

the magazine for town and parish since 1872

yB

Your Berkhamsted

June/July 2021

Volunteers Week

**Berkhamsted Art Society
Exhibition**

Moira Sinclair awarded OBE

Things to do during Half Term



Exploring the past, reflecting the present and looking to the future in Berkhamsted

In this issue...

WELCOME TO THE JUNE/JULY 2021 EDITION OF YOUR

BERKHAMSTED. As I write this we are nearing the end of restrictions, albeit it maybe a little bit longer to wait, but places are open again, shops, restaurants, gyms etc so gradually a little bit of normality. In this edition there are more pages as I had so many great items to add. One being, our very own Berkhamsted resident, Moira Sinclair on receiving an OBE for her charitable work. She has kindly giving us an insight of what it feels like to be a recipient of such a great award. Another great story of achievement is that the Sunnyside Rural Trust have received the Queens Award. This is well deserved as a charity and social enterprise that offers training and work experience for vulnerable people. Dennis Furnell continues to marvel us with his nature piece and his wonderful view of what is out there. There is much more in this edition and I hope you enjoy! Please look out for YB tweets on @Yourberkhamsted. Do get in touch if there are any ideas or stories you may have, either to publish or additions/changes to the magazine for consideration. And please give us your feedback on the features.



JACQUELINE - YBEDITOR@GREATBERKHAMSTED.ORG.UK

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Front cover: Mitzie Green for a lovely picture of Tropical Flowers. You can see more of her work on her website: www.mitziegreen.co.uk

The Town and Parish Magazine of St Peter's Great Berkhamsted

Responsibility for opinions expressed in articles and letters published in this magazine and for the accuracy of any statements in them rests solely with the individual contributor.

Rambles from Berkhamsted by Julian Dawson



The big business news in the town at the end of April was the acquisition of Aitchison Residential estate agents by Ashtons. This was reported in Estate Agent Today, Livingmags.info and MyNewsMag.co.uk. estateagenttoday.co.uk reported that "Aitchisons' offices in St Albans and Berkhamsted will now join Ashtons' existing branches in Harpenden, Redbourn, Welwyn Garden City and St Albans." In a pleasing symmetry, Aitchison's were founded in 1935, and Ashton's were founded 35 years ago. For Aitchison's previous owners Aitchison Raffety Group, it gives them a chance to focus on their core commercial and professional activities according to their group chairman quoted in livingmags.info.

This issue's guest publication is handy-shippingguide.com. Now stay with me on this one. It reports on the appointment of Fr David Burke, who leads the parishes of Sacred Heart, Berkhamsted and Corpus Christi, Tring, as trustee of Catholic charity Stella Maris. He previously worked as lay port chaplain for Stella Maris in the ports of Hull and Goole, hence the naval connection. According to their website, the charity improves the lives of seafarers and fishers through their network of local chaplains and seafarer centres, expert information, advocacy, and spiritual support. For the

uninitiated, Stella Maris is Latin for Our Lady, Star of the Sea and is an ancient title for the Virgin Mary.

livingmags.info also reports on the success of a business based in Berkhamsted, Monkey Puzzle Day Nurseries. The enterprise has been recognised as one of the 2021 UK's Best Workplaces, scoring 100 percent for their exceptional work life balance. Monkey Puzzle has supported our local community by supporting The Pepper Foundation, a charity that provides in-home hospice care for families of children with life-limiting illnesses and conditions. They have raised some money as a team, but they are also hoping to donate time as well to various initiatives to support the charity in the course of 2021.

In Crimewatch corner, both the Hillingdon Times and Watford Observer report on a drugs bust involving stopping a Vauxhall Corsa on the A405. Not exactly the French Connection, but in court two men from Watford were convicted of intending to supply class A drugs. The line with which they were connected supplied drugs across Watford, St Albans, Edgware, Hemel Hempstead, Chesham, Berkhamsted and Hitchin. It seems a global pandemic hadn't dissuaded them from their 'business', which given food

Cont Page 5

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delivery apps have done so well during lockdowns is perhaps not surprising.

House prices are a source of endless fascination, so the Hemel Hempstead Gazette reports on those parts of Dacorum which saw the highest rises in the pandemic year. Woodhall Farm saw the highest rise of 18.7 per cent, Northchurch and Potten End were second with a rise of 9.1 per

cent, with Berkhamsted South coming in at third with rises of 8.9 per cent. There the average price rose to £693,158, up by 8.9 per cent on the year to September 2019. Overall, 64 houses changed hands here between October 2019 and September 2020, a drop of 29 per cent. I am sure statisticians and economists would have a field day explaining that one.



