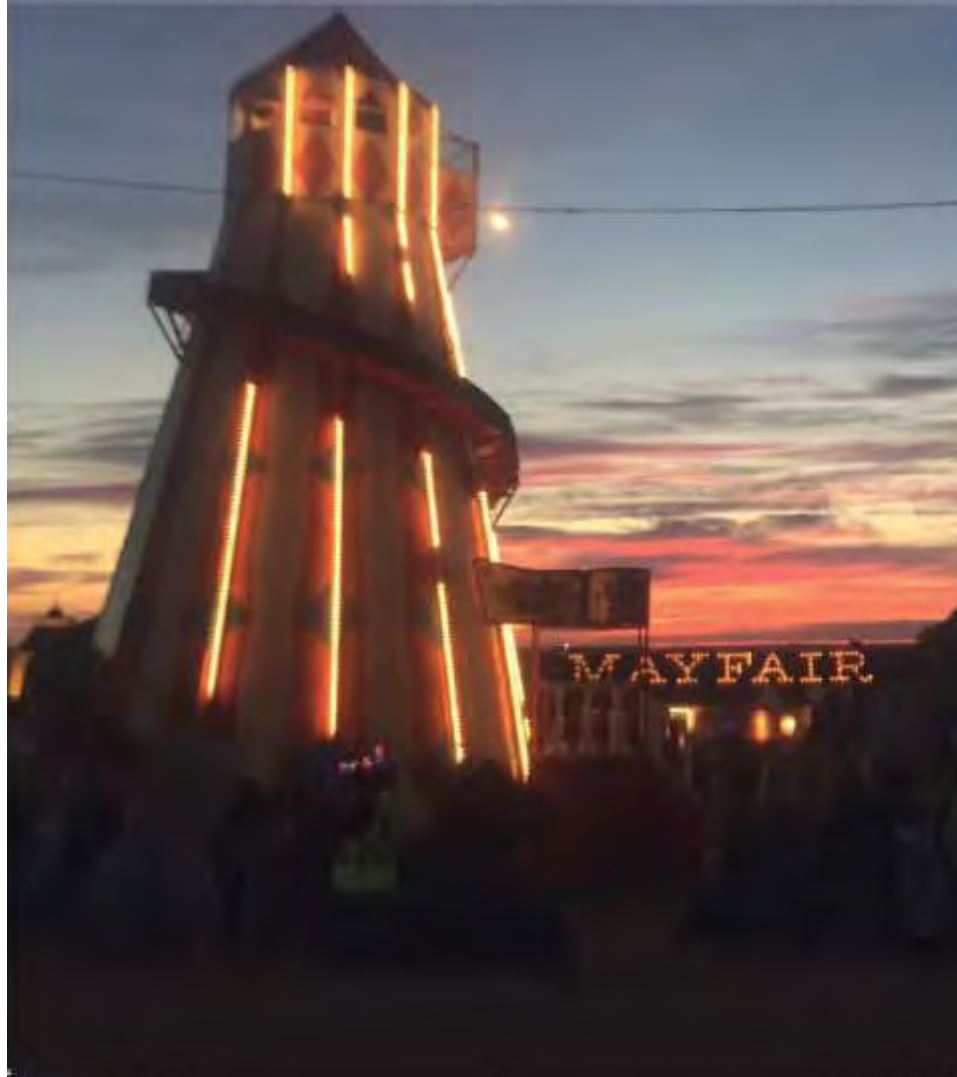


# Valley<sup>ITCHEN</sup> News

Issue 33 September 2016 For Avington, Easton, Ichen Abbas and Martyr Worthy





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# WELCOME to the Valley News



The September edition has in the past sometimes been a little light in content because August is not usually an eventful month in the Valley, but this year we got just the right amount – there is even a little left to carry over for my successor – in spite of some of our regular contributors taking a well earned break.

Special thanks to our two reporters from Boomtown. It is good to hear the views of event attendees to balance the rather negative perspective of the ‘rival’ local newspaper, and although it is tragic that there has once again been a death of a young person, the fire fortunately only caused damage to property.

We are fortunate that our elected representatives have continued their work on our behalf over the summer. We will no doubt get more news about the B3047/A33 junction in next month’s News. We are all hoping that something sensible will be done before there is a fatality.

