



THE GOSSIP TREE

News & Views from the Parish of FONTMELL MAGNA

March
2018
Issue 289

This issue is kindly sponsored by Fontmell
Magna Art Club

Fontmell Magna Art Club meets every Tuesday afternoon in the village hall. It now has 21 members and a waiting list. Every two years it holds a popular exhibition. As an art club, members paint whatever subject they wish using their choice of media and style. We are very fortunate to have a retired art lecturer who comes most weeks and gives us plenty of support and the occasional tutorial. Last autumn we had an afternoon portrait session with renowned artist Anthony Connelly and two very patient models. Some of the drawings from this session will be on a special display at the exhibition. Sandra Jelbart

Fontmell Magna Art Club Exhibition
Sunday 25th February in the Village Hall
2.00pm to 5.00pm. Free entry.

Tea/coffee/cakes available. Supporting Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has now been through all the responses to the 'pre-submission consultation' held in October/November last year, both from residents and from 'statutory consultees' (such as North Dorset District Council, the Environment Agency, Historic England, etc.).

All the comments received, and the Working Group's response to each of them, have been recorded and will be available shortly on the Parish Council's website. As a result of the comments received, a significant number of changes have been made to the Plan: of the 21 policies, 5 (including FM19 Land South of Home Farm) have been substantially amended or rewritten, 11 had more minor amendments and one (FM21 Rural Exception Sites for Affordable Housing) was deleted altogether. Only 4 policies were not amended. Perhaps the most important amendment is to reduce the number of units for Land South of Home Farm from "between 30 and 40 units" to a maximum of 30 to reflect the strong concerns voiced by residents.

The revised Plan, with supporting documents, will be considered by the Parish Council at its next meeting on Monday 12th March – to decide whether the Plan can be submitted for examination by North Dorset District Council. NDDC will run a 6-week consultation and will appoint an Examiner who considers the consultation responses. Once the Examiner's report has been issued, and any changes recommended made, parish residents eventually (probably in the Autumn) will make the final decision whether to accept the Plan in a referendum.

Finally, the Conservation Area Appraisal, as amended by changes resulting from the recent consultation, has now been officially adopted by North Dorset District Council. This Appraisal is now a reference document for guiding any development in the Conservation Area. It will shortly be available on Dorsetforyou and Parish Council websites.

Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Play Area

Very sadly, the Village Hall Committee has had to close the Play Area until various essential repairs are carried out. Even when these repairs are made, this will only be a short-term solution. All the equipment, other than the toddler swings, is well past its 'best before' date and needs replacing.

To do this will need considerable funds and a serious fund-raising effort. The Committee desperately needs someone to organise this fund-raising. If no-one comes forward to do this, the Play Area will soon have to close permanently. Please contact me (contact details at the bottom of page 4) if you feel able to undertake this vital role.

Chris Bellers, Chair Village Hall Committee



Remember

Clocks go forward one hour on Sunday 25th March for the start of British Summer Time.



Notices – March 2018

St. Andrew's Church

Sun	4th	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.00am	Sunday Breakfast (Village Hall - see over)
Sun	11th	9.30am	Mothering Sunday Family Service
Sun	18th	9.30am	Palm Sunday service with Holy Communion
Sun	25th	9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)
Thu	29th	5.00pm	Maundy Thursday Holy Communion and Stripping of the Altars at Sutton Waldron
Fri	30th	9.30am	Good Friday Act of Witness at the Gossip Tree
		11.00am	Benefice Service at Shroton
		2.00pm	Hour at the Cross at Iwerne Minster
Fri	2nd	10.30am	'In Home' coffee morning at 'Maltings', Church Street (Dick & Jennie Jones)

Tue 20th 10.00am Open House in the Tea Room

Prayers each Monday at 9.00am

Parish Council

Mon 12th at 7.00pm in St Andrew's School. The meeting is open to all members of the public and starts with Public Questions.