Picture by Sarah Dawson

Drawings of Berkhamsted by Jenni Cator

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WATERCRESS- A FLOURISHING HEALTHY INDUSTRY



When searching for a flourishing local industry which meets the criterion of 'Edible England' one need

look no further than the watercress businesses which developed in the little valley of the Bulbourne and other chalk streams nearby. Little wicker baskets awaiting despatch to London and the Midlands were a familiar sight on platforms of Berkhamsted station. Local families carried on the work of their fathers and grandfather, Mr Denis Bedford, Mr J. C. Knowles. There is a great deal of difference between the cultivated watercress which requires clear flowing water and the uncultivated cress such as that found in stagnant water in the castle moat. This is much coarser and considered unfit for human consumption. This is said to have been sent to Manchester for use in dye works.

The watercress we enjoy needs a constant supply of pure flowing water. Early producers relied on springs which kept the water in constant motion at an even temperature. As the industry grew artesian wells were sunk to supplement the springs. When pumping lowered the water table in the Bulbourne valley further

expansion of the industry was limited. Dorset and Wiltshire with more generous supplies of water gradually ousted Hertfordshire as the leading watercress grower county.

In favourable conditions watercress grows rapidly. A clean gravelly bottom is essential and cress roots are placed out three inches apart. In a few weeks, the plants are rooted and between January and March there are two crops of high quality. The cress is bunched trimmed and washed and packed in the packing shed. Most of the work is done by women. In the town of Berkhamsted three generations of Bedfords have cultivated watercress. Many of the beds were dug by Mr Denis Bedford's father and grandfather Mr Harry Bedford. An uncle, Mr Frank Bedford, was especially interested in growing watercress in Dudswell and Northchurch but owing to shortage of water the industry gradually left the upper reaches of the Bulbourne. Mr Denis Bedford carried on the family tradition between Billet Lane and St. John's Well Lane until the late 1960s. He recalls summers when he started work at 3am, not returning home until 6 or 7pm.

At Broadway in Victorian times some very small beds were kept by Mr Glenister and then taken over and

extended by the Knowles family. The industry at Bourne End was apparently started by the licensee of the White Horse in Victorian times but taken over by Joseph Sharp who came to the district as bailiff at Pix Farm. He originally intended to breed horses and only started watercress growing as a side-line. He found this more lucrative, trading in the name of F G Sharp and Son.

Although watercress merits the recognition of 'Edible England,' it is not the only event of this year's Heritage Open Days which could meet the requirements. Lane's Nurseries provide us with Lane's Prince Albert apples and many other fruits from the orchards that once stretched up the south west slopes of the town. For years, the plum and pear trees yielded plentiful crops at Broadway, an earlier part of Lane's Nurseries. A little further on at the outskirts of the town, at Berkhamsted Place, we have evidence of a late Tudor walled garden, whose south facing wall yielded crops of more exotic fruits. There

also is evidence of hooks for the hanging of the long ladders for the cherry pickers. Evidence still exists of filbert trees found in almost every large garden in Victorian and Edwardian times, giving us the vital protein of nuts, often together with walnuts and perhaps mulberry trees with their luscious fruits. Before we leave Berkhamsted Place we must not forget the fine grapes in the vinery, which produce a plentiful crop in most years.

Preparations for this year's Heritage Open Days organised by the Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society are well under way and will include some old favourites but also several new events. Further details are available on the History Society website www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk and www.heritageopendays.org.uk Do support these events which will give you an opportunity to learn more of Berkhamsted's hidden heritage.

Jenny Sherwood



Picture by edible-wildfood.com

Appledown Rescue and Rehoming Kennels—A little love story!



Sometimes we hear of a case so compelling that we have no choice but to step in. Florence Nightingale, a poodle cross pup, was found as a frightened stray with a severe leg injury. She was taken to her local dog pound, who were sadly unable to afford the amputation and aftercare necessary to save her life. Hearing of Florence's plight we knew we had to help. Thanks to our wonderful supporters, we were able to pay for her surgery and are delighted to report that she is recovering well – just a little camera shy! We will continue to give Florence all the love and care she needs until she is completely healed and ready for adoption when she will be matched with someone on our list.