Looking forward, we have an exciting programme of cultural events, first the Heritage Open weekend where Nicky Gottlieb has done wonders to transform the previously meagre Hampshire offering into a veritable feast. Then music – Don Giovanni on Friday and Saturday and a concert of favourites on Sunday, who can resist? Later in the year and into 2017 (it is nearer than you might think!) we are offered a series of interesting lectures. All good reasons to invite your friends to come and visit.

Do the Olympics need a mention? By the time this edition comes out it will

all be over, but the Paralympics will soon be keeping sports fans glued again. The London games showed that they can be just as exciting and we hope the funding problems will have been resolved. Valley residents do take part as well as watch sport (well, some of them!) and there are many lovely photographs of the E&MWCC celebrations to prove it. Finally, can I urge you all to visit Abbey Cottage gardens on Sept. 4th and to sample a Brew with a View at Easton Village Hall on Wednesday afternoons. Much to enjoy!

Next month’s editors are Lucy and Fi.  
*Charlotte Appleby*

## Itchen Valley News

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## Brew with a View

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### Every Wednesday 2:30 to 5pm

Brew with a View invites people from the Itchen Valley to come and join us at Easton village Hall for a chat and a cuppa.



## Ride and Stride

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A reminder that the annual Ride and Stride is taking place on **Saturday 10th September**, see last month's magazine or for more information contact Vanessa Rosewell 841182

## Don Giovanni Comes to Itchen Abbas

---

Oborne Opera will be performing a slightly abridged version of Mozart's Don Giovanni in St John's Church, Itchen Abbas on **14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of October**. They will give a concert of opera and musical favourites on **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October**. Oborne opera is a group of international singers who come together occasionally to sing in small intimate venues for a change from big opera houses. They are led by tenor Stephen Anthony Brown and American soprano Maribeth Diggie and accompanied by Susanna Stranders, the Head of Music Staff at Garsington. Don Giovanni is

sponsored by Carter Jonas and Eric Robinson Solicitors.

Kobbe's Complete Opera Book sums up Don Giovanni excellently; "Perhaps Don Giovanni owes part of its success to the unique blending of the irresistibly comic and the tragically serious, as much as to the speed of its dramatic and musical action, and to the quality of the music. Another decisive factor is the character of the Don himself, the libertine and the blasphemer, whose courage endears him to the men and his scandalous



reputation to the women".

PS - We have just come back from Oborne where we heard them sing Figaro and give a gala concert. I had forgotten how brilliant this group can be. The setting, the environment and proximity of opera in a small church is truly special. There is nothing like it in an opera house or concert hall. We marvelled at how this young group of young stars acted out their story with such drama and emotion in a constricted venue; but that is the joy of top artists playing for you just where you can almost touch them. Not to be missed, even if it is me selling the tickets!

Tickets at £30 and more information from [www.southwoodplayers.org.uk](http://www.southwoodplayers.org.uk) or Nick Owen 779162.

# Oborne Opera

Accompanied by

**Susanna Stranders**

In W A Mozart's

# Don Giovanni

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October 16<sup>th</sup> will be a Concert

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## Loyd Grossman - Punk to Polymath.

---

**Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016 at 7.30pm, The Guildhall**

Some of us will recall a time in the 1980's and 90's when Loyd Grossman graced our television screens as the face and voice of *Through the Keyhole* and *Masterchef*. Others may recognise the name as the entrepreneur behind the successful brand of pasta sauces. However, perhaps it may come as a bit of a surprise to discover that not only



does his punk band make regular appearances at Glastonbury, but he is also a highly regarded figure within the heritage sector.

Born in Boston and educated at Boston University (BA), the London

School of Economics (MSc) and Magdalene College, Cambridge (MPhil, PhD) the list of Dr Grossman's credentials is truly impressive. He has been involved in a number of organisations including English Heritage, The Churches Conservation Trust and the Museums and Galleries Commission and currently holds posts that include Chairman of the Heritage Alliance, Chairman of the Royal Parks and President of NADFAS. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, an Emeritus Governor of the LSE and a member of the Council of the British School at Rome. He is also Patron of Heritage Open Days.

On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September, the eve of Heritage Open Days, Dr Grossman will be making a special visit to

Winchester to preview some of the festival events followed by an interview in the Guildhall. Speaking about his career, his passion for playing guitar, and a lifelong interest in history, the arts and heritage he will also explain the importance of 'Treasure Your Treasures', the theme of this year's Heritage Open Days.

Do go along to what promises to be an informative, entertaining and inspiring evening.

In Conversation with Loyd Grossman – Tickets £10

To book tickets please visit the Winchester Cathedral Box Office ([tickets.winchester-cathedral.org.uk](http://tickets.winchester-cathedral.org.uk)) or telephone 01962 857275.

