

The Birches

Community Matters Newsletter

Kingsthorpe, Much Birch, Little Birch,
Aconbury & Wormelw

February 2022 First published 1977



Parish Walks

Around 20 people came along for our first walk of the year. A challenging walk down the sunken path of Conigre Lane and up the other side then negotiating a difficult stile. We returned through Athelstan's Wood to the hall for tea and flapjack. Well done to everyone who came!

A Walk with Good Views!

Sunday 13 February at 1.45pm we will be walking on a short stretch of the Herefordshire Trail over to Little Dewchurch, with far reaching views to Garway and beyond, through Bromley Court and back up Ruff Lane to the hall for refreshments. About **6.5 miles** - starting at Little Birch Village Hall.

All welcome!

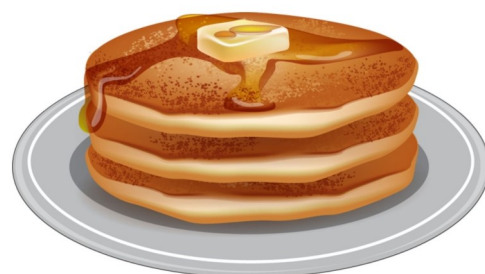
Angela Middleton Voluntary Footpath Officer for Little Birch 01981 540 377 ajbmiddleton@hotmail.co.uk

Pancake Evening

LITTLE BIRCH VILLAGE HALL

TUESDAY 1ST MARCH 2022

5:30PM - 7:30PM



COME AND ENJOY SOME
DELICIOUS HOMEMADE PANCAKES
WITH A SELECTION OF SWEET AND
SAVOURY FILLINGS

Just £2.50 per person to include 2 pancakes.

Extras can be purchased at 50p each.

Tea, coffee and soft drinks will also be available.

Join us at the
Community Café
@ Much Birch Community Hall

We were sorry to have to cancel January's café
but hope to be safe to go ahead in February

Saturday 12 February 2022

10:00 - 12:30

and continuing every 2nd Saturday of the month

12 March

9 April

8 May

For more information or if you are in need of transport contact
Lydia on 01981 540323 or socialfabric@hotmail.com



A local group who want to bring people together, strengthen community links
and provide relaxed and fun events for all ages.

The Queen's Platinum Anniversary Celebration

We are giving preliminary notice that the Much Birch Hall Management Committee has decided to celebrate this special event on Sunday 5th June 2022, starting with a Bring and Share Lunch in the Hall for users of the hall and the community. Details of further events during the day will be announced in the near future.



**Coffee Morning
with Book
Exchange**

Thursday 3rd February

& Saturday 19th February

10.00am - 12.00 noon

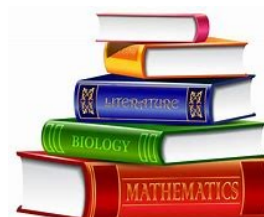
Little Birch Hall

Come and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee,
some cake or biscuit. Make new friends
or catch up with old friends.

Take a book, leave a book, or both.

Exchange recommendations for a good
read. Families and well behaved dogs
very welcome.

looking forward to
seeing you



arts
qLive

FLICKS
IN THE
STICKS

at Much Birch
Community Hall

Thursday 17 February 7.30 pm
Nomadland (12A)

When the gypsum mine in Empire, Nevada closed down in 2011, the place became a ghost town, no jobs, no shops, even the zip code is scrapped. Widowed Fern (Frances McDormand) puts her life in a small van and travels the American West, working odd jobs and sharing experiences with fellow nomads on the fringes of conventional society. Against the odds, the film that swept the board through the 2021 Award season (Best Film, Best Director, Best Leading Actress) is restrained, contemplative, and relies mainly on non-actors. Yet it nails something about the time we live in, a road movie about a forgotten and often ageing underclass from vanishing working-class communities and a personal portrait of quiet but formidable resilience. Best seen on the big screen! *Starring Frances McDormand*

Refreshments including hot dogs available from 7pm

Tickets £4.50 (£3.50 under 16s)

Borderlines Film Festival coming up in March

Tuesday 8 March - Mothering Sunday (15)

Thursday 10 March - Respect (12A)

Tickets available in advance or on the door - for further info or to
book tickets please email muchbirchflicks@hotmail.com or call
01981 540097

For further information about films and screenings visit
www.artsalive.co.uk
(online booking available!)



