

WEATHER – FEBRUARY 2021

Total rainfall for month	84mm	3..30in
It rained on	14 days	
Rainfall same month last year	184mm	7.24in
Total for 2021	210mm	8.26in
Total for 2020	309mm	12.16in
Max temp (on 27 th)	16C	60F
Min temp (on 12 th)	-4C	24F
Number of frosts	11	

This February, we had considerably less rainfall (100mm or nearly 4ins) than last year.

John Smail

FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD!



Not to be outdone by pandemic restrictions, the Hurstbourne Priors 2021 Safari Supper took place on the evening of Saturday, 6th March, via Zoom.

The benefits of not having to book babysitters, drive or leave the comfort of their own home on a cold, dark winter evening attracted villagers from far and wide. Tablets and laptops were fired up, some bravely overcoming their Zoom-phobia, to experience the luxury of meeting and socialising with fellow villagers, whilst enjoying good food and not worrying about the drink/drive limit. Many drew inspiration for their menus from the Hurstbourne Priors Cookbook.

Participants logged in to the virtual Village Hall for a meet and greet session prior to being transported to their first destination for drinks and nibbles. Ian introduced the evening and Dodie set the tone delivering a humorous and amazing Grace.

In parallel with the traditional format Safari Supper evening, couples then travelled around the village to different houses, meeting three new couples each time for Starters, Mains and Pudding. Virtual chauffeurs, in the form of Ann and Crispin were behind the Zoom wheel, navigating people to their destinations throughout

the evening. A 10-minute video showcasing our lovely surroundings and food, accompanied by music and peppered with silly jokes, was shown between courses to entertain and provide the countdown before serving the next course.

The evening ended with everyone congregating back in the virtual Village Hall for coffee and chocolate truffles lovingly crafted by Lulu Beasley, and to share more silly jokes.

At the end of the evening, exhausted laptops and iPads were parked up for the night and chauffeur caps hung on hooks, as Safaritarians made their weary way up the wooden hill to Bedfordshire – Oops! Don't we all love our sat navs? We'd be lost without them.

Not sure about my new sat nav though. I was travelling through my local safari park, and it said bear left. It was clearly an elephant.

Liam: What did the pizza say to the delivery guy?

Emma: I don't know, what did the pizza say to the delivery guy?

Liam: You don't pepper-own me.

Liam: Why does the mushroom get invited to pizza parties?

Emma: I don't know, why does the mushroom get invited to pizza parties?

Liam: Because he such a fungi.

A big thank you to all who participated and we look forward seeing you and others at 2022's Safari Supper in person.

*Ann, Crispin, Emma, Liam, Denise and Ian
Your Safari Supper Team*

VILLAGE TEA TOWEL

Calling all Hurstbourne Priors Villagers!

As part of fundraising efforts for the village following the cancellation of the 2021 May Fair and to coincide with the 2021 Census, a tea towel will soon be created for (hopefully) all residents in the village. The idea is for each resident to draw a matchstick style portrait of themselves which will then be printed onto a tea towel alongside everyone else, much like those you may have been involved in or bought from schools.

An email with full details and how to get involved will be sent around soon, and the tea towels will be available to purchase later in the year. If you'd like to join in but haven't received the email, contact Ed Beasley at hurstbournepriorsmayfair@gmail.com



WHITCHURCH SILK MILL

**Post-lockdown Re-opening**

Following the government's roadmap out of lockdown announcement in February, we are looking forward to a lovely summer at the Mill. For now, the Mill and its grounds and shop are closed, but the café is offering takeaways for local people from Friday to Sunday, 9.30am to 4.30pm. Please do not travel to the site. The Mill will open its outdoor café service on 12th April, Tuesday to Sunday, 10.30am to 5pm. If everything goes to plan we will reopen the Mill on 17th May, but if this cannot happen we'll let you know.

More Ripping Yarns

Have you seen our new Ripping Yarns videos about the possible derivations of the expression 'pop goes the weasel' and the origins of 'to pull the wool over someone's eyes' and 'dyed in the wool'? They are great fun and are available on the Mill's Facebook page. The expression 'to pull the wool over someone's eyes' has two possible sources: a legal one and a parliamentary Act. Lawyers have historically worn woollen wigs, and pulling the wool might have referred to metaphorically pulling a lawyer's wig over his eyes, obscuring the truth/hoodwinking him. In the 17th century, epidemics badly affected the health of the population and the country's economy and led to a decline in the wool and weaving trades. In 1667 an Act of Parliament designed to kickstart these industries made it compulsory for bodies to be buried in woollen shrouds. And, so, people saying 'Don't you think you can pull the wool over my eyes' may have meant 'I'm not dead yet!'