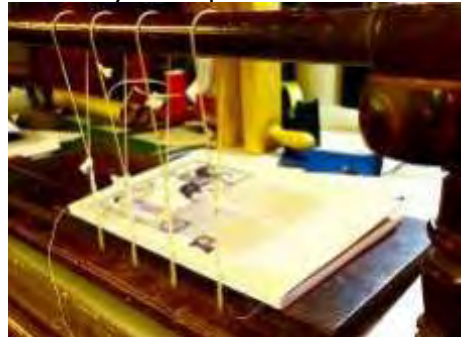
*Nicky Gottlieb*

## Heritage Open Days in Winchester 8<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> Sept.

---

Poetry, fashion, film, comedy, jazz, cocktails and even ukuleles, to name just a few. With so many festivals jostling for a place in the Winchester events calendar it would be easy to assume that every possible theme has been covered. Not quite! It is hard to believe but our once ancient capital of England is missing out on celebrating the very reason for which it is best known – its heritage.

Thankfully this September sees the



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YOUR  
TREASURES

heritage open days

# HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

## Thursday 8 – Sunday 11 September

Don't miss this once-a-year chance to be a tourist in your own town and treasure the treasures on your doorstep. Celebrating local history, architecture and culture, the four-day event offers everyone the chance to see hidden places and experience something new – all of which are completely FREE to explore.

Here are just some of this year's events in Winchester and surrounding areas:

Come and Meet Binky Bear *(see picture opposite)*

Abbey House  
Matterley Bowl

Behind-the-scenes tour of museum collections

Heritage Poetry: new writing inspired by Hampshire's history  
Ginchester Walking Tour

Winchester Bindery Open Day *(see picture on page 7)*

Open Office at Old Hyde House, ADAM Architecture

The Grange at Northington *(see picture opposite)*

Winchester Lido

Serle's House



Friends Meeting House

The Stable – Cider Tasting and Talk

Points of View over Winchester – Exhibition of paintings

For a full list of events please visit [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk) and [www.visitwinchester.co.uk](http://www.visitwinchester.co.uk) Copies of the Winchester programme are available from the Winchester Tourist Information Centre

[www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk)

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architecture but that it encompasses all manner of other things: plants and gardens, food and land management, traditional crafts and skills, folklore, poetry, music and dance.



return of Heritage Open Days to the city. Managed nationally by the National Trust, it is the UK's largest and most popular heritage festival attracting over three million visitors to thousands of events up and down the country.

Heritage surrounds us. It helps us to understand where we have come from, what makes us who we are and it can give us a signpost to the future too.

Free of charge and right on people's doorsteps, Heritage Open Days is an event for everyone, whatever their background, age or ability. By stimulating curiosity and discovery, the event connects people with their local places and helps foster a sense of belonging and place. It celebrates what makes local communities and neighbourhoods special. Heritage Open Days not only opens doors, it opens eyes and minds too and aims to educate, enlighten and entertain.

Here is a chance to be a tourist on your own doorstep, to discover the often hidden or forgotten gems of Winchester and its surrounding areas and enjoy a wide range of tours, events and activities that bring local history and culture to life.

It is important to remember that heritage is not just about buildings and

For more information on Heritage Open Days events and booking details, please visit the website at [www.heritageopendays.org.uk](http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk) and [www.visitwinchester.co.uk](http://www.visitwinchester.co.uk).

Programmes can also be obtained from the Tourist Information Centre in Winchester.

*Nicky Gottlieb*


  
**Abbey Cottage, Itchen Abbas**  
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 All Welcome !

## Upper Itchen Valley Society AGM

---

The AGM will be on **Tuesday, 1st November** at 7.30pm in Martyr Worthy Village Hall. The Speaker will be Christopher Napier OBE.

Christopher is responsible for planning for CPRE Hampshire and will talk about the current situation regarding development and devolution. He started as a submariner, became a partner in a firm of City Solicitors and has worked assiduously for CPRE in his retirement for which he was recently awarded the OBE.

*Alison Matthews*

## Poppy Appeal 2016

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Last year was the seventieth anniversary of VJ Day, and this year is significant as the passing of one hundred years from the Battle of the Somme.

We all appreciate the wreath placed at the Martyr Worthy War Memorial by Princes Mead School.

