home-made pastry, James says: “If there’s a long way of doing things, I will do it.”

We just missed out on a starter of thyme pan-seared mackerel with warm beets, pearl onions and spinach purée to a large party in the restaurant – obviously a popular dish – but we weren’t disappointed by our wild mushroom risotto balls with a rich blue cheese sauce or the ham hock croquettes with a parsley and mustard dip, both satisfying appetisers for the mains to come.

You can’t say I wasn’t warned, as earlier chef had told us The Halfway does “big stuff or small stuff”, “hearty or delicate”.

Under the ‘big stuff’ comes their special slow-cooked lamb in winter or rack of ribs in summer, plus their famous Halfway burger. Wavering between the hearty seared venison with roasted sprouts, butternut squash, onions and spinach purée, versus the lamb, I went with the recommendation of the latter.

‘Big’ was an understatement and we did a double-take at the magnificent half-shoulder that arrived in a fragrant waft of rosemary. It was fit for a feast, glazed in a rich jus and proving as succulent as it looked, the meat just falling from the bone. So it took a while to discover the helping of delicious gratin potatoes under the accompanying sweet potato chips.

The new menu for 2017 includes starters like tempura chicken with sweet chilli sauce, pressed game terrin of local pheasant, partridge and venison, Halfway cured salmon or a sharing baked camembert infused with honey and rosemary, served with sour dough.

The slow-cooked lamb remains on the mains list, alongside saffron butter-cooked charred turbot, pan-roasted saddle of venison or lamb cannon and, "for the real carnivores", a 26-day aged 12oz rib eye or 14oz sirloin steak.

For the non-meat eaters, there's creamy wild mushroom tart or sweet potato and okra curry. There are also daily specials.

Peach tarte tatin on an all-butter pastry, rich dark chocolate torte, cheesecake in a glass and a 'theatrical' upside-down crême brûlée are among a tantalising choice of desserts.

To browse the full menu, visit the website www.thehalfway-inn.co.uk



The theatrical and welcoming interior is the handiwork of Magda Callery



Bearing in mind there was dessert to come, the size of the lamb defeated me – a good job then that they happily supply doggy-bags for such eventualities – and the 'left-overs' fed two of us at home the following day.

Our other mains, a fish dish, was a great choice too; a significantly-sized pan-roasted salmon in a creamy mussel and lentil marinara. And so to dessert – after downing a couple of shots of warming cherry vodka with a toast of 'nostrovia!' to the inn's attentive and friendly Polish staff.

The smooth and creamy lemon posset – a medieval hot drink made with curdled milk, now reinvented as a modern dish similar to a syllabub – was cut through with sharp citrus

zest and topped with raspberries and a cherry, served with a crumbs of lemon sherbet and drops of raspberry coulis. It came under a riot of spun sugar – great practise on 'delicate' for the kitchen apprentice.

Similarly, the deep custard tart, with just the right wobble, was served with coulis, redcurrants and a dramatic spun sugar-spiked strawberry. Heaven.

Pretty as a picture, both dishes cleansed the palate and brought a smile to our faces.

All good things come to an end, however, and we had to venture into the sub-zero night again.

We didn't mind a bit, feeling that warm glow of satisfaction which comes from having eaten well.

James Callery and his son Kris

Starters from: £4.75 to £8.25, or £13.95 to share

Mains from: £13.00 to £26.00

Desserts from: £5.50 to £11.00 for an English cheeseboard

The Halfway Inn, Bath Road, Newbury RG20 8NR

01488 608 115

info@thehalfway-inn.co.uk

www.thehalfway-inn.co.uk



honesty Inkpen is a box of delights

There is something about Honesty Inkpen that makes Romilla Arber happy and she talks about the challenge of turning it into a place to enjoy breakfast, lunch or a cup of coffee.



Honesty Inkpen sits next to the Crown and Garter pub, restaurant and hotel, in the heart of the beautiful West Berkshire countryside and it truly is a super location.

In the winter, the coffee shop is cosy and inviting and in the spring or summer when the sun shines there are tables outside where customers can soak up the sun.

It's an ideal spot for walkers or cyclists to sit and have a break, with plenty of room to leave cycles. It is also welcoming to children and dog walkers.

We are still working on our homemade dog biscuits, which I do hope to see on sale in the new year.

It is important for me that when we open coffee shops they sit well within the community which they serve.

For too long commerce has helped to destroy community, so with that in mind we want to develop Honesty Inkpen as a casual meeting place for groups within the vicinity and we shall be working on this in the new year.

Once upon a time the coffee shop was a barn and part of the coaching inn.

I imagine a place where the horses might have been rested, fed and watered on a journey somewhere.

It was also used on one occasion as a place to lay out the corpses of two people who ended their days swinging on the gibbet at Combe.

Thankfully it fills a happier role now.

In later years it became a skittle alley for the pub and when I purchased the pub in 2014 it was a place of residence for the previous owner.

I took a gamble turning the barn, as it was then called, into a tiny coffee shop and artisan bakery, because it would have been easier to turn it into another bedroom for the hotel, but I like a challenge and I thought that it would add another dimension to the Crown and Garter having a coffee shop, and I think it has achieved this aim.

Some people do just want somewhere to break a walk or a cycle ride and a pub restaurant can often mean you end up eating more than you originally intended, so it attracts a different clientele.

It was lovely seeing it work as a coffee shop and a bakery when we first opened. The bakery walls, facing out to the coffee shop, were perspex sheets so that the customers could see the baker at work and the smells were enticing to say the least.

It did quickly become apparent, however, that as soon as the demand for bread and cakes increased so the space at the bakery became inadequate. It did not take long to move the bakery to the unit at Greenham where we now produce the cakes in the day and the bread at night.

The upside is that we have a lovely roomy space for a coffee shop that also doubles up as a private dining room in the evening.

It is one of the nicest private dining rooms I have eaten in and although you could argue I am biased I am also my harshest critic so I feel my views can be taken as impartial overall.

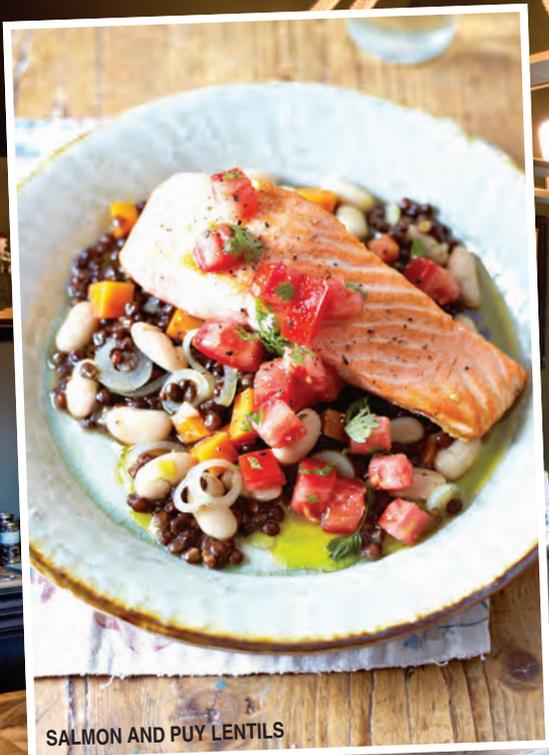
The space also makes a great place for business meetings and as the coffee shop is served by the Crown and Garter kitchen a variety of hot or cold food for lunch or dinner is not a problem.

Take the time to pay us a visit in the new year. I can assure you that you will not be disappointed.



CHELSEA BUNS FROM THE BAKERY

RECIPE



SALMON AND PUY LENTILS

SALMON AND PUY LENTILS

Salmon and puy lentils are a wonderful combination. The nuttiness of the lentils offsets the richness of the oily fish perfectly.

Serves 6.
6 salmon fillets, skin on.
Olive oil.

PUY LENTILS

300g puy lentils
1.4 litres chicken stock
2 shallots, finely sliced
70g pancetta, chopped
100g carrots, peeled and cut into 1 cm cube
1 sprig of thyme
1 x 400g can of cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
½ tsp sea salt
freshly ground black pepper

CORIANDER DRESSING

4 tbsp finely chopped coriander
2 garlic cloves, crushed
200ml extra virgin olive oil
zest and juice of ½ lemon
1 plum tomato, cut into 1 cm cubes
sea salt
freshly ground black pepper

To prepare the puy lentils

■ Put the lentils in a saucepan with the stock, shallots, pancetta, carrots and thyme and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat, cover the pan and simmer for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally, by which time the lentils should be tender. Stir in the cannellini beans, season with salt and pepper and place to one side. You can reheat the lentils when the salmon is ready.

