

NORTH ASTON

NEWS

July 2022

#381

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THEATRE COMPANY

www.northastontheatre.org.uk



NORTH ASTON NEWS

JULY 2022, No:381

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Out of Hours Doctor: 111 or 08453 458 995

Notes from the Chair

It seems to be July already – how did that happen so fast? And it is Wimbledon fortnight and therefore raining again. It is of course very good for the gardens after the very dry Spring.

It is St Swithin's day on 15th July when, according to folklore, if it rains on that day it will continue to rain for another 40 days. So let's hope it is dry and we can all look forward to some glorious weather through the Summer holidays.

Christopher

You can phone Christopher on 340358

or you can email him using: chair@north-aston.co.uk



Many thanks to all those who made the Jubilee Celebration Lunch such a huge success last month. Close on 100 residents attended, and the rain held off ... just.

Planning

Planning Applications

After much delay, the raft of outstanding planning applications have almost all been resolved, and approval given in every case. To view details of Planning Applications submitted to CDC visit <https://planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/> and keyword search "North Aston" for more information. To find a specific application, use the CDC reference number.

Gate Cottage, Somerton Road, North Aston OX25 6HX. The notices relating to use of stone and zinc, doors and windows within the extension to the rear of Gate Cottage remain under consultation. Reference Nos: 22 / 01072 / DISC and 22 / 01073 / DISC

North Aston Hall, St Mary's Walk, North Aston OX25 6AA. The application to realign the existing parkland drive to The Hall and construct a new gateway onto the Middle Aston Lane has been approved. Reference No: 22 / 01094 / F

North Aston Hall, St Mary's Walk, North Aston OX25 6AA. The application to carry out replacement of all sash windows in the Hall has been approved. Reference No: 22 / 00881 / LB

Bradenstoke Barn, St Mary's Walk, North Aston OX25 6AA. The outstanding conditional discharges relating to restoration and renovation of the Barn have now all been approved.

North Aston Hall, St Mary's Walk, North Aston OX25 6AA. The applications to build an estate office, vehicle storage facility and to replace the agricultural storage barn have finally been approved. Reference Nos: 22 / 00276 / F and 22 / 00224 / F

The defibrillator is located in the porch at 4 Somerton Road. CPR & Defibrillator training sessions are arranged from time to time. For more information or to book a session, please contact Mark: 347806



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North Aston Gardening Club

Don't forget that this year's Flower & Produce Show will be held on the Green on Saturday 27th August, which is the August Bank Holiday weekend.

Last year, due to Covid restrictions, all categories were judged in advance by an external panel. This year we have decided that there will be a mixture of judging, with a return to some classes being judged by those attending, and some being judged by experts before the Show starts.

We have devised a new system for the public vote which (we hope!) will make them easier and quicker to tally up.

The Entry Form will be circulated with the August issue of the News, but to give you a taster – and so you can start getting prepared – these are some of the special categories:

- Hanging Basket
- The Chris Tuffrey Cup: The Longest Runner Bean
- Return of "cooking" classes for
 - Jams and Marmalade
 - Pickles
 - Victoria Sandwich and
 - Lemon Drizzle Cake
- Photograph on a theme of *Red, White & Blue*

Entries for all the familiar vegetable and floral categories will be welcome, and during the Show there will also be the return match of Tug-of-War with Duns Tew!

We hope that members of the village will join in with this End-of-Summer event, either as participants and/or as spectators! For further information please contact Tuck on 347727 or email him at tuck56@hotmail.com



After a three year enforced absence due to Covid, the Deddington Festival returns this month, with plenty of fun and entertainment for all the family.

There are still some tickets available for the *Children's Festival*, with weaving and Muddy Feet Forest School workshops, as well as the sessions hosted by local children's author and illustrator Sarah Mahfoudh. Check the event's Facebook page for details: <https://www.facebook.com/deddyfest/>

The *Deddy Car Fest* of pre-bookable passenger rides will return as well this year, with a staggering variety of vehicles taking part, from the latest supercars and classic sportscars to the latest EVs. Rides take place from 12 pm through to 5 pm in the Market Place – book online at www.deddycarfest.co.uk.

There will also be an exhibition by local artists and sculptors, with a special display by some of the area's younger artists.

As if that wasn't enough, Deddington will be rocking on Saturday, starting from around 2 pm singer-songwriter Patrick Foley will be first on stage, followed by Dave Arrowsmith's electric blues band. The Knights of Mentis, an acoustic ten-piece that combines Americana, country, folk and roots music, will take the gig into the early evening. Around half-six, Cold Blue Daze - a four-piece rock and pop covers band - takes to the stage. Finally, at around 8.45pm, the headline Queen tribute band will be creating 'A Kind of Magic', performing the iconic band's best known and most loved hits.