We can only help dogs like Florence due to the generosity of our friends and supporters. It's easy to make a one-off donation of £3 simply by texting APPLE to 70111, or donate via Paypal using the 'DONATE Support a Cause' option and search for Appledown Rescue. Donations by cheque are very welcome too!

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Observations by Dennis Furnell (The Natureman)

Early Summer

I have had a soft spot for butterflies ever since I was a child growing up in Devon. I'm fascinated by the way they appear, as if by magic, in late spring and are so unlike any other members of the family of insects.

This spring was most unusual for all sorts of reasons but, in the wild world, the frosts, rain and cold northerly winds came at us in May, rather than the usual April showers. Indeed, it has been the wettest May I can remember for many years. Nevertheless, the overwintering peacock and comma butterflies are out and about; as is the brimstone butterfly (the butter-coloured fly) the origin of the word 'butterfly' given to all the day-flying insects of the genus *Lepidoptera*, whether they are found in a Hertfordshire garden, or a jungle clearing in Costa Rica.

Many butterflies once common in the English countryside have declined dramatically in the face of the rapacious misuse of the natural world and, whereas my childhood delighted in hosts of these beautiful creatures, these days our spring and summers have been just that bit diminished. It is more common now to buy kits with butterfly pupae, often chrysalis of

painted lady butterflies for children to nurture and watch the miracle of transition to the perfect butterfly. It's a brilliant idea to show them what a fascinating thing nature is.

Each year I wait, with anticipation, for the first male orange tip to burst from its thorn-shaped pupae to patrol the beds of garlic mustard, driving away males of the same species from its territory and waiting for a female. The females do not sport the golden orange wingtips of the male but have a black wingtip instead. Both males and females have patterns on the underwing to imitate a lichen encrusted twig which means they vanish when roosting in a hedgerow.

They pair and the female lays a tiny yellow egg on the underside of a garlic mustard flower from which she has sipped the nectar, in the process fertilises the flower, thereby creating a seed that will grow to feed her caterpillar.

All across the countryside nature is working similar miracles evolved over millions of years.



Picture: Painted Lady Butterfly Underwing by Dennis Furnell

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In the deep, dark lockdown of January 2021, I was speaking with a friend on the phone and she said, “My

lockdown can be summed up in four W’s: working, watching, walking and wine.” What adjectives or activities summarise your lockdown experiences? When the only opportunity to meet another person socially was on a walk, the footpaths certainly took a beating and noticed increased traffic. Perhaps, more so than other years we have been more aware of, and appreciated, the changing seasons and the signs of nature around us. On a walk to Berkhamsted Common last week, I met a badger in the woods. I only caught a glimpse of it before we both dashed off in opposite directions, but at a glance I would say he was a relatively young creature. It was just approaching 8:00am, therefore daylight, so a badger sighting was unexpected.

This time last year, unexpected animal sightings were on our front pages: dolphins and swans in the Venice canals, elephants romping through a village in Yunnan and wild deer roaming the tourist attraction cherry blossom trees in Japan. Some of these

articles were fabricated for good effect but there have been instances in which coronavirus restrictions have benefitted certain species.

As we begin to witness restrictions lifting, businesses and organisations will be reviewing changes they have made and deciding which ones they will continue with. There have been economic and ecological benefits to some of the alternative ways of working and socialising. When restrictions were at their strictest, the human footprint softened to a level that had not been seen in decades, as a result of significantly reduced air travel, road traffic, industrial emissions etc.

This month, St Peter’s, Berkhamsted has been awarded it’s Bronze Eco Church Award. Eco Church is the international charity, A Rocha’s, UK award scheme that assesses how Church’s express their care for God’s world in worship and teaching, how they care for their buildings and land, their engagement with the local community and global campaigns and in the personal lifestyles of their congregation. St Peter’s were proud to have already been meeting much of the criteria to achieve Bronze however to achieve the Silver award, intentional and active changes will need to be made. Some will be individual

changes, other's will be communal; some may be costly, in time and money and others may require difficult decisions.

God has given us partnership as stewards of creation. It is a duty and a joy that we have been granted to live and care for our planet. We have the responsibility and the opportunity to make choices that enable us to live in harmony with creation and build a world that allows everyone to flourish. Individual actions and changes may have an impact on a local level, but perhaps, global changes will require some badgering of others.