To prepare the coriander dressing

■ Place all the ingredients in a small serving bowl and mix gently with a spoon until everything is well combined. Season with plenty of salt and pepper.

To prepare and serve the salmon

■ Put a frying pan on a high heat. Brush the skin side of the salmon with a little olive oil, then lay three of the fillets in the pan, skin side down and fry for two minutes. Flip them over and fry for two more minutes. If your pieces are particularly thick you'll need to cook them for a little longer. Place the fillets to one side to keep warm and cook the rest in the same way.
■ Serve the salmon fillets on top of the lentils with a spoonful of the coriander dressing.



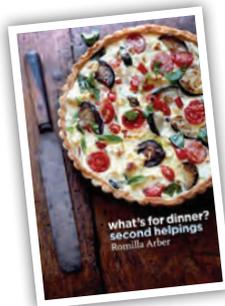
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ROLL OUT THE BARREL

To celebrate 150 years of the *Newbury Weekly News*, West Berkshire Brewery has created a special beer for the newspaper. Dan Cooper went along to watch the start of the brewing process

In 1867, Walter Blacket and Thomas Whieldon Turner founded the *Newbury Weekly News* from a stationers shop at 34 Northbrook Street.

Today, despite the emergence of digital media, the paper is still going strong and this month marks the 150th anniversary of its service to the community.

To celebrate this milestone, the *NWN* decided to team up with West Berkshire Brewery to brew its very own beer in what is believed to be an industry first.

In December, chief executive James Gurney, group editor Andy Murrell and I were invited along to the Yattendon brewery and introduced to head brewer Will Twomey – the man responsible for creating many of its award-winning beers.

I'm a big fan of beer. However, despite my taste for the brew, I didn't know the first thing about how it was made. To get invited to a brewery to see the beer-making process first-hand had me as excited as I imagine my two-year-old would be at a visit to Peppa Pig World.

I was fascinated by the tour of the brewery, which will soon be replaced by a new state-of-the-art building just down the road, following a £4m fundraising campaign.

After a coffee, which was more than welcome after a 7am start, Will showed us how the *Newbury Weekly News* beer goes on its amazing journey from barley to bottle.

We were joined by West Berkshire Brewery chairman David Bruce, who has invested more than £150,000 into the company since taking over.

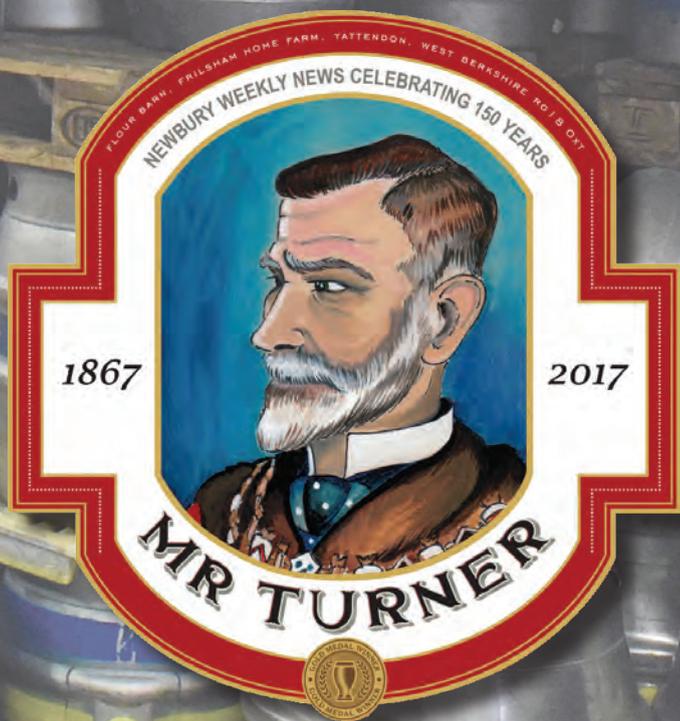
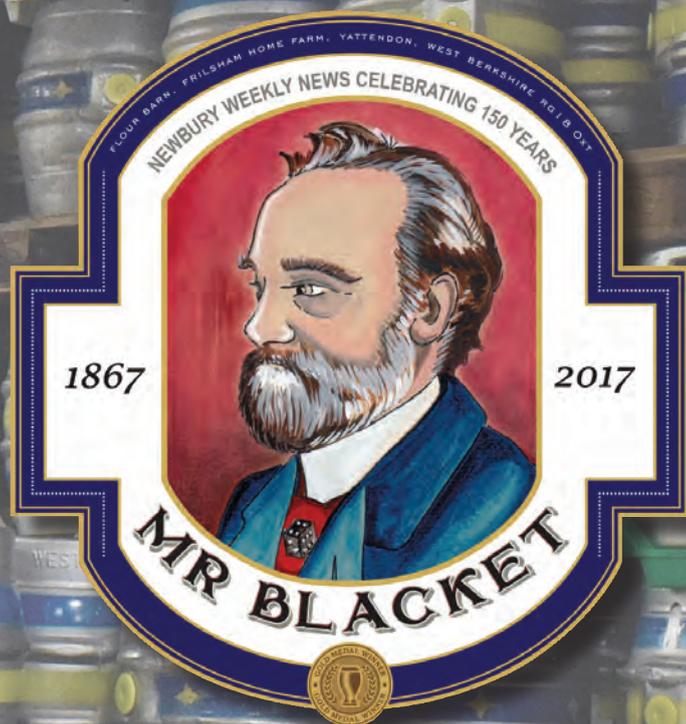
“ Will showed us how the *Newbury Weekly News* beer would go on its amazing journey from barley to bottle ”

Walter Blacket was born in Newbury in 1842, the oldest of three sons of James Blacket, who had moved to Newbury to take over an ailing stationery business.

Within three years, Walter was in sole charge of the business, and keen to start a local newspaper.

Walter sought an editor for his new venture and found Thomas Whieldon Turner, a former printing apprentice at Blacket's, who had become a reporter on the *Cheltenham Examiner*.

TW Turner returned to Newbury and on February 7, 1867, the *Newbury Weekly News* was launched to an eager public.



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SOMETHING'S BREWING



with WBB Head Brewer Will

FIRST THE GRAIN



We started with the grain, which had been malted and put into huge bags. Will explained that there were various types of malted barley, which were responsible for giving beers their different individual colours and flavours. For the *Newbury Weekly News* beer, Will had selected a mixture of pale Maris Otter and roasted barley to give it a bitter, smooth and fruity taste.

1.

THEN THE MASH



The malted barley was then crushed into grist when it is mixed with hot liquor to produce what is called the 'mash'. During the mash, all starch is converted into fermentable sugar, which releases the flavour and nutrients from the grain.

The attention to detail at this stage is meticulous and Will took great care to ensure the temperature was just right. "I just love the science of it," explained Will. It is clear he is a man who is passionate and knowledgeable about beer and takes great pride in what he creates. As David Bruce explained to us: "Just one degree out and the beer will taste different."

2.

ON THE BOIL



After roughly an hour, the sweet-tasting wort – the liquid extracted from the mashing process, which Will says tastes great with whisky – was put into a huge steel brewing kettle. Once the kettle was full it was left to boil for an hour and at the start of the boil the hops were added.

Depending on what kind of flavour you want from the beer, more hops can be added throughout the boil. The purpose of the boil is to sterilise the wort and clarify it, as well as infusing the flavour from the hops.

3.

FERMENTATION



After an hour of boiling, the wort then needed to be cooled through a heat exchanger. Following that, it was cooled down to 18°C and after 12 hours it began to ferment to become a beer.

The primary fermentation takes three days and after that time the beer is cooled down to 8°C to clarify and remove the yeast.

4.

AND FINALLY



After a week it is ready to be racked in casks and put into barrels. It is then left for an extra week to carbonate, before it is good to go out to pubs and shops across the country.



5.

Due to the length of process the *Newbury Weekly News* beer wasn't ready for us to taste on the day, but, as the saying goes, good things come to those who wait. Once finished, the faces of Mr Blacket and Mr Turner will be emblazoned on the bottles of the *Newbury Weekly News* beer.

Here's to another 150 years and we hope you enjoy the beer.



