

WEATHER – MARCH 2021

Total rainfall for month	55mm	2.16in
It rained on	8 days	
Rainfall same month last year	104mm	4.09in
Total for 2021	265mm	10.43in
Total for 2020	381mm	15.00in
Max temp (on 30 th)	23.5C	75F
Min temp (on 8 th)	-3C	26F
Number of frosts	5	

We didn't quite make the record March temperature of 24C on the 30th – but were not far behind with 23.5C!

John Smail

THE MAY FAIR ON-LINE PLANT STALL IS BACK!**There is no May Fair this year but you can still buy plants for your gardens from our on-line plant stall!**

Precelly Murray and her green-fingered team of Katherine McCullough, Tom Crutchfield and Gina Yates have a range of favourites from her usual May Fair stall and some new species for this year including:

- Scented leaf, trailing and bedding geraniums,
- Annuals such as cosmos, lobelia, sweet peas, stocks and fuchsias,
- Edibles such as strawberries, tomato plants, chillies, runner beans, courgettes, herbs,
- Perennials including penstemons, veronicas, verbenas, salvias and campanulas.

There are too many to list them all here as there are over 100 different varieties!

If you would like a full list of plants with prices and instructions on how to order and pay, please email:
hurstbournepriorsmayfair@gmail.com

The list will be available from Monday 3rd May.

**HURSTBOURNE PRIORS MIDSUMMER CELEBRATION AND CHARITY AUCTION**

We will be holding a Midsummer Celebration Dinner on Saturday the 26th June at 7pm. Drinks and canapés will be served in the garden at The Barn House, 50 Hurstbourne Priors, followed by a three-course set dinner with wine in the Village Hall.

This is a fundraising event in aid of St Andrew's Church, the finances of which have been severely impacted by recent lockdowns.

Dinner will be followed by an auction of prizes, which currently include tickets for two for Ascot '22 and a tandem skydive at Netheravon Airfield.

If anyone would like to donate an auction prize, which could be anything from gift cards/vouchers, home made produce, a few hours of an experienced gardener's time, or a unique and interesting experience that might tempt people to bid, we would love to hear from you. Likewise if you know of a business or organisation which would be prepared to donate a prize, that would be wonderful too.

Invitations will be sent out soon. We look forward to you joining us in what will be an entertaining and celebratory get-together to raise funds for St Andrew's Church and mark the end of lockdown.

If you have not already received an email advising you of this event, and you would like to be added to the mailing list for this and other village functions, please let us know.

Ann Orr, Denise Bradley, Lulu Beasley and Emma Ryan
 Email: MidsummerCelebrationHBP@gmail.com

LADIES' COFFEE MORNINGS

Our monthly coffee mornings will resume when restrictions change, hopefully, after the 21st June. Look out for the first date in next month's Hill and Valley!

Meanwhile, for any information or offers of hosting, please contact Susie Sorby tel. 892665 or email:
sbsorby@hotmail.com



WHITCHURCH SILK MILL



Roadmap Re-opening

All being well, by the time you're reading this the Mill will have been able to open its outdoor café and will be planning to reopen the whole site on 17th May.

Help from the Culture Recovery Fund

We were delighted to have been among the recipients benefiting from the latest round of awards from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund. The Mill has been granted £50,000 to help it reopen, recover from the losses sustained since March 2020, and become more resilient by being able to invest further in weaving and community engagement. Our exciting plans include creating a special indoor and outdoor summer exhibition, developing digital engagement and building up our heritage conservation resources. The Mill Director, Sue Tapliss, says: 'The lockdown has given us the opportunity to reflect on how we can better serve our community and visitors, and this funding will enable us to survive and thrive. It will allow us the time to develop new ways of telling our story, to make improvements, and to develop our weaving team and conserve the historic machinery so we can provide an experience that will delight everyone who engages with us.'

Objects in Focus

More Objects in Focus episodes are available to view on our YouTube channel. They focus on shuttle damage and intriguing loom clues.