Food and refreshments available throughout the day.

Duns Tew Village Fête

Although our own Fête hasn't returned this year (perhaps it will in 2023?) most of our neighbouring villages are staging fêtes this summer, and we have three in July, with Tackley on the 2nd, Duns Tew on the 3rd and Steeple on the 9th.

The Duns Tew Church Fête will be held in the Manor Gardens, on Sunday 3rd July from 1:30 pm through to 4 pm. All the usual games and attractions will be on offer, from the Bletchington Silver Band to the Forklift Challenge, bowling and pony rides. Entrance is £2, with children under 16 free.

After a pandemic-pause of two years, the Tug-of-War competition is back, and Mark Stay has been organising the eight-strong team of men and women to defend North Aston's honour, as reigning champions. The 'pull' will take place at around 2:30 pm. Please do go along to support the event, and cheer on the North Aston squad.

There will be a return match against Somerton at the Flower & Produce Show in August.

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North Aston Nature Notes

With Stephen Rees

I was just admiring five little Blue Tits on our feeder while doing the washing-up when all of a sudden, SMASH ... a Sparrow Hawk flew into the middle of them, and caught one. It happened so quick, and with such accuracy, that it just took my breath away. Astonishing.



So, a few good things this month. I went out the other morning to give our little Bantams our left-over pizza for their breakfast, and while Wendy was brushing her teeth, she witnessed a funny thing. A Magpie came out of the run carrying a bit of pizza, landed, and proceeded to pluck grass from nearby and then put it on top of its prize. Then it flew back to the pen, got another bit, and flew into the hedge to its nest. A few

moments later it returned, picked up the piece it had hidden and flew away again. So it got two bits of food while the others only got one. Very clever.

We have had a family of seven Shrews living on our patio. They've been so very entertaining to watch, following each other around from one end of our wall to the other, traipsing along in a long line. Down here looking outside is better than watching the TV – we see all sorts!

Wendy's catnip is still covered in Bumble Bees every evening, especially when it's sunny, and our new hotels are full, although we have three woodpeckers who keep pulling them about a bit.

The Blue Tits make a real mess of nutty bits on the floor under the feeders, much to the pleasure of two extremely gay Wood Pigeons, who Hoover up all the scraps. Then I thought, well, why not make the humble old woody our *Bird of the Month*, so here goes.



Bird of the Month ~ Wood Pigeon

The Wood Pigeon, *Columba palumbus*. I love the Latin names. They only lay two eggs, but can have six clutches a year, and they're the only British bird that will nest in any month of the year.

The young pigeon, called a *Squab*, is fed by the female, who makes a very rich milky substance in her throat. We used to do an awful lot of pigeon shooting years ago, and for my money pigeons are one of the most sporting and difficult birds to shoot with a consistency. They have extremely good eyesight and an awareness for things not being right about a roost or a feeding ground.

When they come into land to feed, flapping their wings exposes two white flashes on their wings, which other birds will see from half a mile away. The gullet of a pigeon is really remarkable, and can hold up to 150 acorns at a time.

The bird has many old English names, and these vary from county to county. My favourites are *cushy doo* and *quist bird*.

Pigeons do a huge amount of damage to farmer's crops, in particular oilseed rape, and it's estimated that the cost to British agriculture averages about £12 million a year.

One last fact then. When the Black Death was dealing havoc in London, you could buy a pigeon that you plucked while it was still alive. You then had to hold the bird against your "ring of roses". Remember the nursery rhyme? That's what they called the scabs under the arms ... a tissue a tissue, we all fall down ... dead. Anyway, if the pigeon lived, you wouldn't. Flipping 'eck!

Regards, Steve & Wendy



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Red Sky at Night

We're so fortunate here in North Aston that we receive a visit each year from the Mikron Theatre Company. There are villages and towns up and down the country, with community halls and pubs that are far better suited to a travelling theatre than our village green, yet they come here, to entertain us. What's more, they've been doing it for ten years now.

I first encountered Mikron in 1977. I was a student then, and had a summer job working as skipper on a 70 foot charter narrowboat, based on the Llangollen Canal. It was my first season on the 'cut', and I was still learning the ropes. Those who worked on the waterways in those days were still a close-knit community, many of them ex-working boatmen or their families, and an incomer like me didn't warrant their friendship, but it was extended generously even so.