Almighty God, creator of all things,
every plant, every rock, every grain of sand proclaims your glory.
May we, stewards of this magnificent Earth,
learn to care for our blue-green home,
and all creatures who share it,
with the same sensitivity,
the same mercy,
the same generosity,
the same love you have shown to us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Olivia Davies



St Peter's Walking Group meet on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 10am, outside the Make Believe Ideas Café (the red Bus!) If you would like to join the group please email the Parish Office:
churchoffice@greatberkhamsted.org.uk

In 2022, St Peter's will be 800 years old!

From the occupation of the castle to the arrival of soldiers in WW1 and major life and civic events up to the present day, St Peter's has been a constant presence in Berkhamsted for 800 years!

We want to celebrate this momentous occasion with the whole town!



WHAT WE'RE PLANNING

It's early days but we have many ideas for events to mark the anniversary from picnics to time capsules, historical displays to commemorative services.

We are exploring the option of holding a St Peter's Festival in the summer of 2022 (when hopefully Covid-19 will be behind us) and coinciding with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We are looking for organisations and local businesses you represent to get in touch to tell us how you'd like to be involved.

Would you like to put on a music event, hold a yoga session in the churchyard, run a craft or creative session in church or organise a book talk, dog show or wine tasting? We'd love to hear your ideas so we can start to plan a schedule.

LOVE YOUR CHURCHYARD!

With all of us spending more times outside these days, we'd like to revitalise our churchyard as part of the 800th celebrations.

As many of you know, the churchyard is a green sacred space at the heart of the community, bounded on all four sides by listed buildings of beauty and significance to the town; the church of 1222, the School of 1544, the 16th century Court House and early Victorian private dwellings. It also contains several ancient trees which give it a unique character.

What are your ideas for enhancing the space? How can we encourage more community visits?

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Join Us! We'd love more people to get involved with the 800th activity. If you'd like to volunteer to help or are bursting with ideas, please get in touch!

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News from Rectory Lane Cemetery



Without the Friends of St Peter's volunteers, Rectory Lane Cemetery would have remained neglected and unused

and fallen into even greater disrepair. This Volunteer Week, it's time to say a big **THANK YOU** to all the volunteers who have made possible the transformation of the Cemetery from 'a dead space to a living place', now appreciated by the whole community.

It was volunteers who had the vision of the neglected space as a valuable heritage asset, community green space and focus for commemoration and celebration. It was volunteers who secured the Lottery funding necessary to pay for it and it is volunteers who now manage and promote the Cemetery by dedicating their time and expertise.

The **work parties** on the first Sunday afternoon in the month which started in 2013 are still going – the tasks are no longer hacking through the undergrowth, stacking up fallen bricks, removing saplings which have sprung up through graves; rather its raking mowed grass, hanging up bird boxes, looking after the bees, managing the

trees for their health and our safety, implementing an effective compost system, cleaning the new seats...



Guided tours have always been a key activity in the Cemetery and volunteer **tour leaders** have delivered no fewer than 26 small group tours during this April and May alone, introducing over 130 people to the restored cemetery and its new features, explaining its history and who is buried there.



Knowing who is buried where is also the result of hours of **research** by volunteers, as is uploading that information onto our comprehensive online burial database along with biographies written by yet more volunteers. Sharing those biographies and the connections between those people and the Berkhamsted of today through written publications, articles and engaging social media posts has also been undertaken by volunteers passionate about local social history.

During May we appealed for additional volunteers to look after selected graves in the Memorialisation area – graves that were not being tended and which could be turned into miniature gardens to commemorate those buried there and to enhance the site for both the two-legged and the pollinating visitor – in effect, to **adopt a grave**. Fifteen new adopters have joined those who have been caring for graves over recent years, which will transform the area around the new Garden of Remembrance.



The new Garden of Remembrance is being looked after and planted up by volunteer **gardeners**. The names on the War Memorial there were re-searched by a volunteer genealogist.

The Retreat in the wildlife area, which is a hub for all volunteers working on the site was **built by volunteers**, but volunteers are yet to enjoy it, under the Covid restrictions in place at the time of writing.