The Move by Mel Thomas

We welcome Mel and Les Thomas who recently moved to Little Birch

My lifetime dream has come true! I now live in an idyllic small village community (Little Birch), have a lovely old cottage and, to me, a fantastic large garden. My life is complete. When the rose tinted glasses are removed the reality is a little bit warped. Yes, the village community is every bit as good as I imagined – friendly, helpful neighbours, village newsletter, Flicks in the Sticks, local coffee mornings, some with book exchange (manna from heaven for an avid book reader) and many country walks to boot.

HOWEVER, the cosy old cottage has been unloved for a long while and is in sore need of a great deal of TLC. The hot water system has let us down for the second time since we moved in at the beginning of November; the main source of our heating system, a large 10kw woodburner, has been condemned as unsafe and mice seem to be holding loud and enthusiastic raves in the attic most nights!! I am still smiling.

Washing up with having to boil water from a kettle on an extremely slow electric hob means slowing life down. Whilst waiting for the water to boil I have had time to lean against the sink and look out the window to watch the birds. Having put up a metal bird feeding station just outside the window I have been amazed at the diversity of birds visiting. The local robin, who seemed to be in charge of the area when we moved in, has been totally overcome by the vast amount of tits – yes tits. Blue tits, great tits, long tailed tits, coal tits, and, to my delight, willow tits. All feeding voraciously on the sunflower hearts and the litre block of suet – ‘not just any suet but’ (sorry couldn’t help that) peanut butter suet that would appear to be the favourite of all wild birds. One of the two vocal nuthatches comes daily, a very smart, stout bird that I adore. His rufus/peach breast balancing beautifully with his grey/blue back. If I happen to be filling the feeders when he arrives, he is not afraid to climb up the nearby telegraph pole and scold me noisily until I have finished. Well really!

They say the collective noun for Goldfinches is ‘A Charm’. Well described I believe, and at this time of year they will all feed together with relative grace, but give it a few more weeks and as Spring makes itself known they become most argumentative. At present I am getting a little group of seven feeding. A Tawny owl woke me during the night calling out, which is lovely to hear and this morning, not even January yet, a woodpecker was giving it full throttle on the telegraph pole.

The pheasants visit almost daily, two males at first and then last week six females marched up the garden with great purpose. They are so beautifully marked. The cats, indoors at the time, were screaming loudly at them through the window, but after half an hour could stand it no more and the youngest demanded to be let out. She then flew (sorry for the pun) down the garden towards them and then watched in wonder as they noisily took off and sailed over the hedge into the neighbouring field. The cat visibly nodded sharply and then turned and walked back indoors – a job

Kings Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club

After a long gap in our activities the gardening club a new season of talks and visits and of course the highlight of the year, the Annual Horticultural Show. We started up again in January 2022, welcoming back all previous members and we extend an open invitation to anyone who may be interested in one, some or all of our talks and activities.

On February 23rd we will welcome Kevin Alviti who will talk to us on ‘**Unusual Fruit and Vegetables**’. Kevin is an enthusiastic grower who will entertain us with his amusing anecdotes of how he attempts to be as self sufficient as possible with his young family. He will also inspire us with new ideas that we can try out in the new season ahead.

At our AGM on March 30th the new program will be revealed and we will hear a short talk from Derek Scrivens, local gardening guru, with a lifetime of knowledge.

