

April 2017

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OUT & ABOUT

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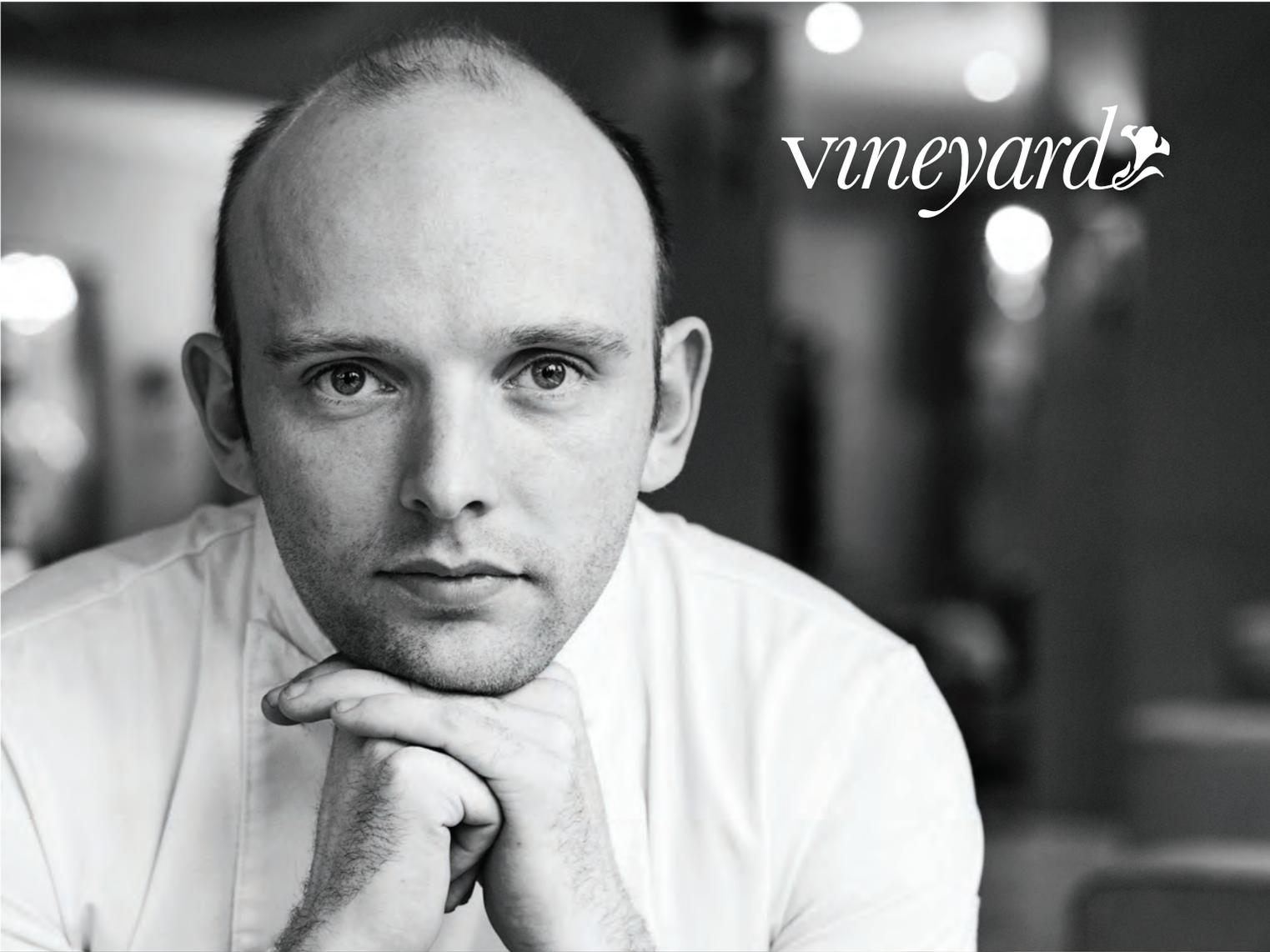
Making music – and so much more

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Equestrian diary 2017

Calendar of events Pull-out-and-keep diary of the year's equestrian events

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AUGUST 29



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SEPTEMBER 30



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Paddington is visiting The Kennet Centre!

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OCTOBER 26/27



LEGO bricks Halloween

It's that time of year! Trick or treat? It's definitely a treat in The Kennet Centre with our LEGO bricks Halloween.

NOVEMBER 26



Polar Bear Shows

Join us for our polar bear puppet shows! Accompanied by an Inuit style handler who will lead interactive style shows.

DECEMBER 9/10 Father Christmas Weekend



Father Christmas will arrive in our usual spectacular style on Dec. 9th, with a fleet of film cars and lots of other noisy, fun entertainment. The parade will start at 10am and makes it way through the town (Parade on the 9th only).

visit www.kennetshopping for full details.



Jonathan Hopson

... we've all got the music in us

With bookings for the annual Newbury Spring Festival of classical music opening earlier this month, (it's encouraging to note that 11 of this year's concerts are already fully-booked), this is perhaps an appropriate time to briefly highlight the transforming power of classical music.

Benjamin Zander, the famous conductor, teacher and author believes everyone loves classical music, it's just that a lot of people haven't found out about it yet.

A powerful and moving illustration of his approach to musical appreciation is available in a TED (Technology, Education, Design) talk he gave to an audience of 1,600 people in California in 2008.

This short video has been viewed by more than eight million people and is available on Youtube (<https://youtu.be/r9LCw15iErE>).

It is well worth watching, and includes an insightful analysis of Chopin's popular *E minor prelude op. 28 No. 4* (movie buffs will recognise it from *The Pianist* and Jack Nicholson's rendition in *Five Easy Pieces*).



Mozart

The revealing and novel way in which Zander deconstructs the first few notes of the Chopin prelude for the musical layman is fascinating.

Incidentally, the first musical example featured in the talk is Mozart's *Sonata in C major K545*.

As well as the Newbury Spring Festival, residents in the Newbury area are also well-served with classical music through Southern Sinfonia.



Gerald Finzi

Based in Somerset and rural Berkshire, Southern Sinfonia recently celebrated its 25th anniversary. They play a diverse and exciting repertoire and present world-class performances of the highest quality across the South of England, all year round.

They firmly believe everyone deserves the opportunity to experience classical music and this conviction has led to a thriving Education and Outreach programme, which works with more than 6,000 local school children and young adults a year.

Southern Sinfonia is currently hosting a series of lunchtime Café Concerts at the Corn Exchange, Newbury and their next concert is on Friday, April 21.

My take on the classical music world from a local perspective would not be complete without a brief mention of the British composer, Gerald Finzi (1901-1956).

Finzi is best known as a choral composer, but also wrote in other genres. Large-scale compositions include the cantata *Dies natalis* for solo voice and string orchestra, and his concertos for cello and clarinet. He lived locally for a number of years at Ashmansworth Farm, near Newbury.

Eclogue, composed in 1929, is a comparatively modest movement for piano and strings and was the slow movement of an unfinished piano concerto that Finzi had begun in 1927-8 and

which he continued to work on until 1953. He twice revised it, but after the abandonment of the piano concerto was content to leave it as a single movement.

Nevertheless it was not performed in the composer's lifetime, and the title was given to it by Finzi's executors.

Its calm serenity and quintessential Englishness is typical of the composer's slow movements.

Eclogue continues to ascend Classic FM's annual Hall of Fame top 300 and is at number 101 in the 2017 list.

Interestingly, three out of the top five compositions in Classic FM's 2017 Hall of Fame list are by English composers.

The single most popular piece of music is *The Lark Ascending* by Ralph Vaughan Williams. Also by the same composer and at number three is *Fantasia on a theme by Thomas Tallis*. Elgar's *Enigma Variations* is in fourth spot.

A great vote of support for English composers and although *Eclogue* may not be in Classic FM's top 100, (at least not yet), it is nonetheless an excellent example of the transforming effect of classical music.

For more information about the Newbury Spring Festival turn to p37 and for a chance to win a pair of tickets to see *Voces8* plus a pre-concert dinner at *The Crown & Garter* turn to p40



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Spring into action



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

As the days get longer and the weather – hopefully – improves, VICKI BROWN says it's easy to incorporate fitness into your daily routine

Spring has sprung and it's a great time to have a lifestyle spring clean as well as a household one, by making the most of the longer, warmer days and getting more active.

Sometimes we need to get a little inspiration to try something new, so here are a few ideas that you could try to get yourself more active – and you may not even have considered them to be exercise before.

Spring clean Literally. If you deep clean and sort out your house, this is physical, strenuous work and chances are you will raise your heartrate for extended periods of time.

Not only that, you will be killing two birds with one stone, being more active and sprucing up your house at the same time.

If you have DIY to do, that will also challenge you.

Gardening As Spring springs, we start to think about spending more time outdoors and that presents a great opportunity to get active.

Whether it be mowing the lawn, digging the flower beds or cutting the hedges, time spent gardening can be hard work and good for the body.

Remember to maintain good posture while you work though, as many people get quite achy doing the gardening, especially in the lower back, as they bend over too much.

Take a walk in a country park. If you make an effort to travel somewhere, the chances are you will adventure for longer.

There are many lovely local areas to walk in and you don't have to venture too far afield to find something new.

Another way to make this more interesting is to print out a route to follow. It's a great way to explore the gorgeous West Berkshire countryside and do exercise at the same time.

Outdoor games Rounders, croquet, netball, football, lacrosse or hockey – the list goes on.

Find activities that you can do with friends and

family in your garden or at the park or join a local team. There are many friendly sporting organisations that can get you playing something new or take up a sport from your school days.

Park Run This is a fantastic free event held all over the world on Saturday mornings. Our local one is based at Greenham Common.

It is a marked and timed 5km run/jog/walk and really is suitable for all, whatever your ability.

The atmosphere is fantastic, and will make anyone, from a seasoned runner to a complete novice, feel welcome.

Visit the website www.parkrun.org.uk/newbury/ to register, then turn up and run for free. You don't have to run the whole way so don't be put off if you've never tried to go that far. You will find support every step of the way and some new goals to achieve.

On your bike! Whether it is mountain, road or hybrid you will get a great workout if you get out and see how far you can go.

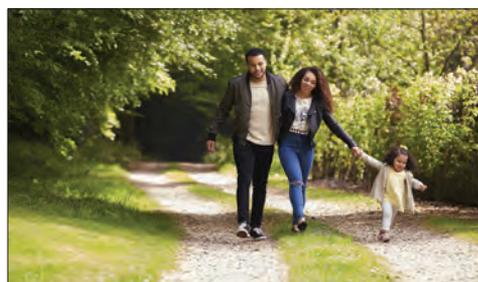
Track your ride and you can get routes to follow. You could also join local cycling groups or bike shop rides to learn some routes and find some like-minded people to go out on rides with, making it more fun and increasing the likelihood of you getting out and riding.

Lift weights You can go to the gym or workout at home.

Lifting weights correctly is a fantastic way to change the way your body looks and feels. You can gain strength, confidence and a more defined body when you consistently lift weight over a period of time – and you can do this individually or with a friend.

As the days get longer, why not take the time to increase your activity level by getting out and trying something new or old.

You may just find yourself a new hobby that gets you moving – after all, if you have fun while doing something, it barely feels like working out at all.





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Give skin a rest

It is believed that the average woman will spend more of her life wearing make-up than not.

In a typical 24-hour day, women will have a face full of cosmetics for nearly 13 hours and will have just 11 hours free from it.

According to research, the typical woman puts on her 'face' at precisely 8am and spends 11 minutes applying it.

While it can no doubt boost your confidence and make you feel better about yourself, it is important to give your skin a break from time to time and to give it the care it needs.

You've heard of the 5:2 diet, well how about the 5:2 make-up-free routine?

Here are the 10 good reasons for going make-up-free:

1. You'll save lots of money

Think what you could do with an extra £10k in your pocket, because that's what one study suggested that the average woman spends on make-up in a lifetime.

Most of us do love our make-up and we spend more than we need to on buying the very best brands that we can, but it could make a big difference in your monthly budget if you were to go make-up-free, even on just a few days a week.

2. When you get a compliment, you know it is about you

When someone compliments you on how beautiful you look, then you can be sure that they are complimenting you and not your skills with make-up.

A lot of girls say that they feel more self-confident without make-up, and not self-conscious at all. If anything, letting their natural beauty show, made them feel just great.

3. You would save loads of time

Another one of obvious benefits of not wearing makeup is that you'll get a few minutes extra in bed in the morning.

Depending on how elaborate your daily makeup routine is, you'll probably save around 10 minutes every morning.

It doesn't stop there, though, you'll also save time during the day, because no touch-ups will be needed and you'll save time at night too, because you won't have to take the make-up off again.

4. Your skin will be able to breathe

You'll probably find that your complexion improves because your skin will be able to breathe all day long.

It could be that the make-up that you are using to hide blemishes and imperfections in your skin is the very thing that is causing them in the first place.

5. You can laugh and cry without worrying about your eye makeup

Another benefit of not wearing make-up is that you will be able to laugh until the tears roll down your cheeks and not end up looking like something out of a horror movie.

No more smudged or running eye make-up to worry about that will mean you can really let yourself go and be yourself.

6. No more stains on your clothes

No more make-up smudges on the collar of your clothes means no embarrassing moments during the day and no more hard work trying to clean the stains out of clothes later.

You won't have powder fall on your bathroom floor or counter tops to clean up either.

7. You'll feel free again

If you have been wearing make-up every day, then you've probably forgotten what it's like to feel the sun on your face or the breeze.

It can feel quite liberating to feel the elements freely on your face, but do remember to wear sunscreen, of course.

8. There won't be any more make-up mistakes

If you stop wearing make-up you will never have that sinking feeling again when you look in the mirror and realise that the great make-up idea you had early on in the morning, doesn't look so great in the cold light of day.

No more wondering of this will work or that will work.

You just get up, splash some cold water on your face and go.

9. You can fall asleep wherever and when ever you please

You will be able to fall asleep on the couch and not leave a make-up smear all over your cushions.

Another one of great benefits of not wearing make-up is that you can also go straight to bed whenever you feel like it and know that you don't have to remove any make-up products before you do.

10. You can kiss and cuddle your man without leaving a trace

You will also be able to get up close and intimate with your man without leaving traces of lipstick or make-up on his face and clothes too.

It's perfect for those lunchtime rendezvous, when he's got to get back to work.





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In the pink!

From feminine blush to statement magenta, pink is the shade that continues to dominate the Spring season. Hit the fashion mark with an instant block colour, floral splash or chic minimal accessory and embrace this tonal trend.



12



6



11



13



10



8



7



9

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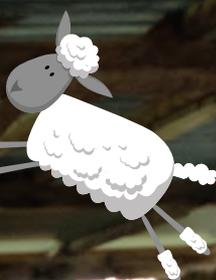
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Counting sheep

Farming in the 21st-Century may have become more sophisticated with hi-tech machinery to help things along, but when it comes to lambing, it is no less labour-intensive than in days of old.

SARAH BOSLEY caught up with Nigel and Karen Wernham, on their farm at Stockcross, during a brief lull in the birthing season. ►



I am sat around the table drinking tea with Nigel and Karen Wernham as they recount the latest lambing tale and explain how they had to play midwife this morning.

They've probably had about as much sleep in the past week as most of us had last night, grabbing power naps when they can, but you wouldn't know it to look at them.

Despite the trials and tribulations of life as a farmer during lambing time, it's clear that the couple love what they do.

"These three to four weeks are hard work at the moment," Nigel explains. "We just catch sleep when we can, as it's 24 hours a day when we're lambing.

"We've had 35 ewes lamb this year so far and only needed to help two or three."

And one of those two or three was this morning, when Karen calmly recalls how she helped deliver the baby lamb.

"You can interfere too early sometimes so we have to let them get on with it as best they can and then just help at the end if

necessary," she says.

This year's lambs are extra special too, as they are born in the 40th year of lambing at the farm in Stockcross.

Just like the lambs we later watch gambolling around the fields, Nigel was born and bred at the farm, which his father took on in 1958.

Initially it farmed pigs and cattle, but, in 1976, Nigel went to help out a local shepherd during lambing and says it made him realise that was his calling in life.

"The first ewe I ever lambed had five lambs," he recalls.

Even Karen is shocked by this revelation that has obviously never been shared before.

"I've never seen that since," he says. "It was at that point that I realised that was what I should be doing."

The following year, Nigel bought his first sheep and he can still trace the lineage and ancestry of every single lamb born at his farm today.

At its peak the farm had 350 sheep; today there are around 80. These are a mix of pedigree Poll Dorset and Dorset Horns.

It seems that farming really does run through this family's veins, with two of their three daughters taking on jobs in the industry.

Their eldest daughter Sophie is working as a shepherdess in Bucklebury, looking after 1,400 ewes, while youngest daughter Zoe has just finished her first year apprenticeship as an assistant herds person in Hook, Hampshire.

Second daughter Holly has chosen another path, looking after children at a local nursery rather than animals, but she is still very much involved in the family farm, helping out when she can.

Since the children have grown up, Karen has been able to take a more hands-on role at the farm too, but there can be some downsides to it.