Despite Covid restrictions limiting what could be done, our **educational resources** have been developed and promoted to local schools by a volunteer, working towards teacher workshops and classroom visits in September. The **activity and event programme**, which relies heavily upon volunteer person-power, was stopped for a year, but is now welcoming special interest and scout groups and gearing up to celebrate Heritage Open Days this September with its theme of *Edible England*. Some of our volunteers will be dressing in costume and welcoming you to our Victorian Picnic with accompanying entertainment and sharing the stories of the bakers, butchers and brewers of Victorian Berkhamsted!

Cont on page 20



The Rectory Lane Cemetery Project team would like to thank all our brilliant volunteers. They bring different skills, energies, abilities and motivations – but share the fundamental belief that volunteering gives back, in terms of companionship, satisfaction, health and wellbeing, that being paid is not the only measure of time well spent –

that ***LIFE IS TOO SHORT, DO STUFF THAT MATTERS***

But a project of this nature and size cannot be sustained by volunteers putting in hours of dedicated work alone. Ongoing funding needs to be secured – here too we are reliant on volunteer **fundraisers** to research, apply and appeal to funding bodies, trusts and other benefactors.



If you are inspired to see how you could volunteer with the project, go to

www.rectorylanecemetery.org.uk/sustain/volunteer/

or email

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JOBS FOR THE GARDEN

We have had a very cold April and wet May; my garden has suddenly burst into life. The grass is growing apace and I am getting ready to see what flowers I have growing in my lawn to submit data to Plantlife's No Mow May. Perennial geraniums and alliums have begun to flower but I also still have some daffodils and tulips flowering. Hopefully risk of frost has now passed and we can get planting up our hanging baskets and put out tender vegetable plants.

JUNE

Most importantly keep on top of weeding your borders. Stake tall perennial plants to avoid wind damage.

Use soft twine to tie in shoots from honeysuckle, clematis and climbing roses.

As early flowering hardy geraniums finish flowering cut back the flowers and foliage to encourage repeat flowering later in the summer.

Put out hanging baskets and tender vegetables, remembering to water well every day in hot weather and feed once a week with a liquid feed. Hopefully you will have a water butt installed that will have collected all the rain water we had last month.

I have some dustbins at the side of my house that I use to collect rain water.

Plant out tender bedding plants in borders and pots, such as geranium, busy lizzies, and begonias.

Harvest early potatoes, lettuce and radishes.



Hanging Basket by Sarah Dawson

JULY

Deadhead roses as they finish flowering and feed with blood, fish and bone to encourage a second flush.

Deadhead flowers in hanging baskets and pots to prolong flowering.

Clear debris, such as blanket weed and algae from your pond and keep the water level topped up. Flowering aquatic plants should be deadheaded so they don't set seed.

Harvest strawberries as they ripen.

If you've grown sweet peas the more flowers you pick the more they will keep coming.

The last sowing of carrots and French beans can be done now as well as seeds for salads to have a continuous crop.

Plant bulbs for Autumn colour, such as colchicum and nerines.

Hopefully we will get some warm weather in July so sit back, relax and enjoy all the hard work you've put into your garden.

Sarah Dawson



Poppies and Alstroemeria by Sarah Dawson



Floors Castle Garden—Kelso by Sarah Dawson



Debut online art show success for local lockdown artists

Virtual visitors invited to view gallery of 90 artworks in exhibition that marks society's 90th anniversary year

A BERKHAMSTED artist who recently sold a painting to Prime Minister Boris Johnson is among 30 local artists whose work is currently on show and for sale in a special online exhibition.

Publicity surrounding the high profile purchase has been among the highlights of Berkhamsted Art Society's successful online Lockdown Art exhibition, which has now been extended for a month because of interest from local art lovers resulting in sales and a boost in membership.

The virtual exhibition shows three pieces of work created by each participating artist during lockdown. The 90 artworks include landscapes, still life studies, portraits, hand-thrown pots and prints including one of the prime minister's painting, 'Chequers Court', by art society member Mary Casserley, depicting Boris and his young family enjoying a moment of calm in the gardens at Chequers.

Some of the lockdown artists' creations take a light-hearted look at life, some a more reflective representation of the difficult past 12 months. Many are inspired by themes chosen by members at their popular Zoom coffee mornings when lockdown brought a halt to their usual meetings and workshops.