We reflect that, as the number of veterans from WWII sadly dwindles, the Royal British Legion still has many more ex-service people to look after from later conflicts. Its work will never be finished, and so its need to constantly raise funds must also continue.

Remembrance Sunday is on 13<sup>th</sup> November this year. We will, as usual, be offering poppies and wristbands in our villages during the two weeks before Remembrance Sunday. We also hope to leave trays and collecting boxes with pubs, schools and businesses who have kindly supported us before.



However, the backbone of the effort is put in by those who do the door-to-door collections in their own neighbourhood. I will be contacting everyone who helped last year in early September, in the hope that you will be able to help us again this year.

Of course, it is always good to welcome new colleagues to this very worthwhile cause. So if you would like to join us, or to chat about what is involved, please do give me a call on 779661 or e-mail me at johndharris\_uk@hotmail.com. People who have lots of visitors might like to have a box of poppies in the hall for the two weeks of Remembrancetide. Last year's efforts raised well over £3,300 and are a credit to you all. Let's work for an even stronger result in 2016!

*John Harris*

## Martyr Worthy Lecture Series 2016/17

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**Venue:** Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall, SO21 1BQ

**Time:** From 7.00 p.m. for a



complimentary glass of wine and canapes. Lectures will be an hour, starting at 7.45 p.m.

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2016 – (please note change of date)**

THE DUTCH GOLDEN AGE – John Lang  
During the Dutch Golden Age in the

17th century, people from the northern Netherlands came together to overcome a range of almost insurmountable challenges to become the world's most enterprising and successful trading nation. Building on its considerable maritime skills it excelled in fields as diverse as science, medicine, industry and - most memorable of all - art, through its supremely talented artists such as Rembrandt and Vermeer.

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

THE WORLD IN CONFLICT – John Andrews

(Author, journalist, former Foreign Correspondent of The Economist) John Andrews will analyse, region by region, why global conflict is ever present in our lives, helping us better to understand the world's trouble spots. Following on from the American Presidential election, he will consider the policy challenges for the new leader of the World's superpower and why it matters to us.

**Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

A TALE OF TWO CITIES: OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE –John Davies

To the casual visitor Oxford and Cambridge have many similarities. They are both ancient and successful cities with flourishing universities dating from the Middle Ages, displaying some of the finest architecture in England.

However the early monastic buildings of Oxford, built in the golden limestone of the Cotswolds, contrast dramatically with those of Cambridge, largely built in brick from rich East Anglian clay. This talk compares the evolution of architecture over the first seven hundred years of their remarkable history.

Tickets are £15 each, please apply by email to [martyrworthylectures@gmail.com](mailto:martyrworthylectures@gmail.com) or

by phone to Liz Platt 779298 or Gilly Greenwood 779540.

*Verity Coleman 882800 and Joanna Lang 734209*

## BOOMTOWN. one

---

Last night, with a little trepidation and a huge amount of curiosity I accompanied my 35 year old daughter to Boomtown. She and her brother had been the night before and had regaled us with tales of wonderment. Having watched it grow over the last month, nothing could have prepared me for what I met inside. The sheer scale of it, the creativity, fully built themed villages: Mayfair, Chinatown, The Wild West, a Pirate Ship stage with trapeze artists, a vast Inca themed stage and many others; music of every genre, cool places to dance in the woods, wonderful lighting, doors leading to little individual rooms of varying music and styles, performance arts of all sorts, food stalls of incredible variety (my Hoisin duck hamburger was out of this world!), clothes and jewellery stalls, sculptures, terrifying funfair rides, bumper cars and then the Main Stage. A massive construction with flames randomly shooting out of the top, huge speakers (which we all hear I know), awe-inspiring laser and other light displays and finally, as we left, the finale fireworks. But above all was the extraordinary feeling of happiness and freedom. The young, and there were only young there, with no one judging or criticising, wore just about anything they felt like, a lot of tails and ears and feathers and sparkly faces & fairy lights, crazy leggings (men!), rabbit costumes etc. etc. They danced where and how they felt like, when exhausted stopped to sleep or recover just about

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anywhere. Or just sat and listened peacefully. It was superbly organised, I could not fault it, and to see the young, who we must admit do not have an easy future ahead, having such an uncomplicated and joyous time is something surely we too can celebrate (even if we don't like the noise, oh and the traffic!).

*Nicky Baring*

## BOOMTOWN. two

---

We just had a spectacular weekend dipping in and out of Boomtown from the comfort of our home in Chapel Lane. It was hot and dusty walking up to the site but as soon as we got inside the imposing metal walls we were transported to festival paradise.



