

Kempsey Times



A free monthly newspaper for Kempsey, Norton, Severn Stoke and surrounding villages

Issue 26

June 2026

FREE



An aerial view of Kempsey

June is upon us again, and so quickly. Nature is in full bloom, birds are singing, lambs are everywhere, and the countryside is lovely. We are very fortunate indeed to live in this amazing part of England. The National Animal Rights Day is celebrated on 7th June and it is appropriate that we should give thought to this event and what it stands for. It is basically to 'demand innate rights and a better future for all animals'.

Many people in this area own horses, dogs, cats and rabbits, for work and play, a very fulfilling part of our daily lives. All animals should be treated with respect and kindness in the same way as human beings should be treated.

Unfortunately, we see so many horrific incidents on television, which is hard to believe in this day and age. Much progress has been made in the way that laws have been changed and serious offenders are jailed!

Quite right too! On 'compassion', Albert Schweitzer wrote, 'Until he extends his circle of compassion to include all living things, man will not himself find peace.' He also said: 'Man is a clever animal who behaves like an imbecile.'

Summer suddenly arrived, it was incredibly hot. Now, we are having some lovely sunny days, ideal for cold drinks and ice cream! Let's hope this continues and we have a great summer. Lots of sport to look forward to,

Wimbledon and Test Cricket! Many congratulations to Nikki Hollier for winning the 'silver gilt medal' at the Three Counties Spring Fair! Another brilliant achievement!

Explore our new website www.hughescompany.uk

featuring

today!

Online news, products and services!

WORCESTER PODIATRY



TAKING ON NEW PATIENTS

01905 428434

Expert care for all your foot health needs

Come and see us for:

- Chiropody
- Verruca treatment
- Fungal nail care
- Pain & injury management
- Shock wave therapy
- Laser treatment
- Custom orthotics

Scan to book online



info@worcesterpodiatry.co.uk
www.worcesterpodiatryandlasercentre.co.uk

Edwards MOTORS

KIA Mazda

• NEW & USED SALES • SERVICING & MOT
• PARTS & ACCESSORIES • MECHANICAL & BODY REPAIR

Your local, one-stop, independent, family-owned destination for new and used Kia and Mazda cars. VISIT US IN KEMPSEY!

EMAIL enquiries@edwardsmotors.co.uk WEBSITE edwardsmotors.co.uk



KIA 01905 828828



MAZDA 01905 828800

Edwards MOTORHOMES

Approved Motorhomes

NEW & USED SALES
DEDICATED TEAM OF SPECIALISTS
HABITATION SERVICING
PAINT, BODY AND FIBREGLASS REPAIRS



AUTO TRAIL ROLLER TEAM Hobby motor

CALL 01905 829000 EMAIL enquiries@edwardsmotorhomes.co.uk
WEBSITE edwardsmotorhomes.co.uk

19 MAIN ROAD, KEMPSEY, WORCESTER WR5 3PA

SOLAR STILL WORTH IT IN 2026?

INTERNATIONAL PRICES INCREASING SOON



2020 SOLAR PV www.2020solarpv.com
01386 802020

Local Company • 16 Years in Business

County and District Report

Councillor Martin Allen



Good news: the Folk Festival was fantastic!
Better news: the Jazz Festival starts on Friday 26th June. For the past few years, I have been thrilled to open the Jazz Festival. It's great to see our local school children take part; for them, it's a memory that may last a lifetime.
County Council-wise, life is a little grim: the political shenanigans continue.

Ketch roundabout concerns grow



Cllrs Louis Stephen, Martin Allen & Rebecca Rollinson

Following yet even more accidents and bumps on the A38 Ketch Roundabout, we three local councillors continue to apply pressure to Worcestershire County Council to face the reality of the situation, and act. At the May

County Council meeting, Councillor Rebecca Rollinson spoke on behalf of many locals and presented a petition asking the Council to look again at the problem that the Ketch Roundabout has become.

St Mary's Fete, many hands help!



Our Kempsey Church Fete is on Saturday 27th June from 2pm to 5pm, and it would be lovely to see lots of friendly faces there.
I've offered to help the volunteers, and we'd be so grateful for any support you can give.

Whether you can spare a little time or a lot, every bit of help makes a real difference.
If you'd like to get involved or find out more, please contact our Vicar, Kat, at revkat@severnside.church
Thank you.

Kerswell Green major roadworks

Severn Trent has announced they will close the road through Kerswell Green daily between 7am and 5pm from 29/06/26 to 12/02/27 for major sewage system works. I'm glad that Highways have approved my request for the diversion route to go up through Severn Bank and then via Kinnersley, rather than down

a single-track road as they attempted during the last proposed closure. This period will no doubt be challenging for local residents, and I genuinely sympathise with them. Property access, as well as emergency services access, will be maintained throughout the period of work.

New section flag for Kempsey!