Objects in Focus

In 'Objects in Focus' we'll be revealing the hidden history behind everyday items in and around the Mill. New episodes will be released every two weeks. The first episode is now available to view on our YouTube channel and focusses on the weaver's bench on the Mill's third floor. In the past we believe it may have been used to spin silk: a spinning wheel would have been fixed into the various holes visible in the removable centre panel of the bench. Taking the panel out and looking at the underside reveals signatures dating back to the early 20th century. The story behind this is that when a new weaver started at the Mill they would write their name on the back of the panel as a sort of 'initiation' process – a hidden record – and in our video we show you the signature of Valerie Nash, dated 1 April 1948. Both Valerie Nash and her sister Pat worked at the Mill. Pat worked upstairs but remembers going down to see Valerie, where she worked on the looms in the din of shuttles flying backwards and forwards.

Another weaver at the Mill was Thelma Painter, who worked alongside her mother, Marjorie. Thelma recalls some of the weaver's antics: 'Sometimes the girls would wash their hair in the morning before coming to work at

the Mill, concealing their curlers underneath their headscarves whilst they operated their looms!'

More recently, the bench had been used as a seat to sit on during tea breaks, but unfortunately this has led to some of the names being rubbed off! So, to preserve the initiation tradition going forwards, all current and future weavers will be adding their names to the loom guard, a modern attachment, instead.

Regular Events

Our regular events including Mini Millers, Young Millers and Pins & Needles will resume as soon as we're able.

Contact: info@whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk – 01256 892065 – www.whitchurchsilkmill.org.uk



Photo: Ian Bradley

TOWN TWINNING PROPOSAL

In the context of Brexit, the Town Twinning Association (www.twinning.org) has reaffirmed the desirability of forming links with our continental neighbours, and after careful research they have concluded that a suitable match for the Bourne Valley would be the Val de Beaune (Beaune Valley) in France. Beaune is a walled town at the centre of the Burgundy winemaking region. Surrounded by the Côte d'Or vineyards, the cobbled town is renowned for an annual wine auction held at the Hôtel-Dieu (Hospices de Beaune).

Links between the two valleys actually go back more than 700 years to the times when much of the land in the Bourne Valley was held by the bishops and abbots of Winchester Cathedral, who at the time were largely resident at Bicêtre, near Paris. The name Bicêtre comes from the manor built there by John of Pontoise, Bishop of Winchester (often known as "John the Fool") at the end of the 13th century. The name of this Manor of Winchester was corrupted into Vinchestre, then Bichestre, and eventually Bicêtre. As well as enjoying the living provided by the church's holdings in southern England, the bishop also enjoyed the fruits of land holdings in the Beaune Valley.

Indeed scholars have opined that the names of villages in the Val de Beaune - Beaune Tarond, Sainte Marie de Beaune and Beaune Preux ("preux" is an old French word meaning doughty or chivalrous) - may have influenced the naming of their Hampshire counterparts.

If you would like to get involved in the twinning association, please do not hesitate to get in touch with

Ms April Fool at www.twinning.org

NEWS FROM TESTBOURNE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

At Testbourne, the arrival of Spring marks the return of a family of ducks to our Jubilee Garden. They are always a welcome sight despite the noise of their chatter!

Students have now returned to school after weeks of home learning and we slowly transition back into normality. We are proceeding with cautious optimism, and all COVID-19 control measures are still in place. These include mask wearing, intense cleaning of “touch points”, a one-way system, zoning, staggered breaks, increased ventilation and more. We are extremely proud of our students and staff for adapting so quickly to these measures and the fact that students are so ready to comply with the measures epitomises the character of Testbourne children.

We have recently finished our student Covid testing programme. This involved over 2500 individual tests in a period of just two weeks. It was a huge undertaking but, once again, many staff and a large army of volunteers went above and beyond to ensure that the operation was as smooth and efficient as possible. It reassures us that there was not a single positive test, and that leaves us feeling optimistic for the coming weeks as staff and children transition to home testing. We are extremely grateful to the large number of staff and community volunteers that supported us and know that you will join us thanking them in your own way.