"I can't remember the last time we had a holiday," she adds - still smiling. "It's

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24/7 looking after animals, but Nigel has promised me a holiday eventually."

Although spring is clearly a key time at the farm, it doesn't mean that they get off lightly the rest of the year.

Shearing takes place towards the end of May, when Nigel will shear all of the sheep himself. They then spend another four weeks lambing the majority of the pedigree ewes in September, before it's the turn of the Hampshire Downs in December.

"I haven't stopped since December really," Nigel explains. "I was at the farm on Christmas Day as we had two sheep lambing then.

"The animals must always come first, so it is all-consuming."

"Showing and exhibiting at agricultural shows is my passion and that is very hands-on. I travel all around the country showing and judging."

"If you have good quality animals and you can get results and prizes at an agricultural show then it can help when you are selling them, but it isn't as important as it used to be."

Nigel's love of agricultural shows has led him to take on the role of chairman of the Livestock Committee at the Royal County of Berkshire Show.

"We start arranging next year's show straight away," he explains.

"It takes up a good three weeks of my time in September and there are always meetings throughout the year with different sections, as I oversee seven sections."

His first taste of the show in Newbury was in 1978 and he has exhibited at every one since; even leaving Karen at home with a week-old baby and two toddlers one year. Once they were old enough, his daughters joined him at the Newbury show and now Sophie and Zoe both exhibit their own animals there.

"Things have changed over the years at the show," he says.

"We've had lows such as Foot and Mouth, and breeds have actually changed too. Different breeds have come in and some have been introduced from Europe.

"It's now about adapting to produce lamb for the mass market. That is the biggest change I have seen recently. Breeds themselves have had to actually adapt to do that."

Although ultimately the job of the farmer is to prepare his lambs for market, Nigel admits that the family have had pet lambs over the years and every one has a name.

His daughters have always helped bottle feed the lambs too, but they would all eventually go back to the flock, evoking a barrage of questions as to where their cuddly pets had gone.

"That's the reality at the end of the day though," he adds. "We cannot get attached to them because they all go, even if it is four or five years down the line.

"You do have your favourites and there is always the anticipation that the next lamb could be an award-winner.

"It is a tiring and hard job but there is a ▶



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Newbury Weekly News – Still making history is an account of this truly local newspaper, ownership of which remains within the founding family since its first edition in 1867. It features some of the people who have contributed to the publication's longevity, and those who have worked to reinforce its place within the community it serves. Proud to be local, nevertheless at times its reach has also been both national and international. The history of the *Newbury Weekly News*, its growth and survival over 15 decades, is a remarkable tale of change and consistency.



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great deal of satisfaction in it.

"I had a ram born in 1998 and he was unbeaten in show in 1999 and then won again in 2000, so Wally was a winner in two different centuries.

"Wally was one of my special lambs."

Nigel will keep the best lambs each year for breed replacement and must try to introduce different blood lines in to the flock regularly.

"When you are a small farm (Nigel has 85 acres) you are limited to what you can produce," he says. "That is why I have a second and a third job."

With a wry smile, Nigel explains that his second job – electrical contracting – was also inherited from his father, and he has since added gardening to his repertoire.

It seems maybe life on a farm hasn't changed that much in the last half a century.

What has evolved, however, is the onset of machinery in the day-to-day running of a farm.

"Farming has become more mechanical," he says. "Things have got bigger; even farms have got bigger. To make a living off a farm you need a minimum of 750 acres to survive now.

"That is why estates are diversifying in to livery and renting cottages or barns for storage."

He has also seen some positives in recent years, with the younger generation showing an interest in farming as a profession again.

"There was a generation gap," he explains. "Because farming in the

1980s and 90s wasn't making a financial return, the sons of farmers didn't follow them into the business.

"Now, 40 years later, it seems there is another generation getting back into farming. There are a lot of youngsters coming in, particularly from agricultural colleges.

"I just hope they get the fulfilment I have got out of it." OA



One development that Nigel and Karen have seen recently is an increase in dog attacks on sheep.

For the past 40 years they were lucky not to have any experience of it, but over a period of 36 months they have had two gruesome attacks that have left their flock grotesquely maimed, dying and terrified.

"We have lost four sheep to dog attacks," Nigel tells me as he shows me the horrific injuries inflicted on those animals.

"It is so disheartening to have raised those sheep for that to happen to them and it's really hard to see the injuries they have.

"Even if a dog just scares the sheep, they still suffer afterwards. A ewe, especially at this time of year, will always protect her lambs."

Karen, who sits beside her own dog as she talks about the problem, says that it is only natural for the dogs to want to run and chase.

"It is just a game to them; it is a natural instinct, which is why it is so important to keep them on a lead when you are near fields of sheep."

The cost of this increasingly frightening phenomenon was £15m to the sheep industry last year alone.

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Sporting Kings

The Thames Valley Kings wheelchair basketball club, for disabled and able-bodied players, has been running in Thatcham for the last 12 years. JOHN HERRING met up with the club's founder Jacqueline Scoins-Cass during training and, after a bit of coaching, joined in one of the practice sessions. >



Pictures: Louise Bellaers



The first thing I had to ask the club's founder Jacqueline Scoins-Cass was why she devotes nearly all her free time to a minority sport in this country, and a team that many in West Berkshire wouldn't know existed in Thatcham.

The idea began as a 12-month project for her Queen's Guide Award, she tells me, and has become a 12-year endeavour.

"I haven't had a free weekend since – every weekend has been a basketball weekend."

She says that a lack of a club in Berkshire for people with disabilities, combined with wanting to help friends at Kennet School, had led to her involvement in disabled sport. "I enjoy making a difference to people's lives and people describe this as a second family.

"We don't talk disability here, we just talk basketball. It's not a focus on what they can't do, it's what they can do and for some of the guys it's skills that make life easier, like pushing their chairs and exercising. It's a support network as well.

“We don't talk disability here, we just talk basketball.”

"We have had more than 100 people since day one. Although not everyone has stayed with it, they have got a greater understanding of disabilities and what is achievable. And I enjoy it, I wouldn't give up every weekend if I didn't."

The club's commitment to help players is something to admire. With no clubhouse or grounds, like most other sports clubs, nearly all of the special wheelchairs are stored in houses and have to be brought to every match and training session.

The Kings have around 25 chairs, and with top-of-the-range ones costing between £2,500 and £4,000, the club has been busy fundraising over the years so that the players don't need to pay out. This is on top of normal running costs such as hall hire.

Jacqueline's efforts have not gone unnoticed. In 2011, at the age of 26, she was appointed an MBE for voluntary services. And this year, aged 31, she scooped a lifetime achievement award at the Get Berkshire Active awards.

"The MBE – that was quite a surprise," she says. "I received the letter for nomination and I couldn't believe it. It was really kind of special and surprising, and nice to be recognised for all my achievements.

"The lifetime achievement award, again I was not expecting that, but it was nice to be recognised and at such a young age as well."

With such an impressive résumé it's easy to think of the good that the club has done, especially when you hear it from the people who have experienced it first-hand.

Club captain Wayne Barton tells me that Jacqueline is an inspiration: "For what she's achieved it was great to see her pick up something so good as that at her age. Thirteen years – it's a great achievement, especially as it's all run by volunteers, for her to bring together people, bring the chairs here and to raise the money."

Team member Vickie Simmonds added: "She's phenomenal. She has changed so many people's lives by founding this club and what she gives to us all each week. She's completely changed all of our lives by giving us this sport."

JACQUELINE SCOINS-CASS



PETER SCOINS
(coach)



Development

Before I got strapped in, I spoke with Daniel Jones, who has been with the club since it was set up in 2004.

I asked 'DJ' why he had stayed with the club and how it had developed over the years.

"I enjoy playing the game and it's given me different opportunities and experiences," he said, which range from playing to refereeing.

"The club has slowly been growing with people who have decided to pick the game up and I've made a lot of friends and seen a lot of people develop from when they were younger, then grow as players and develop as people."

DJ then ran me through a game, which sees two teams of five play four 10-minute periods.

The game is played under International Wheelchair Basketball Federation rules and a team has 24 seconds to attempt to score a basket – they lose the ball and the right of play if the time expires.

In terms of dribbling, a player may wheel the chair and bounce the ball simultaneously, but if the ball is picked up or placed in the lap you may only push the chair twice before shooting, passing or dribbling the ball again.

And if that isn't enough, the wheelchair is considered part of the player's body in relation to any contact made, so no ramming and a player cannot use their feet while in possession of the ball.

A game can be stopped if a chair tips over and the player is deemed at risk of injury.

Teams are given classification points based on their ability to play the game and each team is allowed a total 14 points on the court at one time. Players are ranked from 1 to 4, with 0.5 and 4.5 for exceptional cases, so two able-bodied players could take up 9 points by themselves. To top it all off, the height of the basket is the same as that of a normal basketball game, as well as the shooting lines, making it more difficult to register points.



DANIEL JONES

Participation

My time came to be put in a chair and talked through movement, dribbling, passing and shooting with Jacqueline Scoins-Cass and her husband Peter Scoins.

The chair felt incredibly light and I quickly found myself covering more ground than I first thought I would.

With no brakes, you have to grab hold of the wheels if you want to stop suddenly – something I later found handy as turnover happens fast and frequently. Next came dribbling, with Peter teaching me to bounce the ball to the side of the chair.

I can't dribble a ball standing so being asked to try and maintain control at a lower height with the ball an arm's length away – in my albatross arms case, two feet – from my body was a hard ask; in addition I had to attempt this manoeuvre without looking at the ball.

I started on my right side, which was hard enough, but manageable. Then Peter made me take the ball over to the left side of my chair – seriously, don't ask me to do anything with the left side of my body, I lost the ball straightaway.

Next came some passing, and I fared slightly better.

You can either loop the ball over the top – good if you're crowded out by defenders – bounce the ball in front of a player or try a direct pass; you just need to remember that it has to be at chair height and that some players may not be able to catch accurately on one side of their body.

Now came my chance to have a go at shooting and, as mentioned, the basket stays at the height it would for a standing game of basketball, about 10ft off the ground.

I'm 6ft 2" and can just about manage to shoot a hoop when standing up, so dropping a couple of feet made rethink the power of my shot.

Peter showed me the technique used for shooting, keeping your wrist and elbow bent at 90 degrees and then pushing up and flicking your wrist.

It wasn't long before I tried to show off and shoot while moving, with various levels of success – mostly at the lower end of the scale.

After my whirlwind introduction, I was brought on as a sub during a Kings training game. I was told to get stuck-in and position myself under the basket to try and catch any loose shots, but the speed at which the pros moved left me trailing.

I did make a couple of passes and had one half-decent shot, and claimed an assist – so I was happy enough.

Most importantly, I came away thinking of the amazing work that's taking place in West Berkshire.

You often hear that sport is a great enabler and method of bringing people together. There's no truer case of this than the Kings, so if you want a sport or a club that has changed perceptions and inspired people from all backgrounds and abilities then give them a shot.

As club captain Wayne told me: "Give it a go, see what you find. We have everything here that you could recommend to anyone. We are looking for all types of players." ➤



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Support

It's not just the sport that brings and keeps the Kings together. "It helped me lots with fitness and to make other friends," he says. "It's so hard to describe, it's just great fun," says club captain Wayne Burton, who was paralysed from the chest down in a horse racing accident nine years ago.

Wayne points out there is always something to learn and it's not just the physical aspects of the game such as passing, but in some respects it's the mental element that improves.

"Communication is a great thing in this game – without communication and that team bond it all falls apart," he says.

Club member Vickie Simmonds tells me that the Kings has given her a new outlook on life after she was diagnosed with Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, a group of rare inherited conditions that affect connective tissue. "I've kind of been losing my mobility for six years," she says. Vickie, 25, explains that she was unhappy before joining the Kings and had been thinking about moving back in with her parents.

"I didn't have much confidence, but I realised there was so much I could do, seeing people with different disabilities overcoming them and working together as a team."

"I never had the confidence before, but I finally thought I would give it a go and joined in 2015. I didn't think I would be good at it, but it's completely changed my life." Vickie says that her confidence has improved so much since joining the Kings that she has learned to drive and is living alone. She says that the focus on the sport and not people's disabilities had changed player's attitudes off the court and transferred into personal achievements.

Wayne has also seen the club and players grow: "I have been here since we have had a team in the league. We have come from the bottom to where we are now [the Kings have three league teams – in south west division 3, division 4 and an U19s team, the latter is currently top of its league], so I feel quite proud of being part of the team that's got where we are. We have bonded together, being kind of a family I suppose. Everyone has different types of injuries, but we all put that aside and all play basketball.

"Some of us don't work or have great social lives so it's something to look forward to once or twice a week."

Able-bodied players have also experienced the feelgood factor of the Kings, as coach and player Peter Rapley explains to me. Peter has been involved with the club since their first friendly match, and then attended a training session.

"I just love it. I can't play running basketball to save my life. It's like a second family. It's one, if not the only, sport where able-bodied and disabled people can play together as equals, which is fantastic.

"Everyone has different disabilities and issues outside and forgets about them on the court. Everyone just comes together to have fun and this year, hopefully, win." OA



WAYNE BURTON



VICKIE SIMMONDS



Find out more about the Thames Valley Kings at www.berkshirewheelchairbasketball.co.uk
For more information about wheelchair basketball visit www.gbwna.org.uk/gbwna/welcome.htm

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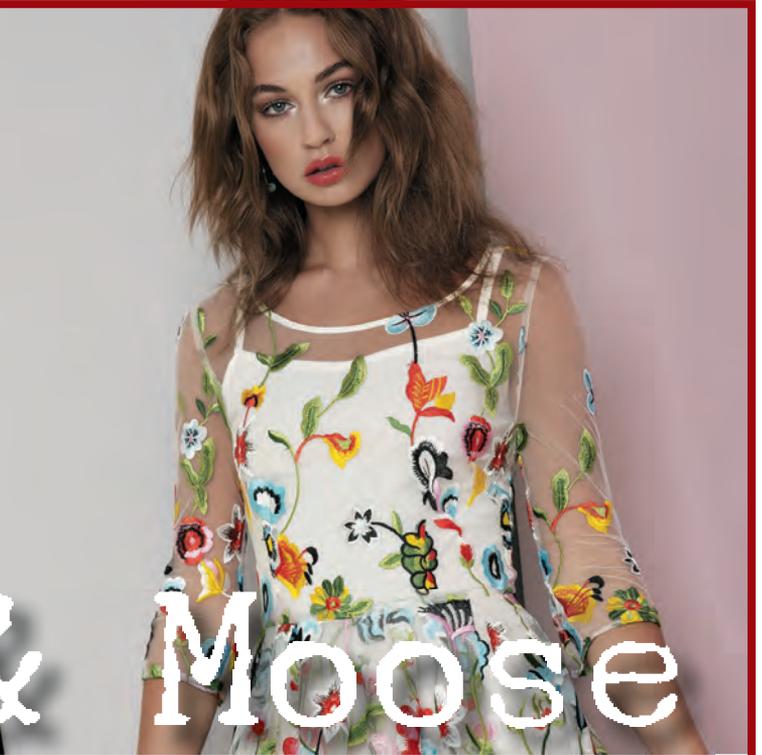
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The roast with the most at The Newbury... *in* Newbury

HILARY SCOTT gets a flavour... plenty of flavour... at a pub in the centre of town

If you're good at cooking Sunday roasts – and a lot of us are – then it's often the one meal that can disappoint when you eat it out. Well fear no more – we've found a gastro pub that dishes up one of the best.

The Newbury in Newbury town centre is proud of its Sunday roast dinners, and rightly so. Succulent local meat, flavoursome gravy, crisp roasties, light and fluffy Yorkshires, vegetables that are cooked individually and with added seasonings like carrots cooked in orange juice. And everything is steeped in flavour, flavour, flavour. For £15 you can choose from pork belly with a shard-like crackling and apple sauce; roast sirloin which has been cooking since the Saturday night at a low temperature so it is meltingly soft yet still pink; or roast poussin with bread sauce.

Can't choose? Try the sharing board that offers all the above for two diners or more at £18 per person.

Of course we tried the sharing board – the rosemary-flecked poussin nestled beside the just-right sirloin and surrounded by rounds of pork. The board also included our sauces – an apple butter to melt over the pork which was new to us, but the cold butter oozing over the hot pork with its crunchy outside was fab, a horseradish with a bite and a lovely bread sauce. Everything is home-made – sauces, ice creams, pastry and more – and owner Pete Lumber and chef Darren Booker-Wilson are proud of that.

"We don't have a microwave and we have a small freezer for ice creams and sorbets," says Darren.

But while that roast dinner will remain in our memories for a good while, the rest of the menu at The Newbury is also really noteworthy.



Top right, orange and passionfruit tart, right espresso martini, below, Sunday roast with all the trimmings





Top left, slate of scallops, cod brandade kedgeree breadcrumbed balls, coronation dressing, raisins and mango puree top right, celeriac and truffle veloute, above roast sharing board, right crunchy topped winter fruits crumble, below, prune and Armagnac and Tonka bean ice cream

Our starters were a slate of scallops, cod brandade kedgeree breadcrumbed balls, coronation dressing, raisins and mango purée, £12.50. The scallops were beautifully cooked and the cod balls packed a strong hit of cod and curry. The celeriac and truffle veloute, £8.50, was light and creamy, flecked with pea shoots and other greenery with little black truffled slivers – the star in the centre was a large hen’s egg encased in crunchy breadcrumbs, which leaked a golden yolk into the veloute when cut into.