The shuttle is a key tool in weaving. It's a wooden object a little like a canoe and it carries the weft thread back and forth over and under the warp threads on the loom. The shuttle travels at speeds of up to thirty miles an hour, and in the past if the weaver wasn't careful it could cause serious damage when any timings in the loom misfired, causing the shuttle to fly off the end. Evidence of this can be seen in the holes on the walls in the weaving shed. Past weavers told a tale of a shuttle hitting a window with such force that it shattered and the shuttle flew out into the river. The weaver had to tuck up her skirts and go barefoot into the freezing water to retrieve it. Today there are metal mesh cages on the sides of the looms to prevent accidents, but the weavers still need to be vigilant just in case a shuttle makes a bid for freedom!

The loom clues in the Mill can be seen most clearly on the second floor, where there are black marks and indentations on the floor. The black marks were made by goose fat, which was used to grease the looms' mechanisms to keep them in working order. The fat would sometimes slide off the loom components and

congeal on the floor. The indentations were made by hand looms, which moved about a lot during the weaving process. There are also clues in the weaving shed, where white marks are visible underneath the looms. In bygone days the floorboards underneath the looms were painted white to provide better contrast to the threads on the looms and enable weavers to spot broken threads more readily. These marks still guide our weavers today.

A lot of the flooring in the Mill is still the original planks, dating back over 200 years. They've received a lot of damage and alteration in their time, but we are lucky to have been able to maintain so many of them.

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

HURSTBOURNE PRIORS PCC

The Annual Vestry Meeting of St Andrew's Church will be held on Zoom on Monday 24th May 2021 at 7.30pm. This is a meeting of all parishioners to elect the churchwardens for the coming year.

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) will take place also on Zoom, immediately after the Vestry Meeting. Anyone on the Electoral Roll of St Andrew's, Hurstbourne Priors can attend and vote at the APCM.

Login in details for Zoom are available from: fenella.williams@btopenworld.com

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The Annual General meeting of Hurstbourne Priors Parish Council is on Wednesday, 26th May at 7.30 on Zoom. The code for joining the meeting is available from the Chairman or the Parish Clerk.

All Parishioners are very welcome to attend meetings of the Parish Council. You do not need to give any notice, however, if there is a particular item which you would like to discuss and which you feel it would be beneficial for the Councillors to look into prior to the meeting, please contact:

Richard Waterman, Parish Clerk, on richard.waterman150@btinternet.com or Clare Read, Chairman clareread@aol.com or 07711 917375.

Minutes from previous meeting are available to view on the Parish Website.

NEW MANAGER FOR THE VILLAGE WEBSITE

The Parish Council are very pleased to announce that Ed Beasley has very kindly agreed to take up the reins of the Parish Website following the departure of Graham Finlayson.

It is some time since the website was put together and, over the coming weeks, it will be updated so that village notices, Hill & Valley pages and Parish Council minutes can be more easily accessed. Please be patient whilst this process takes place.

Hurstbourne Priors PC

DIARY OF A WIMPY CYCLIST

One year on...



Spring has descended, slightly chillier than this time last year, but sunny nevertheless. Group rides of 6 people are now back on, and the roads are filling with cars again. But there is someone missing. It has been a year since last writing, as I lost my 68-year old cycling buddy, Dad, in June. He had a massive, unexpected, heart attack while cycling solo near

Dogmersfield, ending in a ditch. His dashcam (yes, some of us cyclists use video too!) recorded all of it. Sadly, it was fatal and it dealt a hammer blow to our family and confidence. Our thanks goes to PC Thorne and his team from Whitchurch who attended and managed the scene so professionally, plus the Air Ambulance and unfortunate fellow cyclists and road contractors that found my father. Only five minutes earlier he was in good spirits, stopping to help a cyclist who had just fallen. He was a proud ex-Army Major in the Royal Engineers.