Meetings are in Little Birch Village Hall at 7.30pm. We have refreshments, time for a chat and usually a bring and buy stall for surplus plants etc. No charge for the first two meetings. For further information phone Janet Gwinnett 01981 540651 and leave a message.

Maddy’s Animal & Plant Care

I have been lucky enough to stay in many places including New Zealand, Wales and now locally in this beautiful part of Herefordshire where I’ve spent the last few years. Wherever I go I cat-sit, house-sit or farm-sit, caring for animals, gardens and houses, often returning to the same animals and enjoying building up friendships with them. Caring for each animal or garden is special. Its fun getting to know different animals, build up trust. I’ve also increased my knowledge of growing organically, permaculture, flowers, herbs and trees. If you need a sitter you can contact me. tel. 07983 610 559 madsrobinson@gmail.com

Maddy’s Creature Caring



Jobs in the garden for February

Derek Scrivens



If you like gardening you are probably itching to get started. The first three months of the year are a bit like the way that races used to be started without a pistol. Ready, steady, go! Ready relates to January when you are planning and dreaming takes place and you make sure you have all your seeds, fertilizer, compost etc. Steady is for February when you can start doing a few jobs but bear in mind the soil is still wet and cold and hard frosts can still occur. March hopefully is GO when daylight is much longer, the sun is warming things up and there are signs of growth everywhere – and the birds are getting frisky. Let's see what we can do.

- *Trim winter flowering Heather lightly after flowering.
- *Good time to prune most roses.
- *Hardy shrubs that flower on new wood in Summer can be pruned now.
- *Sweet peas can be sown in pots, root trainers or the cardboard 'inner' of toilet rolls.
- *Cut back old Autumn Raspberries to ground level.
- *If Summer Raspberries have grown taller than their support, cut stems back to 10cm (4") above top wire.
- *Add a general fertilizer (Growmore or Blood, Fish & Bone) to all tree, bush and cane fruit, fork in lightly (roots are just below the surface) and mulch with farm yard manure or compost.
- *Sow Broad Beans in pots or root trainers and leave to germinate in the greenhouse, cold frame or a sheltered spot outside.
- *Complete hedge maintenance this month.
- *If you grow vegetables you can plant shallots.
- *Plant some early potatoes (Rocket or Swift are quick growers) in a tub, empty fertilizer or paint bucket, empty compost bag, all with plenty of drainage holes. Put 4 inches (oh, ok, 10 cm) of compost in the bottom, put 2 or 3 potatoes on top of that with their 'eyes' looking upwards, then another 4 inches of compost on top of them. Keep moist, and importantly frost free. As the potatoes grow keep adding compost with a little general fertilizer, still keeping the compost moist.
- *Put up nesting boxes.
- *Continue to feed birds.
- *The compost heap, bonfire and any piles of wood or rubble should be disturbed cautiously in case there are sleeping creatures within.

HEREFORD CATHEDRAL EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

All Things Bright: A thousand years of metalwork. 24th January to 23rd April 10am to 5pm. Finest pieces of historical silver no from the Cathedral Hereford Diocese. Normal admission charges apply.

HCA Crafting the Cathedral 29 January to 26 February Bringing together contemporary craft artefacts, created and designed by students from Hereford College of Arts. Free Entry, open during normal cathedral opening hours

Living in Love and Faith - A 5 week course led by Revd Canon Chris Pullin Mondays at 7pm from Jan 31. free but advance booking is essential via the Library: library@herefordcathedral.org or call 01432 374 225/6

Family Storytelling Mappa, Mynotaurs and Mysteries 22nd & 24th February 1-2.15 This event is free and can be pre-booked via the website or drop in on the day. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Details of these and other events on Cathedral website.

Much Birch Community Hall Village Markets

The Management Committee has decided to continue holding quarterly Village Markets during 2022. The Committee would welcome any new stallholders and if anyone is interested please contact Sylvia Jones tel: 01981540980. The cost of each table is £5. It is hoped that the community will support the markets to make it worthwhile for the stallholders and to make it an enjoyable afternoon. Refreshments always available.