We could have chosen a charcuterie sharing board at £14.95, a breast of pigeon with blackberry and parsnip purée and hazelnut brittle at £9.50 or a ham hock ballotine with piccalilli and olive oil at £7.50 and a good few more.

We had a lovely Gris Blanc Rosé from Gerard Bertrand at £26.50 but there’s also an amazing South African chenin blanc at £19 a bottle or a Bishops Leap sauvignon on the extensive wine list.

As the pub thinned out – it had been full with 80 covers when we arrived – we retired to a comfy leather sofa to order dessert and espresso martinis.

The pub really is a home-from-home

for owner Pete who has brought a lot of artwork from his home to the walls of The Newbury, plus there are local artists’ works that show the races at Newbury – and on the mantelpiece in the bar area two stunning horse-head metal sculptures.

The rest of the pub has unique touches and it’s worth having a walk round and a nosey in the nooks and crannies.

Meanwhile, the desserts kept up the standard.

So as not to disappoint readers (well that’s our excuse) we were allowed a board with a few to try.

And get this – my stodge-hating dining companion wolfed down a very light, yet rich at the same time, sticky toffee pudding.

As sous chef Mo Farhan explained, they hit on the formula when one day they didn’t have enough dates so used half dates/half prunes. It’s often how great dishes are born.

There was also a fabulously crunchy-topped crumble of winter fruits and apple, a mix that was sweet with a hint of sourness.

The Nemesis chocolate cake with

Nemesis chocolate ice cream was the richest of all the dishes we had and utterly gorgeous. The orange and passionfruit tart with just a brushing of chocolate on the pastry base broke open and took us to somewhere in the sun and the prune and Armagnac and the Tonka bean ice creams were deep with flavour.

The Newbury is an ambitious pub. Pete and Darren have some great ideas. At the time of writing, many evenings are themed – so Tuesday is grazing night, a kind of fine dining experience, Wednesday is pie night, Friday is fish night and steak is on Thursdays.

Whatever night you go, the kitchen and pass are open to view, there’s a cocktail bar upstairs and, for summer and warmer days, a roof terrace with removeable roof and sides and an outdoor pizza oven.

Private parties are welcome and Darren had just completed a 133-head vegan banquet the night before for a vegan birthday girl, without turning a hair.

That’s just how they do things at The Newbury – nothing fazes them as they turn out some of the best food around. OA

The Newbury, 37 Bartholomew St,
Newbury, RG14 5HB,
01635 49000,
www.thenewburypub.co.uk

Pictures: Dijana Capan

Hilary Scott shows you how to make the most of Easter, with recipes from John Campbell for you to cook, a round-up of places that do roast dinners if you want to eat out, and – of course – chocolate

Happy Easter

Eat in with John Campbell of the Woodspeen Recipe



New season lamb rump with lamb jus, Boulangere Potatoes, crushed peas



Lamb jus

● 250g diced lamb ● 50g sliced shallot ● 1 garlic clove ● 2 plum tomatoes chopped ● 800g chicken stock ● 50g Cabernet Sauvignon or other red wine vinegar ● 100g white wine vinegar ● 5g tarragon ● 5g chervil

Cook the shallot until a good colour is achieved. Add lamb then garlic and cook until you get a brown and sticky residue on bottom of pan. Deglaze pan with the tomato and vinegar. Ensure the bottom of the pan is clean. Add the stock and simmer for 30 minutes, sieve and then reduce to sauce consistency. Remove from the heat and infuse with the herbs for five minutes. Sieve again and keep warm until ready to serve lamb.

Lamb rump

Season rump and add to a very hot frying pan. Cook to your liking. When done serve with Boulangere potatoes and crushed new peas. Alternatively, you can cook a shoulder of lamb and Boulangere potatoes at the same time.

Take a shoulder of lamb with the bone still in (we are not carving this so will just fall away from the bone). Spike the lamb with garlic, rosemary and anchovy. Rub with oil and salt.

Place in a hot oven (200-220C) for 30 minutes and turn down the temp to 100C and cook for 2 hours.

While this is cooking make up your boulangere as per recipe but x by 4 for a family of 4-5

Once the lamb has had 2 hours at 100C remove and wrap in foil and leave in a warm place in the kitchen. Turn up the oven to 180c and place the potatoes in for an hour covered with foil. Once they are cooked remove the foil and place the lamb directly on a rack allowing the juice and fat to drip over the potatoes and create a wonderful crisp top. This should take 30 minutes max. Remove from the oven and place the lamb on top of the potatoes and place in the centre of the table, stand back and get your guests pulling the lamb and spooning out the potatoes on to their own plates.

Boulangere potatoes Serves 1

● 325g Lovers Choice potatoes or Desiree potatoes sliced on a mandolin ● ½ white onion, thinly sliced ● ½ clove of garlic, crushed ● 1 sprig thyme ● 150ml chicken stock ● 20g diced butter

Heat a large pan with a good splash of oil on a medium heat. Add the onion and two tbs of water and start to sweat the onions down, stirring every couple of minutes. After 10 minutes, add the garlic and thyme and a pinch of salt and continue to cook, ensuring the onions don't catch the bottom of the pan. After around 20 minutes the onions should be soft and a golden brown translucent colour. In a large bowl, mix the potatoes with a good pinch of salt. In an oven tray, add a layer of potatoes, then a layer of the onions with the garlic and thyme discarded. Repeat the process two more times, and finish with a final layer of potatoes.

Add the stock. Which may have to be done in two stages so the bottom layers of potatoes can absorb the stock. When all the stock has been added, press the potatoes down so it is an even spread. Add the butter and bake as above. If cooking to go with the lamb rump, bake for an hour at 180C.

Chocolate cremeux

A rich and decadent chocolate dessert with nuts and bananas

● 125ml milk ● 125ml double cream ● 50g pasteurized egg yolk ● 25g caster sugar ● 120g dark chocolate

Frosted hazelnuts

● 100g roasted skinless hazelnuts ● 150g sugar ● 100ml water ● Pinch of salt

Caramelised banana

● 1 banana ● 100g sugar

Over a pan of simmering water, whisk the egg yolks and sugar until it doubles in volume. Meanwhile, in a separate pan, bring the cream and milk to the boil. Take off the heat and whisk into the egg yolks. Cook the mix out until it reaches 83C. Take off the heat and quickly whisk in the dark chocolate until it has melted completely, and you have a silky chocolate ganache. Pour into bowls and leave to set.

Roast the hazelnuts on a large tray in the oven at 150C until golden brown, around 20 minutes. Bring the water, salt and sugar in a wide pan to the boil, ensuring there isn't any sugar up the sides of the pan as this will crystallise. Bring the liquid down to a thick syrup, but not caramelised. Still on the heat, add the roasted nuts and stir with a heat resistant spatula or wooden spoon, coating the nuts in the syrup. When the sugar starts to crystallise and go white and rough again on the nuts, pour the nuts onto a flat metal tray, and cool them down to room temperature before serving. These can be done a few days in advance and stored in an airtight container.

In a large frying pan, make a direct caramel with the caster sugar – melt without stirring or touching until it is a golden brown and all sugar has dissolved.

Slice the banana lengthways with the skin still on, and place in the caramel and cook it for around one minute. Take out the banana, and store on a flat tray. This can be done 3-4 hours in advance, keeping the skin on so it does not go brown.

The Woodspeen Cookery School, Lambourn Rd, Newbury RG20 8BW, (01635) 265070, <http://www.thewoodspeen.com/cookery-school/>. Please note the school will close for around a month from the end July for a small refurbishment. It should reopen in September.

John's top three tips for stress-free cooking when you have guests

- 1 Pick something to cook within your ability.
- 2 The lamb shoulder with boulangere potatoes is easy and good for those nervous about cooking a roast.
- 3 You can serve the Easter meal buffet style – just put it all on the table and let your guests help themselves. This is also a good ice-breaker if people don't know each other well.



Originally a blacksmith's forge in the 19th century, the **Spotted Dog** is a family and pet-friendly pub – and a place to take your grandmother with their special OAP deal. On Sundays it offers a choice of four meats and prices start from £12.50. Choose from beef, lamb, pork or chicken with the usual accompaniments, including Yorkshires and roasts. Children can have a roast dinner for £6.95. OAPs get the same treatment and starters include soup and good old-fashioned prawn cocktail. Food is served from 12-6pm on Sundays.

The Spotted Dog, Gladstone Lane, Cold Ash, 01635 862458
www.spotteddogcoldash.co.uk



The Winterbourne is a good place to stop on a walk or to walk off the Sunday roast. Those less energetic can simply wander the lovely gardens. On Sunday try traditional roast beef or roast turkey for £14.95, but often roast partridge is a choice or braised wild rabbit served with tarragon risotto, smoked bacon and Parmesan. Meats come with veg like braised red cabbage, butter baked carrots and parsnips, tender stem broccoli, duck fat roast potatoes, celeriac, Yorkshire pudding and red wine gravy. Last food order is 3.30pm on Sundays.

The Winterbourne Arms, Winterbourne, Newbury
01635 248200



Run by Simon Page and Jason King, **The Wellington Arms** is a smart gastropub with a sustainable ethos – be inspired by the fabulous vegetable garden, see the beehives, sheep, hens and pigs or buy a cute tea cosy knitted by Simon's mum. Sunday dishes can include roast Grange Farm beef ribeye with a Yorkshire pudding and home-grown horseradish cream for £18 or roast rack of Orchard Farm middlewhite pork with crackling and apple sauce for £17.50, both served with roast potatoes, red onion, home-grown fennel, root vegetable gratin and a generous jug of red wine sauce.

The Wellington Arms, Baughurst, 0118 982 0110
www.thewellingtonarms.com



The proverbial...

'As much use as a chocolate teapot' – well now's your chance to try one £24.99, from www.thefowndry.com. Novelty chocolate usually doesn't live up to the delicious goodness you expect, however this teapot is made from 600 grams of the finest Belgium chocolate – and apart from being able to eat the entire teapot, you can also use this to create the ultimate hot chocolate or fondue.



Sunday lunch at the **Donnington Valley Hotel** is served in the WinePress restaurant from 12.30-2pm and two courses cost £19, three £22.

Mains include roast chicken with roast potatoes, glazed parsnips and green beans, or roast English sirloin of beef, Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes, cabbage and carrots. There's also baked salmon with new potatoes or a braised lamb shank and a vegetarian option.

Donnington Valley Hotel, Old Oxford Road, Donnington,
01635 551199, www.donningtonvalley.co.uk/



As part of the Ramsbury estate with its own brewery, distillery and smokehouse, **The Bell** serves modern European cuisine the restaurant and country classics.

On Sundays, the restaurant offers two courses for £19.50 and three courses for £24.50 – expect 28 day dry-aged Butts farm sirloin of beef, Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes, slow roast English onion, baby gem and carrot puree. Or roast chicken breast or slow cooked Gloucestershire Old Spot pork shoulder.

The Bell at Ramsbury, nr Marlborough, 01672 520 230,
www.thebellramsury.com



CHOCOLATE FIX

Moo free

Leading (and local) 'free from' chocolate manufacturer, Reading-based Moo Free has some innovative Easter eggs this year – original, orange and bunnycomb. The chocolate from which the eggs and the buttons (each egg now includes 20g of chocolate buttons) are made is a multi-award winning recipe with rice milk, and it recently won Best Vegan Chocolate at the VegFest Awards, 2016. Even better, its dairy-free chocolates are also free from gluten, wheat, lactose, soya and casein, completely vegetarian and vegan, and certified organic. And the Moo Free Easter bunny has bucked the chocolate trend in another way - they now all weigh 120g, up from 100g in 2016, but are still £4.25 each. Available in supermarkets, larger retailers and independent high-street stores.
www.moofreechocolates.com.



The best eggs

Tesco and Aldi are the places to head for the best Easter eggs according to the Good Housekeeping Institute. Tesco's Finest Belgian Milk Chocolate Hidden Egg (£15) has just been voted the best Easter egg in Britain and Aldi's Giant Chocolate Bunny (£3.99) the best for kids. 127 eggs were assessed on their appearance, aroma and texture, and judged in different categories including kids, teens, adults, sharing and free-from. But the judges weren't happy with a lot of the eggs. "Retailers have definitely upped their game with innovative and eye-catching products, but, disappointingly, much of the chocolate failed to deliver on taste," said Caroline Bloor, consumer director at Good Housekeeping.

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by *James Allen*

Cracking suggestions

This month JAMES ALLEN asked local wine merchants to come up with some top tips and they've come up with some corkers! Two gorgeous reds, a lovely sparkler and a tale of eggs...

Wine from eggs?

Did you know that the new trend in France is to ferment wine in eggs? Not ones produced by our feathered friends but huge concrete ones.

Concrete tanks are commonly used in wineries, but egg-shaped vessels are fairly new.

Michel Chapoutier, of Rhone-wine fame, designed the concrete egg with the help of Nombrot, a French company that has been making concrete vats since the 1920s.

Only Loire sand, gravel, unchlorinated spring water and cement are used, with no chemical additives or iron added.

The vessels come in two sizes: 6hl and 16hl. The egg shape gives a continuous flow to the wine as it ferments and ages, which allows a more homogenous liquid. The thick walls provide good insulation and temperature is very stable during fermentation, which avoids the need for artificial refrigeration.

The effect of circulation inside the egg adds depth, volume and texture to the wine.

I've compared it with the same grape from the same terroir fermented and aged in a stainless steel vat, and the difference is obvious: the egg wine has a better mouth feel.

The downside is that the eggs aren't cheap, and the 16hl version weighs more than two tonnes, so transport costs are also significant – but it does add some glamour to the winery.

Actual eggs from chickens are also often used in wine production.

Egg whites are used to fine the wine at the end of the wine-making process. The egg white collects all of the fine particles left over in the wine and acts as a sieve to clarify the end product.

Chocolate, on the other hand, doesn't get used quite so much. But you could try the following:

THE CHOCOLATE BLOCK

From: Franschoek in South Africa for a real Easter treat.

This is a blend of 73 per cent Syrah, 10 per cent Cabernet Sauvignon, four per cent Cinsault and one per cent Viognier.

The Naked Grape, Hungerford, £22 a bottle

2015 FREEDOM CROSS CHENIN BLANC

From: Franschoek Cellar

This is a bright, lively wine that is packed with lemony freshness. Chenin Blanc thrives in South Africa, and this particular example offers stunning value for money.

Fruity, crisp and vibrant, you just cannot go wrong with a glass of this to accompany a mid-week supper or to simply to enjoy on its own.

Haynes Hanson & Clark, £6.95 a bottle



PROSECCO MIONETTO DOCG

A Spring sparkler

The nation's favourite style of bubble, this one is even more special.

Grown near the highly-regarded village of Valdobbiadene, this wine arrives with a stamp of quality. Bursting with an abundance of beautiful pear and apple flavours, with a lovely moussey feel to the wine, lightly chilled this is a great wine to welcome the warmer months.

Stocked by Majestic Wine, Newbury, at £13.99 per bottle



BODEGAS GÓMEZ CRUZADO

This is a historic Rioja cellar, founded in 1886 by the Duke of Moctezuma, and rose to eminence in the 1960s. Hand-harvested Tempranillo matured in French and US oak casks has produced this complex, mellow Reserva.

A 90-point (that's good) Rioja with power, dense fruit and richness. Intense aromas of red berry fruits, sweet vanilla and spice. Firm, fragrant and fruity with well-integrated oak. Lovely long finish.

Ideal with grilled red meats, a rich casserole or roast lamb.

Laithwaites, Theale, at £17.99 per bottle



2015 CHÂTEAU JOYEUX, BORDEAUX

Love the name

The inclusion of Cabernet Franc in the blend accentuates the bright, floral character of this splendid 2015 Bordeaux.

The wine really does reflect its name. It is perfumed, with lovely, silky textures, bountiful energy and a fresh, ripe finish.

Haynes Hanson & Clark, £9.55 a bottle



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Festive fish

Easter is a great time to go all out and enjoy some special fish treats. **SIMON RHODES** makes some suggestions and has a couple of simple recipes for you to try at home



Left: Sea Bass baked in salt, below Salmon Wellington

Traditionally fish is eaten as a replacement for meat over the Easter period, especially on Good Friday, an important date in the Christian calendar.

Many of our customers push the boat out (excuse the pun) and treat themselves to some fantastic fish such as turbot, halibut, lobster, salmon, tuna and scallops, and turn them into mouth-watering dishes.

You can use this time of the year to go to town and create something really special.

Why not have a go at some **sea bass baked in salt**?

This old method of cooking fish is fantastic at bringing out the best flavour of the bass and believe it or not it is not salty.

Cooking fish in a salt crust may seem a bit scary, but is, in fact, quite easy and is extremely popular in Spain.

It's just a matter of placing the fish in a salt parcel and the salt will seal in the juices.

