



THE GOSSIP TREE

News & Views from the Parish of FONTMELL MAGNA

May
2018
Issue 291

This issue is kindly sponsored by
Eileen and Bill Hall

Anniversary Surprise - The Village That Kept The Secret

On Tuesday 10th April, after the village shop had closed, we presented Jan & Rick with the gifts that we had purchased. Our aim was to give them something that showed them just how much they were appreciated and, with your help, we have done just that.

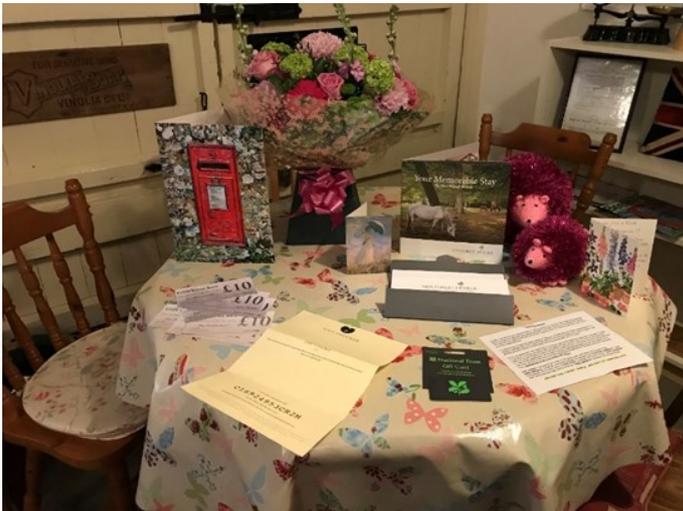
First gift - two-night stay in a lovely hotel in the New Forest. We have also arranged for them to have Sunday lunch before heading back home.

Second gift - 2 year subscription to The National Trust.

Third gift - 10 sessions at Gorcombe Farm where they can enjoy a swim and a relaxing hot tub & jacuzzi.

Fourth gift - vouchers for the Cricketers.

Last, but not least, a beautiful flower arrangement made up of Jan's favourite colours.



As you can see we have tried to give them gifts that they can enjoy for many months to come. To say that Jan & Rick were overcome is an understatement. They were both very emotional to think that people could be so generous (never seen Rick stuck for words before).

Can I say a very big thank you to everyone for their generous donations. The Fontmell also donated a meal for two. My sincere thanks must go to Sarah, Libby, Kate, Justine & Emma - without their help and support this would not have happened. Also, my thanks to everyone for keeping the secret. Who would have thought it possible? No doubt, once Jan & Rick have recovered from the shock, we will be hearing from them. Sue Jones *See also page 4*

Important Message from the Secretary of the Village Hall

The Village Hall is doing very well now, as a result of the dedicated work of the Chair and the Treasurer and other elected officers, ably supported by the Committee (who are representatives of the regular users of the Hall and the Tennis Court). However, the Chair is retiring shortly, after 8 years.

This means there will be no Chair or Vice-Chair, as this latter role has remained unfilled for the last 6 years! Unless both these roles are filled quickly, my position is no longer tenable.

Consequently, the Committee will not be able to function, and the Village Hall may have to close. This is the last thing any of the users, or indeed the Parish Council, will want to happen! Please consider if you can help for the good of the future of the Village.

Carl Johnston, Hon. Secretary, Village Hall Committee. Tel. 812144, email: c.johnston123@btinternet.com

Message from the Chair of the Village Hall

As Carl says above, I have been Chair of the Village Hall for about 8 years. I have now joined the Parish Council and cannot continue as Chair of the Village Hall because of a possible conflict of interest. Before joining the Village Hall Committee, I had absolutely no experience of running a village hall, but I have very much enjoyed my involvement and will be sorry to end it. However, I have been Chair long enough – it is time to hand over to someone else with a fresh approach and ideas. I have agreed to stay on until the Village Hall Committee's AGM on Wednesday 25th July, unless someone comes forward before then. If anyone is interested, please contact the Secretary (details above) and I will be pleased to let them know what is involved. If no-one comes forward, the future of the Village Hall is in serious doubt.