Markets 2pm until 4.30pm

Easter - 25th March

Much Birch Parish Council

Parish Clerk Mrs Alison Wright Longfield House Gooses Foot, Kingstone Herefordshire HR2 9NE Tel. 01981 250860
Email: muchbirchclerk@gmail.com 9th January 2022

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The Parish Council looked at one further planning application for the parish and agreed on comments to be made. The Parish Council also heard further updates on the work of Herefordshire Council and the new proposed budget arrangements from Ward Councillor Toni Fagan. The dates for next year's meetings are as advised below:

February 3, March 3, April 7, May 5, June 9, July 7, September 8, October 6, November 10 and December 8. No meeting in August. The next Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 3rd February 2022 from 7.30pm** at the Much Birch Community Hall. All are welcome to attend. Please see notice boards and website for agendas. As always the public and press are more than welcome to attend the meeting and will have the opportunity to speak directly to their representatives.

Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-

CLlr Alison Cook (Chair) Jasmine Cottage, Wrigglebrook Lane, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW
thecooks@wyenet.co.uk 01981 540703

CLlr Andrew Crum Anfield House, Barrack Hill, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AX, a.crum@btinternet.com 01981 540002

CLlr Roisin Burge The Old Hall, Barrack Hill, Little Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8AX roisinburge@hotmail.com 01981 540724

CLlr David Baldwin The Granary, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HS baldwin79@btinternet.com 01981 541198

CLlr Chris Pickering-Grey 4 Court Farm Barns, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HT chris@pickering-grey.uk 07712 813218

CLlr Joseph Goldsmith Quantock House, Hollybush Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HX josephgoldsmith@hotmail.com 07967 728590

Full minutes of the meetings and information etc. can be found on the Parish Council website following the link found in this summary. www.muchbirchparish.org.uk. You can also find us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/MuchBirchPC> and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Much.Birch.Parish>

Defibrillator Locations

IN A LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL 999

There are a number of AEDs available to use locally for those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest? A defibrillator is a sophisticated, yet easy to use, medical device that can analyse the heart's rhythm and, if necessary, deliver an electrical shock or defibrillation to help the heart establish an effective rhythm.

Allensmore – located at Locks Garage

Backney – located on the garage wall at Market Gardens Cottage **Bridstow** – located on the outside of the village hall

Garway - located on the wall outside the Garway Moon pub

Harewood End - located at Harewood End Inn on the outside of the pub around the back in the beer garden

Little Birch - on the outside of the village hall **Llanwarne** - located on the wall by steps leading up to the village hall

Much Birch - located on the outside of the church hall

Much Dewchurch - located outside Steiner School, first building after the church

Peterstow - located at the Yew Tree pub **Sellack** - located on the outside of the parish hall (key code required)

St Weonards – located on the old BT phone kiosk off the A466 between the church and Forge Cottage

Wormelow – located at the Cricket Club AND at the Carrot and Wine shop

Elizabeth Dinnen

Elizabeth Dinnen of Kingsthorpe was born in Porthmadog N Wales in 1925, of a mixed marriage. Arthur Hughes was Methodist. Cecilia Griffiths (an Anglican incomer from Carmarthenshire) struggled to be accepted by some in his family. They had met playing golf, often spoke English at home as their NW and SW Welsh dialects were so different.

Slate was a big industry. Arthur became a hero in hard times by securing a contract to supply slate to roof Copenhagen city hall. The family was fairly comfortable in that hungry era: a fish thrown to children on the quayside would be borne home in triumph. Elizabeth's mum Cecilia was a pioneer with a sense of social justice, the first female councillor in Porthmadog. She and Elizabeth knew the Lloyd George family well. Cecilia's uncle William Llewelyn Williams was a Liberal MP in 1906, radical thinker and King's Counsel. Hughes cousin Cledwyn was preacher, lawyer, and Labour MP from 1951. Elizabeth came to admire Margaret Thatcher.