To give good theatre to your guests present the whole salt-crusted fish at the table.

To prepare a salt crust: Combine salt, water and herbes de Provence in a bowl; mix until it's the consistency of wet sand. Spread half the salt mixture on the prepared baking sheet in a rectangle just larger than the fish.

Place the prepared sea bass on top of the salt and cover the fish with the salt making sure there are no gaps and simply bake in the oven

for 30 minutes.

Then remove the sea bass from the oven and break open the crust and carefully remove the skin to reveal a delicate, soft flesh of the fish which can be filleted or eaten off the bone.

Accompany the sea bass with either a good homemade hollandaise sauce or melted lemon butter.

This recipe works equally well with salmon too.



Talking of salmon, why not go full steam ahead with a delicious **salmon Wellington**.

Was this dish an adaptation of the beef Wellington, so named after the defeat of

Napoleon? Or is the name related to Wellington in New Zealand? A topic for discussion over the dinner table perhaps?

Anyway, this dish is awesome with a capital AWWW..

Method:

Melt some butter in a pan and sweat down some finely chopped leeks, then add a glass of white wine and reduce by a third.

When the wine has reduced, add a couple of handfuls of fresh spinach and cook down until it has wilted.

Take off the heat and add a good helping of soft cheese or cream cheese. (Ricotta is ideal) and stir into the mixture.

Brush the salmon fillet with a mixture of balsamic vinegar, brown sugar and salt and spread the cheese, leek and spinach mixture on top of the salmon.

To make this even easier wrap the salmon in ready made puff pastry.

Bake in the oven for approx. 30 mins at 180c, or until the pastry is golden brown.

So, along with chocolate eggs and hot cross buns make fish part of your Easter tradition.



About the author

Simon Rhodes owns:

The Lobster Pot Fishmongers. Cobbs Farmshop, Bath Road, Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 0SP

Telephone: (01488) 686770

honesty

A class act



ROMILLA ARBER is on a mission to educate people about the food they eat and teach them cooking skills for life at the Honesty Cookery School

Honesty Cookery School opened in January 2014. The idea was to start slowly and build up a following, seeing what people wanted to learn about.

It was always clear to me, having attended quite a few cookery classes, that the sessions had to be hands on.

I think people learn more effectively this way.

One of the best cookery schools I ever attended was Richard Bertinet's in Bath, where I did a five-day bread course, which really gave me enough knowledge to go on and teach others.

I have been to other classes where you are just watching demonstrations and these are not nearly so constructive and helpful. They are usually also very expensive.

The classes at Honesty are small, so that people can get all the help they need. It is also easier to relax in small classes. There is plenty of time to chat and get to know each other. It is so important to me that the classes are a social occasion where stories about food and life are shared.

The cookery school is based in a new build green oak barn and it really is an inspirational environment in which to learn.



The back door opens out on to the beautiful Hampshire countryside, and in the spring and summer, when it is warm enough, lunches and refreshments can be enjoyed outside.

Wherever possible we use ingredients that have been grown in the garden and we try as much as possible to stick to seasonal cooking.



The classes cover a wide range of food-related topics, from the cuisine of Thailand, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Japan, Italy, India, Turkey and Lebanon to regional cooking, pastry and cake craft.

We have looked at healthier ways to cook and to make use of certain types of ingredient, such as fruit and vegetables.

Some of the most popular courses are the bread-making courses.

Bread baking is an area of cooking that is close to my heart. More and more people want to acquire the knowledge to bake bread at home as mass produced bread is so disappointing in comparison.

Lots of people also find eating industrially-produced bread difficult to digest and so want to find an alternative. Bread is far too delicious to take out of our diets.

When people come to Honesty Cookery School I want them to understand that they don't have to have some great talent for cooking. They just need a desire to cook.

I strongly believe that everyone should know how to cook. I think it gives us an understanding about our environment, animal welfare and the health and well-being of our own bodies.

The loss of our food culture and our apparent willingness to hand over decisions about what we eat and how we eat it, to massive food

manufacturers has had far-reaching consequences for our health and the state of the environment in which our food is produced.

We do need to make time to appreciate the important part that good food plays in our lives.

Honesty Cookery School is all about this, as is the Food Education Trust that I set up in 2008 and which is partly-funded by sales of my cookery books and partly-funded by profits made in the cookery school.

The trust funds initiatives that encourage children and young adults to learn to cook.

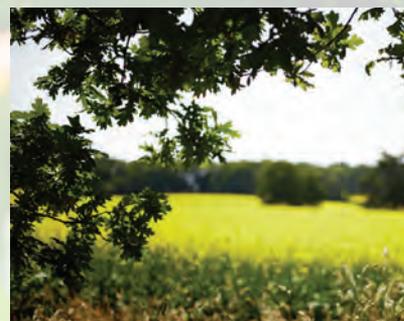
As well as putting on cookery classes for small groups we also put together bespoke courses for larger groups, friends or colleagues wanting to cook and eat together.

These sessions have been a great success and huge fun.

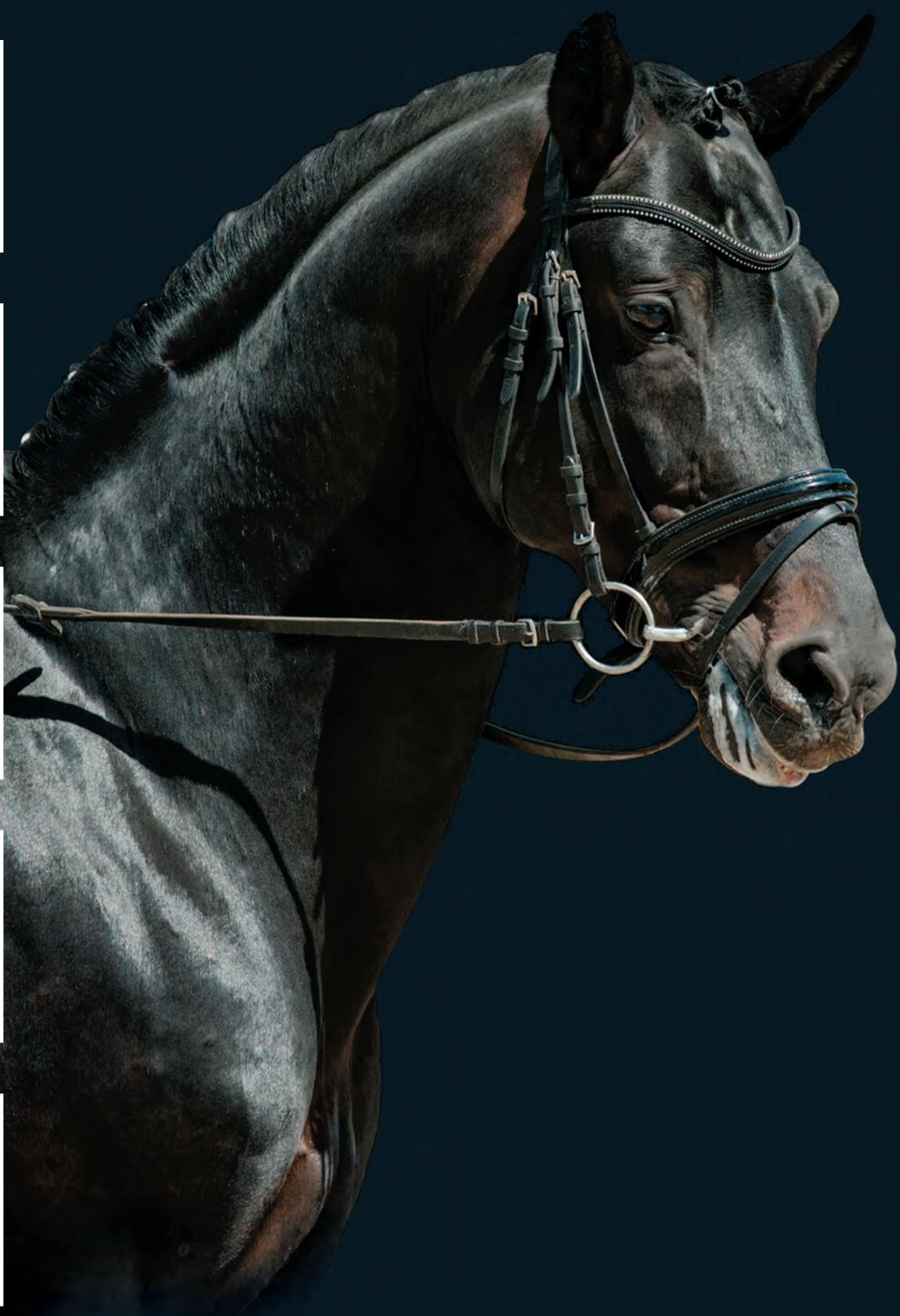
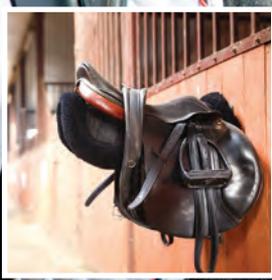
The courses still focus on food, but there is also an element of team-building or celebration involved. Food can bring people together in so many different ways.

Whatever your reason for coming to Honesty Cookery School you are sure of a rich and rewarding experience that you will remember for a long time.

To find out more visit www.cookeryschool.honestygroup.co.uk



EQD17



Equestrian diary 2017



APRIL

- 2nd Ascot Racecourse**
Spring Family Raceday
Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Jumping Clinics with Warren Lamperd
Enborne Equestrian Centre
Trailblazers Show Jumping
-
- 5th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Indoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running
-
- 8th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Indoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running
-
- 9th Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Dressage
Vine & Craven
Highclere Ride
-
- 10th Hall Place**
Dressage & Dressage to Music
Windsor Racecourse
Spring Afternoon Racing -
Season Opener
-
- 11th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Classical Dressage Clinic with Diane Followell
-
- 12th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Jumping Clinics with Warren Lamperd
-
- 13th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Evening Show Jumping
Competition (Indoors)



- 14th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Gymkhana Games
Hall Place
Easter Show Jumping
Newbury Racecourse
The Many Clouds Lambourn
Open Day
-
- 15th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Team Quest & My Quest
-
- 16th Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Mini Fun Show Jumping
-
- 17th Hall Place**
Spring Show & Fun Dog Show –
Ridden & In Hand Showing
Vine & Craven
Point to Point
-
- 18th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Training with Robert Pickles BHSF

- 21st Hall Place**
Mini Show Jumping
Newbury Racecourse
Dubai Duty Free Spring Trials &
Beer Festival
-
- 22nd Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Indoor Show Jumping
Competition
Newbury Racecourse
Dubai Duty Free Spring Trials &
Beer Festival



- 24th Windsor Racecourse**
Monday Night Racing -
Feat The Chip Shop Boys
-
- 27th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Dressage Test Riding Clinic with Liz Properjohn
-
- 29th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Eventers Challenge



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MAY

- 1st Hall Place**
May Day Show & Fun Dog Show
– Show Jumping
- Windsor Racecourse**
Family Fun Day - Plus see
Paw Patrol's Chase & Marshall



- 3rd Ascot Racecourse**
Discover Ascot Raceday
- Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running
- 6th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running
- 7th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Riding & Road Safety Test
- Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Trailblazers Show Jumping



- 8th Windsor Racecourse**
Monday Night Racing
- 9th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Classical Dressage Clinic with
Diane Followell
- 12th Ascot Racecourse**
May Racing Weekend
- 13th Ascot Racecourse**
May Racing Weekend
- Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Outdoor Show Jumping
Competition
- 14th Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Dressage
- 15th Hall Place**
Dressage
- Windsor Racecourse**
Monday Night Racing -
Featuring Royal Windsor Stakes

- 19th Newbury Racecourse**
Starlight Charity Raceday
- 20th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Combined Training
- Newbury Racecourse**
Al Shaqab Locking Day
- 21st Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Jumping Clinics with
Warren Lamperd
- Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Mini Fun Show Jumping
- Vine & Craven**
Kingsclere Cross Country Ride
- 22nd Windsor Racecourse**
Monday Night Racing -
Featuring Leisure Stakes
- 29th Hall Place**
Show Jumping
- Windsor Racecourse**
Family Fun Day
- 31st Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Jumping Clinics with
Warren Lamperd

JUNE

- 1st Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Evening Show Jumping
Competition
- 2nd Hall Place**
Mini Show Jumping



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or facebook page Berks and Bucks Draghounds

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schedule: www.bb-draghounds.co.uk

May 27th WINDSOR GREAT PARK FUN RIDE

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Smith's Lawn, Blacknest Gate, Windsor Great Park, Smith Lawn,
Blacknest Gate, SL5 0PT
schedule: www.bb-draghounds.co.uk

Tickets from - <https://www.horse-events.co.uk/events/fun-rides>





4th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Jumping Clinics with
Warren Lamperd

Enborne Equestrian Centre
Trailblazers Show Jumping

5th Windsor Racecourse
Monday Night Racing -
Caribbean Night

7th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running

10th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running

11th Hall Place
Mini Cross Country



12th Windsor Racecourse
Monday Night Racing -
Irish Night

13th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Classical Dressage Clinic with
Diane Followell

15th Newbury Racecourse
June Afternoon Racing

17th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Team Quest & My Quest

18th Enborne Equestrian Centre
Mini Fun Show Jumping

19th Hall Place
Dressage

Windsor Racecourse
Monday Night Racing -
Real Ale Racenight

21st Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Jumping Clinics with
Warren Lamperd

24th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Outdoor Show Jumping
Competition

25th Hall Place
Cross Country

26th Windsor Racecourse
Monday Night Racing

29th Newbury Racecourse
Pump Technology Irish Night



1st Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Combined Training

Windsor Racecourse
Gentleman's Day -
Vernon Kay DJ Set

2nd Enborne Equestrian Centre
Trailblazers Show Jumping

Windsor Racecourse
Best of British Festival -
Celebrating 300 Years of
Freemasonry

3rd Hall Place
Dressage

Windsor Racecourse
Best of British Festival -
Ronnie Scott's Jazz Night

5th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running

6th Newbury Racecourse
Motown & Soul Night

8th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running



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9th Hall Place
Mini Eventers Challenge



10th Windsor Racecourse
Monday Night Racing

11th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Classical Dressage Clinic with Diane Followell

13th Newbury Racecourse
Newbury Night

14th Ascot Racecourse
Summer Mile Racing Weekend

15th Ascot Racecourse
Summer Mile Racing Weekend

Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Eventers Challenge

16th Enborne Equestrian Centre
Mini Fun Show Jumping

17th Windsor Racecourse
Monday Night Racing - Cuban Racenight

21st Newbury Racecourse
July Afternoon Racing

22nd Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Outdoor Show Jumping Competition

Newbury Racecourse
Weatherbys Super Sprint Day with Jess Glynne

23rd Hall Place
Eventers Challenge

24th Windsor Racecourse
Monday Night Racing

27th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Evening Show Jumping Competition

Newbury Racecourse
#ThrowbackThursday Disco

28th Ascot Racecourse
King George VI Weekend

Hall Place
Show Jumping & Mini Show Jumping

29th Ascot Racecourse
King George VI Weekend

Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Gymkhana Games

30th Newbury Racecourse
Dubai International Arabian Races

31st Hall Place
Dressage & Dressage to Music

Windsor Racecourse
Ladies Evening

AUGUST

2nd Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running

5th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running

6th Hall Place
Cross Country

Enborne Equestrian Centre
Trailblazers Show Jumping



7th Windsor Racecourse
Monday Night Racing - Sausage Festival

8th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Classical Dressage Clinic with Diane Followell

CROSS COUNTRY RIDES

Sunday 9th April 2017: **Highclere Estate**

Sunday 21st May 2017: **Cannon Heath, Kingsclere**

Sunday 13th August 2017: **Highclere Estate**

Sunday 10th September 2017: **Lambourn Ride**

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Monday 17th April 2017: **Hackwood Park**

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9th Hall Place
Non residential Pony Camp

10th Hall Place
Non residential Pony Camp

11th Hall Place
Non residential Pony Camp

12th Ascot Racecourse
Dubai Duty Free Shergar Cup & Concert

13th Vine & Craven
Highclere Ride

Windsor Racecourse
Family Fun Day

14th Windsor Racecourse
Monday Night Racing

16th Hall Place
Residential Pony Camp

17th Hall Place
Residential Pony Camp

18th Hall Place
Residential Pony Camp

Hall Place
In House Show

Newbury Racecourse
August Afternoon Racing

19th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Outdoor Show Jumping Competition

Newbury Racecourse
August Afternoon Racing



20th Enborne Equestrian Centre
Mini Fun Show Jumping

21st Windsor Racecourse
Sky Bet - Summer Sprint Series Finale

26th Windsor Racecourse
Season Finale with Live Music

28th Hall Place
Annual Show & Fun Dog Show

31st Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Evening Show Jumping Competition



SEPTEMBER

2nd Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Combined Training

3rd Enborne Equestrian Centre
Trailblazers Show Jumping

4th Hall Place
Dressage

Windsor Racecourse
Monday Afternoon Racing

6th Checkendon Equestrian Centre
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running