This year, our new intake students received a welcome pack in the post consisting of a pen, a Testbourne shield badge, an events pamphlet, a travel leaflet, a ‘how-to’ flyer, and our Testbourne Student handbook, as well as personalised welcome letters for students and parents from the Headteacher. These packages have been well received, and we have received many emails from parents to say their child is excited to be joining our school. This is just the beginning of a welcome package that will continue over the next few weeks to give children who have had a very disrupted year 6, the best start possible in September.

With the Easter holiday approaching, we wish you and your families well as we all look forward to the summer term.

*Mr Jon Beck, Headteacher
Testbourne Community School*

WORD OF THE MONTH



Judging from the contents of our village cookery book and other events featured on these pages, we are seemingly a RIPARIAN neighbourhood of ARISTOLOGISTS – those who practise the art of ARISTOLOGY - being the art and science of cooking and dining.

Barbara Carrodus

GOODBYE TO DON AND ANNE YEAMAN

This month we sadly say goodbye to Don and Anne as they leave our village for pastures new. They both were extremely active in many aspects of our village life.

Anne’s banking skills were much appreciated when she joined Helen, Mark and Fenella as Treasurer in taking over the organisation of the May Fair at a time when it needed a lot of support to enable it to continue in a viable format.

Don quickly lent his expertise in enabling the provision of electricity across the field which made a tremendous difference to the attractions on offer on the day. He was always on hand to sort out any crisis which arose. In addition, he became the “unofficial” wandering photographer throughout the day and quickly established himself as the “Village Photographer” for many village occasions providing the photos for The Hill and Valley.

A keen gardener, Anne was a stalwart helper to Precelly Murray both in preparation of the plants throughout the year and working on the Plant Stall at the May Fair.



Anne busy on the Plant Stall

Both Anne and Don served on the Village Hall committee where Anne was the hall Booking Secretary for many years.

Anne also took over the co-ordination of our village Ladies’ Coffee Mornings from Doreen.

Wherever help or support was needed, either or both of the Yeamans could always be relied on.

Don and Anne will be sorely missed in all areas of village life. Both leave behind a great legacy of involvement in our community for which we are extremely grateful. We do hope that when life gets back to some sort of normality, they will return in order that we will be able to express our heartfelt thanks to them in person soon.

In the interim we wish them safe and happy travels as they embark on this next stage of their journey.

From all your friends in Hurstbourne Priors

I am sorry we are unable to include a picture of Don. We have a wonderful collection of the photos he has taken over the years, but it seems he was more often behind the camera rather than in front of it! - Editor

The Half term Lego Challenge Master builders of Hurstbourne Priors embraced the latest Village Challenge with great enthusiasm and imagination. Great fun for all generations, with entries from pre-schoolers to teens, with family teams including siblings, aunts, uncles, parents and grandpas! All the winners were awarded a certificate and small prize. A big thank you to the budding architects, engineers and artists who took part - we raised a fabulous £85 towards village amenities!

The May Fair Team



Best Team Engineering Project

Team Sorby
Robot



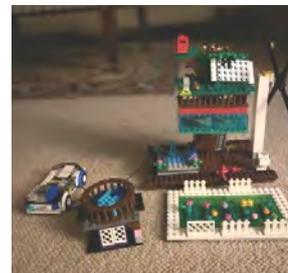
Best Multi-media Project

Team Saddler
May Fair ice cream truck



Best Infant Landscape

Hugo Briant-Evans
Vintage Moonbase



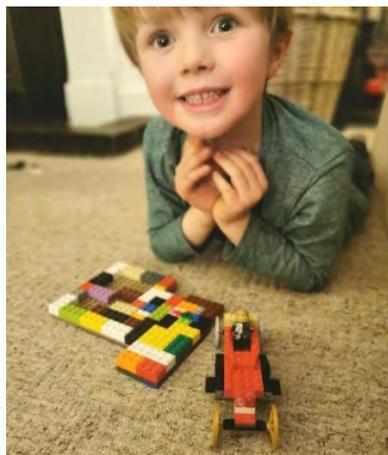
Architects of the Future Award

Thomas & Martha Stanes
Eco Community



Best Infant Engineering Project

William Ryan
Marble Run



Best Infant Car

Alfred Brunwin
Car & Mosaic



Village Pets' Favourite Build

Megan Brunwin
Posh Stable



Best Infant Build

Archie Ross
Knight Bolter vehicle



Best Tot Build

Miles Ryan
Castle in Duplo



Best Team Build

Rose & Mark Briant-Evans
Hurstbourne Priors Viaduct



Best Fantasy Build

Lottie & Fred Tufnell
Scorpion Castle



Design Award

Ivo Briant-Evans
"Axe"