"We have all been delighted by the success of our online lockdown art show," said Bernadette Duffy

"Pieces in the show have been selling to our 'virtual visitors' and we have had new members joining too, it's been great," she said. The online format means that when one piece of work is sold the artist is able to replace it with a fresh new item – and the show is now staying 'open' for a month longer than planned so that visitors get plenty of opportunity to visit the ever-changing gallery again and again.

“Just like everyone else, our normal society activities had to stop during lockdown – and that included our social coffee mornings at the pub and our annual exhibition at Berkhamsted Civic Centre,” said Ian Jones

“But we continued to meet up over a coffee thanks to Zoom, where we chatted and laughed together, and supported each other through the highs and lows of lockdown.

“The coffee mornings were a chance to show and share some of the art we had been working on. We chose a ‘theme’ each time to inspire us too, and many of the pieces in the online show and for sale demonstrate how imaginative members have been in interpreting the theme.”

“The Lockdown Art exhibition is more than a showcase of artwork created by society members in their studios, spare rooms or in corners of kitchens and dining rooms over lockdown”, said Catherine Archer.

“Our first-ever gallery of 90 pieces of work presented in an online art show for virtual visitors is a perfect way for us to mark the society’s 90th anniversary,” James Honour Chair of BAS said. The BAS Online Lockdown Art exhibition can be seen by visiting <https://berkhamstedartsociety.co.uk/exhibition/>

In normal times, Berkhamsted Art Society meets on weekday evenings for talks and demonstrations in the Court House and in the winter for life drawing evenings. We also meet from May to August at various locations in and around the town for summer sketching evenings. This year’s weekly outdoor summer drawing sessions began on Monday 10 May.

The society welcomes people of all ages and abilities who enjoy drawing, painting and creating art. For more information visit our website at <https://www.berkhamstedartsociety.co.uk>

Our Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/BerkhamstedArtSociety/>

or email James Honour on berkhamstedartsociety@gmail.com

The show will now run until 30th June 2021

Ian Jones

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Naked Raku Bowl by Ian Jones

Coronavirus by Tracy Dudley



Mary Casserley's story with Boris Johnson buying her painting. Continues. After appearing in the Gazette and Express, it was picked up by the Daily Mail, the picture made a very brief appearance on the TV show "Have I got news for you". and Mary's picture was also part of iNews Quiz.

Obviously Mary has received quite a few enquiries, also three of the pictures were sold at the exhibition.

It is with sadness to announce that Berkahmsted Art Society's, Chairwoman Frances Evershed passed away a couple of days before the Exhibition was launched and now the exhibition has been dedicated to her.



Painting by Liz Hobson



Old man of Storr by Bill Bain

Berkhamsted Resident, Moira Sinclair, has been awarded an OBE for services to charity and the arts.



When did you find out about the OBE and how long did you have to keep it secret for? Who was the first person you told?

I got an email, which at first, I thought was a hoax. It seemed such an unlikely thing to happen, but it became clear that, in a pan-

demic year, lots of organisations had had to change the way they operated. You are asked to keep the news a secret, which was almost impossible. I told my daughter straight away because she's been living at home during lockdown, and she would have guessed something was up. But I didn't tell anyone else, not even my mum or my sisters, until the official announcement.

Looking at your bio, you have achieved many things, what is the achievement you are most proud of?

Probably what Paul Hamlyn Foundation has done in the last year. We saw the scale of the pandemic early and understood the important role that charities would play in supporting individuals and communities through the crisis. It was really important to get funding out quickly and to be as flexible as possible – the entire PHF team and our trustees worked so hard, and I am forever grateful. We created a £20m emergency fund and made three times as many grants we would usually, we spent hours on the phone listening to what people needed – and all from kitchen tables and makeshift studies. I am very proud of that effort.

I see you have a love of Arts. How did you get into the Arts?

Although it's hard for people to imagine now, I was quite shy and quiet as a child and didn't find it easy to make friends. For some reason, I shone in a school play – being on stage felt like home and I found my voice. My parents discovered the Pump House, a local arts centre, in Watford and I joined a Saturday morning drama group, and that's where my love of the arts started.

Tell us more about your background?

I was one of three girls and grew up in and around Hertfordshire and Northwest London. Education was a big thing in my family and there was a definite hope that I would be a professional, a doctor or a lawyer. But that love of the arts was too embedded, so I studied drama at Manchester University, which was enough to convince me that I would never be an actor, but that I'd like to make a career in the arts. Slowly I developed the confidence and skills to organise and then run an arts and charitable organisation, which stood me in good stead when I made the move into more strategic and policy-based work, spending nearly ten years at Arts Council England.