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Stars in their eyes

It may be a little chilly as winter draws to a close, but it is still worth venturing outside late at night or in the early hours of the morning and gazing up at the skies to see what is shining brightly in our solar system. Nic Fleet from Newbury Astronomical Society says there's plenty to see if you're out for a romantic evening stroll this month and points out some of February's highlights.

Newbury Astronomical Society was founded in 1981 by four local women who had taken a GCSE in astronomy through evening classes at Newbury College. The society is a registered charity, and one of its main aims is to promote science and astronomy to the public, especially young people.

Members often give talks to local organisations, particularly schools and youth groups, and they are happy to answer any astronomical queries by email or online.

The society currently has a membership of about 80 people of all ages and levels of knowledge, together with a lively Twitter account and Facebook page.

They meet twice a month, between September and June, with the main meetings on the first Friday of the month

at the Mencap Centre, just off Enborne Road, Newbury, from 7.30pm. They usually have a guest speaker at these meetings, and short contributions from members after a break for tea or coffee.

Their beginners meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month at St Mary's Church Hall, Greenham starting at 7pm. These are more informal, with several short talks and a chance to look through telescopes if it is clear.

An annual subscription covers entry to both meetings. Non-members are welcome to come along to any meeting and there is a small visitor's fee, which covers refreshments.

The society also holds occasional observing evenings, telescope workshops and outings to places of astronomical interest. Details are published on its website.

For more information visit www.newburyastro.org.uk
follow us on Twitter, @newburyastro
or message them at Newbury Astronomical Society on Facebook

Pictures: Stellarium, Wikipedia,
Newbury Astronomical Society members Steve Knight, Richard Fleet





On February 1, the crescent Moon, Mars and Venus will form a line in the South West sky after sunset.

Venus, named after the Roman goddess of beauty and love, is the brightest of the planets and the third brightest natural object in the night sky after the Sun and Moon.

Venus the goddess was married to the god Vulcan, but it was not a happy marriage and she had numerous lovers, including Mars the god of war.

Cupid, the mischievous winged god of love, was the son of Venus and Mars and had the ability to make people fall in love by shooting them with his arrows.

In reality, the surface of the planet Venus is anything but beautiful.

Although it's nearly as large as Earth, it's thick atmosphere is more than 96 per cent carbon dioxide, which traps the heat and makes its surface the hottest of any planet in the solar system.

The pressure of Venus' atmosphere is equal to the pressure 1,000 metres under Earth's oceans, and the whole planet is covered by clouds of sulphuric acid.

The few robotic landers that have touched down on Venus have lasted fewer than two hours in its hostile embrace.



On the evening of February 5, the waxing gibbous Moon is about halfway between the striking constellation of Orion the hunter, and the seven sisters, or Pleiades, star cluster.

The Pleiades can be found by following the line of Orion's belt through the Moon and about half the distance again on the other side.

Six (or more) stars may be visible to the unaided eye as a fuzzy patch in the sky, but are actually part of a cluster of about 1,000 young stars that formed from a massive cloud of gas (and little dust) around 100m years ago.

In legend, the Pleiades were the daughters of the Titan, Atlas, who was condemned to hold up the sky on his shoulders.



They, and their mother Pleione, were devastated by their father's fate, but one day the mighty hunter Orion met them and was so captivated by the lovely group that he pursued them everywhere, with amorous intent.

To save them from Orion's unwanted attentions, the god Zeus turned them into a flock of doves and placed them in the sky where Orion still admires them, in vain.

The Moon is full on February 10.

Various Native American Indian tribes have named the full Moon in February the Full Snow Moon, the Hunger Moon – or the Shoulder to Shoulder Around the Fire Moon.

If you get the chance to watch the moon rising at about 5pm, see how large it appears.

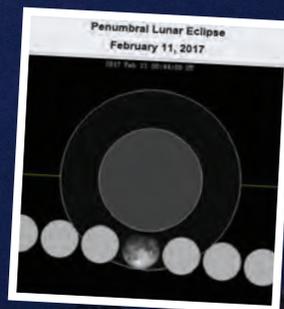
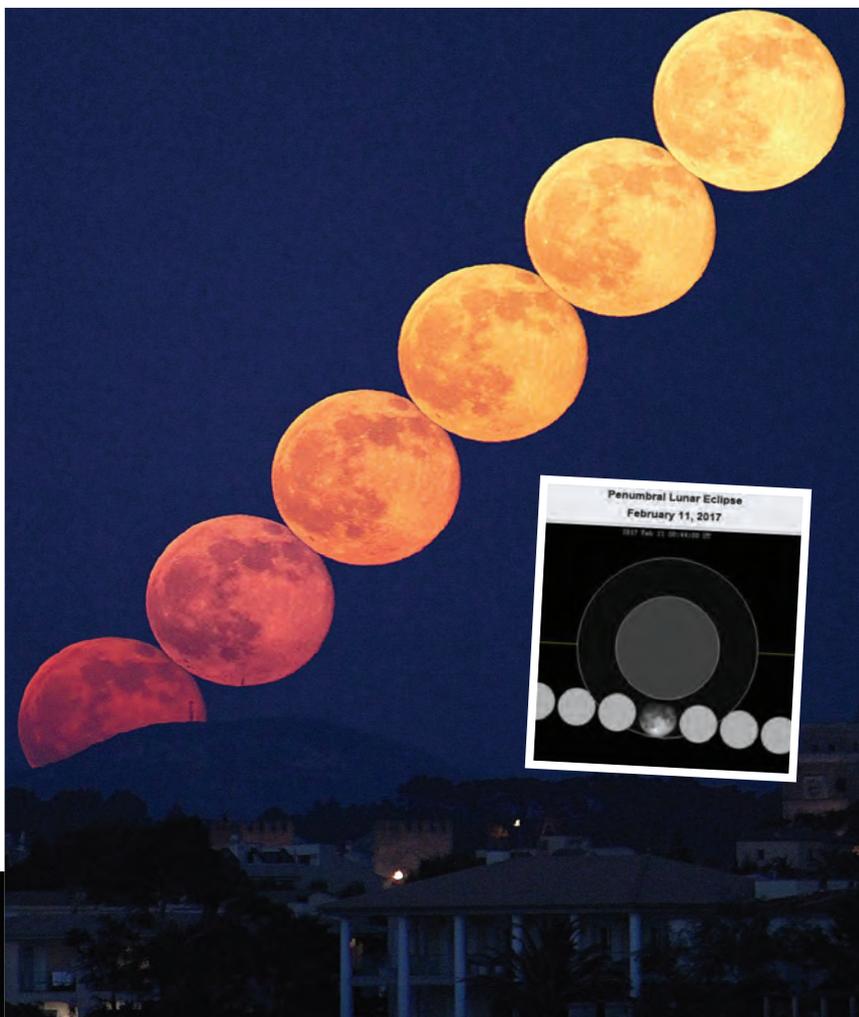
The moon on the horizon often seems to be much bigger than when it is high in the sky, but this is an illusion.

Because the moon near the horizon is flattened by the distortion of our atmosphere it's actually smaller than when it's high up in the sky.

But there's still nothing as romantic as watching the soft golden glow of the rising moon over the landscape.

This month's full Moon is also slightly unusual as it will look a little bit darker than normal.

This is because as the Earth passes between the Sun and the Moon, it blots out part of the Sun's light, causing a partial shadow on the Moon.





This is called a penumbral lunar eclipse, but isn't as spectacular as a total lunar eclipse when the Moon is completely in Earth's shadow.

This eclipse starts at 10.34pm on February 10 and finishes at 02.53am on February 11, but it will be at its dimmest at around 45 minutes past midnight.

Although there are no major meteor showers in February, if you are out and about on a clear, crisp night keep an eye out for shooting stars.



Generally, these are caused by particles no bigger than a grain of sand burning up as they enter the Earth's atmosphere at an altitude of 70 to 100km.

However, larger particles the size of a pea or a pebble will occasionally leave a blazing trail across the sky, lasting a few seconds.

If the shooting star is brighter than the planet Venus it's called a fireball; if it's brighter than

the moon it's called a bolide.

If you are lucky enough to see one of these, then make a wish – and report it using the International Meteor Organisation's fireball report form at: www.imo.net/observations/methods/visual-observation/major/report/

If you are an early-riser, or a very late party-goer, there's an opportunity to locate the planets Jupiter and Saturn in the morning sky this month.

Look for the waning gibbous Moon any time after midnight on February 16.