The sun shone all weekend over fifty thousand happy, dancing, colourful party people. We spent Friday evening wandering through Uptown – along the top of the Matterley Bowl through Whistler's Green, Barrio Loco, dusty Wild West streets through Old Town to Mayfair Avenue along which you could buy any food from Vegan, to Japanese, to wraps and roasts. There were long rows of long drop loos, which are biodegradable and stayed relatively OK. There were water fountains and helpful people offering around sun cream and filling peoples' bottles. You

could pop into mysterious looking shop fronts to find a room full of dancing people, get involved in some street theatre, go on bumper cars or shoot down the helter-skelter. There are over 30 beautifully styled main music venues and as many smaller street venues where a band or DJ can be found. In the Psy Forest we danced with sand underfoot and fluorescent butterflies and flowers all around, The Old Mines stage was belting out County and Western and Dub in the Tangled Roots stage in the woods. There was some wonderful reggae in another enormous valley: The Lions' Den, which had an avenue of fir trees drawing our eyes to a magnificent view of our valley beyond.



Here Alex and I spent our best hours on Sunday afternoon sitting in the sun listening to a New Zealand Reggae band we love called Fat Freddy's Drop. We were so pleased to be at Leftfield's set on Saturday night with some of the older ravers, while the most popular gig for all ages was Madness. From Mayfair Avenue we paused for a breathtaking look down to the glittering bowl full of circus tents, fun fair rides and the main stage – The Banghia Palace with lasers and lights flashing out into the night, Devil Kicks Dancehall in China Town bathed in red light, Robotika and Sewage Works.



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Boomtown is mainly for drum and base, garage, grime and dub step fans, so most of the stages later in the evening were throbbing with banging sounds short on melody.

We were given tickets for all the family so Zac and Amber (18 and 20) had an awesome time camping with friends; though the ground was sloped and found themselves pressed against the lower side of the tent in the mornings. We took Sky and Charlie Freemantle (both 15) and Joey whose 13<sup>th</sup> Birthday it was on Saturday for a few hours in the afternoon. As an experience they enjoyed it – there was a very good vibe, we saw no violence or aggression, just a few drunken and high but very friendly people. We all had good chats with random folk and I got some lovely hugs too! Joey said he liked all the different types of music and the set up was very cool and interesting with good merchandise. He says the great music kept him on his feet; there were good vibes and a good rave! They were too young to enjoy it fully but had a good time with us.

It is incredible to think that this spectacular event is hidden so close to us. Fifty thousand people mostly in their 20s and 30s having the most brilliant time dancing and chatting and having fun. Many have said that they enjoy it more than Glastonbury; the town theme, the woods and the bowl,

a site that is prettier and more varied and interesting to navigate. We should be proud to have such a vibrant, creative, cool and colourful festival on our doorstep. I know the black smoke from 80 cars on fire in the car park wasn't great and Alex and I did get stuck on Monday night for 30 minutes on Chapel Lane on our way to yoga as camper vans and festival traffic were unable to pass each other.

*Emma Mitchell*

## Books, Books

---

The Itchen valley book swap scheme is now firmly established at the Plough pub, with almost two bookshelves bursting with novels to borrow! It is a lovely feeling to think people who don't necessarily know each other can come together and create a community asset – although for a change the cause is more local and not for a charity. The idea is to take and then replace a book or swap it with an alternative. So if you have a few spare novels then pop them along to the Plough – Ashley and his staff are all on board with the project and have been very supportive. My aim is to have a separate section for children and perhaps young teenagers – perhaps even longer term to have categories, e.g. crime. We might even club together and get a stamp to label the books quickly since I've run out of labels with the logo on it.

Perhaps other pubs might be interested in joining in so we have book swaps along the valley - it's the easiest of schemes to set up (just a shelf and a bag of discarded books!) and it's self running

Happy reading !!

*Kim Adams*

# Cricket

They say good things come in threes and it was no exception for Easton and Martyr Worthy Cricket Club with its trio of events, which drew in the local crowds in July.

The bumper 70<sup>th</sup> birthday weekend kicked off on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> with the Itchen Valley Tug-of-War competition. Various village teams battled it out for the trophy while being entertained by local band, The Eastones, and fed and watered with beer and barbecue. Trevor Compton's Easton Village side won the tussle.