What does the Paul Hamlyn Foundation do?

Paul Hamlyn Foundation is one of the largest independent grant-makers in the UK. We use our resources to support social change in the UK and India, working towards a just and equitable society in which everyone, especially young people, can realise their full potential and enjoy fulfilling and creative lives.

What is Clore Leadership?

Clore Leadership is a programme and set of resource materials for leaders and aspiring leaders in the arts, culture and creative sectors. I was lucky enough to take part in 2004, it really helped me take a major step in my career, and now as Chair, I hope I can be part of the team that gives the same opportunity to the next generation.

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What are you hoping to achieve in the future?

That's a hard one to answer, when life is still so uncertain. In the short term, I would love to be able to travel again, to visit my sisters who are both based in Australia and to see my team in India. My daughter has just got a new job. The last year has been very hard for her generation, and I'd be very happy to see her flourish again. And longer term, I think I'll want to continue to support charities to do their best work, funding them for sure, but also thinking about how I can add more value.

How has lockdown affected you? Any changes in your lifestyle?

Like many others, my working life was turned upside down. From commuting every day and often going to events in the evenings, I've become a work from home person, confined to the spare room and sharing the broadband. Zoom has been the primary communications tool and I have really missed the face to face, and live music and theatre. Some of that I can't wait to get back, although I don't think you're ever going to see me on the 08.31 five days a week again.

How long have you been in Berkhamsted and what is it you like most about the area?

We moved here when I had my daughter – and she's now 24. I've always loved how green it is, the fact that you can smell that in the air when you step off the train. I have been reminded of just what a privilege it is to have access to space - strolling along the canal, being in reach of the Chilterns and staring at the red kites circling overhead have been very important moments of release from the stresses and pain of the last year.

www.phf.org.uk/news/new-years-honours-2021-phf-ceo-awarded-obe-for-services-to-charity-and-the-arts/

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Picnics & Daytrips



5 No-Booking Necessary Daytrips this Half Term in Beds, Bucks & Herts

If you're looking at an empty calendar for the holidays and are panicking that everything is already fully booked, this is the guide for you!

Here are my **top 5 things to do** in Beds, Bucks and Herts that you officially don't need to book. Most are free, or just charge for parking, and all come with a fantastic picnic site, so you can take your own packed lunches.

As with anything over half term, it's worth arriving early to avoid the crowds, but if you keep your activities to the morning, then you can feel justified in watching a film every afternoon, right??

Wendover Woods



This has to be number one – for the cost of parking you get a play trail, the choice of two Gruffalo trails, fantastic play-grounds, and expansive, scenic picnic grounds. It's worth buying a map though as it's super easy to get lost! The café is currently takeaway only and there are no highchairs available for public use so worth

factoring that in. www.forestryengland.uk/wendover-woods

College Lake

A recent discovery for us, this is a beautiful day out with lots of different paths and trails to explore. These long straight paths are great for buggies but they ask you to leave scooters and bikes at home. Hot drinks and snacks are available at the Visitor Centre and the picnic grounds are idyllic. Find out more about our visit to College Lake.

[picnicsandday-trips.wordpress.com/2021/05/25/college-lake-behind-the-bat-roost](https://trips.wordpress.com/2021/05/25/college-lake-behind-the-bat-roost-picnicsandday-trips.wordpress.com/2021/05/25/college-lake-behind-the-bat-roost)



P.E. Meads Farmshop



This is one of our favourite places locally. A total foodie treasure trove, stocking loads of interesting local producers, alongside the usual farm shop fare (seasoned logs, bird food etc). They also have their own café and picnic grounds next to a field of animals. It's a bit of a stretch to say this is a full daytrip, but if you twin it with a tramp around Tring Reservoirs, then you'll make a day of it.

www.pemeadandsons.co.uk

SOME OF OUR LOCAL PRODUCERS

The Chilterns is one of Britain's best kept secrets. Its a fantastically diverse farming area with abundant local food producers of which many supply our farm shop. To date... we stock ranges from over 30 local producers and always looking for new delicious products to stock.

www.pemeadandsons.co.uk/local-producers

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Rushmere Country Park



We love Rushmere! The fairy houses, the sculpture trail, the giant's chair, the amazing picnic grounds and the brilliant playground all make Rushmere a regular haunt for us. There's a café and shop on site, and admission is just the cost of parking.