Parish Clerk: Marianne Wheatley
clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk

The Tea Room Crafters

Wed 14th & 28th at 2.30pm. Details Barbara Humphreys blueletterbox@btinternet.com

The Surgery

Mon - Thur 8.00am - 12 noon.
Enquiries 856700

Village Shop & Post Office

Mon - Fri 8.00am to 6.00pm
Sat 9.00am to 1.00pm; Sun 9.00am to 12.00 noon
Enquiries 811201

St Andrew's School

Thu 29th - Break up for Easter Holidays
Mon 16th April - Summer Term starts

Fontmell Magna Toddler Group

Tue 9.00am in the School Hall
Details Kelly Oakley 07792 425609

Fontmell Magna Under 5's Breakfast Club

Every morning for St. Andrew's pupils from 7.45am at the Under 5's. Details 812773

Iwerne Valley Walking Group

Sat 17th starting at 10.00am. For further details, contact either Pam on 811251 or Penny on 812222

Bell-ringing

Tue 13th - Practice 7.30 to 8.30pm
Details Chris Bellers 811734

Bin Collection Dates

W/C 5th & 19th - Recycling & Food
W/C 12th & 26th - Rubbish & Food

Village Hall events - see over

Events in the Village Hall

Fontmell Magna & District Society
Fri 2nd at 7.30pm. 'I selfie therefore I am' by Jethro Lyne
Details Dick Stainer 811153

Sunday Breakfast
Sun 4th at 9.00am. Run by
St. Andrew's Church. All welcome.
Details Janet Smith 811904

Village Hall Committee
Wed 7th at 7.30pm
Details Chris Bellers 811734

Fontmell Films
Wed 14th - 'Victoria & Abdul'
Doors open 7.00pm
Details Libby Gendall 811551

Garden Club
Thu 15th at 7.30pm. 'Gardening for Wildlife' by Dorset Wildlife Trust
Details Robert McCurrach 812077

Archive Society
Thu 15th 4.00 to 5.30pm.
Details Roger Hillman 811878

North Dorset Wildlife Trust
Wed 21st at 7.30pm - 'Badgers, Badger Ecology and Bovine TB' by Imogen Davenport
Details Geoff Peters 811546

Five Faces of Easter
Wed 7th, 14th & 21st, 12 noon to 2.00pm. Studies followed by lunch. All welcome.
Details Revd. David John 811623

Fete Planning Meeting
Wed 28th at 7.30pm.
Details Hannah Lister

Fontmell Magna Art Club
Tue 2.00 to 4.00pm.
Details Sandra Jelbart 812468

Carpet Bowls Club
Thu 1st, 8th & 22nd, & Fri 16th, all at 7.30pm.
Details Gerry Bone 811814

Dru Yoga
Fri 9.30 to 11.00am.
Details Kirsty Elliot 07783 780128

Pilates
Mon 6.30 to 7.30pm.
STOTT Pilates Matwork & props.
Details Vicci Gillett 07940 961221
www.stable-bodies.co.uk

Tue 9.15-10.15am, 10.30-11.30am.
Details Lyn O'Neill 07989 192424

Taekwon-do
Tue 8.00 to 9.00pm.
Fri 6.00 to 7.00pm.
Details Sam Donohoo 07584 039351

Zumba
Thu 9.30am
Details Abby Down 850867
zumbawithabbyd@gmail.com

To book the Hall, call Catherine Allard on 812047 or email catherineallard1980@hotmail.co.uk

Garden Club

Our speaker on Thursday 15th February was Jake Hobson, who showed us slides, and talked about The Art of Creative Pruning. Jake is an artist who came into gardening. He studied sculpture, and went to Japan on a travel award where he had the opportunity to learn how the Japanese create their gardens – largely with pine trees and azaleas which they prune into very decorative shapes. He discovered “why the Japanese get excited about cherry-blossom” and learnt how they use topiary to celebrate odd shapes and create a landscape in a small space.