Chris Bellers, Chair, Village Hall Committee (see page 4 for contact details)

Notices – May 2018

St. Andrew's Church

Sun	6th	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
		9.00am	Sunday Breakfast (Village Hall - see over)
Sun	13th	9.30am	Morning Worship
Sun	20th	10.00am	Benefice service at Shroton
Sun	27th	9.30am	Holy Communion (CW)

Prayers each Monday at 9.00am

Parish Council AGM and PC Meeting

Mon 21st in St. Andrew's School, immediately following the Annual Parish Meeting which starts at 7.00pm. Parish Clerk: Marianne Wheatley clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk

The Tea Room Crafters

Wed 9th & 23rd in the Shop 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

Fri 25th - Break up for Half Term
Mon 4th June - Back from Half Term

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

'Open House' Coffee Mornings - All Welcome!

Every Friday 10.30am to 12 noon in St. Andrew's Church social area. Coffee/tea/hot chocolate, biscuits and home-grown produce.

Iwerne Valley Walking Group

Sat 19th starting at 10.00am from Thorncombe Farm, about 3 miles west of Cheselbourne, postcode DT2 7RF. Short drive afterwards to The Fox at Ansty DT2 7PN. Leaders: Monique and John (442970).

Bell-ringing

Tue 15th - Practice 7.30 to 8.30pm
Details Chris Bellers 811734

Bin Collection Dates

W/C 14th & 28th - Recycling & Food
W/C 7th & 21st - Rubbish & Food

Village Hall events - see over

Sunday Breakfast

The smell of bacon cooking on the first Sunday of the month is returning to the village hall on 6th May. The first Sunday in April was Easter and March had to be cancelled because of the snow (sorry Barry) but we are now back in business. About 30 people come to enjoy each other's company and the amazing breakfast that is on offer. Why not come along? This is for everyone. Janet Smith

Events in the Village Hall

Village Hall Committee Meeting
Wed 2nd at 7.30pm
Details Chris Bellers 811734

Garden Club
Wed 2nd - Shopping at Castle Gardens.
Details Robert McCurrach 812077

Fontmell Magna & District Society
Fri 4th at 7.30pm. AGM and Members' Evening.
Details Dick Stainer 811153

Sunday Breakfast
Sun 6th at 9.00am. Run by St. Andrew's Church. All welcome.
Details Janet Smith 811904

Archive Society
Thu 17th 4.00 to 5.30pm.
Details Roger Hillman 811878

Fete Planning Meeting
Wed 23rd at 7.30pm
Details Hannah Lister 811568

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

Carpet Bowls Club
Thu at 7.30pm.
Details Gerry Bone 811814

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

Pilates
Mon 5.30-6.30pm, 6.30-7.30pm.
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 8.00-9.00pm, Fri 6.00-7.00pm.
Details Sam Donohoo 07584 039351

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

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

Easter Flowers

I would just like to thank everyone who contributed financially to the beautiful flowers in the church for Easter. A special thank you to all arrangers, who gave their time and talent to make such a magnificent display, which has been greatly admired by the many visitors who came over the Easter period. Congratulations, you did a wonderful job. Joy Murphy

Ring found at the Play Area

On Saturday 21st April, 10 volunteers spent the morning repairing and clearing the Play Area, which is now open once more. Thank you to all concerned, particularly Leo Williams and Dick Stainer. During their work, a ring was found. If anyone has lost one, could they please contact the Editor (contact details on foot of page 4).