Teaching was a career open to women. Young Elizabeth Hughes thrived teaching in newly established comprehensive schools in London. She didn't freeze in her Brixton lodgings in the winter of '47, because she was back home, recovering from chicken pox. Elizabeth was tempted back to Wales to lecture, partly in Welsh at a Bangor teacher training college. Not a morning person, she hated giving 9am lectures. Next to Liverpool, but she drove back to Porthmadog at weekends to care for her ageing parents. As a senior manager, unmarried, she later found herself working seven days a week. Weary of tussling with unions, she took early retirement.

Elizabeth was on a committee to devise words in Welsh for new technical terms, and did expert witness work on civil cases involving textiles. She said she always liked to have a project: she met Irishman Alex Dinnen playing Bridge, and reader she married him. She was 56, he 63, a social worker. To be near Alex' son John and daughter in law Judy they bought a Kingsthorpe bungalow which they renamed Wenallt, after Elizabeth's childhood home.

Life together was curtailed by Alex having a severe heart attack aged 69. He had a second one in Portsmouth, en route to a Normandy veterans' commemoration. World War Two was a powerful influence in both their lives. They still managed Bridge, gardening, Evergreens trips, and cruises. Elizabeth was in the WI and Osteoporosis Society. Alex died in 2003, just short of 85.

Elizabeth remained an avid Bridge player and enjoyed pensioner lunches at the Axe. In her eighties she chuckled about having six points on her licence for speeding, was bashful that both offences involved the same speed camera (Aylestone Hill). Elizabeth was allergic to people knowing her age: that allergy waned in her nineties. She let her driving licence go on her 94th birthday. Life became restricted by a phenomenal list of serious ailments: Elizabeth used to say Thank God for the NHS.

Covid time proved miserable, but Elizabeth would tell friends on the phone that she was 'ticking over' even when she was ill. A stroke cruelly interfered with her passion for reading. Soon after her 96th birthday, Elizabeth decided to enter Ross Court care home, where she was well cared for and died peacefully on 18 December 2021. Elizabeth disliked fuss, insisted there be no funeral ceremony, but the family hope to have a Covid-appropriate gathering in spring 2022, to celebrate the life of this wonderful one-off. Watch this space. **Rodney Dinnen**

THE PELLEAS ENSEMBLE (Harp, Viola & Flute Trio)

19th March 2022 at 5pm

St. Michael's Church,
Michaelchurch Escley HR2 0JS
Further information and tickets

<https://concertsforcraswall.org/concerts/>
telephone 01981 510112

Concerts for Craswall



Rebecca Clarke	Songs
Sally Beamish	Between Earth and Sea
Debussy	Syrinx
Debussy	Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp
Dowland	Songs
Ethel Smyth	Variations on Bonnie Sweet Robin

Trouble with Footpaths? Contact numbers below if you have any footpath issues

Aconbury - Mike Leigh 01981 540698

Much Birch including Kingsthorpe- Al Davies 07872 548440 or alanrcd@gmail.com

Little Birch - Angela Middleton 01981 540377 or ajbmiddleton@hotmail.co.uk

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Little Birch Parish Facebook Group



Find the latest news, events and business listings all in one place. You are welcome to promote your local business, advertise a local event or post news or information of interest to the village and surrounding area. Search for *Little Birch Parish Group* on Facebook

Little Birch Parish Councillors

Peter Rees Chair. Janet Gwinnett Vice Chair, Kate Dillon, Michael Davies, Kate Robbins, Angela Middleton, Volunteer Footpath Officer, Sophie Glover, Clerk 01432 617306 lbpcclerk@gmail.com

Website www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org

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Contact Liz, Tony or Jenny

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The Nightmare

Bar and Events

We are a mobile bar set up on a semi permanent basis opposite the closed country pub The Castle Inn in Little Birch. Offering a range of cask ale and Draught products as well as a wide variety of hot and cold drinks.