His main theme was that whilst the tree is central, it is the gardener who makes it look the way it is. He demonstrated this with his slides showing how trees and hedges can be pruned to create interesting and asymmetrical shapes, with pictures of wavy box hedges and fascinating yew trees in the UK, elongated pines and shaped azaleas in Japan, and even a tea plantation in India. Some of the slides showed how a (second) late pruning, at the end of the summer, can leave a tree looking neat all though autumn and winter.

Our thanks to Jake for an excellent talk which we very much enjoyed.

The next meeting is on Thursday 15th March, when our topic is “Gardening for Wildlife” with Dorset Wildlife Trust. Robert McCurrach

Fontmell Magna and District Society

Friday 2nd February – Rob Comins – The World of Loose Leaf Tea

Milk and two sugars made with a teabag and drunk in a hurry. Throughout his talk, Rob was extremely tolerant of all tastes, but this particular drink does not form part of his world. He and his wife Michelle import and serve single estate teas that come directly from the farmer. In order to appreciate properly the delicate flavours of these teas you have to drink them slowly and in a contemplative frame of mind.

We were served five different teas, from a light white tea grown in Malaysia to a Puerh tea which is fermented and at least five years old. Our favourite was probably the Dong Ding from Taiwan which is an Oolong tea with a wonderful taste.

There are many different teas and many different ways to treat the leaves and then serve the finished product. This was a fascinating subject and, if you would like to know more, Rob and his wife run two teahouses, one in Sturminster and one in Bath, where they serve up to forty-five types of tea.

Our next talk is on Friday 2nd March by Jethro Lyne entitled 'I selfie therefore I am' - a brief history of self-portraiture. Michael Goldberg

The Tea Room Crafters

The Tea Room Crafters will be meeting every second and fourth Wednesday of the month, so anyone interested in handcraft with or without a current project, is welcome to join us, whether it is once in a while or regularly. We are in the Village Tea Rooms on 14th and 28th March from 2.30pm and are very grateful to Jan and Rick for their warm welcome as well as the tea and cakes, available to buy. These drop-in sessions are about chatter, sharing skills, enjoyment in handcrafts and are open to all. For more details please email Barbara at blueletterbox@btinternet.com

St Andrew's Church Spring Clean

The annual Spring Clean of our village church will once again take place over two mornings from 9.30am. On Wednesday 28th March, Barry Roberts will be organising a team to tackle the harder to reach parts of the church (a head for heights would be useful!). This will be followed on Thursday 29th by a traditional, ground level 'Spring Clean'. Refreshments will be provided on both days. Help on either day will be very welcome – no previous experience necessary, just enthusiasm!

Details: Barry on 811906 about the 28th or Jan Cobby on 812115 about the 29th.

Easter Flowers 2018

1st April is Easter Sunday.

To enable us to decorate St Andrew's Church with as many flowers as possible, I am appealing to residents of Fontmell Magna to donate to the flower fund in memory of a loved one. Flowers are very expensive and the fund very depleted. There will be a plate at the back of the church on Sundays from 4th March, or give to me at 15 St Andrew's View, or to the Churchwardens, Barry or Janet. Thank you in appreciation of your generosity. Joy Murphy

Planning Applications and Development in Fontmell Magna

The Parish Council meeting on Monday 12th March will be considering a number of important planning applications affecting the village. Not only will the Parish Council decide whether the draft Neighbourhood Plan, amended following the recent consultation, be submitted for examination by North Dorset District Council, but the PC will also be considering the planning applications for Mill Street and Middle Farm. The deadline for comments for both applications has been extended to Wednesday 21st March. The proposed developer of Middle Farm is planning to attend and will give a short presentation on the revised plans followed by a short Q&A session. The meeting, in the School Hall, will start at 7pm.

Spend a Tenner!

The last day to use your paper £10 notes, featuring Charles Darwin on the reverse, is Thursday 1st March 2018. Some retailers, banks and building societies may still accept these notes after this date, but this is at their own discretion. Otherwise, all you can do after 1st March is to exchange them at the Bank of England in person or by post. The new polymer £10 note, featuring Jane Austen on the reverse, was issued from 14th September 2017. The £20 note will not be printed on polymer until 2020, when it will feature the artist J.M.W. Turner.