Iwerne Valley Walking Group

February Walk

On Saturday 17th February, about a dozen of us gathered at the Milton Arms in Winterborne Whitechurch on a fine day. The first section of the walk was up the Winterborne valley through the village to Winterborne Clenston where we stopped to look round the churchyard. Unfortunately, the church was closed but the churchyard was very pretty and provided a welcome break. On route we had fine views across the valley to Whatcombe House. From the church, we crossed over the road and ventured up into Oatclose Wood, part of the Whatcombe estate. The wood was a touch boggy but we made it! We met some stray sheep on the way but their owners said that this was perfectly OK as they normally wandered about. At the far end of the wood we encountered the only steep section of the walk, or so I thought until having to clamber up the opposite side. Unfortunately, we then got a bit lost on the far side as the track seems to have been altered since the last time I did the walk. However, a bit of a detour and we were back on track going up towards La Lee Farm with another view of Whatcombe House, this time from the back, and views across to the Purbecks the other way. From there it was straight down the hill into Whitechurch again and the pub where we enjoyed an excellent lunch.



Jim Bird

March Walk: Fiddleford – Around and About

On Saturday 17th March, eighteen hardy souls and four energetic dogs met at the Fiddleford Inn for our March walk and, having ordered lunch at the Inn, we set off through a lane leading us to the North Dorset Trailway.

Although the weather was bright we had been warned to expect snow by 1.00pm so we had a brisk walk up the trailway, which was a good move because the wind across the fields was brutal. We left the trailway at Shillingstone and headed up towards Bere Marsh farm for a very gentle walk across two fields leading us to Conyger Coppice.

We skirted the coppice, on pleasantly dry and springy ground, and headed steadily up hill. After reaching the top of the wood the path bears right and descends to meet a lane where we turned left through an interesting collection of caravans before reaching a road. Turning right, we walked down a field and across a stile to the main A357 then into Angers Lane to pass Oak Tree Farm.

We took a slight detour to the left to cross a stream, which was hidden from our view from the start of the field, and then through metal gates to cross another field before reaching the edge of Piddles Wood. Here we turned down a grassy path skirting a field with several new born lambs and their wary mothers. Climbing the last of only three stiles, we crossed the A357 and headed back to the Fiddleford Inn at 12.30pm to enjoy our lunch.

A good effort all round, we completed about 4 and a half miles in two and a half hours and only saw three cyclists the whole time on the trailway. Feeling very smug, we were all home before the promised snow began to fall heavily.

Pam Payne & Penny Wintle

Fontmell Magna and District Society

Friday 6th April – Lords, Ladies, Heralds and Kings; Conservation at the College of Arms and Houses of Parliament by Liz Ralph

It was fascinating to have a glimpse into an area of public life that usually remains hidden. The Victoria Tower in the Houses of Parliament contains twelve floors of documents, thirty thousand pieces of legislation dating from the 15th century, that all need looking after. Similarly, the College of Arms has many thousands of manuscript records including the coat of arms of William Shakespeare himself. Liz described her work of conserving and restoring all these books and documents. As we would expect, most of the damage is caused by damp or pests or abrasions. In a seminary in Italy where Liz worked, one book had its cover peppered with bullet holes. It was used as target practise by Napoleon's troops when they invaded. At the College of Arms, they use hawks to keep off the seagulls. With these and other examples we were given a real insider's view of the precision needed in this exacting profession.

Our last meeting this year is the AGM and members' evening on Friday 4th May. There will be a short slide show and quiz with a finger buffet. Please come along and bring a plate of food to share.

Michael Goldberg

Bank Holiday Monday 28th May, Open Garden, 10.00am to 5.00pm, with stalls and café serving refreshments and light lunches. Admission £3.50, under 16 and Friends of Springhead free. Dogs on leads welcome and assisted wheelchair access
Kate Partridge, Coordinator – Friends of Springhead, Tel. 811853
Email: info@springheadtrust.org.uk www.springheadtrust.org.uk

Neighbourhood Plan – Examination by NDDC

Following approval by the Parish Council, the Neighbourhood Plan has now been submitted for examination by North Dorset District Council. The submitted documents can be viewed on the Parish website http://www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk/FontmellMagna-PC/neighbourhood_plan-9778.aspx. Copies of the principal documents are also available in the Village Shop & Post Office.