Whether you want a quiet drink in our fairy light grotto or a good old chinwag with our friendly patrons, you can come and relax after that stressful week in one of our heated gazebos. Let all worries float away in to the night sky because you and I know we all need it after the last two years. We welcome all here.

Friday 1800 till 2200

Saturday: 1500 till 2200

Sunday 16.30 till 2100





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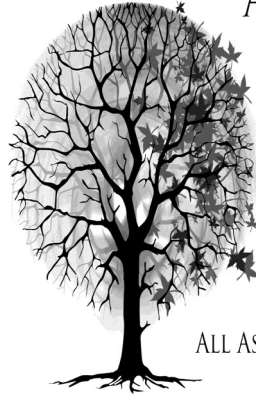
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Much Birch Surgery

We thank you for all your good wishes over Christmas and New Year.

Covid 19

As of 14th January 2021 over 87.19% of the eligible population of Herefordshire were fully vaccinated (including booster vaccines). Herefordshire & Worcestershire are currently ranked second in England in terms of percentage of the eligible population who have received a booster vaccination.

We continue to follow the necessary infection control guidelines at the surgery, including keeping doors and windows open at all times to aid circulation (which may be why you spot some of our staff wearing coats!) and while the waiting room remains open, patients are still welcome to wait outside in their cars if they would prefer.

Dispensary have been working under extremely difficult circumstances with staff shortages as well as issues with the delivery of medication to the surgery. We are pleased to say we have new staff due to start in February and we hope things will settle down in dispensary soon. We thank you for your patience during this difficult time and please be assured that everyone at the surgery is doing all they can to help ease things, including working weekends, helping out across departments and all pulling together to try to get medications dispensed and ready in a timely manner. Patients can help by ordering medications in plenty of time, rather than when they run out. Please allow a week for the time being until things ease up.

Kings Thorn and Little Birch Gardening Club

After a long gap in our activities the gardening club a new season of talks and visits and of course the highlight of the year, the Annual Horticultural Show. We started up again in January 2022, welcoming back all previous members and we extend an open invitation to anyone who may be interested in one, some or all of our talks and activities.

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Arts and Crafts Space

Alternate Thursdays 2-4.30pm

Little Birch Village Hall

Look forward to seeing you

Contact Sally for information

Sally Nichol

sally.nichol@btinternet.com

The Jolly Gardener

TheJollyGardener2502@gmail.com

Kyle - 07850921889



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Message from Revd Mark

Hi everyone

I managed a walk around the Gospel Pass and Hay Bluff between Christmas and New Year. It was a breezy day, not unusually, but it was nice to be out in the power of nature having had Christmas at home, with all the food, wine and warmth. The wind blew, the rain fell (well for part of the walk), the sun shone and a good time was had by all.

So how much time do we get to spend outdoors? Especially at this time of year? Probably not as much as we should. There are great benefits, as we found out during lockdown, of being outdoors, exposed to the elements and to the sights and sounds of nature. Although it is an interesting discussion about how much of that part of the world is “natural”.

We have become too sedentary for our own good, we spend time at computer keyboards and screens, on our phones or watching the telly when we would be much better off being outside, even if only for a few minutes, to enjoy the sounds of the countryside around us.

We are so blessed in this part of Herefordshire to have such options, to have such vistas and to be so close to nature. We forget it at our peril! So, even on a grotty day, when the rain is tipping down and the wind is roaring, let's take a few moments to enjoy the weather, to see nature and creation at her best and at her fiercest, at her calmest and most peaceful to refresh our souls.