Fontmell Films

Our film on Wednesday 14th March is 'Victoria & Abdul' starring the wonderful Dame Judi Dench as Queen Victoria and Ali Fazal as Abdul Karim. This is the extraordinary true story of an unexpected friendship in the later years of Queen Victoria's remarkable rule, when Abdul Karim, a young clerk, travels from India to participate in the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The two forge an unlikely and devoted alliance with a loyalty to one another that her household and inner circle all attempt to destroy. As the friendship deepens, the Queen begins to see a changing world through new eyes and joyfully reclaims her humanity.

Tickets £6 from Fontmell Village Shop or £6.50 on the door. Doors and the bar open at 7.00pm with the film starting at 7.30pm. We look forward to seeing everyone and don't forget your cushions! For more information please call Libby in 811551

Date for your diary: Wednesday 11th April 'Murder on the Orient Express'

Iwerne Valley Walking Group**January Walk – The Meeting of the Tarrant and the Stour**

On Saturday 20th January, Claire Watson led twenty of us (five with four legs) on a beautiful walk from The Woodpecker pub in Spetisbury. We followed the footpath over the mill gardens and concrete bridges over branches of the Stour for our first stop at Keyneston Mill. This is a newly established enterprise which is well worth a visit. As it says on their website, "The creative and experimental

home of Parterre Fragrances, Keyneston Mill is the largest private botanic gardens in the country dedicated solely to aromatic and scented plants – over 2000 varieties in a 50-acre estate. Here the key ingredients of Parterre perfumes are grown, harvested and distilled." There is a cafe there too, so we all agreed it would be a lovely place to visit in the summer, especially once the flowers get going.

We carried on from there to Tarrant Crawford Church, past the remains of the foundations of a Cistercian abbey founded in the 13th century by Bishop Poore. Before the abbey was built, a house adjoining the church was the home of three aristocratic ladies called Anchoresses. They wished to lead a religious life but to first no established rule. So Bishop Poore wrote a guide for them, the *Ancren Riwle*. Although the ladies were to lead a strict religious life, the kindly Bishop advised their clothes should be warm and well-made and allowed them to keep a cat.

We looked inside the remote and ancient church with lots of snowdrops carpeting the churchyard before continuing on along the footpath over fields and over and under bridges into the Stour Valley and eventually scrambled up to the top of an embankment on Spetisbury Rings with gorgeous views all round. After the Roman invasion in AD 43, Vespasian set about destroying the Dorset hillfort communities. The Celts of Spetisbury had no time to finish their defences. Their fate was revealed when a cemetery was discovered during work on the nearby railway cutting in 1857.

From the trig point we set off back downhill into Spetisbury to enjoy a tasty lunch at The Woodpecker, really grateful that the rain had held off until we were happily ensconced inside.

Helen English

Springhead

Incandescendo will perform on the afternoon of Sunday 18th March at 4.00pm. A musical kaleidoscope of jazz, world, folk and classical influences with Emily Burridge on cello and Felix Gibbons on Latin percussion and guitar, spinning a web of intricate harmonies and rhythms highlighted by some dazzling displays of improvisation (for more information see www.incandescendo.com)

Tea and cakes will be available and tickets are £8, £6 (Friends of Springhead and U 18), £24 (family 4 – max. 2 adults) from www.artsreach.co.uk or from Springhead's office – info@springheadtrust.org.uk or 01747 811853.

For further information please see www.springheadtrust.org.uk

Kate Partridge

Organ Recital

David Briggs, International Concert Organist, is giving a Recital in Clayesmore School Chapel on Thursday 8th March at 7.30pm. David is a master of the instrument and can play anything! His programme will include works by J. S. Bach, Haydn, Franck, Vienne and Saint-Saens, as well as a silent movie improvisation. Tickets are £10 for adults, free entry for 18 year olds and under. Book online at www.clayesmore.com. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to see an outstanding musician performing locally.

