



# The Grapevine

Issue 112

April 2015

## Editorial

As the Grapevine is non-political, all that the Editorial Team wishes to say on the subject of the forthcoming General Election, is that we would encourage everybody to use their vote in May. Many people live in countries that do not have our free voting privileges that have been hard fought for over the centuries, so get out there and vote out of respect for those that can't. Spring is upon us at last, winter is shaking off its last throes of misery and our feathered friends are engaging in what they like to do best at this time of year. With all the problems in the world, this is still a great country to live in and soon it will be time to get the BBQs out and undertake the annual rituals of wine tasting and grass cutting in the garden. We can't wait!

Welcome again to all the newcomers to our village. We hope you will enjoy life among this nice group of people who you will meet while out dog walking and at the various functions around the village. Sadly, we have to say goodbye to our resident cartoonist Millie Reeves and we would like to thank her for all her humorous contributions over the past year.

Here's to a great summer and glorious sun tans!

Eds

## Nature Diary - April

The countryside should now be changing from the drab, dull colours of winter back to the fresher and stronger colours of spring, and there is a lot of white to be seen in the hedgerows.

The most dramatic display is that of the Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) which produces masses of small white flowers before any of its foliage emerges, so that being a common hedgerow shrub, large banks of white adorn the edge of fields. If you have a hand lens or magnifying glass take a closer look at one of the flowers and marvel at its delicate intricacy and beauty. This emergence of the flowers often coincides with perhaps the last spell of cold weather, and this is described as the "blackthorn winter" - it is a regularly seen association.

The leaves break bud after the flowers, and these breaking buds are eaten by the hatching larvae of the Brown Hairstreak butterfly (*Thecla betulae*), which have spent the winter as tiny white eggs, placed singly by the female at the base of a young shoot at the margin of the hedge. These eggs are also incredibly beautiful if viewed with a hand lens.

Blackthorn is a very hard wood, and its thorns are just as tough, and able to pierce car tyres (unfortunately!). Later in the year the small, dark purple fruits of the blackthorn are to be found.

These are sloes, and a great favourite of many keen home-producers of Sloe Gin - a tasty cure for many winter maladies -and if it doesn't work, then it just doesn't seem to matter!

In the grass at the base of hedges can be found the Greater Stitchwort (*Stellaria holostea*), a plant that produces 2 - 3 cm wide white flowers, borne on weak, straggly stems, which benefit from the support of the surrounding grass. The flower has five petals, but each is so deeply cloven that it looks as if the flower has ten petals. Its name comes from the fact that the flowers were used to produce a drink or cure (wort) to treat a stitch (pain in the side). I think I'll stick to sloe gin.

Later in the month watch out for the return of the Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*), a warbler that has wintered south of the Sahara, coming back to breed here.

The male can be seen singing from its perch on top of a hedge or shrub, occasionally flying up a few metres, singing and returning to its perch. The song is melodious but can be a bit harsh or scratchy. The plumage is brown on the back with a grey top to the head. The under parts are pale, but with a very obvious white throat. They can be seen each year from the footpaths behind Church Farm, Hankerton, but they are shy, so binoculars will be needed for a good view.

Steve Davies



The next Newsletter will be published in June 2015.

Please send copy by 16th May 2015 to Craig McCallum, 19 Follyfield Hankerton, SN16 9LA or email to

[Craigmccallum@Btinternet.com](mailto:Craigmccallum@Btinternet.com)

All opinions expressed will be solely those of the correspondent.

Don't forget to visit the Hankerton Village Website at [www.hankertonvillage.com](http://www.hankertonvillage.com) for Parish, County Council, back issues of Grapevine and other useful local information

## Do you have things for sale or goods/services that are wanted?

Please feel free to use Grapevine to place your small ads. They are free for Hankerton residents or good causes and should be sent to Craig using his email address shown above.

## Do you need a babysitter?

Do you live in Hankerton and need a babysitter?

Flo, a responsible 15-year-old who lives in Church Lane, can babysit at weekend evenings and daytime and weekday evenings.

Please phone (01666) 575498.

## Golf Clubs for Sale

Sadly, Craig is selling his golf clubs, electric trolley and extras etc. Contact him for more details at his email address shown above.



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**Babysitter Required!**

Elf sitters are recruiting sitters to join our team. We are looking for experienced individuals with their own transport for evening childcare. Applicants should be over 18 years of age, have a current CRB/DBS disclosure (or willing to have one processed), checkable references and weekend availability (we do also have week night bookings).