The bright 'star' to the right of it is Jupiter, the king of the Roman gods, known to the Greeks as Zeus.

If you have a good pair of binoculars, or a small



telescope, see if you can spot Jupiter's four brightest moons – Io, Europa, Ganymede and Calisto.

They were first observed by the Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei around January 1610 and are named after three of Zeus' paramours, and Ganymede, a beautiful youth who he carried off to be his cup bearer.

Zeus had a penchant for seducing beautiful

A slim crescent Moon also points the way to Saturn in morning sky at around 6am on February 21.

They will be low down, slightly to the East of South, so you will need a clear southern horizon to glimpse them. Saturn will be to the right, and a little below, the Moon. It will be fainter than Jupiter, and look like a slightly golden star.

On February 26, there is an opportunity to spot the planet Uranus.

Although it was only discovered by William Herschel in 1781, it's bright enough to be seen with the unaided eye in a dark sky, or with a pair of 10x50 binoculars.

On February 26, it will be very close to the planet Mars in the evening sky, just below and to the left in the same binocular field of view.



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a Chinese tale of star-cross'd lovers

Zhinü, the seventh daughter of the Empress of Heaven, was so skilled that she could weave clouds of many colours.

One day she decided to visit the Earth and a cowherd called Niulang saw her and fell in love with her. While she was bathing he stole her dress so she couldn't return to heaven, but when she saw him she fell in love with him too and they married, had two children, and were very happy.

However, when the Empress of Heaven heard that Zhinü had married a mortal she was furious.

Her daughter had given up her weaving so there were no longer any brightly coloured clouds in the heavens, and Niulang was neglecting his cattle.

The Empress sent her guards to bring Zhinü back to her palace in the sky – but Niulang put on a magic ox hide and, with their children in his arms, he flew after Zhinü.

He had nearly caught up with her when the Empress, seeing this, took her hairpin, and drew a silver river across the sky – separating them forever.

Zhinü became the star Vega, and Niulang and the children became the star Altair, and the two fainter stars on either side of it. Between them runs the faint silvery river of distant stars that make up our home galaxy, the Milky Way.

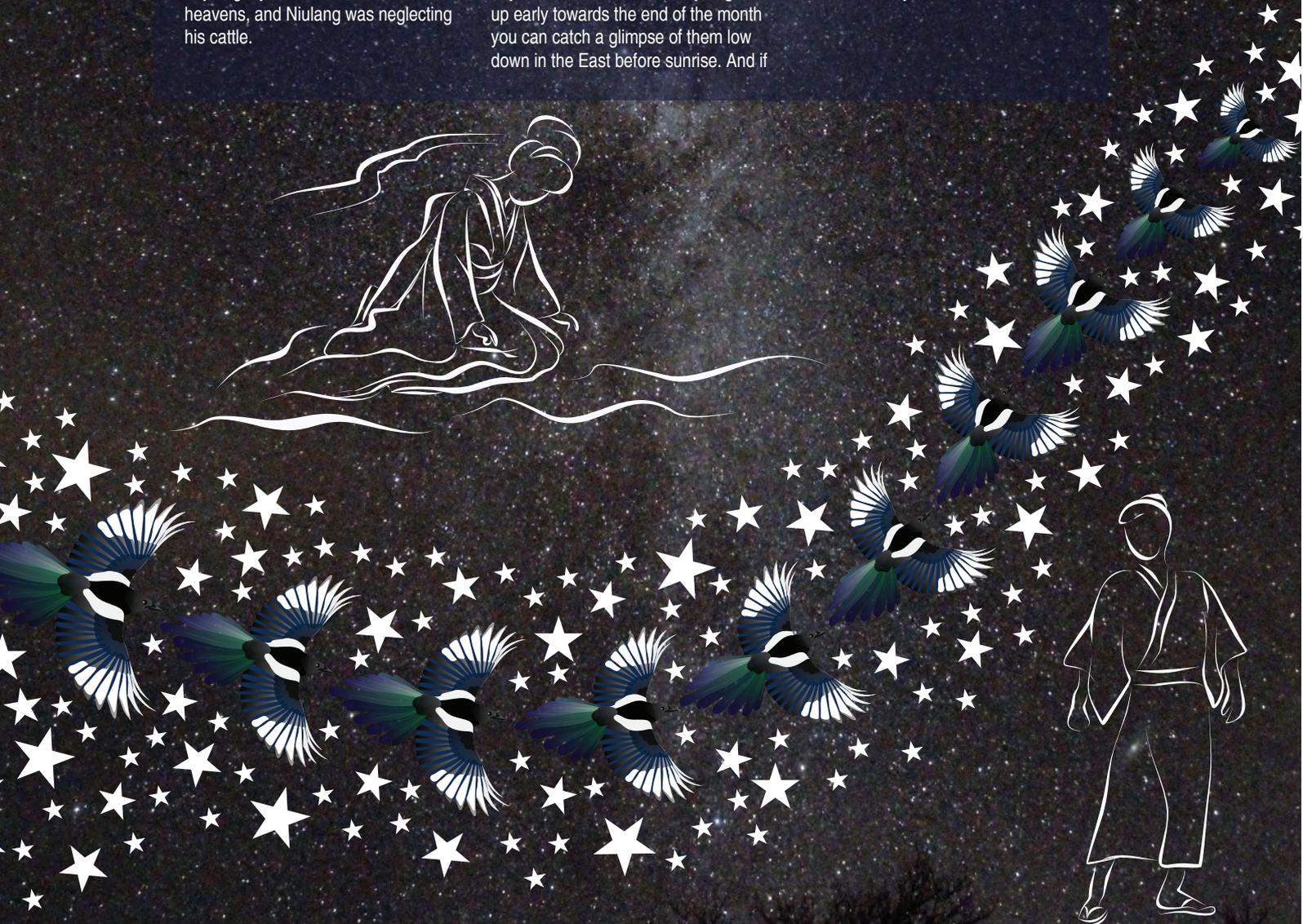
Although February isn't the best time of year to see these stars, if you get up early towards the end of the month you can catch a glimpse of them low down in the East before sunrise. And if

you have a clear, dark sky, away from street lights, look for the pale glow of the Milky Way running between Vega and Altair.

The story does have a (sort of) happy ending though.

The couple were so heartbroken that even the Empress took pity on them. Providing Zhinü works hard at her weaving, and Niulang keeps his cattle under control, once a year, on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month, flocks of magpies come together to form a bridge over the Milky Way river and Zhinü and Niulang can spend the day together.

This day is celebrated as the Chinese 'Valentines' day.



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Hidden gems

A piece of vintage jewellery can add a romantic sparkle to Valentine's Day says Thomas Plant, and there are plenty of precious items to be found at auction.

They say that diamonds are a girl's best friend and they certainly prove to be a popular choice at auction.

Our jewellery auctions are frequented by dealers and private collectors, as well as individuals. These sales offer the chance to purchase good-quality, classically-designed jewellery – whether it be a pair of earrings, necklace, bracelet, a watch or even an engagement ring.

The modern diamond market began in 1866 with the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley, South Africa.

This changed the perception of diamonds from rare gems to something available to those who could afford it; and these days at auction they can be purchased for a variety of prices.

Naturally diamond solitaires sell well and depending on size they can range from £50 to millions.

Necklaces and earrings are also really sought after. Again, diamonds feature heavily in the popularity stakes right now, with diamond studs and diamond and pearl being the preferred choice for earrings.

In terms of necklaces, buyers are favouring fringe necklaces and chokers, that are great for dressing up an outfit.

Jewellery is often something that people hand down from generation to generation and it is quite common to see the older, vintage pieces go under the hammer.

Brooches are not necessarily items that people immediately think about collecting – but hand-crafted brooches by an iconic designer or even cameo brooches will always hold their value.

Often at our jewellery views we have couples who come along and try rings for size before placing bids.

This month our Jewellery auction falls on February 14 and we anticipate a record number of potential grooms hoping to make a purchase.

With a wide array of coloured stones, fabulous designs and, of course, heart shapes – an auction is also a great place to purchase a Valentine's Day gift.



An impressive diamond solitaire engagement ring.
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“
Diamonds are a girl's best friend
”



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£150 to £250



Thomas Plant discovered his love for auctioneering at a young age, living on the family farm. Watching the man with the gavel at local cattle auctions was a regular event, and Thomas quickly decided on which side of the rostrum he'd rather be.

He went on to take a degree in antiques and served his apprenticeship with leading auction houses, including Christie's in London.