www.greensandtrust.org/rushmere-country-park

The Grove Musical Trail



I'm reliably informed that the bluebells are just about hanging on in The Grove's woodland so it'll still be as beautiful as when we visited a few weeks ago. Parking is free, but there are no publicly available facilities, so you need to bring everything you need with you. What a place to spend a couple of hours though! The musical instruments are great entertainment and the picnic tables are some of the more architectural we've found.

www.picnicsanddaytrips.wordpress.com/2021/05/16/the-grove-hotel-musical-trail

By Heather Rhian Davies

Please see further blogs from Heather Rhian Davies:-

www.picnicsanddaytrips.wordpress.com

GREEN THERAPY

at Ashridge House

NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME & PLANT FAIR 2021

TUESDAY 8TH - 11TH JUNE 2021

The spectacular gardens at Ashridge House will be open for the National Garden Scheme from **Tuesday 8th June - Friday 11th June 2021.**

After a challenging year we are looking forward to welcoming you back to Ashridge House to celebrate the healing power of plants and gardens for our health and wellbeing.

This annual event is perfect opportunity to explore the 190 acres of historical landscaped gardens and grounds with the opportunity book onto additional activities including a plant fair, garden tours, photography workshops, inspiring talks and afternoon tea!



www.ashridgehouse.org.uk/ngs

The Courtyard Café at Ashridge House

We are delighted to announce the opening of The Courtyard Café, because who doesn't love tea, coffee and cake! The Courtyard Café is open every day from 9am – 3pm offering a delicious selection of homemade food and beverages to takeaway. On Mondays and Tuesdays, we offer a 15% Senior Citizens Discount on any food and beverage purchases. Whether you are out walking the dog or cycling past the house, The Courtyard Café is the perfect place for a delicious treat.

Open Door News

It has been wonderful that at long last we have been able to open our doors to you all and to show off our fabulous garden with its wildlife pond brimming with frogs and newts. A lovely place to sit and enjoy the beautiful sunshine plus our delicious coffee and cake.

Our face to face activities are starting up again with a mix of both zoom and face to face at Open Door. Check out what is happening on the What's On Page on our website www.opendoorberkhamsted.co.uk/What's On

As a small sample: for the youngsters, we have Canvas Crew after school Art Club back at Open Door, until the 20 July. Katie will be showing you lots of different techniques to produce your wonderful art works. We will look forward to some exciting summer holiday classes as well.

Our adult art classes have also started again in June with acrylics and Julie Smare's beginners/intermediate watercolour and pastels classes.

Our online Easy Printmaking without a press workshop, with our current artist in residence, printmaker Bee Millar, has proved really popular. Bee has been showing you printing without a press using leaves and plants from your garden. We now have a waiting list for our next course. Please enquire if you would be interested in taking part in July/August.

Specially for the men is our fortnightly Mens Connections Thursday meet-ups, hosted by Iain Manson. The first face-to-face meeting will be at Open Door Thursday 1 July.

If you missed the football commentator Peter Drury I am sure he will be back with some more fascinating and entertaining tales of a life in the game.

The beginning of July also sees our first Repair Café on July 3 from 9.30am-12.30am, do come and join us and meet our band of repairers, let us know if you have something you need repaired.

If you are looking for some new reading material and some good discussions come and join our book club, run by Jane Ellen. We have two fascinating books for July - Fools of Fortune by William Trevor (1 July) and Kingfishers Catch Fire by Rumer Godden (28/29 July) covered during the Zoom sessions. Please contact us at Open Door if you are interested in joining.

There is lots more going on including our Health and Well-Being sessions which are a mix of online and face to face.

Looking forward to seeing you at Open Door very soon.



www.opendoorberkhamsted.co.uk

By Sam Harris



Non-members can sign up to our newsletters Free of Charge.

16th-18th July 2021: Big Art Fair. <https://www.hvaf.org.uk/our-events/big-art-fair>

September 2021: Herts Open Studios <https://www.hvaf.org.uk/our-events/herts-open-studios-2021>

The easiest way to join HVA is online: www.hvaf.org.uk

Twitter: @HVAF #HertsOpenStudios Instagram @HertsVisualArts

Facebook: @HertsVisualArts

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