To apply please contact Emma Fursman-Ward.  
01666 860171 | [emma@elfsitters.co.uk](mailto:emma@elfsitters.co.uk) | [www.elfsitters.co.uk](http://www.elfsitters.co.uk)



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### **Minety Minis Rugby**

As the 6 nations ramps up for another rip-roaring season, future generations of sports men and women are being introduced to the game at local rugby clubs every weekend across the country. At Minety RFC, our players, both girls and boys, start at the age of 5 as "Rugby Minis". They can progress through to the Junior section when they reach 12 (At which point boys and girls train and compete separately within their respective gender groups) and then onto Adult Rugby when they reach 18. From the first week in September through to the end of April, Sunday mornings are punctuated between 10:30am until noon with the cacophony of determined players and tumultuous encouragement from parents and coaches. Of course, the Mini's don't play "full contact" rugby until they reach the age of 8. Instead they learn and play "Tag" or "Touch" rugby, a non-contact version of the game where players are required to pass the ball when they are tagged. Through Tag Rugby, younger players develop coordination, agility, teamwork and tactical skills in a safer environment. From the touchline I would argue Tag Rugby is as nail-biting to watch as any international. At all levels Minety focuses players, parents and coaches on the importance of sportsmanship, enjoyment of the game and positive encouragement. It is therefore not surprising that as well as being reasonably successful in fixtures and festivals, Minety are consistently commended for their sportsmanship both on and off the pitch. Boys and girls of all ages are welcome and we encourage children to come and try it for a few weeks. Joining or getting involved couldn't be easier: Get in contact with one of the club representatives who can be found at [www.pitchero.com/clubs/minetyjuniorrugbyclub](http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/minetyjuniorrugbyclub) or check when we are playing at home and come down on a Sunday morning and speak to one of the coaches.

Adrian Thorne

Minety Under 6 Coach



## Can YOU help....?

Can you spare a little time during the week to befriend someone who may be housebound and lonely? Could you step in to support someone who has just come out of hospital? I have been asked by Age UK and Carer Support Wiltshire to do a bit of advertising for them. Annie and Jane's contact details are below, or call me, Ellen, on 07557 922020 for an informal chat.



### Volunteers needed in this area for our Home from Hospital Service

This service is being offered to older people who have been discharged from hospital and are worried about how they will manage when they return home. Volunteers will provide short term support for 4-8 weeks, assisting the service user to regain the independence they had before the admission to hospital. An example of this would be doing someone's shopping for the first two weeks, and then accompanying them on a shopping trip on the third week. Annie and Jane, the Discharge Support Caseworkers, will support volunteers every step of the way.

#### Would this type of role suit your skills and experience?

This role would suit somebody warm and friendly, who is a good listener and sensitive to older people's needs, and who has their own car and is happy to drive within their locality.

#### How much time and commitment is involved?

Usually between 1-2 hours for each person visited, perhaps twice a week.

#### What training is provided?

Home from Hospital Volunteer Induction Training Programme – 4 hours

**For further information please contact: Annie Fiducia or Jane Harber on 01380 727767**

## WIVES GROUP

The Charlton and Hankerton Wives Group is an informal group that meets once a month, in the evenings, to enjoy each other's company. Activities, talks, dining out and craft evenings are examples of past activities. We welcome new members. Contact Susan 577526 or Claudine 577627 for further information.

## COFFEE MORNINGS

Coffee is available in the North Aisle of the church every Saturday morning between 10:30 am and 12 noon. There is a regular group of attendees but new visitors would be very welcome.

If you would like to volunteer to organise one Saturday it is very straightforward. Please contact Anne Brown or have a chat to whoever is "on duty" when you visit on a Saturday.

#### The North Aisle Committee

## Hankerton Art Group

Are there any frustrated, wannabe or totally amateur Picassos out there. Craig McCallum would like to start an Art Group in Hankerton and our resident artist, Christine Jarvis, has kindly offered to provide her expert painting skills and tutoring to help budding artists (like Craig). If you are interested in joining us in this new village activity please drop an email to Craig - see front page for his email address. If there is sufficient interest he will organise an initial meeting to talk about the way forward. All levels of expertise are very welcome.

Craig



# Hankerton History Group

## A Grand Obsession

If like me, you are obsessed with dates and their relevance to historical events, then 2015 is a truly rich year for my fellow obsessives. For instance, 1215 was the date of the signing of the Magna Carta by King John of England while his brother King Richard the Lion heart swanned off to the Holy Land crusading against the Infidel under the leadership of Saladin. It has to be remembered that John and Richard were descendants of William the Conqueror who became King of England after defeating an English army at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Thus much of this period of English history was actually provided by the Norman-French. As we will see, this was the only period when the French influenced British history in France's favour.