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Equestrian diary 2017

Your local guide to equestrian events



- 8th Ascot Racecourse**
Festival of Food & Wine
Racing Weekend

- 9th Ascot Racecourse**
Festival of Food & Wine
Racing Weekend

- Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running

- 10th Vine & Craven**
Lambourn Fun Ride

- Hall Place**
Mini Cross Country

- 12th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Classical Dressage Clinic with
Diane Followell

- 13th Blenheim Palace**
International Horse Trials

- 14th Blenheim Palace**
International Horse Trials

- 15th Blenheim Palace**
International Horse Trials

- 16th Blenheim Palace**
International Horse Trials

- Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Eventers Challenge

- 17th Blenheim Palace**
International Horse Trials

- Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Mini Fun Show Jumping



- 22nd Newbury Racecourse**
Dubai Duty Free
International Weekend

- 23rd Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Outdoor Show Jumping
Competition

- Newbury Racecourse**
Dubai Duty Free
International Weekend

- 6th Ascot Racecourse**
Autumn Racing Weekend
& Ascot Beer Festival

- 7th Ascot Racecourse**
Autumn Racing Weekend
& Ascot Beer Festival

- Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running

- 8th Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Dressage

- 9th Windsor Racecourse**
Autumn Afternoon Racing

- 10th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Classical Dressage Clinic with
Diane Followell

- 15th Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Mini Fun Show Jumping

- Hall Place**
Mini Show Jumping

OCTOBER

- 1st Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Trailblazers Show Jumping

- 2nd Hall Place**
Dressage

- 4th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Outdoor Dressage Competition
Affiliated dressage also running



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Equestrian diary 2017

Your local guide to equestrian events



- 16th Windsor Racecourse**
Autumn Afternoon Racing
- 21st Ascot Racecourse**
QIPCO British Champions Day
- Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Outdoor Show Jumping
Competition
- 23rd Hall Place**
Show Jumping
- Windsor Racecourse**
Autumn Afternoon Racing
- 26th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Evening Show Jumping
Competition (Indoors)
- 27th Hall Place**
Autumn Show & Fun Dog Show
Ridden & In Hand Showing
- Newbury Racecourse**
October Afternoon Racing
- 28th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Gymkhana Games
- Newbury Racecourse**
Worthington's Armed Forces Day

NOVEMBER

- 4th Ascot Racecourse**
Fireworks Spectacular
Family Raceday
- 5th Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Trailblazers Show Jumping

- 9th Newbury Racecourse**
November Afternoon Racing
- 12th Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Dressage
- 13th Hall Place**
Dressage
- 14th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Classical Dressage Clinic with
Diane Followell
- 19th Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Mini Fun Show Jumping
- 24th Ascot Racecourse**
The Prince's Countryside Fund
Racing Weekend & Christmas
Shopping Fair
- 25th Ascot Racecourse**
The Prince's Countryside Fund
Racing Weekend & Christmas
Shopping Fair

DECEMBER

- 1st Newbury Racecourse**
December Afternoon Racing
- 2nd Newbury Racecourse**
Gold Cup Day
- 3rd Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Trailblazers Show Jumping
- 4th Hall Place**
Dressage
- 10th Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Dressage

- 12th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Classical Dressage Clinic with
Diane Followell
- 16th Checkendon Equestrian Centre**
Gymkhana Games
- 17th Enborne Equestrian Centre**
Mini Fun Show Jumping
- Hall Place**
Christmas Show - Show Jumping
& Pony Games
- 20th Newbury Racecourse**
December Afternoon Racing
- 22nd Ascot Racecourse**
Christmas Racing Weekend
- 23rd Ascot Racecourse**
Christmas Racing Weekend
- 30th Newbury Racecourse**
Betfred Challow Hurdle Day



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RECIPE

Roast chicken with mascarpone and herb stuffing and fennel gratin

The mascarpone cheese keeps the chicken breast nice and succulent during the roasting time. If you stuff the chickens carefully they look beautiful when they come out of the oven.

Serves 6

2 x 1.5kg chickens (you can get away with one chicken if you have small mouths to feed – in which case halve the stuffing recipe)

olive oil
sea salt
freshly ground black pepper

Mascarpone and herb stuffing
1/2 red onion, finely chopped
2 tbsp mascarpone cheese
1 tbsp finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
1tbsp finely chopped basil
1 drtsp finely chopped tarragon
sea salt
freshly ground black pepper

Fennel gratin
1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, finely sliced
2 bulbs of fennel, trimmed and sliced thinly across
150ml double cream
2 tbsp finely grated Parmesan cheese
sea salt
freshly ground black pepper

■ Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas 5. Put all the ingredients for the stuffing in a mixing bowl and mix until well combined.

■ Put the chickens on the work surface. Gently lift the skin on the breast of 1 of the chickens and slide some stuffing underneath the skin with your fingers. Spread it over the breast as best you can, using about half of the stuffing mixture. Repeat with the other chicken.

■ Place both birds in a roasting tin. Drizzle them with olive oil and season well with salt and pepper, then roast in the oven for 1 1/2 hours. Set aside to rest for 15 minutes before carving and serving with the fennel gratin.

To prepare the fennel gratin

■ Heat the olive oil in a saute pan. Add the onion and fennel and cook over a low heat for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper.

■ Place the onion and fennel in a gratin dish, then pour on the cream and sprinkle the cheese on top.

Place under a hot grill for five minutes or so until the top of the gratin is tinged with brown.



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Put a Spring in your step

You might just be surprised at the range of music on offer during the Newbury Spring Festival fortnight, between May 6 and 20. TRISH LEE takes a look at this year's more unusual events ►



KAKATSITSI
Traditional African drumming group

39th international

newburyspringfestival

So Newbury Spring Festival's all about classical music. Too high-brow. Not my thing. *Right?*

Wrong...

Over the years I've seen all sorts turn up to concerts at St Nics Church, from pearls and cravats to 'sloppy Joes' and piercings (and that includes the musicians). There's something special about live music of any genre, and the rumbling of organ pipes, the boom of timpani that shake the pews and vibrate through your torso, or a plaintive string solo that brings tears to the eyes, have made many a convert. There's nothing quite like a full-on orchestra, especially one of international renown. Once experienced, never forgotten.

Besides, the festival fortnight offers a feast of alternative events featuring jazz, folk, World Music, cabaret and musicals, as well as concerts for young children.

From May 6 to 20, the festival returns for its 39th year and, as always, world-class artists comes to our town to perform at venues in and around the area. There are 45 concerts to choose from, all for a fraction of London prices.

In the heart of town, the Corn Exchange hosts a daily programme of diverse events featuring established groups such as Marlborough Jazz Dixieland favourites, the Dutch Swing College Band, one of the oldest and best-known brass ensembles in the world, the Black Dyke Band, and famous Welsh male voice choir, the Morryston Orpheus – and now here's a point in question, I thought I wasn't a fan of the genre until I was engaged to look after this big, bold bunch of Welshmen before a London gig. That night their sensitive and haunting rendition of *Cwm Rhondda* reduced me to tears. They stir your soul.

Alongside these acts are performers like Kathryn Tickell – long-revered in folk circles as the foremost player of the Northumbrian smallpipes and an ace fiddler – coming with her band, and one of Africa's leading traditional drumming groups, Kakatsitsi from Ghana, who have taken Glastonbury by storm. And destined to get you on your feet is the Bollywood

Brass Band with their compulsive dance rhythms – funky drummers and hot horns play massive hits from Indian films, driven by the punchy beat of the dhol drum.

Britain's leading international concert pianist Stephen Hough – hailed by *The Economist* as one of 20 living polymaths, a true renaissance man; writer, composer and painter – has won global acclaim for his outstanding interpretations of the piano repertoire. He has played the top venues, from the Festival Hall to Carnegie Hall, where he was the first musician to give a solo recital in 20 years, and now comes to our town for a Sunday afternoon performance at the Corn Exchange.

It's great for children to experience the thrill of live music, and the festival is a lovely place to start. Families with children of all ages, including toddlers and babes-in-arms can go to Sound Beginnings, where they will be introduced to the wonderful world of Tchaikovsky's ballet music in an informal atmosphere, as well as enjoying a wholesome lunch at Sheepdrove Eco Centre, Lambourn. Or there's a family puppet show in the Corn Exchange and Travelling by Tuba, a duo who show that serious music-making really can come with loads of fun and laughter. 

But this is all for starters

Visit www.newburyspringfestival.org.uk and discover a whole world of music right here on your doorstep from May 6 to 20. You might even give classical music a go. Tickets are selling fast, book online or in person at the Corn Exchange.

To win a pair of tickets to Voces8 at East Woodhay Church, with a pre-show dinner at The Crown and Garter Inkpen see p49



Stephen Hough

ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

St Nicolas' Church is the festival's 'concert hall', hosting the major orchestral concerts. On May 6, the opening night, you can hear the finest of English choral masterpieces, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, performed by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra conducted by David Parry, particularly known for his opera work, with a truly stellar cast, including one of the finest mezzo sopranos in the world, Alice Coote, and our own Festival Chorus of superb local choralsists.

On the middle Saturday, violinist Tasmin Little – regarded as one of the world's leading violinists and international soloists, returns to the festival to play the well-known Bruch *Violin Concerto* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra followed by Sibelius *Symphony No 5*, and the closing night sees the marvellous Moscow State Symphony Orchestra with a concert of popular Russian Music, including the much-loved Tchaikovsky *Piano Concerto No 1*.

ALISON BALSOM



Superstar trumpeter Alison Balsom is back on Tuesday, May 16. Not only is she the world's finest trumpeter and a serious musician, but her supermodel good looks have meant she is the poster girl of British classical music. Alison will be joined by one of the UK's leading sopranos, Lucy Crowe, for a very special recital at St Lawrence Church, Hungerford.

THE SIXTEEN



Matching venue and musician is important to the festival, none more so than with choral group The Sixteen who will perform in the beautiful setting of Douai Abbey on May 12. Arguably the UK's most popular and important choral company, they have gained a reputation for their excellent and imaginative programmes. The theme this year is Choral Pilgrimage and they will perform works by Palestrina and Poulenc, their singing so pure it will raise the hairs on the back of your neck.

DUTCH SWING COLLEGE BAND

Not many groups can claim to have



recorded more than 100 albums, but the Dutch Swing College Band have done exactly that. Celebrating their 75th anniversary this year, the original group started out in the cellars of The Hague during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands in 1945. Now they are one of the world's greatest trad jazz bands, appearing at festivals, theatres and royal occasions all over the world. They will perform at the Corn Exchange on May 6.

KAKATSITSI

Following their sold-out show at the 2013 festival, Kakatsitsi, one of the world's leading traditional African drumming groups, are returning to the Corn Exchange on Thursday, May 11. With their infectious rhythms and traditional dances, Ghana's finest traditional drummers, dancers and singers from the Ga tribe perform a fascinating and compulsive cross-section of West African music tradition.



BOLLYWOOD BRASS BAND



Up on your feet! The London-based Bollywood Brass Band is one of the most exhilarating acts around. With pounding dhol drums, trumpets and trombones, this

is the Indian-style big band sound with six hot horns and four funky drummers, playing great dance rhythms. Full of colour, May 19 promises an evening you really won't forget.



BETTY BLUE EYES

A first for the festival and a big hit in the West End, on May 12 comes *Betty Blue Eyes*, the award-

winning full-length musical based on Alan Bennett's comic film *A Private Function*. Set in 1947 among the forthcoming celebrations for the royal wedding, there's laughs aplenty as a small Yorkshire town rears a pig called Betty for a banquet for dignitaries, while the locals make do with Spam. Full of typically English eccentric characters, combined with an infectious toe-tapping retro-contemporary score by Watermill favourites George Stiles and Anthony Drewe, this is great entertainment for all ages.

TRAVELLING BY TUBA

The sound of the brass instrument can always make people laugh and never more so than when played by Travelling by Tuba. This classical music duo, with their dunges, kudus and digeridoos, make youngsters dissolve into laughter with their humorous and fun approach to classical music. Definitely a family-friendly show that leaves you smiling, Travelling by Tuba will perform at the Corn Exchange on May 20.





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AN EVENING OF FINE DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT

Win two tickets to see choral group Voces8 perform at St Martin's Church, East Woodhay and a pre-concert dinner for two at the Crown and Garter, Inkpen on May 10

Voces8 were the first group in the history of the Newbury Spring Festival to be asked back two years in a row.

And now, one of the world's most versatile and best-loved singing ensembles are back, by popular demand, for a third time appearing at St Martin's Church, East Woodhay on May 10 as part of this year's Newbury Spring Festival.

They will be joined, for this performance, on the piano by one of England's leading composers, Jonathan Dove, whose music has filled opera houses on five continents.

Voces8 consists of eight beautifully-integrated solo voices who, as a group, perform at major venues worldwide to huge critical acclaim and have become a favourite with audiences at Newbury Spring Festival.

Their programme will start off on a serious note with works by Palestrina, Britten, Victoria and Fauré, but more contemporary, humorous numbers will start to appear with composers such as Berlin, Gershwin, Jonathan Dove and Van Morrison.

They are regular performers on international television and radio including the BBC and Classic FM. Furthermore their two recordings *Lux* and *Eventide* went straight to the top of the classical charts on their release.

The Newbury Spring Festival returns for its 39th year from May 6 to 20 with world-class concerts featuring artists from classical music, folk, jazz and cabaret.

The opening night is a performance of Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* performed by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra with conductor David Parry.

The Festival also looks forward to welcoming trumpeter Alison Balsom, Harry Christophers

and the Sixteen, Stephen Hough, the Dutch Swing College Band and the Black Dyke Band.

There are shows for all the family with Sound Beginnings for young children, a puppet show entitled *Dr Dee's and the Philosopher's Stone* and *Travelling by Tuba*.



The Crown and Garter is once again pleased to be supporting the Newbury Spring Festival.

On May 10th, Voces8, the Capella octet, is performing at St. Martin's Church, East Woodhay, and the Crown and Garter is offering a prize of a pre concert meal for two.

The Crown and Garter, part of the Honesty group of businesses, is situated in the heart of the Berkshire countryside in Inkpen near Hungerford and is the perfect location for a pre-concert meal, being only a short journey from East Woodhay.

The Crown and Garter, in its current guise, opened its doors in September 2014, and has acquired a reputation for good food, cooked simply, using fresh, seasonal and, wherever possible, local ingredients.

In 2015, it won best newcomer for the South East and London area in the Great British Pub Awards and was runner up in the best gourmet bolt hole category in the Food and Travel Magazine awards.

There are 10 beautiful bedrooms all individually designed and there is a lovely coffee shop on site where you can enjoy handmade cakes, pastries and biscuits, made locally in Honesty Bakery.

Honesty Group has two other coffee shops in Lambourn and Kingsclere and is about to open a tea room at Houghton Lodge in Stockbridge in April. It also has a cookery school located near Newbury.

Honesty and the Crown and Garter believe in engaging with the local community, so whether it is through employing local people, sourcing meat from local, small farmers, using only fish harvested from uk coastal waters, buying beers and ales from local breweries or supporting local charities, community is close to its heart.

Please support the rich opportunities that your community offers. Support the Newbury Spring Festival.

With more than 45 concerts and performances in a dozen venues, this fortnight in May brings something for everyone.

For more information visit www.newburyspringfestival.org.uk

Tickets: 0845 5218 218

For your chance to win a pair of tickets to Voces8 at East Woodhay Church, with a pre-show dinner at The Crown and Garter Inkpen, answer the following question:

Which orchestra will playing the concert on the opening night of the festival?

Send your answer on the form below to Newbury Spring Festival competition, OUT&ABOUT, Newspaper House, Faraday Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2DW. The closing date for entries is Tuesday April 11.

39th international **newburyspringfestival**



Newbury Spring Festival competition

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Making a House a Home

When architect Kate Cooper was asked to transform a small former lodge into a cosy, but up-to-date family home, she took up the challenge with relish as MARGARET MCDONNELL discovered

Derelict late-Victorian houses with broken fireplaces, sparking sockets and a utility door where the front entrance should be pose no problem for Kate Cooper from Absolute Architecture, Newbury.

The architect recently helped a West Berkshire family renovate a two-bedroom former lodge house, built in 1910.

Kate worked with the family on a year-long journey to sympathetically and comprehensively renovate the property. From humble beginnings with a tired façade and unconventional layout, it is now a 21st-century home.

Kate's first job was to assist with a planning application that would allow the owners to extend. She then started work on a seamless extension to include a larger kitchen with utility room and dining area, and a third bedroom with en-suite.

"The property was quite run-down and needed a complete refurbishment," said Kate.

"It was cramped with lots of small rooms so we opened it out, added an extension and worked on extensive landscaping, a large patio and a pond to enable the family to enjoy the outdoor space as much as possible.

"However, it had real character, which we've worked hard to retain and enhance, and there are some beautiful features that have been unveiled, such as exposed rafters in the bedrooms, which had to be removed and replaced so we could paint them and install the huge lantern lights".

Removing the ceilings in the master bedroom created an amazing transformation, leaving behind a dramatic vaulted space. Kate also reconfigured the area to include the en-suite bathroom.