The NDDC Examination is quite a lengthy process, running over several months. The steps include a check on the submitted documents for legal compliance, a six-week public consultation, appointment of an inspector, examination of the plan and consultation comments by the inspector, publication of the inspector's report, further updates to the Plan to be approved by NDDC. All being well the final step is for NDDC to call a referendum of all parish residents to decide whether to adopt the Plan, whereupon the Plan is formally made at the next available Council meeting. This is expected to be in October 2018. In the interim, now the Neighbourhood Plan has reached the examination stage, it does carry some weight in the consideration of planning applications by the District Council.

Michael Humphreys, Secretary, Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Fontmell Magna Annual Parish Meeting

This public meeting, open to all residents of Fontmell Magna Parish, will be held on Monday 21st May at 7.00pm in St Andrew's School hall immediately before the Parish Council AGM and bi-monthly meeting.

All parish based clubs, societies and similar organisations are invited to report briefly (no more than 3 minutes) on their previous year's activities and their proposals for the next twelve months. Any representative from a club/society/organisation who wishes to give a report should inform the Parish Clerk by Wednesday 9th May, by email: clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk. As in previous years, individual invitations will not be sent.

North Dorset Wildlife Trust - Events for May

Dawn Chorus Walks

Sunday 6th May – International Dawn Chorus Day. Join DWT Warden, Steve Oliver, for an early morning discovery of bird song at Ashley Wood Reserve (Map ref. ST925050), near Tarrant Keyneston. Meet by the Reserve entrance board at 4.30am. Please wear warm clothing and sturdy footwear and bring a torch and a folding chair. Cost is £5 per person and places must be booked in advance by telephoning Anna Aubrey on 07970 903 679.

Saturday 19th May – join us for our very popular Dawn Chorus Walk and Farmhouse Breakfast at Bere Marsh Farm, near Child Okeford. Meet at the farm at 4.45am for a prompt 5.00am start. Please wear warm clothing and sturdy footwear. The walk will be led by our very experienced birder, Tim Hooker. Cost is £15 per person (including breakfast), and places must be booked in advance by telephoning Anna Aubrey on 07970 903 679.

Date for your diary:

Thursday 28th June – a guided walk around Shaftesbury Abbey Herb Garden with herbal specialist, Julie Wood, who is a medical herbalist. The cost is £10 and includes refreshments. Numbers are restricted on this walk so please book in advance by telephoning Roy Davies on 01258 880 699.

Fontmell Magna Village Archive Society

We need your help - if you can! The Archive Society is embarking on a two-year project entitled 'Houses through Time' in Fontmell Magna Parish. (i.e. including Bedchester and Hartgrove). The project aims to record every property in the Parish (approximately 340) and to gather as much information as possible on each – e.g. the date and type of construction; a time-line of any changes to the building or its use; previous occupants and any relevant family history

We are aiming to produce information, similar to the recent articles on Bedchester in The Gossip Tree. While much information is available in the public domain we are sure that there is still a great deal we could discover from householders in the parish.

The material collected will be stored digitally with a view to keeping it for future generations of interested villagers but also to allow it to be searched for research purposes. At the end of the project it is expected to upload the document to the Archive website (www.fontmellmagna.net). In our determined search to complete the project you may be approached by an eager member of the Society. However, if you are happy to contribute information that could be useful to our project, or would like to join the Society, please contact Roger Hillman 01747 811878 rfdhillman@gmail.com or our website (info@fontmellmagna.net)

Village weather for March 2018



A cold start and a cold period mid-month. A lot of rain and 10 sunless days. 4 days snowfall. 23 rain days. 1 gale. 9 air frost. 17 ground frost.