Today, Thomas is the co-owner of Special Auction Services in Newbury and is also a favourite TV expert on BBC programmes, including *Bargain Hunt*, *Flog it!* and *Antiques Road Trip*.

If you've any jewellery, antiques and collectables you'd like valued for auction, don't forget we hold free valuation days every Wednesday at:

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The fruit of love

Naomi Slade dissects the sensuous quality of the apple, from Greek myths and legends to the Garden of Eden, poetry and old wives' tales

Whether or not you are a gardener, there is a kind of sensual, luscious, juicy quality about fruit that lends itself to the language of love.

It appears in poetry and prose, in mythology and folklore; a coy metaphor, a cautionary tale or a symbol of lust and passion.

In 1675, metaphysical poet Richard Leigh published a love poem in which a beautiful lady picks and eats peaches; "*Behold, wherever she does pass,/How all the am'rous Trees contend,/whose loaded Arms should her embrace,/While with their fruit tow'rds her they bend./ As if the willing Branches meant,/To her, their Bounty to present*".

But, even 400 years ago, this drew on thousands of years of fruity imagery.

Apples appear early in Christianity, tempting Eve into original sin in the Garden of Eden.

In paganism, meanwhile, they are a symbol of knowledge and abundance, often depicted as a giving, fruitful tree that evokes fertility.

In Ancient Greece, there were similar associations with love and abundance.

On the wedding night a bride was given apples to eat, which were supposed to awaken sexual desire and stimulate fertility, ensuring many children.

And while it is no longer customary to pelt girls with fruit, at one time a gentleman could confess his love to a lady by tossing an apple at her. If she caught it, the affection was reciprocated.

Goddesses and symbolic apples go hand in hand, but the Greek goddess of love, Aphrodite, did not arrive by hers smoothly.

The story goes that Eris, Goddess of Discord, angered by not being invited to a wedding, threw a golden apple inscribed 'to the fairest one' into the wedding party. It was immediately claimed by three goddesses – Athena, Hera and Aphrodite.

A celestial cat-fight ensued and they appealed to Zeus to decide who the apple rightfully belonged to.

Preferring not to get too involved, he nominated Paris, handsome, mortal and known for fair play, to make the decision.

The goddesses did everything in their power to persuade Paris to decide in their favour, but Aphrodite won by offering Paris the hand of the most beautiful woman in the world.

He gave Aphrodite the apple and set out to claim the gorgeous Helen of Sparta. At the time, however, she was married to Menelaus – who took it badly when she was abducted by Paris on heavenly approval and, setting out to reclaim her, started the Trojan war (hence hers was the face that launched a thousand ships).

So apples are clearly powerful and should not be trifled with. Yet folk magic often uses them in domestic-level divinations and to create love philtres (potions).

In Roman times apple pips would be thrown into the fire to see whether all would be well in love – if they popped loudly it was a good sign.

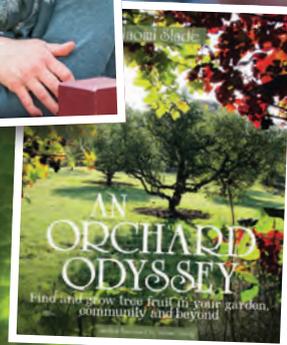
In country areas it was common for young girls to discover the first letter of their true-love's name, by removing the skin of an apple in a single spiral and throwing it over their shoulder, to form an initial where it landed.

Meanwhile, in Scotland, young women who ate an apple in front of a mirror while combing their hair with the other hand, would see the face of their future husband appearing in the mirror behind them.

From ancient times to popular culture, the apple as a symbolic fruit thrives, as love and temptation go hand in hand; therefore, perhaps, the perfect gift for a beloved is a fruit tree.

An Orchard Odyssey by Naomi Slade, £24.99, published by Green Books. Signed copies are available from Waterstones, Newbury.

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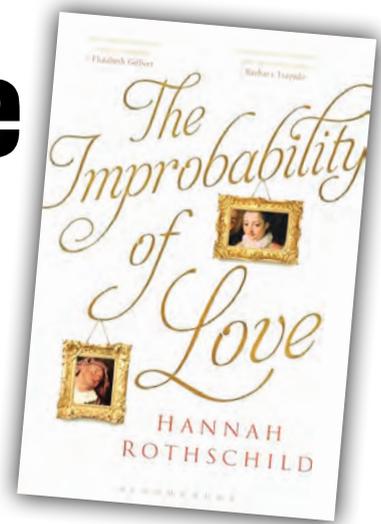
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A fine art romance

A talking masterpiece, coveted by a cast of colourful characters in *The Improbability of Love* by Hannah Rothschild, brings this modern romantic novel to life say Helen Sheehan and Lissa Gibbins



Annie McDee, alone after the disintegration of her long-term relationship and trapped in a dead-end job, is searching for a present for her unsuitable lover in a neglected second-hand shop. Within the jumble of junk and tack, a grimy painting catches her eye. Leaving the store with the picture after spending her meagre savings, she prepares an elaborate dinner for two, only to be stood up, the gift gathering dust on her mantelpiece. But every painting has a story – and if it could speak, what would it tell us?

For Annie has stumbled across 'The Improbability of Love', a lost masterpiece by Antoine Watteau, one of the most influential French painters of the 18th century. Soon Annie is drawn unwillingly into the art world, and finds herself pursued by a host of interested parties that would do anything to possess her picture. For an exiled Russian oligarch, an avaricious sheik, a desperate auctioneer, an unscrupulous dealer and several others, the painting symbolises their greatest hopes and fears. In her search for the painting's true identity, Annie will uncover the darkest secrets of European history – and in doing so, she will learn more about herself, opening up to the possibility of falling in love again.

Shortlisted for the Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction and for the Bollinger Everyman Wodehouse Prize

It is almost impossible to categorise this highly entertaining novel. With brilliantly-spirited prose, Hannah Rothschild takes us on a wild romp through the top echelons of the London art world.

It's romantic, funny, truly informative and an easy read – a fascinating story about a painting called *The Improbability of Love*, through whose telling we learn about, and become admirers of, the Old Master paintings and the history of European art over the past 300 years, not to mention the culinary feasts which the owners of these artworks, kings and princes, soldiers and mistresses, gorged themselves on while celebrating their good fortune.

Set in present day London, our heroine Annie McDee stumbles across a cheap painting in a junk shop.

She is drawn to its beauty despite the filthy state in which she finds it. She buys it as a present for a date, who then stands her up.

Love-lorn Annie, who is trying to put the pieces of her life back together again following the demise of a long-term relationship, keeps the picture anyway and turns her back on love.

Finding London crippling expensive in contrast to her previous life in Devon, and knowing the only thing that makes her feel truly happy is cooking, she takes a temporary job cooking for the extraordinarily wealthy Winkleman family.

Her duties are frustratingly light; the peculiar Winklemans' diet comprises only of steamed fish and vegetables. To add to Annie's troubles, her alcoholic mother Evie turns up in a desperate state.

The one remarkable thing that Evie does for Annie is convince her that the painting is special and needs further research.

She persuades her to take it to the Wallace

Collection. Once there, mother and daughter compare it to the paintings from the late Renaissance era and find that it bears striking similarities to paintings by Antoine Watteau.

Annie, while trying to control her mother's over-excited proclamations, meets Jesse, a guide for the Wallace Collection.

It is love at first sight for him, but Annie, locked away in her grief for her broken relationship and troubled present, shuns him.

Unbeknown to Annie, the painting, which has captured her imagination, is indeed a genuine Watteau, and is about to become the most hotly-pursued painting on the planet.

She is on a collision course with immoral Russian oligarchs, dishonest art dealers and London's richest and most powerful elite, all desperate to own her painting.

Most disturbing of all, her employers, Rebecca and her father Memling Winkleman, are concealing a dark secret from their past, and the only way to keep it under wraps is to get hold of the painting, at any cost.

To navigate the reader through the complexities of the art world, both past and present, Hannah Rothschild uses an ingenious technique; the painting itself talks in the first person to the reader.

He – the painting is unmistakably male – is a key character in the story. As one might expect from a true master, he is vain, snobbish and opinionated, therefore first impressions of him are unfavourable. However, as the story unfolds, his narrative becomes central to our understanding of the world that he has lived through – 300 years of human beings fighting over land, possessions, love and beauty. He also develops a soft spot for his mistress, our heroine Annie.