The next significant date insofar as this article is concerned was 1415 when an English army under the leadership of King Henry V, defeated a French army at the battle of Agincourt. 2015 is the 600th anniversary of this significant battle. On his accession to the throne of England in April 1413 Henry V resolved to revive the war against France and press his claim to the French throne. In August 1415 Henry's army landed at Harfleur and began the siege of the town. Harfleur finally surrendered on 22nd September 1415, no French army having appeared to relieve it. Because of sickness and death, Henry's army at Agincourt was probably around 5,000 knights, men-at-arms and archers. Estimates of the size of the French army vary widely, from 30,000 to as high as 100,000. As the English army marched to within 30 miles of Calais and safety scouts came riding back with the news that an immense army blocked the road. The French had managed to march past the English and cut across their route to Calais. A Welsh man-at-arms, David Gambe, on being questioned by King Henry as to the size of the French army, said "There are enough to kill, enough to capture and enough to run away." The next morning, 25th October 1415, the feast of St Crispin, the English army took up position across the road to Calais in three divisions of knights and men-at-arms. Henry, urged to begin the battle by his commanders, gave the command "Forward banners" and the army advanced with trumpets blaring. Once in arrow range of the French Henry gave the command to halt and the divisions closed up, the archers setting their pointed staves in the ground forming a fence leaning outwards towards the French. On the king's signal the English archers opened a devastating fire on the compact mass of French knights and men-at-arms. After the initial shock the front line of the French army moved forward to the charge. In the narrow confines of the muddy rain soaked ploughland the charge quickly reduced to a stumbling walk, impeded by the floundering men and horses shot down by the archers, the arrow storm from the front compounded by the fire of the English concealed in the woods on the flanks.

The battle raged over the stake fence along the English line, the archers abandoned their bows and joined the knights and men-at-arms in hand to hand combat with the French cavalry, much of it now dismounted; the soldiers from the woods attacking on the flanks. Within two hours of the battle beginning it was clear that the English had won. While individual French soldiers fought hard, it was from desperation as the English knights, men-at-arms and archers overwhelmed the struggling mass, taking as prisoner those who might be worth a ransom and killing the rest.



The third significant date is 1815 and this year is the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. On 1st March 1815 Napoleon escaped from Elba and landed in France. The European allies reassembled their armies under the leadership of the Duke of Wellington and prepared to overthrow the Emperor yet again. Napoleon resolved to attack the British, Prussian, Belgian and Dutch armies before the other European powers could come to their assistance. He marched into Belgium. The Prussians under Marshall Blucher were defeated at Ligny and driven away to the East. Napoleon sent Marshall Grouchy in pursuit while he advanced on Wellington's army. The opening battle was at the cross roads called Quatre Bras. The British and their allies were forced to withdraw towards Brussels. Assured by Blucher that he would join him for the conclusive battle, Wellington on the afternoon of 17th June 1815 halted on the ridge astride the Brussels road south of Soignies where he resolved to give battle to the French. It rained heavily during the night of 17th June 1815. The French artillery commanders insisted that the attack did not begin until the ground had dried out sufficiently for the guns to manoeuvre without sticking in the mud. At 11am the French bombardment of Hougoumont Farm, on the extreme right of the Allied line, began the battle. The British artillery on the ridge behind the farm replied, cannonading the French infantry massed for the attack on the far side of the valley. At 1.30pm Marshal Ney brought forward 74 French guns over the ridge opposite La Haye Sante followed by D'Erlon's corps to begin the attack on the Duke of Wellington's centre and left. After half an hour the barrage stopped, giving way to the roar of drums as Ney's columns advanced to the attack. The French infantry passed La Haye Sante and marched up to the crest of the ridge, where Picton's 5th division was positioned. As part of the advance a furious assault began on La Haye Sante, held by the King's German Legion, which was to continue intermittently for the rest of the day until the German troops ran out of ammunition and were finally overwhelmed. As the French infantry approached the hedge at the top of the ridge the line of British infantry stood, fired a volley and charged, driving back the massed French columns. British cavalry formations were ordered to charge in support of the infantry attack. The Union Brigade continued its attack across the valley. These regiments charged up to the French gun line on the far ridge where they were in turn destroyed by French lancers and cavalry.