I think of Cycling as a crossover between leisure and sport, less about commuting out here in the Hampshire countryside. Some of us enjoy bimbbling along, admiring the views and listening to the birds, some like the social group encouragement, and some enjoy putting pedal to the metal (carbon fibre). I took an opportunity to try out the latter this week, in my first Time Trial event. The Club gets permission from the local Police, uses 6-8 marshalls and sets a 10-25 mile course in an anti-clockwise direction (i.e. always turning left, so as not to cross the opposite carriageway). The roads are still open to traffic and we keep wary eyes peeled for lethal potholes, yet the more serious racers are pulling some serious speeds (think downhill skiing!). The outfits are hilarious: gaudy sausage skins, shaved shins and tron-like machines. I only have a regular road-bike, but it was great fun coming near-last at just 28 minutes for the 10 miles. Room for improvement.

The key is fresh air and fitness, while managing risk through keen senses. When the weather is bad, the fitness can be improved using indoor cycling machines (your bike on a flywheel). Dad and I were both training indoors for 6 months before beginning to practise for a significant charity event. The event got postponed to September 2021, 5 months from now. I will be riding the 300-mile event to Paris in his honour, in aid of the Royal British Legion – that looks after service families and the well-being of ex-service folk. You can find us on JustGiving, search for “mattisonsp2pforrbl” or Team Mattison.

Simon Mattison

SAVE EVERY DROP – WHY WATER MATTERS

Hello – my name is Sophie! You may have met my colleague, Maggie Shelton, around the local area. We're part of a team running Watercress and Winterbournes, a Landscape Partnership Scheme that is protecting, enhancing, and celebrating the Test and Itchen headwaters, including the beautiful Bourne Rivulet. Our scheme is large and varied, with lots of opportunities to get involved. At the moment, one great way to support our chalk streams is by using water wisely. As the weather grows warmer, many of us are doing more laundry and reaching for the garden hose. But did you know that doing so could have serious implications for nature?



Coot Splashing. © Andrew Parkinson 2020 VISION

Chalk streams are an incredibly precious type of habitat, housing iconic species like the brown trout, water vole, kingfisher, damselfly, and white-clawed crayfish. Their cool, clear, mineral-rich water is the result of an underground chalk aquifer, which supplies them with a fairly steady flow throughout the year.

Another quirk of the aquifer is that, in loftier parts of the landscape, some stretches of stream may dry out for weeks or months at a time. The intermittent nature of these sections gives them the title 'winterbournes', and creates an ecological timeshare in which both terrestrial and aquatic wildlife can thrive.

This natural drying of winterbournes is limited to certain areas, and the resident species are suitably adapted. But if the streams artificially run dry over larger stretches, or for longer periods, then wildlife can really suffer. A major cause of this problem is humans tapping the aquifer for fresh water, a process known as 'abstraction'. The aquifer's water is a highly precious resource for people and wildlife alike - it should be seen as something that we share. Abstraction is based on demand, so we all have a say in how big our impact will be. This is why our new project, Save Every Drop, is asking local communities to reduce their water use.

For many of us, indoor tasks are the most water-hungry. In the bathroom, you could take shorter showers, wash your hair less often, or turn off the tap while brushing your teeth. In the kitchen, you could use a washing-up bowl, put lids on boiling pans, or keep a jug of water in the fridge instead of waiting for the tap to run cold.

If you have any outdoor space, give it a little attention too. Digging in compost or laying down mulch can increase your soil's water retention abilities. Water butts will capture rain, which many plants actually prefer. Choosing the right species, and cultivating them in the right way, can greatly affect how much you turn the garden tap on.

From May onwards, we'll be sharing lots of tips on water efficiency. A special water-saving challenge will be coming to your area later in the scheme, but you can still get involved in the meantime. We suggest signing up to our monthly e-newsletter, where we share news, events, and other opportunities:

www.hiwwt.org.uk/winterbournes

Sophie Evingar

HAMPSHIRE COUNTRY & GARDEN FESTIVAL IS BACK!