The novel is a fascinating commentary on the corruption and avarice of the art world. Far

from the often-impooverished circumstances in which the great works of art were created, the art scene portrayed in the novel is greedy, heartless, eye-wateringly rich, even murderous.

It consists of people who will do anything to increase the value of their artwork, and falsify provenance to secure a transaction.

The beautiful Watteau painting, inspired as a testament to unrequited love, becomes an expensive asset to villainous people who cannot see, and do not care about, its real value; its power to illustrate the improbability of love.

There is a raft of colourful and flamboyant secondary characters who populate this book. Enter Barthomly Chesterfield Fitzroy St George (Barty), the man who styles the rich and famous, Delores Ryan, an art historian who wants to throw the best art-themed dinner party for the glitterati of London and Vladimir Antipovski, a homesick, lonely Russian billionaire exile in the grip of the Mafia.

Hannah Rothschild is a writer and a film director. She is also the Chair of the National Gallery, a trustee of the Tate Gallery and Waddesdon Manor and a vice president of the Hay Literary Festival. She lives in London.

As she says, through the voice of the Watteau painting: "All that matters is that artists keep reminding mortals about what really matters: the wonder, the glory, the madness, the importance and the improbability of love."

Helen Sheehan and Lissa Gibbins are writers and owners of Aide Memoire, based in Great Bedwyn. Inspired by their passion for words, they write memoirs, edit novels and documents and proofread for a wide range of clients.

Email: lissa@aidememoire.biz / helen@aidememoire.biz

Fall in love over food

Whether you're looking for a quick romantic getaway to Europe or a more adventurous escape further afield, Sarah Woodthorpe has some luxurious suggestions

The Feast of Saint Valentine is a celebration of romantic love, a day for honouring our loved ones and one that invariably finds us indulging together in the simple, sensual pleasure of food.

Nothing shouts romance like a culinary feast for the senses.

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Black Truffle

Head to **Norcia in Italy** this February for the National Black Truffle Festival and revel in a romantic Valentine's Day extravaganza.

Enclosed by 14th-century walls in the heart of the beautiful Umbrian countryside, Norcia is one of Italy's finest gastronomic centres, home of the Italian black truffle and renowned also for its wild boar, mountain cheeses, wine and salami.

Stay at the luxurious Palazzo Seneca, a converted 16th-century palace and the ultimate destination for lovers of all the simple pleasures.

Indulge in sensory heaven with a guided menu showcasing the region's specialty truffle dishes at the hotel's Michelin-starred restaurant, Vespasia.

Join chef Emanuele Mazzella for a cooking class and learn how to prepare this delicacy at home, then walk off the evening's excesses



Cavas Wine Lodge

and join a professional truffle hunter and his dog to search for what the composer Rossini called the 'the Mozart of fungi'.

The tiny, landlocked region of **Matarrana in north east Spain** is an enchanting, little-known rural idyll that encourages comparison to Tuscany.

Home to olive groves, terraced vineyards and medieval villages, the region's delicious wines, cheeses and distinctive dishes can be savoured at local restaurants that, being off-the-beaten-track, offer tremendous value.

Stay at La Torre del Visco, a restored 15th-century tower house set majestically on the brow of a river valley and a member of Relais & Chateaux.

The hotel is renowned for its superb restaurant, serving slow-cooked specialties and huge breakfast platters, with most of the produce sourced from the estate's lovingly-maintained 90-hectare organic farm.

Explore the estate and take a cookery class in between romantic walks and cosy evenings in front of the fire.

Alternatively, **Mas de la Serra** is an isolated, converted farmhouse with fabulous views over the surrounding countryside.

Your Peruvian hosts, Luis and his chef-wife Jenny, provide delicious, comforting food with a South American twist, such as ceviche and lamb casserole.

If the Pisco Sours don't inspire your inner raconteur, perhaps the cellar's unexpected stash of single malt whisky will; the hotel's owner is Alasdair Grant of the Scottish whisky-making dynasty.

Galvanise yourself after an evening of gratifying excess and go hiking or fossil-hunting, visit the nearby Vente d'Aubert winery or try a cookery class.

For more than just a taste of South America, head to **Argentina**, the land of pampas plains, cattle and gauchos, who are not just horse whisperers but arguably the best barbecue chefs on the planet.



The team at Cavas Wine Lodge, a luxurious boutique hotel and vineyard in the foothills of the Andes, are consummate hosts.

The cellar is stocked with the finest vintages and the restaurant is uncompromising in its pursuit of excellence.

Chef Federico Castro was born and raised in Mendoza and believes unconditionally in the flavours, tastes and traditional foods of his native land.

Five hundred years ago Mendoza was the southernmost limit of the Inca empire and today dishes such as steak with chimichurri, Andean potatoes, salsa criolla and baby goat with vegetables retain the stamp of this truly indigenous South American cuisine.

Chef Castro and his team offer cooking classes while the spa has some stimulating treatments,



Presently, we were aware of an odour gradually coming towards us, something musky, fiery, savoury, mysterious, – a hot drowsy smell, that lulls the senses, and yet enflames them, – the truffles were coming.

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863)



including a Malbec scrub and a red wine bath. Inspire your inner cowboy and play gauchos for the day on a horseback adventure, revel in the glorious scenery and whisper sweet nothings over a romantic picnic with the spectacular Andes as your backdrop.

South Africa is home to a thriving foodie scene and the promise of sunshine is a seductive panacea in February.

Bold and exciting local chefs, inspired by the country's natural abundance and influenced by the traditions of the Cape Malay, Afrikaans and Indian communities, have created a gourmet scene that is incomparable.

And yet, Bartholomeus Klip is almost still a secret.

This exquisitely romantic and supremely comfortable Victorian farmhouse is located on a working farm and game reserve in the Riebeeck Valley, just over an hour by car from Cape Town, and surrounded by mountains which, at sunset, turn a dusky-rose hue.

Arriving through the wheat fields, you are greeted by twin sisters Lesley and Louise Gillett; Lesley is a qualified field guide and head chef Louise authored an award-winning cook book.

Peace and quiet, fabulous food and glorious surroundings are the order of the day in this exclusive spot in the Cape Winelands.

Bask in the African sunshine or curl up with a book on the large shady balcony overlooking beautiful gardens, the salt-water swimming pool and the great beyond.

Rouse yourselves for an interactive cooking session showcasing the property's farm-to-table bounty followed by the requisite game drive.

There are not many things more romantic than an evening's safari and the mandatory stop for sundowners as the sun sets over the African bush; the game, the magnificent skies, the dramatic landscape and the sounds and inimitable smell of the bushveld, all conspire to overwhelm your senses and create memories to last a lifetime.

Make a lasting impression on your loved one by treating them to a gastronomic and romantic treat they will never forget.



If any of these destinations inspire you to flirt with the idea of a holiday fit for a romantic foodie, please do get in touch for more information. To find out more please email: travel@baileyrobinson.com or call on 01488 608746



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Classic collection

Four pairs of tickets to the Classic Car Show at ExCel London to be won

Win tickets to the glittering London Classic Car Show – the capital's premier celebration for any classic car enthusiast, collector or buyer.

Now in its third year, the 2017 show – which will be held at ExCeL London from February 23-26 – will be the biggest and best yet. And, with more than 700 of the world's most stunning classic cars on display plus innovative features such as The Grand Avenue, Car Club Square and the brand new Historic Motorsport International, it really isn't to be missed.

Out&About has teamed up with the organisers to offer five pairs of Sunday tickets to this must-see show for all car enthusiasts.

Highlights include a 'red sea' of fabulous Ferraris, celebrating the legendary Italian company's 70th birthday.

Among the mouth-watering £100m collection on show will be eye-catching greats such as the GTO, Daytona, Dino and F40.

Another popular feature is The Grand Avenue, a ground-breaking roadway running through the centre of the display stands.

It means The London Classic Car Show is no mere static exhibition but a living, breathing homage to the automobile where visitors can not only see, but also hear their favourite classics in action.

The 2017 London Classic Car Show is also certain to attract many celebrities from the motoring world.

The roll-call from previous years includes F1 stars Jenson Button and David Coulthard, TV's James May and racing icon Sir Stirling Moss. More big names are promised for 2017.

Advance tickets to the 2017 London Classic Car Show are available from the show website – thelondonclassiccarshow.co.uk – with adult admission priced from just £24.

To win a pair of tickets to Sunday's show, answer the following question on the coupon provided, and send it to: Classic Car Show Competition, OUT&ABOUT, Newspaper House, Faraday Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2DW.