Ney launched a massive cavalry attack on the Allied line without notifying Napoleon who was resting. Before the French could reach the Allied line the infantry formed squares interlaced with artillery batteries. The French cuirassiers flowed around the squares but were unable to penetrate them and were destroyed. During the next three hours some twelve cavalry attacks were made up to the ridge and back. Napoleon while deprecating the initial attack as premature felt bound the commit increasing numbers of cavalry to support the assault. Ney led the five battalions up the left hand side of the Brussels road. As they climbed the ridge they came under fire from a curve of batteries assembled to meet them.



The 3rd Regiment of Chasseurs approached the ridge opposite Maitland's Brigade of Foot Guards (2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 1st Foot Guards). Wellington called to the brigade commander "Now Maitland. Now's your time". The 52nd Foot outflanked the French column as it passed, fired a destructive volley into the left flank of the Chasseurs and attacked with the bayonet.

The whole of the Guard was driven back down the hill and began a general retreat to the cry of "La Garde recule". The French were beaten again. and Napoleon went into exile on St Helena.



**Craig**

## History Group Events

The people at the February meeting were shown a film directed by Daniel McAleavey and produced by The Flying Monk Company Productions about the First Battalion of the Wiltshire Regiment and the retreat from Mons to Le Cateau in France during the first weeks of the Great War, 1914. This film followed several scout troops who retraced the steps of the retreat and attended international commemorative events along the way. Everyone agreed that it was a very interesting and well-researched film and had great praise for the local film makers. A donation of £20 is being sent to Unicef and the Royal British Legion where all the profits from this film are donated .

### A visit to RAF Museum Hendon

[www.rafmuseum.org](http://www.rafmuseum.org)

The Hankerton History Group is organising a coach trip to the Museum on Wed. April 29.

The RAF Museum in Hendon has recently opened a WW1 exhibition in the Graham-White Hangar with original aircraft (and some replicas) showing the development of aircraft through the period of World War One. The original aircraft display is the largest collection of WW1 aircraft in existence. The displays also include the stories of the lives of airmen and women and displays of diaries and artefacts.

We have already visited the exhibition and can thoroughly recommend it!

There are over 100 aircraft on site, a Battle of Britain Hall, historic hangars, an Aeronauts Interactive Centre and a Milestones of Flight Hall. Restaurant and café provide refreshments.

Archives and research: If you would like to conduct research into a family member or specific events, 5 places have been booked in the Reading Room and archives. Please let us know if you would like to book a place.

Entry to the museum is free; the cost of the coach will be about £22, depending on the numbers (min30, max 50).

We plan to leave Malmesbury Old Station Yard car-park around 8am, leaving Hendon at 3.30pm. Journey time will be approx 2.5 hrs.

If you would like to go, please let us know as soon as possible with your full contact details to [tgmockler@aol.com](mailto:tgmockler@aol.com)

Places will be allocated first-come, first served. As the coach is to be paid before we go, full payment will be needed by March 20th, and is non-refundable.

### Next meetings.

#### April 21<sup>st</sup>

7.30pm Holy Cross Church

AGM and talk about the footpaths and boundaries of Hankerton. Everyone welcome, please join us for refreshments.

#### May 20<sup>th</sup>

7.30pm Holy Cross Church

An illustrated talk about three men from the Army, The Navy and The Royal Flying Corps who fought in the Great War 1914 -18. Hear their personal accounts of training, fighting and being a prisoner of war as recorded in letters and diaries. Notices about meetings are displayed around the village and on the Hankerton web site. Information from: Susan 577526.

## Celebration Afternoon Tea

*Sunday 17 May 3pm*

*North Aisle, Hankerton Church*

*Join us for a vintage tea party with sandwiches, scones and cake.*

*You can even make it into a more special occasion with a glass of sparkling wine.*

*What are we celebrating?*

*Who knows, it's just an excuse for a village get-together with family and friends.*

*Adults £7.50*

*Children (under 12) £3*

*For more details contact a member of the North Aisle Committee.*

*Posters will be going up nearer the time.*

## Hankerton Golf Club

There is great excitement building with the members, Spring is on the way and at the time of writing the Devon Cornwall tour is just around the corner.

David and the two Mikes are in Spring Training playing 18 holes mid week as well as the usual Friday bash around.

For 2015 the club is having a Birdie award. The trophy at the moment is in the imagination but will come to reality when purchased from club fees, which to remind everyone, are due April 1st. The plan is to have a Trophy of some splendour.

So far this year the Birdie ward has been won in this order: Frances David, Frances, David, Peter.

The term "Birdie" signifies one under par and comes from an American named AG Smith. While playing in 1899 he hit what he described as a Bird of a Shot, which over time became a Birdie.

We still have only one player who has played the ultimate, a Hole in One and that is Brian.