Sian Highnam

Village weather for January 2018

Sun was rather scarce. A lot of grey, damp days (snow only settled in the North of the country).

5 gales. 24 rain days. 1 day sleet. 3 air frost. No ground frost.

Comp. Figures	2018	2017
Rain (most 17.2 mm on 21st)	90.8 mm	94.5 mm
Sunshine	48.4 hr (av. 1.56)	68.4 hr
Max mean temp. (highest 12.8°C on 2nd)	9.44 °C	7.8 °C
Min mean temp. (lowest - 3.3 °C on 30th)	2.6 °C	0 °C

Friday 2nd February was Candlemas, a day when folklore makes a prediction for the rest of the winter:

"If Candlemas Day be fair and bright

Winter will have another flight

If on Candlemas Day it be shower and rain

Winter is gone and will not come again."

Sadly, the weather on 2nd February was cold and sunny....

In the USA, Candlemas is known as Groundhog Day, when a groundhog casting a shadow on the ground means that another six weeks of winter will follow. Sadly, this year Punxsutawney Phil cast that shadow. The good news, however, is that Phil's predictions have a success rate of only 20 percent in the last 30 years.



There were no Full Moons in February, but there are two in March (just as there were in January). The first Full Moon is on Friday 2nd March.

This Full Moon was

known by early Native American tribes as the Full Worm Moon because this was the time of year when the ground would begin to soften and the earthworms would reappear. This moon has also been known as the Full Crow Moon, the Full Crust Moon, the Full Sap Moon, or the Lenten Moon.

On Tuesday 20th March, the Sun will shine directly on the equator and there will be nearly equal amounts of day and night throughout the world. This is the vernal equinox (the first day of spring).

The second Full Moon of the month, and therefore a blue moon, is on Saturday 31st March. This Full Moon is traditionally called the Full Pink Moon (as it was said to herald the appearance of one of the first Spring flowers). Disappointingly, the moon is unlikely to be either blue or pink. Other names for this Moon are the Sprouting Grass Moon, the Growing Moon, the Egg Moon and the Full Fish Moon.

Compost Corner

"You'll grow into it", words I dreaded hearing when I was on a clothes shopping expedition as a child. I remember once having to make a skirt at school - a family of four could have made a roomy home in it.

As Spring approaches, you may find some gaps in your borders or want to change things round a bit, but what is the best course of action - buying a large plant to fill the space or opt for much smaller ones? In makeover programmes or at shows like RHS Chelsea, large plants are often chosen because they make a better impact (and make it to look like a finished garden) but I would always buy smaller ones; they establish so much better and very quickly reach their optimum size. If you're planting herbaceous perennials, try and group them in odd numbers with plenty of room between them - look at the label which will give you its eventual height and spread. Whatever you choose, water them well before planting and continue to do so as they are settling in and during dry periods. And did I ever wear my hand-crafted skirt? No chance - it would still have been huge even if I'd eaten a pie every day from that day to this. Alison Main

Fontmell Directory 2018

Many apologies to Abby Down for incorrectly spelling her email address. Her address should be:

Zumbawithabbyd@gmail.com.

John Knight of 'Green Hays', Manor Farm, F/M, tel. 811411 would also like to be included under 'Architectural Building Surveyor.' John is a Chartered Architect, being a member of the RIBA and ARB and, whilst theoretically retired, will occasionally take on very small projects, such as design advice locally to Fontmell residents, if time permits.

Dennis Tooley – deceased

Dennis Tooley died peacefully in Harrogate on Monday 15th January. He and Audrey were the first residents in St Andrew's View, where they occupied Christmas Cottage from 1998 to 2008.

They were very supportive of all the local organisations and Dennis' many practical improvements to St Andrew's Church still exist and are much appreciated.

Fontmell's loss was Harrogate's gain. R.I.P.

John Light Bennett (1857 - 1911)

This brass plaque on the wall on the south side of the Chancel of St Andrew's Church commemorates John Light Bennett. Who was he and why does he merit a plaque?