A young couple, Mac and Carl, ran a travelling shop out of a converted working boat moored at Marbury. On a Friday evening in September we all bundled into their old Morris van, me loose in the back, and drove to Acton Bridge. Mikron was performing in the Leigh Arms, overlooking the River Weaver, and the pub was heaving. We arrived late, and didn't get to see much of the show, but afterwards I was introduced to Mike Lucas, founder of Mikron, and the rest of the cast. That included flame-haired Buffy Davis, who went on to work widely in film and TV before landing the role of Jolene in the *Archers*.



Having missed most of the performance that evening, I was determined to catch up with them again, and I managed to get a front row seat for another show later that year. That first meeting with Mike grew into a friendship that lasted many years, and I got to know him, his wife Sarah, and young son Sam very well. I was welcomed into the Mikron family, getting to know the cast, being trusted to steer the company's narrowboat *Tyseley* between venues, and even helping Sam with his home-education lessons.

Some of those early cast members went on to become household names. Probably best known is Mark Williams – *The Fast Show*, Ron Weasley's father in the *Harry Potter* films, and more recently, as *Father Brown*. It was evident, back in the early 80s, that Mark was going to travel far. He was hilarious, kind and generous. He stayed with Mikron for about five years before fame beckoned. Also in the cast then was Mark Strickson, who went on to become a companion to Peter Davidson's fifth *Dr Who*, while Julie Brennon would join *Dr Who* number seven, Sylvester McCoy, before starring in *Emmerdale*. I'm sure Sarah Wilson would have been another to find wider success, following early roles in *Last of the Summer Wine*, before tragically succumbing to cancer at a cruelly young age. I was lucky to count them all as friends.



Anna Winslet, Kate's older sister, also did a tour, and there have been many others who've seen Mikron as a rung on the ladder towards stage and screen. Last month's performance on the Green introduced us to three talented young actors; Hannah Bainbridge, Thomas Cotran and Alice McKenna, as well as a familiar face in James McLean, who's been with Mikron six years now and visited North Aston every time! Alongside "Raising Agents", which the troupe offered us in 2015, this season's all-new production is "Red Sky at Night", which plays on the British obsession with the weather to tell the history of meteorological forecasting.

As with every Mikron production, "Red Sky at Night" was a mix of humour, pathos and song. I concede that the storyline was less of a narrative than most Mikron productions, but the songs had toes tapping, and the comedy came thick and fast ... aided by the faded fabric of picnic chairs giving way under the strain, and the energetic dancing of one toddler in the audience.



It was encouraging to see so many people on the Green, despite the grey skies and chill breeze. Strangely, most were not North Aston residents, and I do wonder if those from within the village who stayed away realise what they're missing. After the show James did say that they hoped Mikron could return again next year, and if they do, I would urge those who've never attended a performance before to give it a go.

If you already wish you'd not missed it, Mikron will be at The Boat Inn in Kidlington on 5th August, Adderbury on the 14th, and Cropredy on the 9th. If you're really brave, you could join them at The Toad Gin Distillery in Oxford on 6th August, but be warned ... it's a British Naturism Event, so everyone except the cast could be naked!

Full details and plenty of information about Mikron can be found on the website: www.mikron.org.uk MP

From the FIRE STATION

Thirteen fire calls this month – not sure if this is considered lucky or unlucky! Usual mixture of standbys, alarms, hazmat and entrapment. Nothing protracted, just standard shouts for the crew.

Training carries on a plenty, with Garin Wilby and James Greenwood having completed and passed their BA Board and Oral, with just their practical wear to pass before they can operate as a BA team leader.

Long service awards were presented to Adam Franklin and Andy Hayward. Jubilee service medals being presented to Emma Flint, Adam Franklin, Adrian Spilsbury, Andy Hayward and Chris Fenemore. Presentations by SM Dave Edge and GM Mike Adcock.



This month sees the introduction of “Home Safety Week”, promoting awareness of summer bonfires and BBQs – namely awareness of unattended fires and fire spread, even from embers. Also, the brigade is highlighting “Child Safety Week”, underlining correct fitment of child seats and booster seats in cars and the correct wearing of seatbelts.

James Greenwood FFD james@cyclogicalshop.co.uk

Dates for your Diary

It is Tackley Church & PTA Fête on Saturday July 2nd, starting at 2:00 pm, and then Steeple Aston Church Fête on Saturday 9th July, also starting at 2:00pm.