Kate introduced local designers and craftsmen to the team including Ben Heath Kitchens, LT interiors and Isobel Pigott landscape design, so that all aspects of the project were fully designed and bespoke.

The exteriors have been carefully renovated and softened with a more subtle Farrow and Ball colour-scheme of grey and white.

Kate enjoyed designing all of the interior detail to meet specific requirements for built-in storage, an Aga, and a raised wood burner. Kate herself is delighted with the results and even personally shopped for the family kettle, tea towels and crockery to complete the kitchen.

She said: "The extension ties in with the original character of the cottage and the kitchen is a real triumph – it's just unrecognisable from what was there before.

"We chose simple Shaker-style units in soft white and the highlights of the room include a striking black and white tiled floor and a bespoke pendant light which has been powder-coated the same colour as the Aga.

"The colour and interest comes from the bright Manuel Canovas fabric picked out for the dining room chairs and everything else is simple and elegant. The owners didn't want the room to feel too new and slick, so we added ceiling beams to give it character and texture."

French windows have been put in, leading onto the outdoor terrace and the new bay window provides light and extra seating plus views of a newly-planted wildflower meadow and natural ponds.

The owner, Leslie, added: "We needed someone with great references and contacts to take on such a huge project and Kate gave us the confidence and vision to achieve our dream home. She did a lovely job. You can hardly believe the transformation.

"Every small detail has been thoroughly thought through and it's a truly relaxing hideaway for our family. I feel like I am enveloped by a warm hug when I am here. When I'm away for a while, I come here to escape everything and breathe a sigh of happiness when I walk through the door."

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Garden



Kitchen



Lounge



Bedrooms





Quality time

If you have an old grandfather clock sitting in your house, or an ornate mantelpiece one, they could well be collector's items – whether in working condition or not. THOMAS PLANT says in this instance time really is money

Horology is the art and/or science of measuring time and horologists is the name given to clock collectors.

One of the best things about collecting clocks is being able to study them to find out about the social culture, science and technology behind them.

Looking at a clock, you can tell a lot about when it was made.

Clockmakers often wove their culture into their creations, so looking at the design and construction can help you pinpoint where and when the clock was made.

Clocks started to be used in the 1600s with verge and foliot escapements, later to be replaced by pendulums, and back then they were made of brass with iron components and were wall-hung and struck every hour on the hour – but they were not great time keepers.

Although this design continued for the next 150 years, there are relatively few of them in the market and we rarely see them at auction.

We now call these lantern clocks – thought to come from the word 'latten' meaning brass or possibly because these clocks resembled lanterns.

Longcase clocks, or grandfather clocks as they are more commonly known, were produced in England from the mid-1600s for 200 years, however production slowed after about 1860 with modern-styled examples being made up to the 1950s with reproduction examples still being produced today.

Good quality clocks from well-known makers or clocks with complex or automaton movements are highly sought after and command good prices. The automatons can be moon phase, "rocking ship" or merely animals/people being part of the painted dial with moving eyes.

In the 1650s the English cleric, the Reverend Edward Barlow, invented the Rack and Snail striking mechanism, which in turn allowed the repeating clock to develop at the press of a button, or the pull of a chord. These clocks chimed the hours (and in more complex designs the minutes too). The striking mechanism he used later became standard in clock and watch repeaters. Occasionally, these come to auction, usually on better-quality clocks.

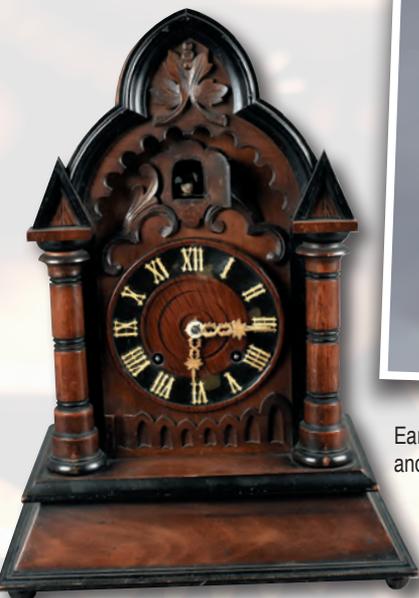
Scientific progress in clockmaking is evident in the early 1800s when cheaper, mass-produced clocks came to the market making them accessible to everyone.

American Inventor and clockmaker Eli Terry created one of the first mass-produced clocks cased in a wooden box with a glass door, often with a famous place or person reverse-painted on the glass. This was later replaced by a transfer.

These clocks are known as ogee because of the profile of the wood used in the frame work or occasionally as "Kipper boxes", this being a name started by importers as the clocks stacked in the hold of the ships transporting them looked like so many stacked boxes of fish.

American steeple clocks are also quite common, however "double decker" examples with "waggon spring" movements, wooden gears or lesser known manufacturers are very much in demand by collectors and as such can bring considerably higher prices than their more common counterparts.

At SAS, our monthly auctions often include clocks and they sell at prices that suit all budgets. **OA**



Earlier this year, SAS sold a Sevres Style Rococo clock for £330 (above) and a Black Forest Cuckoo Clock for £236 (left)



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*.

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An Electric Master wall clock in a mahogany case went for £130 (above), an Edwardian Slate Mantle clock with decorative Corinthian side columns sold for £22 (above right), while a walnut 1950s Eight Day Mantle clock (right) was snapped up for £17.70



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Call the Midwife, Canterbury & Kent

21/05/17

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Includes Historic Dockyard with 'Midwife' guide and Kent & East Sussex Railway. Kent has a rich sense of history and tradition, and is dotted with picturesque villages, imposing castles and stately homes. The Historic Dockyard has recently been used for filming 'Call The Midwife' as well as 'Mr Selfridge'.



Royal Scotland

22/05/17

6 Days: £479

Includes Scone Palace, Glamis Castle, RRS Discovery, Balmoral and Linlithgow Palace. Proud Scotland was ruled by its own Kings & Queens until 1707 and has provided Scottish monarchs for the British Throne. This fascinating heritage is combined with an enjoyable coach tour which also witnesses some of the best scenery in central Scotland.



Ireland's Northern Highlights

28/05/17

7 Days: £599

Includes 'One of the most beautiful train rides', Giants Causeway, Walking Tour of Serry, Ulster American Folk Park & Belfast

A fine tour exploring the north of Ireland combining the beautiful scenery of the Inishowen Peninsula, the Walled City of Derry and a classic coastal rail journey to the Giants Causeway. Plus we get the best out of Belfast with a 2 hour city tour and entry to the Titanic Museum.



Manchester Ship Canal & Lancashire Landscapes

28/05/17

5 Days: £419

Includes 6 hour Canal Cruise, Specialist Tour Guide, a day by the sea & much more!

The highlight of this trip is clearly the 6 hour, 35 mile cruise from Salford Quays to Liverpool which is informative and awe inspiring. We also spend a day in the Ribble Valley.



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Weymouth, Delightful Dorset & The New Forest

05/06/17

5 Days: £369

Weymouth is one of Britain's most attractive resorts with its level promenade from which there are grand views of the coastline. It is a resort full of interest, especially around the busy harbour. We will be staying at the delightful Crown Hotel which lies in the warm and friendly atmosphere which always prevails.



Change of scene

Easter is the perfect time to book a unique trip. Hungerford travel agent Bailey Robinson says Portugal has a lot more to offer than just its trademark port wine

An ancient kingdom defended by hilltop castles and fortified towns, Portugal is not just a place for history buffs; its cities are home to some of Europe's most adventurous architecture, vibrant streetlife, fabulous food and wine and friendly locals, and its beaches are without comparison.

This itinerary showcases the highlights, from Lisbon through the northwest to Porto and the Douro Valley.

Lisbon is one of the oldest cities in the world and the political, cultural and economic centre of Portugal.

Built over seven small hills that rise from the banks of the river Tagus, this is a city overflowing with history and folklore.

Explore cobbled streets and squares, museums, galleries and gothic cathedrals as trams trundle up and down the steep, leafy streets.

World-class cuisine and remarkable architecture reflects Lisbon's history and each district is bursting with individual character; discover Alfama's medieval charm, elegant Baixa, the heart of the city and chic Chiado, the shopping, theatre and cultural centre.

At night, the Bairro Alto district comes alive with bars and restaurants and the sound of Portugal's traditional music.

Location-wise you can't beat the Bairro Alto Hotel. Overlooking the city's main square in a beautifully restored 19th-century building, this stylish, bold yellow hotel cleverly combines classic features with contemporary design.

Head to the hotel's romantic rooftop bar for a cocktail as the sun sets, and consider visiting the beaches of the nearby town of Cascais or hiking in the gorgeous Sintra National Park.

Known for its stately bridges and port wine

production, **Porto** is located at the mouth of the River Douro, about three hours drive from Lisbon.

Stroll through the fascinating, medieval streets of Ribeira and explore the riverfront, lined with colourful houses and picturesque traditional boats floating at the quayside.

Sit back in one of the multitude of bars and cafés and watch the world go by over superb seafood and fine local wines.

No visit to Portugal would be complete without a trip to one of the port cellars.

Across the river from Porto, Vila Nova de Gaia is the place to head with a hearty appetite for port.

The Yeatman Hotel revolves around wine as clearly indicated by the decanter-shaped pool, the 25,000-bottle cellar and the grape-pip treatments on offer at the spa.



Complete with a Michelin-star restaurant, a stay at this luxury hotel in the heart of Vila Nova de Gaia is ideal for those wishing to explore the simple pleasures.

With three World Heritage Sites recognised by UNESCO, there is no shortage of reasons to visit the **Douro Valley**, which stretches from Porto to the north of Portugal. This is a land of

stay at Six Senses Douro Valley. After a day wine tasting, retreat to this luxury hotel, a converted 19th-century manor house, complete with a fantastic spa.

The property is located in the oldest demarcated wine region in the world, boasts an exceptional wine list, and the fantastic concierge can arrange plenty to keep you busy,



“ Explore cobbled streets and squares, museums, galleries and gothic cathedrals as trams trundle up and down the steep, leafy streets ”

traditions where 2,000 years of wine production have shaped the landscape. Spend a day on a vineyard tour, enjoy a tasting and watch the various stages of winemaking.

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Flower Power

ALEC WHITE extols the virtues of peonies and explains how easy they are to grow

Every English garden deserves at least one beautiful peony to grace its borders in our opinion. Some may hold back from choosing a peony because of the relatively short flowering season. Many believe that the peony is a difficult plant to grow, best left to experienced gardeners, but both concerns are invalid – it is an excellent low-maintenance plant, perfect for all levels of expertise.

The sheer size of the flower is incredible, with many of the intersectional peonies producing flowers the size of dinner plates and with colours ranging from white to yellow, pink to purple and everything in between. There are single, semi-double and double flowers, all of which are exceptionally beautiful and that is before you look at the many peonies that are fragrant. For example, peony lactiflora *Duchesse de Nemours* AGM is an exquisite double white flower with a cream centre and the most delightful perfume. A personal favourite is the delicate blush flowers of peony lactiflora *Catharina Fontijn*, which produce a delightful yet intense perfume. Despite a popularly-held view that peonies are delicate and difficult to grow, the truth is that they are very easy to grow and extremely hardy, making them perfect for all gardeners. They will live happily in a decent-sized container for some years, but ultimately they will be happier in the ground. There are of course, a few things to remember with peonies but get these right and you are looking at decades (in some cases peonies can live for 60 years) of hassle-free gardening and the finest display of colour and scent that simply gets better with the age of the plant.

Remember not to plant your peony too deeply

The tuberous roots must not be planted more than about 2.5cm below the surface. If they are planted any deeper they may give wonderful foliage (some of the intersectional peonies, such as *Bartzella* AGM or *Julia Rose* have finely cut leaves which turn crimson red in the spring and autumn and many of the herbaceous or garden peonies have strong red stems and light green soft foliage), but they simply will not flower.

If you have a peony in the garden and it isn't flowering, it is probably because it has been planted too deeply or it has been buried when you have diligently mulched your borders. Wait until autumn and then, taking care not to damage the buds on the roots, lift your peony and re-plant it at the right depth.



Plant your peony in a sunny position

Although many varieties will tolerate some shade (for example Peony lactiflora *White Wings*) if your peony is in heavy shade it will be reluctant to flower well.

Plant your peony in fertile, free-draining soil

Peonies are not generally too fussy about the soil and are quite happy in chalky or clay soils provided that it is free-draining – they don't like to sit in water in the winter.

Once planted, your peony will be quite content to be left alone. In fact if you have rich, fertile soil you probably don't need to feed your peony, but if your soil is not so good, a balanced, general fertiliser such as Growmore, applied in the spring, should do the trick.

It is also a good idea to cut back and remove the dead leaves in autumn to avoid peony wilt. Peonies aren't going to grow like trifids and take over your garden; most will get to about 80-90cm tall and about 60-80cm wide and of course they will die down in the winter before emerging in the spring (this does not apply to the tree peonies).

Peonies do not really suffer from pests and diseases, requiring little care or attention once established. In fact, deer and rabbits also leave them alone.

Peonies take time to mature and you must therefore be patient. While it may be tempting to purchase a smaller, cheaper plant and wait for it to grow, my advice is to buy a well established peony, one that is at least three to five years old or more, to be sure of success.

The show that peonies put on may be relatively short, but what a show it is. As if that isn't enough, peonies are excellent value for money because their low maintenance requirements, hardiness and decades-long lifespan means that the peony is well worth the initial outlay.

Peonies also make fabulous cut flowers. Varieties such as Peony lactiflora *Sarah Bernhardt* AGM or Peony lactiflora *Pink Hawaiian Coral* or Peony lactiflora *Festiva Maxima* AGM are excellent examples with long stems.

The only real drawback is the relatively short flowering period, but with careful planting you can get peonies flowering across a season. Plant peonies lactiflora *Festiva Maxima* AGM, *Bowl of Beauty* AGM and *Sarah Bernhardt*

AGM to ensure you have flowers from May to July. Peony lactiflora *Sarah Bernhardt* AGM is a late flowering variety and will provide stunning scented double pink flowers.

Then there are the intersectional (or Itoh) peonies. This is where it really gets interesting, because these plants are a tree peony and herbaceous peony hybrid; they die down in the winter and emerge again in the spring, but they have the large, delicately-fragrant flowers similar to a tree peony in the most incredible colours, often fading through several shades.

Intersectional peonies are still relatively difficult to come by, unusual and highly collectable. While herbaceous peonies often require a little staking or support, the intersectional peonies are shorter (about 75cm) and use a tree peony framework, meaning that they do not require support even though the flowers are enormous and, like a herbaceous peony, they are covered in blooms (sometimes 40-50 blooms per plant). And the best bit? The best bit is they flower for



longer than the herbaceous peonies, usually for four to five weeks. Unique and breath-taking, intersectional peonies are just as hardy as herbaceous peonies and as easy to grow – look at *Lollipop* or *Cora Louise* for dramatic and spectacular examples.

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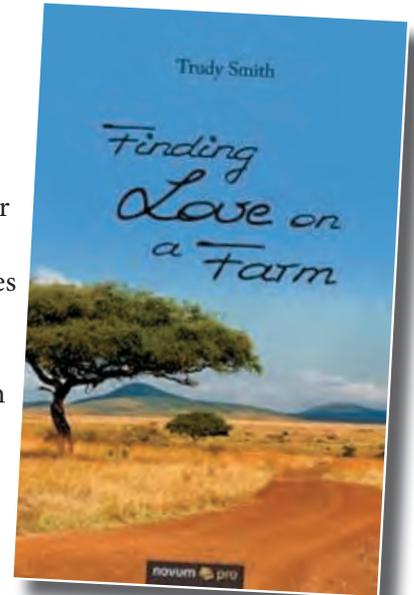
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Finding Love on a Farm

Trudy Smith



All's well that ends well. From the beginning we know that Trudy Smith has an amazing daughter and a passion for life. Remembering this makes it easier to read of the trials, injustices and abuses she went through in her life. And yet my past still weighed heavily and dragged me down... and kept me there, because it was never far away.

Smith allows the reader to meander with her through her life against a backdrop of the South African veld with colourful imagery and descriptive prowess. We all have so much to learn, not only from our own past, but from the lives of others. To take comfort and strength from the success and happiness of those who have struggled and won. Her debut novel is a reflective look back over her life in South Africa. It still resonates today on a personal and global level. There is something for everyone to take away from Smith's debut novel.



"I lived in Newbury for about ten years and thoroughly enjoyed walking in the countryside and along the river. I was so fascinated that it went through the town and couldn't resist feeding the swans and ducks. Retirement came around suddenly, and it was then that I decided to gather all my thoughts I'd stored for a lifetime and write my memoirs."

Biography:

Trudy Smith was born in Pretoria and lived the majority of her life in South Africa. In this, her first novel of a trilogy, Smith paints a portrait of life in South Africa in the 1970s. As readers we can picture the landscape and almost hear the wildlife as we are transported back to a different time and place, into Trudy's childhood and early life. Now living in London, Smith is retired from a career in the cosmetic industry, and has time to reflect on a life filled with uncertainty and self-doubt. There is something for everyone to take away from this thought-provoking and evocative debut novel.