The closing date for entries is Tuesday, February 7, 2017.

For OUT&ABOUT competition rules, please turn to page 63.

Which Italian car manufacturer will be celebrating its 70th birthday at the 2017 London Classic Car Show?

- A Maserati**
- B Ferrari**
- C Lamborghini**



Classic Car Show competition

Answer.....

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Address.....

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Email.....

Daytime tel. no.....

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What's on

Find out what's happening in West Berkshire and the surrounding area this month, with concerts, theatre, fetes, lectures, exhibitions and markets to choose from. You can find more detailed listings every Thursday in the *Newbury Weekly News* or online at www.newburytoday.co.uk

Carpet of snowdrops



Wednesday, February 1 to Sunday, March 5
Snowdrop Garden
Welford Park, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 8HU
 Wednesdays to Sundays
 11am to 4pm
 Adults £6, concessions £5
 Children (four-15 years old) £2
 Under four, free
www.welfordpark.co.uk/snowdrops

Baroque and roll



Award-winning early music ensemble Charivari Agreeable present this popular programme encompassing themes of dangerous, forbidden and courtly love.

The programme is held together by a narrative containing anecdotes, letters and speeches from Queen Elizabeth I and her close circle and is both entertaining and educational, which, together with beautiful music and Shakespeare's incomparable poetry, makes for a rich and varied evening.

February 25
My Ladye Loves
Shaw House, Church Road, Newbury RG14 2DR
www.charivari.co.uk

The cafe will be open, serving wine and local beer / cider
 Tickets: Adults £16, under 16s £4
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www.westberkshireheritage.org/what-on

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February dates for your diary

Wednesday 1

To March 9, *All Our Own Work*, An exhibition showcasing the talents of the Old Chapel, National Needlework, and *Country Wife* mural volunteers. From cross stitch to gold work, crochet to embroidery, tapestry to quilting and much more. You will be inspired by the variety on show.

Friday 3

Jongleurs, 7.45pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box Office 0845 5218218

Saturday 4

The Bob Dylan Story, 7.45pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box Office 0845 5218218

Mitch Benn: Don't Fear the Reaper, 8pm New Greenham Arts. Age guide 14 plus. Box office 0845 5218218

Made in America, St Nicolas Church, Newbury, 7.30pm. Newbury Symphony Orchestra, conductor Jonathan Williams. Music by Bernstein, Copland, Delius, Ives and Dvorak's *Symphony from the New World*. Tickets from Hogan Music and Phillip Brown Violins

Sunday 5

Newbury Chamber Choir perform *The Music of Biber*, St John's Church, Newbury, 4.30pm. The spine-tingling sounds of sackbuts, a quintet of soloists and the Newbury Chamber Choir combine with period string players to bring you this wonderfully atmospheric music by this fine 17th-century composer. Tickets: £15 on the door (school pupils free). Special ticket offers at: www.newburychamberchoir.co.uk

Wednesday 8

Henning Wehn: *Westphalia is not an option*, Corn Exchange, Newbury, 7.45pm. Age guide 16 plus. Box Office 0845 5218218

Thursday 9

To Thursday, ***Sneaking Into The Theatre*** by Chris Billingham, New Era Theatre, Andover Road, 8pm. A range of characters who all feel drawn by the nostalgic charm of an abandoned theatre. Some are grieving, some seek to impress, and some simply miss the old place. Tickets £10 from: boxoffice@neweraplayers.org

Friday 10

Beyond the Barricade, Corn Exchange, Newbury, 7.45pm. Box Office 0845 5218218

The Dark Room, 8pm, New Greenham Arts. Play the world's only live action text-based adventure game – the fate is in your hands. Box office 0845 5218218

Saturday 11

Solid Gold 70s, 7.45pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box office 0845 5218218

70s and 80s evening, Hungerford Royal British Legion, 7.30pm. To raise funds for

Beejacks Wallai Primary School in Sierra Leone. Host is fitness instructor Bee Jacks plus a DJ. Tickets £10 from Bee Jacks, at his fitness classes, or telephone 07795154808, or via the www.beejacks.co.uk or the Beejacks Tombo Foundation on Facebook.

Snowdrop Saturday at Foxgrove, Enborne, 10am to 4pm. 01635 40554. In Aid of Enborne Church. View snowdrops, plus pot and photographic display and snowdrops for sale. Refreshments. Admission £3.

Monday 13

Newbury & District Association of National Trust. Illustrated talk by Peter Preen on *How did the Welshman T. E. Lawrence come to Live and Die in Dorset*. New Greenham Arts, 7.30pm. Visitors £3. More details call Keith Spires 01635 30457.

Wednesday 15

And Thursday, ***The Very Hungry Caterpillar***, Corn Exchange Age guide 2-7 Times vary, £10.50 Box office 0845 5218218

Friday 17

Whitney: Queen of the Night, Corn Exchange, Newbury, 7.45pm. Box Office 0845 5218218

Linking the Landscape: Under the Microscope, 10am-1pm, West Berkshire Museum. Local Wildlife Trust experts will be on hand with microscopes, and an array of remarkable mini-beasts up-close. Drop in any time to this free event. For more info, see www.bbwt.org.uk/whats-on

Saturday 18

Wild at Heart: Bird Walk, Bowdown Woods and Lower Farm Lake, 10am-12.30pm. A chance to see and hear any birds enjoying the protection of Bowdown ancient woodland in the winter. Followed by a walk down to the bird hide at Lower Farm Lake. Members of the Newbury District Ornithological Club (NDOC) will be on hand with telescopes, books and plenty of knowledge to help you identify and learn about the birds. Hot drinks will be available at the hide. For more information and booking www.bbwt.org.uk/whats-on

Newbury Talent IV. Presented by Young Corn Exchange, 7pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury Box Office 0845 5218218

Jim Causley: Forgotten Kingdom, 8pm, New Greenham Arts. Box office 0845 5218218

Sunday 19

Pete Allen Reeds'n'Rhythm, 3pm, Chequers Hotel, Newbury. Tickets on the door £12.50 (cash only)

Watermill Sunday Sessions: *Smitty's Big Four*, Watermill Theatre, Bagnor. Box office 01635 46044. www.watermill.org.uk

Afternoon Sunday Concert, spanning the decades and played live by Mark Thompson, William Penney Theatre, AWE Rec Society, Tadley. Interval, raffle, bar. £8 at the door. Sylvia 0118 9323971

Tuesday 21

Anyday – a comic, absurd and surreal trampoline show, 7pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box Office 0845 5218218

Thursday 23

The Vanishing Man, 8pm, New Greenham Arts. Age guide 12 plus. Box Office 0845 5218218

Friday 24

Southern Sinfonia Café Concert, 1pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box office 0845 5218218

Sing-a-Long-a-Grease, 7.45pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box Office 0845 5218218

Saturday 25

Mum2mum Market, Park House School, Newbury, 10.30am to 12.30pm. Baby & kids nearly new sale.

Contact helen@mum2mummarket.co.uk for more info.

Nine Below Zero, Arlington Arts Centre, Snelsmore. Box Office 01635 244 246

A celebration of Neil Diamond, 7.45pm, Corn Exchange. Box Office 0845 5218218



Deadline for listings for March issue: Tuesday, February 7

Email: report@newburynews.co.uk
or tweet: @outnaboutberks

February dates for your diary

Creative history

Family Activity Day
West Berkshire Museum
16th February 2017, 10am – 3pm
Theme: **Rocking Romans Craft Days**

Make and decorate a simple **catapult** and find out about the Roman catapult it is based on.
£2 per child. For 4-11 year olds but younger and older children are welcome.
No need to book, drop in.

Family Activity Day
West Berkshire Museum
17th February 2017, 10am – 3pm
Theme: **Rocking Romans Craft Days**

Make and decorate an **eagle standard** similar to one a Roman army would have carried into battle. Then see the local Roman artefacts on display.
£2 per child. For 4-11 year olds but younger and older children are welcome.
No need to book, drop in.



Rainy days

February 15
Activity day
Shaw House, Church Road,
Newbury RG14 2DR
10am to 3.30pm

Make and decorate a rainstick from cardboard tubing and other craft materials.
A new trail will also be available.

www.westberkshireheritage.org/whats-on



Village markets



Aldworth Community Market, every Saturday, 9.30am to noon.
(01635) 578090.