"In loving memory of John Light Bennet, of Hartgrove, Dorset, late Chief of Police of Gibraltar & Chief of the C.I.D. Bloemfontein South Africa. Treasurer and Trustee of Gibraltar Cathedral. Born Dec 3rd, 1857. Died March 25th, 1911. Interred in the North Front Cemetery, Gibraltar. 'Blessed are the pure in heart.' Erected by his sorrowing wife."



John Light Bennett was born on 3rd December 1857 at East Orchard. He was the second son and fourth child of William and Elizabeth Bennett who lived at Hartgrove Farm. He was baptised on 17th January 1858 at West Orchard Church. In the 1861 census, his father was described as a farmer (probably a tenant of Sir Richard Glyn) of 100 acres employing 5 labourers and 2 boys. William's father was also called John Light Bennett.

In around 1865, the family, now with 7 children, moved to Manor Farm, Fontmell Magna, also owned by Sir Richard Glyn. William was described as a farmer of 487 acres employing 9 men and 4 boys. While John was described as a farmer's son, he and his siblings attended Bourton Academy, a private school near Wincanton.

In 1873, John's mother, Elizabeth Bennett, died. By 1881, William was a 'Farm Bailiff' in Hartgrove. In 1884, he became the tenant of East Melbury Farm, another of Sir Richard Glyn's properties and then, in 1889, he moved to Lower Oakley Farm, Chilthorne Domer near Yeovil. When he died in 1895, he was buried alongside his wife in St Andrew's Churchyard.

Meanwhile, John had moved to London. In 1879, he joined the Metropolitan Police in Scotland Yard and was sworn in as a Police Officer in January 1880. In 1881, he was a boarder at Metropolitan Police Station, 23 Paradise Street, Southwark. He was evidently an ambitious and capable man: he became a Warrant Officer in 1883, Sergeant in charge of Holloway Police Station in 1887 and Acting Inspector at Holloway in 1888. The same year, he married Jane Elizabeth Warman.

In 1889, he resigned from the Metropolitan Police and moved to Gibraltar. He took up the position of Senior Police Inspector in the Gibraltar Police. This Police Force was modelled on Sir Robert Peel's Metropolitan Police and was formed nine months after the latter was formed in 1830.

In 1894, he applied (unsuccessfully) for the position of Chief Constable of Bristol but, in 1895, he was appointed 'Chief of Police and Supervisor of Public Markets' in the Gibraltar Police. As such he was involved in some high-level visits from royalty and senior politicians. These included the Prince and Princess of Wales (later King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra), the Kaiser, Theodore Roosevelt, various Admirals of the Fleet and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Joseph Chamberlain (father of the future Prime Minister Arthur Neville Chamberlain). The latter was so impressed with John's work that, for some months in 1902 and 1903, John was seconded for special duties in South Africa (where the Boer War had recently ended). There he organised and controlled the Criminal Investigation Department in Orange River Colony (Bloemfontein).

In 1908 and 1909, John also acted as Captain of the Port in Gibraltar in addition to his normal police duties. This was at a time when large harbour works were being completed.

He died on 25th March 1911, aged 53, and was interred at the North Front Cemetery in Gibraltar with the epitaph 'Blessed are the pure in heart.' On his death, Jane returned to England and died in 1949, aged 93. They had no children. Chris Bellers, Archive Society

Gordon Luxton

We are sad to report that Gordon Arthur Luxton (widower of Leonora Luxton), late of Orchard Corner, Hartgrove, died on 13th January 2018, aged 94 years.

The views expressed in this publication by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Committee of The Gossip Tree. Last copy date for the next issue is **Sunday 25th March 2018**. Contributions for consideration should be submitted as early as possible to the Editor, Chris Bellers, via e-mail to chris.bellers@hotmail.co.uk or phone 811734. Please also contact the Editor if, rather than have your Gossip Tree delivered to you, you would like to be emailed a copy and benefit from seeing the pictures in colour (while also saving us printing costs), or if you would like to sponsor an issue (cost £30).