**Winners**

**Gallant losers**

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> saw the Easton Sixes family fun day return to the David Roth Memorial Ground, sponsored for the fourth year running by Charters. Eight teams batted for victory in the fundraiser for the club's junior development academy which coaches and mentors players aged 13 to 21. The Friday fun day, which enjoyed glorious sunshine in contrast to last year, also included two bouncy castles,



padding pools, bar, hog roast and Jude's ice cream sold to raise funds for local charity Youth Options.

The Sixes trophy was won by green team: Fenwick Elliott Eagles. The squad featured two Avington junior players, Isaac Low and Monty Randle, fresh from their U11 County Cup victory for EMWCC. Monty also won player of the day for taking two wickets in one over.



**The winning Sixes team**

The celebrations continued on Sunday when the club marked its 70<sup>th</sup> birthday with an inter-generational match and Hampshire cricketer Jimmy Adams ran a coaching session for juniors.





- Derrick Fullick for a career of 40,000 runs
- Martin Hall, still playing for the club after 43 years
- Mick Neville, who set up the first juniors' team in 1976
- Chris Green, former captain and prolific batsman and sons Steve and Shaun who were the backbone of the 1<sup>st</sup> XI for 20 years
- Dave Cooper, head groundsman  
*Tracy Wickham 07887 802425*

The club president of 58 years, John Roth, planted a tree to mark the event. Memorial plaques were also planted for the following stalwart club members: Eric Thompson, Ben Marsh and Jess Hobbs.

Chairman Adam Murch also made several birthday presentations to mark the contributions of the following club members over the decades:

- John Roth, aged 95, for his presidency of the club for 58 years. John's father David was the first president. He bought the land for the newly formed cricket club in 1946. The ground is named after him.



## The Valley Gardeners: A Yorkshire holiday

The Valley Gardeners' biennial holiday trip was to Yorkshire this July. Our first garden was Renishaw Hall, near Chesterfield. Renishaw has been home to the artistic and literary Sitwell family for over 400 years. The garden was voted Garden of the Year by the Historic Houses Association. Long avenues of clipped yew led to room after room of herbaceous and mixed border planting, often with striking sculpture or water features. A particular plant was the climbing tropaeolum that had begun to adorn many of the hedges. A splendid start to our tour.

Havoc Hall was built in the 1930s by a family with six daughters, hence the name. Since 2009 David Lis has developed the 8 acres with hidden gems flowing from one level to





another. The attractive courtyard entrance leads to the vegetable garden with its raised beds bordered by a row of pleached limes, underplanted with step-over apples, through the Spring garden to the south facing lawns. Hornbeam hedges forming arches and pleached hornbeam trees create long vistas over the wildflower meadow and pond to the hills beyond. A rose covered pergola leads to a more formal 'white' knot garden, then on to perfect lawns surrounded by softly planted herbaceous beds with symmetrically planted silver weeping pears. Oh for the energy of this one man who keeps this jewel in such immaculate condition!

Scampston is a garden of the 21st century. As you enter the walled garden, re-designed by Piet Oudolf in 1999, you find yourself among great

swathes of contemporary planting, with drifts of perennials and grasses creating blocks of colour, shapes, texture and movement. The radical concepts first set out at Scampston may seem more appropriate to public parks and spaces than the average small scale family garden but they have had a profound influence on how we all garden. The fact that this style of gardening is also less labour intensive, more drought tolerant and attractive to butterflies and bees, means that it is guaranteed to endure. An absolute riot of colour, Breezy Knees was made out of flat arable farmland into a series of seventeen garden 'rooms'. Each one surprises, but it is the informality and huge variety of plants (over 6,000) which are the most outstanding features. The gardens are a marvellous showcase for the excellent nursery







from which we bought souvenirs. The main view from the house at Mount St. John was designed by Tom Stuart-Smith. Lawns flanked by borders crammed with colourful planting lead the eye to the countryside beyond. Many of the vegetables, cutting flowers, soft fruits and herbs go to supply the local Provenance Inns. They even grow cucamelon and borage for the Pimms. The absolute favourite of the Valley Gardeners was the spectacular, aptly named “valley garden” with its exquisitely muted planting, waterfall and lake. Littlethorpe Manor is on the outskirts of Ripon. This garden of 11 acres is made up of 4 acres of formal gardens and 7 acres of parkland, including a lake with classical pavilion. The earliest part of this Georgian manor house dates back to 1700 but was being developed up to 1835. It was bought by the present owners in 1985 and the

head gardener, Eddie Harland, was brought in to develop this very special garden. The beautiful walled four seasons garden features metal, rose covered gazebos and a centrally placed tree of life. The sunken garden, with a central artillery sphere and parterre, resembles the emblem of the white Rose of York. An answer to box blight is the planting of dwarf Japanese hollyhox crenata which is looser and more informal. In front of the house was an intriguing water feature called an Aqualens. Even the wildflower meadow was perfect. RHS Harlow Carr is the showcase for the RHS in Yorkshire. The 68 acres are being gradually developed and improved. There is a wide variety of growing areas, woodlands, still water, wildflower meadows, herbaceous borders and kitchen gardens. One outstanding feature was the stream side planting which runs the length of