Basildon village market, 10am to 12.30pm. Last Saturday of the month. (01491) 671515.

Beenham village market, 2pm to 3.30pm. Second Saturday of the month. (0118) 971 4822

Bradfield market, Bradfield Village Hall, 10am to 11.30am on the second Saturday of the month. (01189) 744068

Bucklebury Artisan Food market, The Bladebone Inn, Chapel Row, first Saturday of the month, 10am to 12noon.
Love food @BuckleburyAFM

Farmers' markets – Newbury, first and third Sunday of every month, 9am to 1pm; Hungerford, fourth Sunday, 9am to 1.30pm; Purley-on-Thames, second Sat, 9am to 1pm.

Hamstead Marshall market, second Saturday of every month, 10am to 1pm, (01488) 658932/ 658168.

Hermitage farmers' market, second Sunday of every month, 10am to 1pm, (01635) 201555.

Inkpen Food and Craft Market, Inkpen Village Hall, 3rd Sunday of every month, 10am - 12.30pm.

Silchester Market, Silchester Village Hall, first Saturday of the month, 10am to midday.

Spirals Craft market, raising money for The Brain Tumour Charity, dates and venues vary. See www.spiralscraftmarket.co.uk

Thatcham Community Market every Wednesday, United Reformed Church Hall, Church Lane, Thatcham 10am to 11.30am. (01635) 872713.

Wolverton Village Hall, market first Saturday of every month, 9.30am to 11am. (01488) 608594.

Woolhampton Village Market, first Saturday of the month, 10am to midday. (0118) 971 3637.

Woolton Hill Village Market, last Saturday of every month, 10am to 1pm.

on the tiles



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www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-vyne

January competition winner:

Photography competition: Trudi Collins, Thatcham

General competition rules: The winner(s) will be the first entry(ies) drawn with the correct answer. In the event that a winner must be notified quickly and is unavailable on the daytime number provided, another winner may have to be chosen. Newbury News Limited

employees, and employees directly involved in the competition, and their families, are not eligible to enter.

The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Responsibility not accepted for entries lost or torn in the post. Postal entries must be on the original form. There are no cash alternatives to the prize.

WEST BERKS INDOOR BOWLS CLUB

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Courses for Winter 2017

DATE	COURSE	TIME
Saturday 4th February	Beginners Crochet (£25)	14.00-16.00
Saturday 12th February	Needle Felting Penguin (£40)	11.00-16.00
Saturday 18th February	Beginners Knitting (£25)	14.00-16.00
Saturday 4th March	Intermediate Crochet (£35)	14.00-17.00
Saturday 18th March	Needle Felting Mouse or Teddy Bear (£40)	10.00-16.00

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Nature worship

Share your love for nature in February says Jacky Akam

At the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust everyone's Wild at Heart; and, through our Linking the Landscape project in West Berkshire, we know that thousands of people who live and work here love their local wildlife too.

My job as the Linking the Landscape project manager gives me the chance to create opportunities for more people to enjoy being outdoors and closer to nature, not only in the wild spaces of the nature reserves that the trust looks after, but also across the wider landscape.

Over the last three years, the Wildlife Trust has been working with local landowners to create wildlife-friendly 'corridors' by using hedgerows, field edges and woodlands to link habitats that are essential for species such as dormice and butterflies.

Ponds, meadows and coppiced woods have become wild 'stepping stones' to help wildlife such as reptiles and birds move through the landscape to find food, homes and mates.

This has all been achieved through the extraordinary work of our regular volunteer groups as well as corporate teams who enjoy a wild work-out away from the office.

Hundreds of volunteers take part in weekly and monthly work parties doing scrub clearance, coppicing, hedgelaying and pulling up Himalayan Balsam. Other volunteers spend time carefully surveying butterflies and birds so that we can monitor the effectiveness of the habitat management work.

Key to the success of Linking the Landscape are people from the residential areas of Thatcham, Newbury and surrounding villages, who are enjoying making stronger connections with the wonderful wild spaces on their doorsteps.

The popular events at Thatcham Community Orchard, including our recent noisy wassail and last autumn's harvest celebrations, attract huge crowds.

Children are fascinated by the natural world; they instinctively love it and want to know more.

At the Nature Discovery Centre in Thatcham, we help children from toddlers to teenagers discover nature in ways that feed their curiosity, excite their imaginations and enable them to understand the importance of wildlife for us all.

I am very proud of the Teen Rangers who recently received their John Muir Discovery Award.

It's great to see young people with a real passion and enthusiasm for looking after nature. Any of them could be the next Chris Packham or David Attenborough because Teen Rangers gives them an outlet for taking real, practical action for nature while having a bit of fun at the same time.

Find out more on Wildlife Clubs page at www.bbwt.org.uk



Teen Rangers take practical action for wildlife



Volunteers from Thames Water help to improve the paths in Thatcham Reedbeds



Bullfinch, one of the bird species benefitting from the wild 'corridors' and 'stepping stones'

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust's Linking the Landscape in West Berkshire project is funded primarily by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and we are very grateful to our wonderful volunteers with whom we are able to make the funds go so much further. Come and be Wild at Heart with your local Wildlife Trust this month. Join in the fun with one of the volunteer work parties, go on a guided walk to see birds and mosses, or find Magic under the Microscope at West Berkshire Museum in Newbury. All details on: www.bbwt.org.uk/whats-on

Pictures:
Rob Appleby, Katie Smith
and Bob Coyle

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DEVILS PINCH: Cheese, Hot Chilli Sauce & Onion	£3.50	£4.60
MALIBU: Cheese, Bacon, Pineapple & BBQ Sauce	£3.70	£4.80
PACIFIC: Prawns in a Tasty Cocktail Sauce & Salad	£3.60	£4.70

CHICKEN NUGGETS:

6 Whole Muscle Nuggets with a dip of your choice **£2.99**

Additional Sides Available

MEDIUM CHIPS	£1.80
LARGE CHIPS	£2.50
CHEESY CHIPS	£2.70
LARGE CHEESY CHIPS	£3.50
ONION RINGS	£2.50
MOZZARELLA STICKS	£3.20
HOMEMADE COLESLAW (8oz)	£1.80

CHICKEN BURGERS:

	¼LB	½LB
ROAD RUNNER: Lettuce, Tomato & Mayo	£3.40	£4.50
PHOENIX: Sweet Chilli Sauce & Salad	£3.50	£4.60
BLUE BIRD: Blue Cheese, Salad & Mayo	£3.50	£4.60
FIRECRACKER: Hot Chilli Sauce & Salad	£3.50	£4.60
BIG BIRD: Cheese, Lettuce, Tomato & Mayo	£3.50	£4.70
OSPREY: Garlic Mushroom, Salad & Mayo	£3.50	£4.60
ALCATRAZ: Bacon & BBQ Sauce	£3.50	£4.60
MONTANA: Bacon, Cheese, Salad & Mayo	£3.90	£5.00
KINGFISHER: Prawns in a Tasty Cocktail Sauce & Lettuce	£3.90	£5.00

SPECIALS:

SILENCE OF THE LAMBS: 6oz Lamb topped with Redcurrent Jelly & Salad	£4.50
THE BEAST: 5oz Cumberland Ring, 4oz Beef Burger, Smoked Bacon & BBQ Sauce	£4.70
PAY DAY: Any choice from the Beef menu with a Giant ¾lb Burger	£5.85
RIO 2000: 4oz Chicken & Beef, Cheese, Bacon, BBQ Sauce, Mayo & Salad, Mushrooms	£5.00
MARRAKECH: 6oz Lamb topped with Homemade Mint & Yoghurt Dressing on a Bed of Side Salad	£4.50

VEGGIE BURGERS:

	4OZ	8OZ
KEY LARGO: Lettuce, Tomato & Mayo	£3.50	£4.60
OHIO: Coleslaw & Salad	£3.50	£4.60
IDAHO: Sweet Chilli Sauce & Salad	£3.50	£4.60
SAN DIEGO: Cheese, Pineapple, Salad & Mayo	£3.50	£4.60
ORLANDO: Mushrooms, Garlic Mayo & Salad	£3.50	£4.60
MONTE CARLO: Cheese, Salad & Mayo	£3.50	£4.60

All our prices include VAT

5 - 6, Eight Bells Arcade, Bartholomew St, Newbury

OPENING TIMES

MON - THU: 11.00am - 10.30pm,
FRI - SAT: 11.00am - 11.30pm, SUN: 4pm - 10pm

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