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| Church Services in July 2022 | | |
|---|--|---|
| N. ASTON | S. ASTON | TACKLEY |
| Sunday 3rd July | | |
| 9:30 am Holy Communion <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> | 11:00 am Holy Communion <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> | 5:30 pm Evensong |
| Sunday 10th July | | |
| 9:30 am Family Communion | 11:00 am Family Communion | 5:30 pm Holy Communion |
| Sunday 17th July | | |
| No Service | No Service | 10:30 am United Benefice Holy Communion |
| Sunday 24th July | | |
| 9:30 am Holy Communion | 11:00 am Holy Communion | 5:30 pm Evensong |
| Sunday 31st July | | |
| 9:30 am Morning Prayer | 11:00 am Morning Prayer | 9:30 am Family Communion |

More news is always available from: www.sntchurch.com

You can contact members of the North Aston PCC:
Church Wardens: Clive Busby, (casb@north-aston.com, 340470) and Annabel Bevan, (annabelbevan@hotmail.com, 345153).
Richard Bailey (LLM, ex officio), Vicky Taylor (secretary), Jeremy Taylor, Ginny Stay, Jane Jana, Les Parry, Beryl Greenwood.

Announcements

Deddington Farmers' Market

This month the Farmers' Market will be held on Saturday 23rd July, starting from 9 am through until 12:30. Please park at the school if possible, and take your own bags and containers to save on single-use plastics. For further information and the latest news, visit the website: www.deddingtonfarmersmarket.co.uk

Wednesday Fish & Chips: 7:25 pm to 7:40 pm

Van 99 missed the last Wednesday in June, for staff holidays. Hopefully, back on schedule through July, calling at the Green on Wednesday evenings between 7:25 pm and 7:40 pm. You can track the van's progress on www.bit.ly/findvan99 and pre-order by email to van99orders@gmail.com or calling 07484 360719.

Baby Sitting Service

Susie Taylor's babysitting service can be booked for Friday or Saturday nights, or weeknights during school holidays, by calling Vicky on 07483 291277.

Dog Walking Service

Evelyn's Dog Walking Service is now available evenings and weekends, just £5/hr. Message or call Lucinda on 07869 282227

Homes For Ukraine Scheme

Cherwell District Council is actively involved in the *Homes for Ukraine Scheme*. Under this scheme, UK Hosts agree to sponsor Ukrainian Guests during their time in the UK, and support them in their application for visas and to provide accommodation for at least 6 months. Currently 120 Ukrainians have been settled into 58 addresses across Cherwell, with a further 130 due soon. Homes are spread across the district, with about two thirds in villages. Under the arrangement the Host receives a 'Thank-you' payment each month, but is not allowed to charge rent. The Council also receives a lump sum from central government to cover services and resettlement costs, while each Guest is given an emergency payment on arrival. There is still a need for more Hosts to help with the scheme. Further details can be found by contacting CDC on ukraine.support@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

We are pleased to learn that a Ukrainian family has already been settled into the village, and we look forward to welcoming them in the coming days and weeks.



Front cover: The Mikron Theatre Company performed on the Green, on Friday 24th June (MP). Above: It's been a good start for roses! (EH-L)

July Birthdays

Jane Durnin
Eddie Hatzigeorgiou
Robert Hite
Marc Le Clerq
Rosi Nicholson
Marcus Potts
Colin Rainbow
Eileen West



Many Happy Returns to all the North Aston residents who celebrate birthdays this month. If you're not listed, or know someone who should be, please let us know.



Aunt Sally is Back!

The Green will be a little busier every second Wednesday, with July dates for Aunt Sally being 13th and 27th, from 7 pm.

Bring along your own bottle of beer or a glass of wine, and make an evening of it, with a portion of Fish & Chips from Van 99!



June 2022

This month's winners were:
1st Prize (£10): Freya Doggett (#25)
2nd Prize (£5): Scott Plowman (#92)

Renewal time is upon us again. If you haven't yet returned your envelopes, please do so as soon as possible. There is one month's 'grace', but after that unpaid winning numbers go back into the pot! For more info, call Bev on 347434 or email info@north-aston.co.uk.

You've got to be in it to win it!

North Aston News

The North Aston News is designed and produced by CMC Graphics, printed by Nicholson's of North Aston, and distributed monthly, free of charge, to all the residents of the Parish of North Aston. A full-colour edition in electronic format is also available and is sent out to an extensive emailing list every month. To be included in that list, please contact the News, stating your wish to be added to the mailing list. We welcome contributions, which need to be in an electronic format (except Classifieds and Announcements, which may be hand written). To submit an item, including high resolution photographs suitable for use on the front cover, please email: info@north-aston.co.uk.

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