Comp. Figures	2018	2017
Rain (most 22.9 mm on 30th)	158.8 mm	68.3 mm
Sunshine	63.0 hr (av. 2.0)	97.4 hr
Max mean temp. (highest 13.5 °C on 27th)	9.0 °C	13.0 °C
Min mean temp. (lowest - 5.7 °C on 1st)	1.71 °C	4.95 °C

Not surprisingly, given the two sets of snowfall, intermingled with freezing rain, March was particularly cold. It was also particularly wet. In fact, it was the wettest March since Judy's records began in 1989, with the exception of March 2001 when rainfall was slightly higher at 159.2mm.

Looking forward, weather folklore goes "March winds and April showers bring forth May flowers". We certainly experienced some strong winds in March, but there seem to have been more continuous rain, rather than showers, in April. It remains to be seen what effect this has on flowers this month. A Dorset saying is "A Zunny May 'n a drepping June'll put all things in good tune." Finally, the first cuckoo of Spring was heard on Wednesday 18th April.

Full Moon – Tuesday 29th May

There will be 13 Full Moons in 2018. Two of them have been Blue Moons which don't seem to have been given traditional names. The April Gossip Tree stated that the Full Moon that month (on Monday 30th April) was the Full Flower Moon.. Some sources say that this should, in fact, have been the Full Pink Moon. This means that the Full Moon in May is either the Full Strawberry Moon or the Full Flower Moon. It was certainly the Full Flower Moon in May 2017, as evidenced by the picture below. And the 29th May is possibly a little early for the start of the strawberry picking season. Readers are invited to decide for themselves.



Flower Moon – May 2017 (The Times) Page 3

Compost Corner

It's well documented that the nation's diet was far better during World War II than it is now, with meat, fats and sugar being rationed but vegetables readily available. But going back further in time, what was our diet like during The

Victorian era?

Leafing through a social history book about Victorian England, I was surprised to read that Victorians weren't entirely comfortable with the vegetable. In fact, they were what can only be described as suspicious about consuming them, unless they were subjected to a jolly good boiling - Mrs Beeton suggested that carrots should be boiled for over two hours!

But vegetables are now de rigueur both raw and cooked and it's time to start planting them. It sounds obvious, but only grow vegetables that you enjoy, crop well, are versatile or are very expensive to buy - herbs for example: one pound will only provide you with a mere handful of them from a supermarket. Victorians were also wary of fruit unless that was also cooked - stewed or in a pie.

And when it came to grapes, no self-respecting Victorian would have risked eating them without peeling and de-pipping them first - I think I might just have skipped the grape course.

Alison Main

Fete

At the Fete meeting on Wednesday 28th March, the date of the 2018 Fete was agreed as Saturday 15th September. The theme is to be based around the centenary of the RAF - 15th September is actually Battle of Britain Day. It was also agreed that of the £250 left in the Community Chest funds, £150 would go towards the repairs of the Play Area and £100 would go towards the cost of the Bedchester defibrillator (which will be placed in the Bedchester phonebox). The next meeting is on Wednesday 23rd May. Alix Austin, Secretary

Royal Wedding

A reminder (if you needed one) that the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle will take place from 12:00 to 14:00 on Saturday 19th May at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

The Great Plastic Pick Up

Blue collection bags are available in the shop for anyone taking part in the The Great Plastic Pick Up from Friday 11th to Sunday 13th May (details at www.greatplasticpickup.org). Filled bags can be left at the shop for removal.



*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 20th May 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).*

Dr Geoffrey William Tapper (1931-2018)

Dr Tapper, who is survived by his wife Philippa and their four sons, Henry, Rupert, Gregory and Albert, was born in London but had strong links to Fontmell. His grandmother was Kate Rose, youngest daughter of Job Rose, the miller at Woodbridge Mill until his death in 1871 aged 59. His grandfather, John Tapper, lived at Woodbridge Mill from 1919 to 1946. Dr Tapper's father, William, was a Methodist Minister and the Rose family were also Methodists. Dr Tapper was himself a devout Methodist and was a lay preacher for over 50 years.