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Trudy's book 'Finding Love on a Farm' is available from Amazon and www.novum-publishers.co.uk

Advertisement

Dog day afternoon

Alexandra Fuller's account of her unconventional upbringing in war-torn Africa, *Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight*, is a roller-coaster of a ride say
HELEN SHEEHAN and LISSA GIBBINS

As the daughter of white settlers in war-torn 1970s Rhodesia, Alexandra Fuller remembers a time when a schoolgirl was as likely to carry a shotgun as a satchel. This is her story – of a civil war, of a quixotic battle with nature and loss, and of a family's unbreakable bond with the continent that came to define, scar and heal them.

This extraordinary memoir, written by the daughter of white settlers in 1970s Rhodesia, is full of humour, compassion, true grit and tragedy.

The story Alexandra Fuller tells of her childhood is so exciting and exotic that you often believe this is a fictional account rather than a memoir.

Rhodesia then was war-torn and a dangerous place to live. Ian Smith was the controversial Prime Minister, in charge of the security forces during the majority of the Bush War.

Against this backdrop, the Fuller family are eking out a living on their cattle farm. Alexandra's parents are both passionate supporters of a white-ruled Rhodesia, in love with Africa itself, and they are eccentric, almost to the point of madness. They have passed their love of Africa down to their two daughters who delight in their surroundings: "As we bump onto the bridge that spans the Zambezi River, Dad and I hang out of our windows, scanning the water for hippo".

The title of the book is taken from a quote by A.P. Herbert, "Don't let's go the dogs tonight, for mother will be there".

Alexandra's mother rampages through this book, taking unimaginable risks with her children, drinking heavily, a fantastic horse rider toting a gun.

The author describes a typical evening with her mother and an unsuspecting guest from the UK: "Guests trapped by Mum have chapters of their own. Chapter One – Delight, Chapter Two – Mild Intoxication Coupled with Growing Disbelief, Chapter Three – Extreme Intoxication Coupled with Growing Panic, Chapter Four – Lack of Consciousness".

Her mother, although often appallingly neglectful of her daughters, even so garners your respect and sympathy. She has lost two children in early infancy, a son Adrian and a daughter Olivia, both of whom she mourns deeply.

After Olivia's untimely death Alexandra says "...Mum and Dad's joyful careless embrace of life is sucked away". However, this same woman kills a spitting cobra that rears up in her

kitchen, and makes a truly courageous ride to herd cattle back to the farm through the war-riven countryside; she is a force to be reckoned with, even in the midst of her grief.

Alexandra is therefore amazed when she visits Pru Hilderbrand, a family friend, commenting, "Pru... is like a mum out of a book... Her three little boys do not have itchy bums and worms and bites up their arms from fleas".

Animals, especially dogs, loom large in this book.

The Fullers have a collection of unruly dogs accompanying them wherever they go. As Fuller explains: "The life expectancy of a dog on our farm is not great. The dogs are killed by baboons, wild pigs, snakes, wire snares and each other".

Each dog, however, is loved by the family and their antics and adventures are a delightful addition to this memoir.

There are many wonderful descriptions of a fabulous array of African wildlife, including a spotted eagle owl which the Fullers have rescued and named Jeeves.

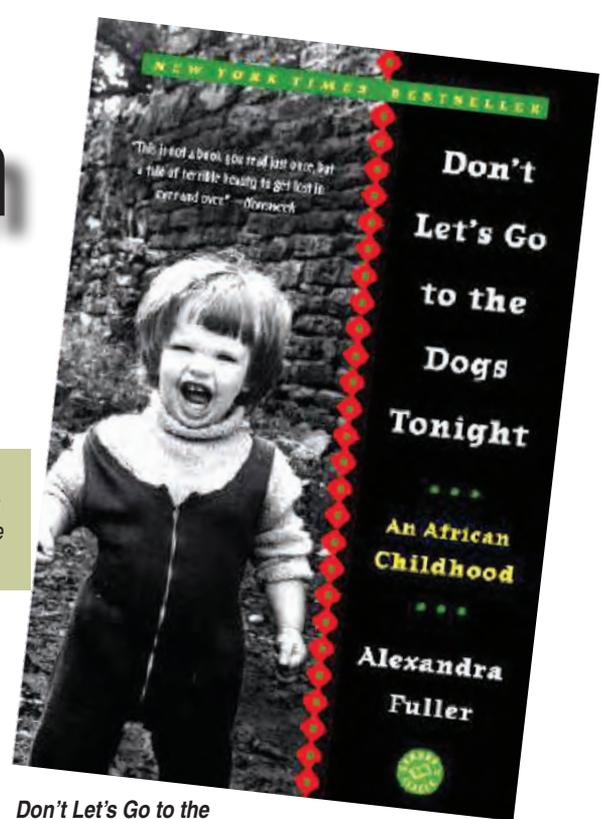
The memoir is supported by photos from the family album, in every chapter. These photos are a visual treat, depicting Africa in all its controversial and complicated glory.

There is a picture of Alexandra's father in combat gear with the police reservists on call up duty, and several pictures of the attractive Fuller family on various excursions.

Fuller has also included pictures of both Adrian and Olivia, and these snaps of happy, round-faced, innocent babies will pull at your heart strings.

The Fullers run various farms throughout Alexandra's childhood, predominantly cattle, but at one point a tobacco farm in Malawi, and finally Serioes Farm in Zambia where the author declares: "It seems a logical place for this family to stop. And mend".

Farming life is exacting and precarious and the Fullers permanently teeter on the edge of bankruptcy. They are not afraid of hard work and descriptions of their toils and privations are riveting.



Don't Let's Go to the Dogs Tonight: An African Childhood
By Alexandra Fuller

"The pump spits mud into the water tank from the sinking, stinking dam, and the water chugs from the tap thick and red and muddy... A small frog is spat into the hot bath one night."

This book is a long love letter to Alexandra's African childhood.

One time, while camping in the Bush, she comes near death from an infection, but as soon as she recovers she vows never to leave Africa.

As an adult she does eventually settle in America, but on a return visit writes: "I want to kiss the gun-swinging officials. I want to open my arms to the sweet familiarity of home. The incongruous, lawless, joyful, violent, up-side down, illogical certainty of Africa comes at me like a rolling rainstorm, until I am drenched with relief".

This sharp and witty account of her unconventional childhood, her many adventures and her beloved family, make this memoir a joy to read from start to finish.

By the end, you'll yearn for a warm, sunlit veranda, dogs slumped by your feet, and the noise of exotic birds calling while you sink a few drinks with the Fuller family. **[OA]**

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

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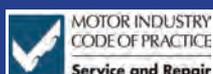
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MAURICE and ANNETTE HARDY give the Audi A3 Sportback the thumbs up



Best bits: brilliant as any Audi ever was

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That's not how the market reacts today.

The test car, listed at £29,295 on the road had already seen a drop in retail value to £25,000 on the forecourt, a fall of 14.6 per cent. The harsh reality trading it in, however, after only a few months at the wheel, would be a valuation of £22,750, which is well in excess of a 20 per cent hit.

Fortunately, there can't be many A3 owners who would find themselves in that situation. It's a car that quickly captures your heart so you're unlikely to bin it in double-quick time.

One of the reasons behind its success was its ability to allow people to downsize on physical dimensions without compromising on quality and that's a formula that hasn't changed.

True, the cars feel slightly bigger than they were then and there are now three-door, four-door, and five-door variants, as well as a convertible and the Q3 SUV, but it's all down, as they say, to the fact that success, breeds success.

However, one thing this car isn't is big.

It may look physically commanding, but the load space is no better than might be found in some of the smaller SUV and MPV models.

What they don't wear, of course, is the Audi

badge and it's this prominent, four interlinked circles, symbol on the front that has allowed Audi to hold up in sales terms, while VW has withered.

The same applies to Skoda when compared with Seat, although both VW and Seat are showing signs of recovery.

What has hurt the VW Group brands, if only in the eyes of the media, is the emissions debacle. But it happened in late 2015, and is probably largely forgotten among those who aspire to VW Group's products.

Our son-in-law has a diesel A3 that was affected and he's sent it for its software correction. However, he's so unimpressed by the loss of performance and resultant fall in fuel economy that he's considering having it reset to its previous status while our daughter, who has a diesel Golf, may avoid the recall corrections altogether.

In the past, we have achieved more than 70mpg from the frugal versions, but as this article is about celebrating the A3 we went for something more powerful and luxurious.

So it was, that a fire engine-red A3 Sportback with S-line trim and suspension, powered by the 150 PS version of Audi's 2.0 litre diesel engine driving through the S Tronic automated manual gearbox arrived on our driveway.

Audi A3 Sportback 2.0TDI S Tronic Sportline

Does it fit your ego...

0-62 mph: 8.3 secs

Top speed: 135 mph

Bhp: 149 @ 3500 – 4000 rpm

Torque: 251 lb ft @ 1750 - 3000 rpm

...and your wallet...

Price: £29,295

Combined: 64.2 mpg

CO2 emissions: 116 g/km

We've not met many people who enthuse over red cars the way we do.

Our current S-Max is a special order metallic red, and back in the mists of time we've owned a bright red Range Rover and a VW Passat estate of similar hue.

Discreet was the exact opposite of what this Audi managed, but it was fun for all that, although keeping it well within the parameters in which speed cameras operate and traffic cops trigger interest was a good idea.

What surprised us initially was that despite the Sportline set-up that makes most Audis ride like a plank, this car felt quite compliant, at least in the front.

Friends who occupied the rear seats reported it was quite hard to endure, but thankfully we weren't going very far on our trip to see a group called The Churchfitters – whose use of technology was as impressive as Audi's.

The bass player has wired-up boots that amplify his foot beats to provide the background rhythm so there's no need for a drummer. Add to that a bass guitar formed from two Mercedes wheel trims and a double bass made from a motorcycle petrol tank and you might wonder what could be achieved.

The answer is brilliant music perfect for petrolheads.

Just as the Audi's burbling diesel was music to our ears, the roar from the 40 profile tyres was overwhelming for much of the time.

But the car bowled along at an average 46mpg, which was at least soothing for the credit card. **OA**

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ENJOY THE RIDES

WIN A FAMILY TICKET TO LEGOLAND WINDSOR RESORT

Get ready to experience the ultimate Lego adventure this spring.

Join the famous Legoland Pirates on a new action-packed adventure full of surprises and high-octane stunts in a brand new pirate stunt show Return to Skeleton Bay.

OUT&ABOUT has two family tickets to be won for a great day out at the Windsor resort, where there's plenty to keep the whole family entertained.

Fly through the treetops to escape fearsome dragons, ride the thrilling rapids with a Viking fleet, join Lego divers on a magical underwater adventure on Atlantis Submarine Voyage or enjoy the UK's only Lego Star Wars miniland model display.

New for 2017 is the chance to become a master of Spinjitzu at the all-new Lego Ninjago, which opens in May.

Join your favourite heroes and take on awesome training activities as you prepare for the ultimate test of your ninja skills on Lego Ninjago – The Ride.

With more than 55 rides, live shows and attractions, Legoland is a great day out. Plan your Lego adventure at www.LEGOLAND.co.uk

To enter and be in with a chance of winning one of two family tickets to Legoland, answer this question correctly.

What is the name of the Ninja skills ride at Legoland Windsor?

Send your answer on the form to Legoland Windsor Resort competition, OUT&ABOUT, Newspaper House, Faraday Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 2DW. The closing date for entries is Tuesday April 11.

Legoland terms and conditions

- Only one entry per person.
- Entrants must be aged 18 or over.
- Entrants submitting the correct answer will be entered into a prize draw which will take place on [insert date]
- The winner will be selected at random [by – insert method]
- Each prize consists of 2 adult and 2 child day tickets to the LEGOLAND® Windsor Resort.
- Any additional adults and/or children will be charged at the standard rate.
- If the winner elects to partake in any or all portions of his/her prize with fewer than four (4) guests, the prize will be awarded to the winner and any participating guest and any remainder of the prize will be forfeited and shall not be subject to further or alternative compensation.
- The prize is for one day tickets only, and not 2 Day or Annual Passes.
- Prizes must be used within the 2017 season from 10 March 2017 – 30 October 2017.
- Prizes will be sent to winners by the LEGOLAND Windsor Resort by post.
- Any additional tickets you may wish to purchase can be booked in advance online at www.legoland.co.uk
- If you are using these tickets to attend on an event day please ensure that you arrive early to guarantee entry.
- When planning your visit, please remember to take a look at our calendar for opening dates and times. We are closed on some Tuesdays and Wednesdays throughout the season.
- Height restrictions apply on some rides.

- The prize is subject to the attractions normal Terms and Conditions of Entry, which can be found at <https://www.legoland.co.uk/tickets-and-passes/terms-and-conditions/park/>
- The use of the prize is subject to availability and capacity restrictions.
- Not all attractions, shows and rides may be operational on the day of the visit.
- Height, age and weight restrictions apply on some rides.
- Prize consists only of one day entrance only; no other elements or expenses such as travel, car parking, meals and beverages, spending money or Q-Bot access to rides and attractions are included. All such expenses are the sole responsibility of the winner plus guests.
- The promoter's decision is final and binding. No correspondence will be entered into. Unless otherwise stated the promoter is the LEGOLAND Windsor Resort.
- This prize cannot be taken in conjunction with any other promotion, offer, reward/loyalty program, 2 Day or Annual Pass, group booking, rail inclusive offer.
- Competition entry is open to all UK residents except employees and the immediate family of the LEGOLAND® Windsor Resort.
- There is no cash or alternative to the prizes stated, and the prizes are non-transferable.

Legoland competition

Answer.....

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Address.....

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Email.....

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DATE	COURSE	TIME
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Saturday 6th May	Corner to Corner Crochet Shawls/Blankets (£35)	14.00-17.00
Saturday 13th May	Beginners Crochet (£25)	14.00-16.00
Saturday 3rd June	Intermediate Crochet (£35)	14.00-17.00
Saturday 1st July	How to read a Knitting Pattern (£25)	11.00-13.00
Saturday 1st July	How to read a Crochet Pattern and Chart (£35)	14.00-17.00
Sunday 30th July	Summer Open Day and Craft Fair - Book a Table Ring Sue for details	

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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

JUST SEW



Monday, April 3
Newbury Embroiderers' Guild
St Francis de Sales Church Hall,
Warren Road, Newbury
7.30pm Visitors £5.

Talk by Polly Woolstone, *Journeys with a Sketchbook, Camera and Needle*. Polly will share the brilliant colourful work that has been inspired by her many journeys to India.

01635 862289
info@newburyembroiderers.org.uk
www.newbury-embroiderers.co.uk

Beat it



Thursday 20
Rhythm / percussion /
drumming workshops.

St Paul's Church, Ashford Hill
11am, 1pm and also 2.30pm

Adrian Wiggins from Big Beats will be bringing lots of drums to St Paul's. The day will be split in to workshops according to age (although parents are most welcome to be with their child). For children Year 2 up to adults. Workshops will be between 40-60 mins. Tickets £6, come and learn something new. Such fun. Refreshments provided during the day.

Please ring: Vanessa Martin 01635 299227 if you would like to reserve a place, or email: vanessa.martin24@btinternet.com



WALK FOR PARKINSON'S - WELFORD PARK, BERKSHIRE



Sunday, April 9
Walk for Parkinson's, Welford Park
Registration from 9.30am, walk starts 10am

Sponsored walk around the beautiful Welford Park Estate, home of the *Great British Bake Off*.

Two circular routes to choose from, a 2.5-mile walk or a more challenging 6.5-mile walk.

Entry fee £10 for adults and £5 for under-16s and all walkers will receive a Parkinson's UK T-shirt, plus a medal on completing the walk.

Contact the Regional Fundraising Team on:
020 7963 3912
fundraising@parkinsons.org.uk
www.parkinsons.org.uk/walkwelfordpark

Quiz Night

Saturday 29
Newbury Rotary Fun
Spring Quiz Night
Portal Hall, Church Lane, Burghclere,
7pm for 7.30pm start

Brighten up spring by joining the Rotary Fun Quiz evening for Rotarians, their guests and all keen quizzers.

Cost £10 includes a fish & chip supper.
Private pay bar available on the night.

Teams of eight maximum.
Solo guests can join/assemble teams on the night.

Contact Trevor Gibbons:
01635 254123
fundraising@newburyrotary.org.uk
www.newburyrotary.org



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Ladies Lunch Club

Every last Monday of the month Esseborne hosts a Ladies Club where guests are entertained by interesting speakers after lunch.

There is a set 4-course menu with a glass of wine, coffee and petite fours.

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Monday 24th April
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by Margaret Adams

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April dates for your diary

Saturday 1

To April 23, **Sandham Memorial Chapel** – solo art exhibition by Sydney Klugman (Wed–Sun only), 11am–4pm. Free (usual entry to chapel)

Thames Vale Singers, Fauré *Requiem*, conducted by Max Fane, with Thorngrove School senior choir. Includes readings commemorating the two world wars. St Mary's Church, Aldworth, 7pm. Tickets £15 Contacts: Lily: 01635 578 936 or Ken: 0118 943 2788. tickets@thamesvalesingers.org.uk www.thamesvalesingers.org.uk

Sandham Memorial Chapel First World War Poetry reading, 11am–4pm. Free (usual entry to the chapel)

NEW: Music Showcase. Showcasing some of the best local rock music, 7.30pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box office 0845 5218218. Age guide 14 plus.