### ***And a golfing joke to end.....***

Several men are in the locker room of a golf club.

A mobile phone on a bench rings and a man engages the hands-free speaker function and begins to talk.

Everyone else in the room stops talking.

MAN: "Hello"

WOMAN: "Hi Honey, it's me. Are you at the club?"

MAN: "Yes."

WOMAN: "I'm at the shops now and found this beautiful leather coat. It's only \$2,000. Is it OK if I buy it?"

MAN: "Sure, go ahead if you like it that much."

WOMAN: "I also stopped by the Lexus dealership and saw the new models. I saw one I really liked."

MAN: "How much?"

WOMAN: "\$90,000."

MAN: "OK, but for that price I want it with all the options."

WOMAN: "Great! Oh, and one more thing..."

I was just talking to Kate and found out that the house I wanted last year is back on the market. They're asking \$980,000 for it."

MAN: "Well, then go ahead and make an offer of \$900,000."

They'll probably take it. If not, we can go the extra eighty-thousand if it's what you really want."

WOMAN: "OK. I'll see you later! I love you so much!"

MAN: "Bye! I love you, too."

The man hangs up. The other men in the locker room are staring at him in astonishment, mouths wide open.

He turns and asks, "Anyone know who owns this phone?"

***Peter Jeffries***

# Hankerton Church News



## Hankerton Church Services April 2015

Please note the Church is open every Saturday, unless specified, for tea, coffee and chat; all are welcome.

April

Maundy Thursday	2nd	6:30pm	service and agape supper Crudwell
Good Friday	3rd	2pm	Service of devotion Hankerton
Easter day	5th	9:30am	Holy Communion
	12th	10am	Group Holy Communion Minety
	19th	11am	Informal Service

May

3rd	9:30am	Holy Communion
10th	10am	Group Holy Communion Oaksey
13th	7:30pm	Arch Deacons Visitation St. Sampsons Cricklade
14th	7:30pm	Ascension Day
		Group Holy Communion Ashley
17th	11am	Informal Service
	3pm	vintage afternoon tea
31st	10am	Group Holy Communion Charlton

June

7th	9:30am	Holy Communion
14th	10am	Group Holy Communion Crudwell
21st	11am	Informal Service
28th	3-5pm	Strawberry tea

July

5th	9:30am	Holy Communion
12th	10am	Group Holy Communion Hankerton
19th	11am	Informal Service

## information from the registers

On 28th February Sarah Mansfield and Austin Richards were married.

## VISION

Keep your eyes on Jesus and you will not stumble  
When sins want to trip you up and make you tumble

Away from the path He shows you is right -

Hold your eyes on Our Lord, keep Him in sight ...

Think on Jesus when life is proving hard -

Put discouragement behind you, be on your guard

Do not think you are on your own - You will never be alone ...

Do not give up on Our Lord, be true -

Remember what He gave up for you

He sacrificed His Life upon the Cross, an act of deepest Love.

- Reflect on this when you feel like straying  
and times are proving tough

When you have to endure your difficulties  
and days seem to be turning sour -

Concentrate on Him, remember what happened  
at that darkest hour

The chains of sin that bound us tight  
were broken and unwrapped -

He set us free to start again, no longer were we trapped  
Feel the joy within your heart when you pray in quietness -

Let Our Lord's Love swamp you, eliminate unhappiness

Forget external circumstances do not feel depressed and weak -

Focus your eyes on Jesus and you will find the Love that you seek.

24.07.97.

(Hebrews 12:1-11)

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## NEW VICAR APPOINTED

We are delighted to be able to announce the appointment of Rev Phil Daniels as the new vicar for The Braydon Brook Group (Ashley, Charlton, Crudwell, Hankerton, Minety and Oaksey). He and his wife Rhoda will take up residence in The Rectory at Crudwell, hopefully in July, and we look forward to welcoming them to our community.

Philip Carter and Valerie Durnford  
Churchwardens

## Hankerton Church Supper

33 people sat down on Saturday 7th March to a superb supper. The Church was attractive with flowers and candles from a recent wedding, adding atmosphere to a very enjoyable village event. Thanks to all who came, and those who helped in any way. All monies raised go to Church funds.



## HANKERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Items discussed at the Hankerton Parish Council meeting on 2 March included the amenity area, the Hannah Ludlow Trust and the annual spring clean (date to be confirmed). The next meeting is on Monday 11 May, 7.30pm. This is the annual parish meeting and there will be updates from the last year of activities in or affecting Hankerton. Go to the village website for more information about the Parish Council

John Thorne