Dr Tapper trained as a doctor in Middlesex Hospital, during which time he played rugby for Middlesex. After three years' national service with the Royal Navy, he became a house surgeon in obstetrics at Dorchester and in 1960 took up general practice in North Dorset living at The Mount in Shaftesbury. As well as a surgery in Shaftesbury, for three days a week Dr Tapper took over the surgery in Fontmell previously used by Dr Robin Lees who had died in his 40's. The surgery was in a converted garden shed at Estyard House, Parsonage Street.

Later in the 1960's, Dr Tapper moved his surgery to the Sunday School adjoining the Methodist Chapel, next to the village shop. The chapel kitchen became the waiting room. There was no appointment system. Any patient could (and did) walk in and sit, awaiting their turn. The surgery served any patients of the practice. These came mainly from Fontmell, Sutton Waldron, Iwerne Minster, Compton Abbas, The Orchards, Margaret Marsh and Ashmore. Patients who could not attend the surgery would be visited at home. Dr Tapper did an average of about 100 home visits a week, every week (not including the three weeks annual holiday), throughout his 30 years in the practice surgery. He retired in 1990.

Even before his retirement, Dr Tapper found time to take part in local politics. He became a Borough Councillor in Shaftesbury (and served as Mayor of Shaftesbury in 1974). Having unsuccessfully stood for Parliament as a Liberal Democrat in 1983 and 1987, he became a County Councillor in 1989. For four years, he was Dorset County Council's Chairman of Social Services. From 1993 to 1997, he was the leader of the Liberal Democrats' largest council. He stood down as a councillor in May 2000.

Dr Tapper delivered many babies at the Castle Hill House GP Maternity Unit until it closed down in 1984 (the last baby was born there on 12th August to mother Jackie Abbott of Springhead Farm). He was the driving force behind reopening Castle Hill House as a Nursing Home and, for nearly 30 years, was chair of the Trust, which later became the Shaftesbury Community Health Association, which bought the House and was later involved with The Cedars Nursing Home.

Despite a busy professional life, Dr Tapper found time for numerous other activities. He was Chair and then President of The Shaftesbury & District Historical Society and oversaw the re-invention of Gold Hill Museum. He was President of the Hardy Society and specialised in Thomas Hardy, his novels and his life. He was a director of Nordeat (North Dorset Community Accessible Transport) from 2001 to 2017, and a director of Dorset Community Action from 1997 to 2001. He was President of the Dorset Ramblers. For many years he was a member of the Fontmell Magna Village Archive Society. He collected antique maps of Dorset and loaned many at Archive Exhibitions over the years. He was an acknowledged expert on Dorset postal history as well as being a philatelist and amateur botanist. When his rugby playing days were over, he became a rugby referee. He was also an accomplished table tennis player and bridge player. He played the recorder and had a lusty singing voice.

In the words of his son, Henry: "After retiring from politics, his main hobby was writing poems for competitions in The Oldie and The Spectator magazines and soliciting readership for his translation of the Acts of the Apostles into blank verse. He was also a devotee of The Archers" (and Countdown).

Dear Customers and friends,

How can we even begin to thank you for our 5th Anniversary Surprise? Actually, it was Surprises! And we can assure you, with hands on hearts, that we didn't have the slightest idea beforehand. What we say here can't describe how incredibly astonished, grateful, humbled and plain gobsmacked we were to learn about how it was all planned and how long everyone had kept the secret. Just amazing!

We will enjoy every single second of our treats and will add photos to our 5th Anniversary display of your cards and well wishes (behind the fruit and veg. basket) to prove it! Do come and have a peak. Once again, to all those who contributed in any way and whether by name or anonymously, **thank you very much**. Love Jan and Rick, Fontmell Shop xx