The annual Hampshire Country & Garden Festival is back for 2021 in the beautiful, private gardens of Bere Mill in Whitchurch.

The festival launches on Saturday 26th June with a special evening of sparkling wine, cocktails and canapés followed by a luxury picnic hamper supper, a silent auction and a fast auction finale hosted by rugby sports presenter Mark Durden-Smith. Dust off your dancing shoes ready to party the rest of the night away courtesy of Afterdark Entertainment.

On Sunday 27th June the festival opens at 9.30am and offers a fabulous day out for all the family. Be inspired by expert guest speakers on topics as diverse as 'Producing Food with Nature', 'The Well Gardened Mind' and 'Running Free, Swimming Wild.' Live music from local band 'Head North' will create a wonderful atmosphere as you sample Hampshire's finest food and drink and let your younger family members try circus skills, enjoy story-telling or cuddle animal rescue rabbits - just a few of the many children's activities available.

For keen gardeners, there are opportunities to browse the beautiful plant nurseries, drop in at the Garden Clinic hosted by local gardening experts and ask the expert 'Gardeners Question Time' panel all your gardening queries. For shoppers, there will be a wide range of stalls from local businesses selling arts and gifts, food and drink. Last but not least, enter your canine friends in our very own Family Fun Dog show!

The weekend is in support of The Hampshire Medical Fund, a charity buying pioneering medical equipment for Basingstoke, Andover and Winchester NHS hospitals. The focus this year is to purchase new and vital Resuscitaire machines for the neonatal departments. With thanks to our gold sponsor, JM Finn Wealth Management and our silver sponsors, Fowlers Architecture and Planning and NFU Mutual North Hampshire.

To book tickets: www.hampshiregardenfestival.co.uk

WORD OF THE MONTH

This month I have two words which do partner each other so well that I offer them up together.

Firstly, TACHYGRAPHY which is the art or practice of quick writing. Shorthand though introduced by ancient Greeks and Romans is now most commonly practised as SMS "short message service" in text messaging.

Secondly, LOGODAEDALUS which is uncommon artistry in writing. So I suppose the purpose of Word of the Month is help the art of Logodaedalus survive!

Enough said and I will keep this short and tachygraphic!!

Barbara Carrodus

FLOWER HELPERS IN ST ANDREWS CHURCH

It is wonderful that we can now attend St Andrews for services and as a result, our happy band of flower arrangers are back in action. We welcome new members to join the rota so if you are interested please drop a note to Clare at clareread@aol.com

Please don't be daunted – you certainly don't need to be Constance Spry – arrangements can be as formal or informal as you like. Helpers work in pairs so that it is not too challenging on your time. Decorating the church for Easter, Harvest Festival and Christmas is a group activity for as many as wish to be involved.

Clare Read

CLOSED FOOTBRIDGE AT TUFTON

Please note that the footbridge over the river in Tufton has been closed by HCC's Countryside Service as it is deemed unsafe. Unfortunately there is no alternative route over the river.

We are pushing for the bridge to be replaced as a matter of urgency, but the Countryside Service is, like many other local Government Departments, running very slowly as a result of the Covid Pandemic. The bridge is owned by HCC and they are liable for its maintenance. We have been assured by Andy Aitken, the Senior Countryside Ranger at HCC, that the work will be completed within six months. Obviously, we feel this is far too long for the path to be closed and we are pushing for more urgent action.

Hurstbourne Priors PC

THE EASTER EGG TREASURE HUNT



The Easter Egg Treasure Hunt over Easter Weekend was the perfect excuse for children to enjoy (yet more) chocolate with the bonus of some fresh air and exercise, not to mention a little bit of brain puzzling, question solving and raising funds for our village amenities.

Thank you to Hannah Ross for organising some egg-cellent fun for the Easter weekend!