Bucklebury Pre-school Family Treasure Hunt, 11am, Bucklebury Memorial Hall. Tickets £3 from Peach's Stores, Upper Bucklebury, or contact Mair on 07968 797944

Cromwell Singers and Phoenix Brass present a spring concert in aid of the YMCA, 6.30pm, St Nicolas Church, Newbury. There will be a retiring collection. Refreshments

Sunday 2

Champions of Magic, The Haymarket, Basingstoke, 7.30pm. An award-winning cast present mind-reading, close-up magic and large-scale illusions. Tickets: £23; over-65s, under-16s and f/t students £18

Spring Food and Craft Fair, Shaw House, 11am.

Spring Fayre and Fun Run, 12noon–4pm, Mary Hare School, Snelsmore. To register contact KirilLynn Gardner kgardner@maryhare.org.uk 07740 100654

Boxford Masques Meet and Greet, 12noon–4pm, Boxford Village Hall. For anyone who would like to take part in *All At Sea*: the 2017 Boxford Masques, which will take place in July at Welford Park. Whether it be cast or helping out with lighting, sound, stage, costumes or any manner of useful support we'd love to meet you. Come along and see what we're all about and meet our lovely people and share a scrumptious BBQ with us. All welcome, children, dogs and spouses www.boxford-masques.org.uk

Autism Berkshire is marking 2017 World Autism Awareness Day with a family fun day at Bucklebury Farm Park, with lots to see and do, indoors and out. Along with all the park's attractions, there will be live music from the Ding Dong Daddios. Ticket includes a barbecue lunch, with vegetarian, gluten-free and dairy-free options available – £10 adults

and £7.50 children, plus a booking fee. Under-threes, free. See www.autismberkshire.org.uk for full details and booking information.

Monday 3

Sandham Memorial Chapel Service led by David Bartholomew, 10am

Tuesday 4

Kintbury Wildlife Group, *Brown Hares*, an illustrated talk by Peter Thompson of the Game and Wildlife Conservancy Trust. Meeting starts 7.30pm, Coronation Hall, Inkpen Road, Kintbury. All welcome, non-members £2.

Wednesday 5

To Saturday 8, **The Sound of Murder**, The Haymarket, Basingstoke, 7.30pm (Thu & Sat 2pm). By William Fairchild. Charles Norbury is a successful writer of children's books but he doesn't like children. An unlovable man, he has no friends, is arrogant, controlling, and cruel. His wife, starved of love and denied children of her own, has met another man. In their cottage in Surrey, a tape recorder has been left on during a conversation between his wife and her lover in which the latter plans the author's murder. Charles' secretary listens to the tape and hears the murder plot.

Kennet Opera chorus and soloists present *1791: Mozart's last year: a celebration in song and words*, 7.30pm, Majendie Hall, Speen. Tickets £12 on the door.

Thursday 6

To May 6, **Twelfth Night**, The Watermill, Bagnor. Box office 01635 46044. watermill.org.uk

Blues Danny Bryant, 8pm, Arlington Arts Centre, Snelsmore Common. Box office 01635 244 246

Friday 7

Music of Today, Philharmonia Orchestra, The Anvil, Basingstoke, 6.15pm. In a free performance before the main evening concert, members of the Philharmonia perform contemporary music in a relaxed, informal setting, showcasing the music of Danish composer Bent Sørensen.

Philharmonia Orchestra, The Anvil, 7.45pm Jakub Hruša conducts. Programme: Brahms' *Hungarian Dances*, Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto* and Dvorák's *Eighth Symphony*. Violinist Sergey Khachatryan. A relaxed live screening of this concert for those on the autistic spectrum and with other disabilities in the welcoming atmosphere of The Forge.

Workshop: Lino printing Made Easy with Karen Carter, 10am–4pm, City Arts, Hampton Road, Newbury. info@cityartsnewbury.co.uk

Unplugged open mic night, Ace Space, St Nicholas Road, Newbury, 7.30pm, (performers from 7pm).

Saturday 8

Kintbury Wildlife Group – spring morning walk at Lower Denford, looking and listening for birds. Meet in Kintbury Square at 9am. All welcome, but please ring 07796 605016 in advance.

Newbury Chamber Choir performs *Spiritual Sounds*, 7.30pm, St John's Church, Newbury. This Easter-inspired programme includes Obrecht: *St Matthew Passion*, Arvo Pärt: *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* and *The Visit to the Sepulchre*, Anon 12th century, arranged by Edward Lambert. Free admission, with a retiring collection. For more information visit the www.newburychamberchoir.co.uk

Alexander Devine Children's Hospice stall, Aldworth village hall, 9.30am to 12noon. Handmade children's clothes, toys and gifts. Foods and flowers market plus refreshments. Playground adjacent. Details: 01635 578090

Barb Jungr sings Bob Dylan: *Every Grain of Sand*, New Greenham Arts, 8pm. Box office 0845 5218218.

Sunday 9

Newbury District Ornithological Club – a morning stroll on Walbury Hill and Combe Gibbet looking for ring ouzels passing through. Meet in the Gibbet car park at 8.30am. All welcome, but please ring 07796 605016 in advance.

Sunday afternoon concert, William Penney Theatre, AWE Rec Society, Tadley. Organ music spanning decades and played live on stage by Andrew Nix. Interval, refreshments, raffle. £8 at the door. Sylvia 0118 9323971.

Monday 10

Touch to See, group for the visually impaired, 10.30am–12noon, West Berkshire Museum. For more info contact 01635 582666

Gardening for wildlife talk, 7pm–8.30pm, Thatcham Nature Discovery Centre. £4. Booking essential 01635 874381

Newbury & District Association of the National Trust, 7.30pm, New Greenham Arts, New Greenham Business Park. *The Wilts and Berks Canal*, speaker John Farrow, who was a government research chemist before joining one of the research councils in Swindon in the late 1970s. After retirement, he became a National Trust Guide at Ashdown House and Avebury. He is also Branch Secretary of the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust and helps with maintenance and restoration. The canal originally ran over 50 miles from Semington, south of Melksham, to Abingdon on the Thames. He will describe the history of the canal, its current status, and plans for the future. Visitors £3. For more details call either Keith Spire 01635 30457 or June Hearsey 01635 551034 ►

April dates for your diary

Arts editor Trish Lee picks four of the best events on the arts scene in April. Reviews of all of these – and for more arts news – see N2 in the *Newbury Weekly News* each week

Hot off the arts press
 Modern Artists Gallery,
 Whitchurch on Thames
www.modernartistsgallery.com

I'm a huge fan of the Modern Artists Gallery – you'll always find inspiring and innovative work on show – director Peggy Gibson Brodie has an eye for the extraordinary. April sees the arrival of some exciting new 3D work by East Hendred artist Kate Kessling. So new they are 'hot off the press' and she is still experimenting with discarded paper offcuts from the book industry. "I like the idea of working with recycled materials – so the pieces are made from just over a thousand pieces of paper held

under tension and then painted with watercolour. I've been looking at edge-gilding and the qualities of different painting surfaces – these pieces are like reconstructed books. There are also new paintings from Alice Cescatti, who works in silver leaf. Catch a day when Alice is in the gallery and she will explain her water-gilding process – building up layers of sanded gesso and clay on wooden panels, followed by floating individual silver or gold leaves onto the surface using a specialist method dating

back to Egyptian tomb paintings and reliefs from the 23rd century BC. This gives her coastal landscapes a magical shimmer as the changing light of the gallery hits them.



Inspiring children's theatre
The Boy and The Mermaid
 at Arlington Arts
www.arlingtonarts.co.uk

Paper Balloon believe in the power of story to inspire and that great theatre starts with great stories. On Monday, April 10, at 2pm, they bring their beautiful new show, *The Boy and The Mermaid*, to Arlington Arts, Snelsmore. Perfect for families with children aged six-plus, it is a mix of innovative puppetry, exciting storytelling, live music and song. Based on an original story by Alex Kanefsky and featuring original songs and music from Darren Clark, the play explores one island's relationship with the outside world. It chronicles the

fate of one little fishing town exposed to the mercy of sea monsters, mer-creatures and spectacularly bad town planning. It was presented as a scratch performance last year following a period of research and development with young people in coastal communities, exploring our relationship with the ocean; its traditions, its music and its myths. In the wake of the humanitarian crisis on Europe's shores, this enchanting play uses traditional sea shanties and original new music fused with

puppetry, storytelling and movement to explore how the mythical town responds when faced with newcomers from the ocean.



If music be the food of love...

 at The Watermill
www.watermill.org.uk

The intimacy of *The Watermill* auditorium is made for the words of Shakespeare and the theatre has become known around the world for its bold, ensemble work. It is celebrating its 50th anniversary year with a new production of *Twelfth Night*, a play that embraces comedy, romance and tragedy. Bohemian, outlandish, isolated: Illyria is a land where everyone has lost something and they will use any

means to survive. This production is reimagined in the 1920s, where prohibition is rife and Europe is still reeling in the wake of war. Viola is washed ashore. Compelled to survive in a mysterious ethereal land, she disguises herself as Cesario to serve the solitary Duke Orsino. What follows is a tale of mistaken identities, seduction and transformation, leading to a complex love triangle and the potential

destruction of all propriety. As always with Watermill productions, expect the unexpected: a scintillating selection of energetic jazz music, where the radical spirit of Duke Ellington, Django Reinhardt and Ella Fitzgerald is fused with an innovative approach to staging and actor musicianship. And the front seating will be set out cabaret-style. *Twelfth Night* runs from Thursday, April 6 to Saturday, May 6.

3... 2... 1... BLAST OFF!

The First Hippo on the Moon at the Corn Exchange

Two big hippos. One enormous dream. Who can make it to the moon first? David Williams has taken the literary world by storm – he's currently the number one best-selling children's author and his brilliantly funny stories are adored by children the world over. Now award-winning theatre company Les Petits have adapted his space adventure *The First Hippo on the Moon* for the stage. Sheila is a hippo with BIG ideas. Specifically, she is determined to be the first hippo on the moon.

But Hercules Waldorf-Franklin III is also determined to be the first hippo on the moon. And he is very rich indeed. Who will win the great space-race? Follow their fantastical antics in two morning shows and two matinees, on Sunday, April 23 and Monday, April 24, featuring puppetry, music and mayhem. Age guide 3+.
www.cornexchangenew.com



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THE ROYAL OAK
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April dates for your diary



Tuesday 11

Sandham Memorial Chapel Decopatch workshop, 2-4pm. £15 booking essential.

Don't Dribble on the Dragon, The Haymarket, 2.30pm. Based on the new book by Steven Lee, and with magic designed by the late Paul Daniels. Running time: 60 minutes

Sandham Memorial Chapel – Papercraft Workshops, 11am–12.30pm. £10 booking essential. 0344 249 1895 ►

Wednesday 12

To Saturday, 15, **Newbury musical theatre society** presents *My Fair Lady*, 7.30pm (2.30pm matinee), Kennet School. Tickets £13 from Scope Charity Shop, Kingsland Centre Thatcham and Shoemakers Christian Bookshop, The Arcade, Newbury.

Friday 14

Newbury Floral Society. National demonstrator Susan Phillips presents *Petals Galore*, Royal British Legion Hall, Newbury. If you are interested in flower arranging, Newbury Floral Society meet on the second Tuesday of each month for demonstrations and workshops. Guests welcome. Contact 01635 253874

Saturday 15

Academy of Vocal Arts Workshop, 1pm-5pm, Ace Space, St Nicolas Road, £25. For details email info@academyvocalarts.co.uk

Mortimer Easter Egg Hunt Hunt trail maps will be on sale from the April 1, in Budgens, Dads Shop and the Baobab. They can also be purchased on the day from Hunt HQ (in the Community Centre on Mortimer Fairground) Maps are just £2 each or 3 for £5. All proceeds go to Mortimer Pre-school.

Completed maps and golden eggs can be brought to Hunt HQ (at the Mortimer Community Centre) between 10am and 4pm to receive your chocolate treats. www.facebook.com/MortimerEasterEggHunt

Children's Easter Egg hunt, St John's Church, Newbury, 10am to 4pm. Find the chicks and win yourself an egg.

Sunday 16

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

Tuesday 18

Amazing Bubble Man, 11.30am and 2pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box office 0845 5218218

Wednesday 19

The Friends of Newtown Road Cemetery invite you to attend Primrose Day. Drop-in during the day from 10am to 6pm. Children's activities all day. 'AAA' tour (artists, angels and authors) at 3pm for adults. Details www.fnrc.org.uk

Thursday 20

Someone Like You, Katie Markham sings Adele, 7.45pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box office 0845 5218218

Saturday 22

Paul Lamb and the King Snakes, 8pm, Arlington Arts Centre, Snelsmore Common. Box office 01635 244 246

Tuesday 25

Memory café: African Music Session with Jo May, 10.30am-12.30pm, Balcony Bar, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Sessions for people living with dementia and their carers.

Wednesday 26

Audience with Ian Waite and Natalie Lowe: Somewhere in time, 7.30pm, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box office 0845 5218218.

Sara Pascoe – Animal, The Haymarket, 7.30pm. Sara considers issues such as, will pornography lead to our extinction? Are humans naturally bad? How do we become better? Do we really have to die? And, gulp, should she have a baby? If that sounds a bit weighty, there will also be stuff about selfies, glow worms and RuPaul's Drag Race.

Thursday 27

And tomorrow, **The Empty Nesters' Club**, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box office 0845 5218218

Saturday 29

Newbury District Ornithological Club Regular spring morning walk around Speen Moors, west of Newbury. A flat, easy walk for all abilities, starting at 8.30am. All are welcome, but please ring 07796 605016 in advance.

You've Got a Friend – the music of James Taylor and Carole King, Corn Exchange, Newbury. Box office 0845 5218218

A Bit of Magic with Stu and Friends, 8pm, New Greenham Arts. Box office 0845 5218218

**Deadline for listings for May issue:
Tuesday, April 11**

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

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. 0118 9744068

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.

March competition winner:

Andresa competition: Ali Burgess, Hermitage

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.



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Wild, go wild, go wild in the country...

Going wild in West Berkshire this Easter with WENDY TOBITT from the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust

The clocks sprang forward at the end of March and early mornings are full of birdsong.

Colourful wild flowers are springing up in the woodlands where the first butterflies are flitting among the trees.

There's a definite feeling of sap rising and spring in the air, so it's time to go wild in West Berkshire!

Cowslips are one of my favourite spring flowers. The clusters of golden yellow flowers, dangling like keys from the top of the stems, look so fragile, and yet they are one of nature's survivors.

Fields and pastureland, once full of wild flowers, were ploughed up for food crops, relegating cowslips to a few road verges and woodland edges where they have colonised.

Come to the Nature Discovery Centre in Thatcham on Saturday, April 1, where you will find cowslip plants for sale and lots of advice about which plants to grow to help wildlife in your garden.

Make a date for the Gardening for Wildlife talk at the Nature Discovery Centre on Monday, April 10 with expert Becca Flintham.

Taking an inspirational walk around the wildlife garden and community orchard, Becca will show us how wildlife helps gardeners, and we can help wildlife in return.

Everyone can grow something that helps wildlife even if you have only a balcony or a small backyard. Your garden can be a mosaic in the wider network of natural havens linking urban green spaces with nature reserves and the countryside.

Spring is the perfect time of year to be outdoors with all the family, so start your Easter fun on Thursday, April 13 at the Easter Eggsplorers event at Paices Wood Country Parkland. Explore a trail where we've created a mystery quiz: 'which animal laid this egg?' There are lots of clues and lovely prizes for the correct answers! 



Pond-dipping at the Nature Discovery Centre



Cowslips are returning to our fields



YOUR SPRINGTIME DIARY

- **Saturday 1 April, 11am to 3pm**
at the Nature Discovery Centre, Thatcham.
Cowslips and garden plants sale.
- **Monday 10 April, 7 to 8.30pm**
at the Nature Discovery Centre, Thatcham.
Linking the Landscape: Gardening for wildlife with Becca Flintham.
- **Wednesday 12 April**
all day at the Nature Discovery Centre, Thatcham. Telescopes with Celestron.
- **Thursday 13 April, 11am to 3pm**
Easter Eggsplorers at Paices Wood Country Parkland.
- **Thursday 20 April, 10.30am to 4pm**
Spring family Wildlife Day at the Nature Discovery Centre, Thatcham. Have a go at pond-dipping, making dens, bug hunting and wildlife crafts.
- **Saturday 22 April, 10am to 3pm**
Caversham Court Gardens, Reading.
Beanpole Day! Discover bee-friendly and wildlife gardening tips while getting your beanpoles.
- **Saturday 29 April, 10am to 4pm**
Linking the Landscape Training: Birding for Beginners. What makes a bird a bird? Answers to this and many other questions.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THESE EVENTS
www.bbwt.org.uk/whats-on

Pictures: David Appleton, Pam Cruise and Annette Traverse-Healy

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