# Itchen Valley Church Services

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## Sunday 4th September

8am	Holy Communion	Avington
10am	All Age Service	Itchen Abbas
11am	Matins	Martyr Worthy
6pm	Healing and Wholeness	Itchen Abbas

## Sunday 11th September

8am	Holy Communion	Easton
10am	Parish Communion	Itchen Abbas
6pm	Evensong	Martyr Worthy

## Sunday 18th September

8am	Holy Communion	Martyr Worthy
10am	Parish Communion	Easton
6pm	Evensong	Avington

## Sunday 25th September

8am	Holy Communion	Itchen Abbas
10am	Parish Communion	Martyr Worthy
6pm	Taize	Easton

## Sunday 2nd October

8am	Holy Communion	Avington
10am	All Age <b>Harvest Festival</b>	Easton
6pm	Healing and Wholeness	Itchen Abbas

### Rector

Rev Amanda Denniss      779832      amandadenniss@gmail.com

### Curates

Rev Alex Pease              791010      rev@ampease.co.uk  
Rev Rebecca Fardell        809264      rebecca.itchenvalley@gmail.com

### Licensed Lay Ministers

Mr Tony Gaster              779110      tonygaster@btinternet.com  
Mr Gerry Stacey              620263      gstacey@easynet.co.uk

**Parish website:** <http://itchenvalleychurches.org.uk/>

### Itchen Valley Churchwardens

Robin Greenwood 779540; Andrew Impey 779645;  
Theo Mezger 07775 908014; Vanessa Rosewell 841182

the garden. Our visit concluded with a visit to the world famous Betty's Tea Rooms. On our return there were as many plants on the coach as luggage!

*Written by members of The Valley Gardeners*

*Photographs taken by Mark Porter*

## Quo Vadis?

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There were some interesting visitors to the Valley in early August but opinion was divided by how welcome there were here, as they had camped on Hampshire County Council land at the Cart and Horses junction between the A33 and the B3047. The night after the "travellers" arrived, there were several break ins in the area and there were some suggestions that the two occurrences might be linked. Having driven past the camp site and been delighted by the colourful "caravans" and the healthy state of the horses who were grazing happily, I decided to visit the camp and see if I could find out more about these unusual people and their lifestyle. I was warmly welcomed to the camp

by one of the men who was sitting by the fire, presumably keeping a watchful eye on the horses, dogs and hens, the latter two being allowed to roam free despite the traffic on all sides. When I expressed alarm at this, the man said "they all know the Green Cross code!" He was very happy to talk to me and was pleased that I was going to write about him and his co-travellers. He hoped my article might dispel some of the myths which surround people who choose this type of life. My interviewee was born on the road in 1970 and was charming to talk to and most informative.

There are four main types of traveller: the Romany Gypsy, the New Age/ Hippy, the Irish traveller and the showmen who tour the country's fairgrounds. Our visitors were Romany Gypsies and the group was made up of 3 small families with 4 children between them. The children are home educated but their academic progress is checked by a local education authority each year. This group spends most of its time in Dorset but had travelled as far as



Warwickshire this year, booking stopping places in advance. They had made a temporary stop at Kings Worthy before moving onto the Boom Town Fair, to which they had been invited and were presumably participating in some way.

Gypsy vehicles are called wagons or vardos in Romani chib (the Romany language) and are usually brightly painted and are used only to sleep in, transport and for storage. Cooking takes place outside, over the fire which is the centre of the camp. The women make goods to sell, such as the large craft flowers offered by this group, which were made of old tights, as well as painted tins for pencils and pens and of course their hens' eggs. The men deal in scrap metal, do casual farm work, help at local festivals and buy and sell horses. I wondered why there was a car on site and was told this was mainly to ferry the horses' water (horses drink many gallons of water a day each) and provide transport in a medical emergency. The spare horses (those not needed to pull the wagons) are hitched to the back of the wagons when the convoy moves off – a sight I wish I had seen when the Romany gypsies left the site on the day they had promised to! As I got in my car to leave, I heard my Gypsy acquaintance on the 'phone. "Khushti!" he said to his caller – shades of Del Boy and Rodney!