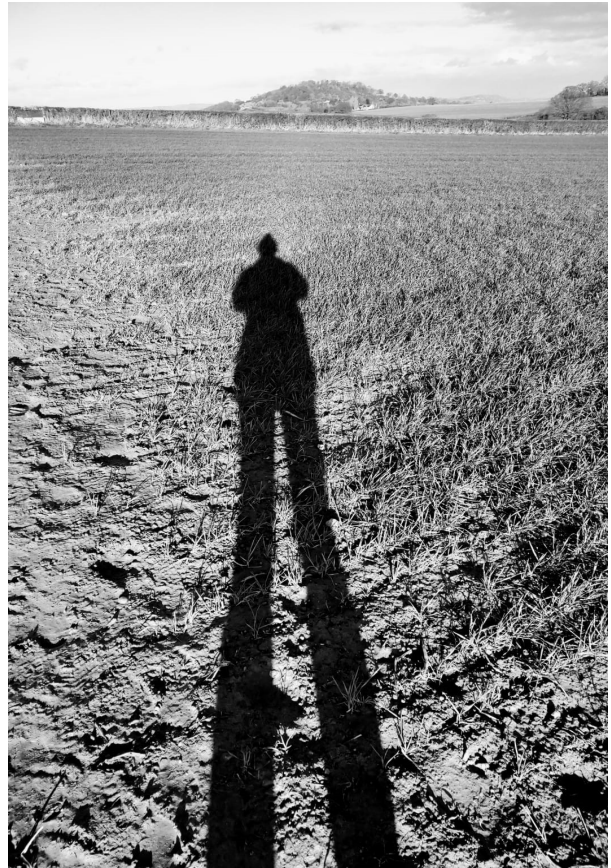


Photo Janet Gwinnett

I'm Sorry by Cathy Richards

Apologies are hard to make when pride gets in the way,
But I don't want to lose a friend, so please just let me say:
I didn't mean to turn aside when you really needed me
And I hope you will accept this sincere apology.

My attitude was not the way to treat a lifelong friend.
Can you forgive my bitterness and let our silence end?
My selfishness made me blind to the pain you're going through.
I wish that I could find a way to make it up to you.

The courage that you've shown makes me feel ashamed
And if our amity has ended then I must take the blame.
Even now I find it hard to say this face to face,
But I want to put our friendship back on a firmer base.

If you can forgive me and take my apology,
Then maybe I can be the kind of friend I ought to be.

Articles for March to
editorial@birchesnews.org.uk or
paper copy to Elisabeth Taylor
07854 629193 by **18th February**

W.M. PARTINGTON

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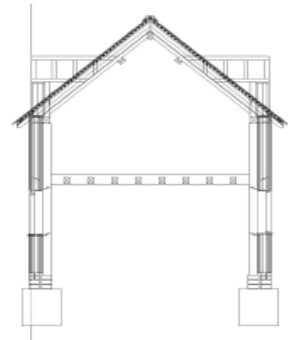
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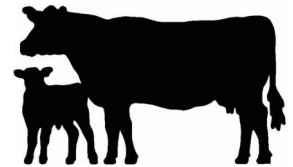
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Alison Allan is back!

I have been Zooming away in the summer but am now back at
Little Dewchurch

Social distancing is a must and we can do this with 10 people
per class – which means I can keep my eye on everyone!

Rollers, soft balls and circles makes for a varied and fun
workout whatever our ability.

After our Lockdown Blues we all need to get moving with Pilates
for our physical well-being and our mental health - and while
we do this, we will improve our posture, balance, strength and
general fitness.

My clients are aged between 18 and 95 so there is no excuse!
Just give me a call!