I have had personal experience of another type of traveller who live in motorised caravans and camp on the footpaths and bridleways where I ride in Cheriton. Their horses are in a very poor state, left chained to graze far off but often without water. These poor creatures escape their grazing spots dragging their chains which can cause havoc on the roads. The youths in the

camp verbally abuse anyone walking or riding by and they stay for months on end, effectively making anywhere near their camp a no-go area. When they leave, the disgusting state of the ground has to be seen to be believed.

Driving past the campsite after our gypsy visitors had left, all I could see were the embers of the fire. No damage, no detritus, no mess. I know they were uninvited and unconventional but they certainly provided interest and colour for a few days and I enjoyed learning about them.

*Catherine Hahn*

In the 60s we used to meet similar travellers as kids out riding and then we used to take scissors and knives to them for sharpening. I do not know if they are the same family but they used to come every summer and we all loved going to visit. I have seen them about most years since. They have always been extremely nice and friendly.

*Sarah Bullen*

## Letter from the Rector

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Summer holidays are often a time when we have space to think.

The normal busyness of 21<sup>st</sup> century life is put on hold for a time and we get the chance to look back over the last year and make plans for the new one. My husband Oliver and I love to do this when we're on our summer holidays – talking through things that have happened and making new plans. This can be wonderful if the last year has



been a good one or if we've got exciting things to look forward to in the coming year. It can be more difficult if we have regrets about things that we've said or done or if we face uncertainty in some way about our future.

Some of my favourite verses in the bible are in the Old Testament in the book of Lamentations. They were written at a time of terrible suffering for Israel. In 587BC Jerusalem fell to the Babylonian armies. The leaders and many of the people were marched 600 miles away into exile. Lamentations is like a funeral service for the death of a city. It is a communal lament. The suffering was awful. Carnage. Cannibalism. Sacrilege. The writer spares us no detail. The accounts are graphic and heart rending – much like some contemporary accounts of the dreadful plight of many people today in Syria.

Yet the wonder of Lamentations is that this suffering does not have the last word. The writer is a man of faith. He knows that life isn't meaningless. He knows that there is a God who cares. This is even when his understanding is that the root cause of the suffering is God's judgment. He writes these words, 'Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.'

With God there is always the possibility of a new beginning. With God there can always be hope. I've seen this so many times in my ministry. People feel they are at the bottom of a pit, yet God has opened up the way for them to have a new beginning. God is full of compassion and love for each one of us. He offers each one of us a new start. A new beginning. This new beginning is not based on pretending that everything is OK when it's not. This new beginning is based on forgiveness. God loves to

forgive. Forgiveness is at the heart of why Jesus came and why he died on the cross. He took our rubbish and selfishness and in exchange gave us the opportunity of forgiveness and a fresh start. In turn he asks us to be people who forgive, who don't hold a grudge, who are willing to give their husbands or wives, their children, their friends, their colleagues, a fresh start.

This is true for us in our personal relationships and it's also true for us at a national level. Much has been written about the level of disagreement and disunity in our country that has been exposed by the referendum result. We have a choice as to how we could go forward. Whatever our view of the result, not holding on to grudges about things that happened and the things that were said in the campaign would be a healthy way forward.

There is now an opportunity across the political spectrum for a fresh start. It could be an exciting time to make plans for the future. My hope and my prayer is that this new beginning will have at its heart the call of God to care for the poor and the people on the margins of our society.

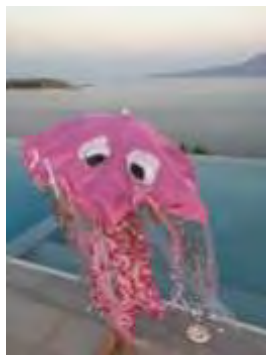
*Amanda Dennis*  
Rector

## Tiddler Joke

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Q. What happened to the cold jellyfish?

A. It set.  
Charlie Wolfe 6yrs





I am sorry but technical problems prevent me from displaying the complete magazine online this month.

I have tried for hours to fix it without success.

If you need a copy please visit one of our pubs or churches or email me at [itchenvalleynews@gmail.com](mailto:itchenvalleynews@gmail.com)

Vernon Tottle

Editor