Tel: 01432 840491 Mob: 07947 011707

Email: Alisonpilates2016@gmail.com

Or on Facebook



Gracefulness has been defined to be the outward expression of the inward harmony of the soul
William Hazlitt

Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?
Mary Oliver



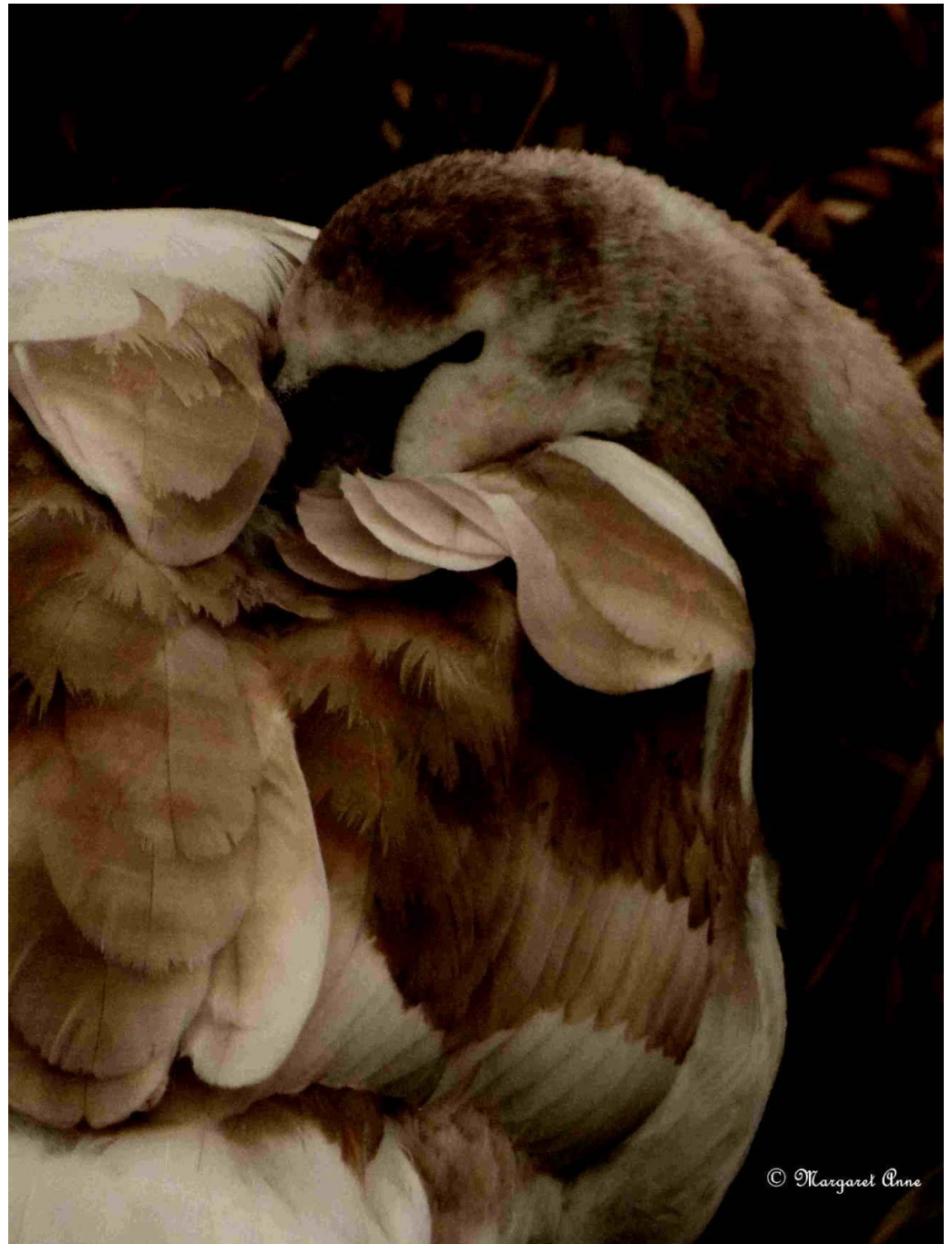
Thanks to members of the Birches Camera Club and Photography Group for their photos.

Owl - Emma Davies

Swan- Margaret Beare

Stones—Julie Green

For more information
sally.nichol@btinternet.com



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