On Sunday 12th April, I had the privilege of attending and speaking at the blessing of the new Section Flag for the Beavers, Cubs, and Scouts of Kempsey, an occasion marked by strong community attendance. The group continues to seek additional leaders to support its ongoing growth. Offering a comprehensive programme for young people aged 6 to 14, the organisation is

structured into three active sections. Each delivers carefully planned activities designed to foster skill development, confidence, and enduring friendships within a supportive environment.

For further information or to express your interest in becoming a leader, please contact Nicki via email at: glv@scouts6thworcester.org.co.uk

Food bank in Upton



Charly Lowndes, Janet Liddington, Rev Amy Wearing

Did you know that food poverty often remains hidden in places like Upton, Kempsey, and throughout the Malvern Hills District? Cllr Rebecca Rollinson and I met with Charly Lowndes, Chair of Malvern Hills Foodbank, and a couple of volunteers to learn more about the valuable local work being done to tackle the issue. Since its founding in 2013, Malvern Hills Foodbank has supported residents facing crises and, in 2025 alone, it assisted over 4,000 people in Malvern, Upton and the surrounding area. More than 80 volunteers dedicate their time and compassion to the cause. Charly said, "Beyond material support, we understand the value of welcoming people warmly. Directing individuals to sources of advice and help is a

crucial part of our work. As part of the Trussell organisation – which supports 1,400 foodbanks across the UK and campaigns to end food poverty – we see most people only once or twice. Only 17% need to return more than three times in six months, which shows that difficulties are often resolved, and we focus on those with genuine need."

How can you get help?
Visit the Food Bank's website at www.malvernhills.foodbank.org.uk

You can also reach out to more than 40 referral agencies such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Platform Housing, NHS, Malvern Hills District Council, and Worcestershire County Council. These organisations provide support and offer vouchers for food parcels.

And finally ...

I know politics leaves most of you cold – and, personally, I don't blame you! In between the pantomime that is County Hall, I find a smidgin of free time to

work on my veg plot. At least when I'm there, my cabbages talk a bit of sense.

As ever, I'm here if you need me.

Martin Allen

A few words from... Dame Harriett Baldwin MP



Dame Harriett Baldwin MP and Josh Newbury MP outside the Masterchef kitchens.

Welcoming BBC Investment in Midlands Creative Talent

Dame Harriett Baldwin MP has welcomed a major investment in the region as the BBC develops a new creative base in Birmingham. The BBC is developing a new Midlands headquarters to house 600 staff in Digbeth which is at the heart of the city's creative quarter, relocating from The Mailbox next year. Dame Harriett visited the new HQ to hear about the Corporation's vision to invest in the creative industries and to offer more jobs to people living in and around Birmingham. The Tea Factory is expected to open in 2027 but TV production companies are already using sites in the area to film the popular drama *Peaky Blinders* and Masterchef has moved its kitchens from London to the second city. The MP was invited to tour the area as part of a cross-party Parliamentary group promoting the West Midlands economy. Many West

Worcestershire residents travel to the second city to work, study or shop on a regular basis and it is estimated that up to 35,000 county residents make the daily commute.

Dame Harriett commented: "The BBC has impressive plans to invest in the creative industries locally and by developing this new hub, it will attract production companies to use facilities there offering job opportunities for people across the region. This goes hand in hand with the major re-development of Malvern Theatres which I am hoping will be beneficial bringing cash into the local economy and also to inspire a new generation of young people to follow a career in media and the arts. The BBC has committed to doubling the number of programmes commissioned in the West Midlands and I am confident this will be a springboard for more opportunities for people working in media and the arts."

Free Advertising

All start-up businesses will be eligible for three months free advertising.

The size of the free colour advertisement will be 1/8th page

To start a business, you need courage, belief and determination.

We are here to help you achieve success!

Hughes & Company

Printers & Publishers

Pershore, Worcs

Tel: 01386 803803 Email: news@hughes.company

Larkin About

Chris Taylor



Philip Larkin (1922 - 1985)

After John Betjeman, Philip Larkin was probably the most widely read British poet of the second half of the 20th century. Not amongst the greatest - it was agreed that Larkin's narrow focus and constricted emotional range precluded that judgment - but a frontrunner in the buying public's stakes. Larkin's popularity seemed to have to do with his quintessentially home-grown English subjects: church-going, tombs, regrets at the passing of time, bed-sitter loneliness, agricultural shows, hospital visits and so forth.

In fact, a close reading of the *Collected Poems* (1988) shows how crass that judgment is. His subjects may be rooted in England, but their range is wide and their resonance universal. As with all artists, of course, the reader needs some awareness of the context of the original making, but that is quickly absorbed, and complex pleasure and recognition flowers. Here's an easy one about experiences most of us have had:

Cut Grass

Cut grass lies frail:
Brief is the breath
Mown stalks exhale.
Long, long the death
It dies in the white hours
Of young-leaved June
With chestnut flowers
With hedges snowlike strewn,
White lilac bowed,
Lost lanes of Queen Anne's lace,
And that high-built cloud
Moving at summer's pace.

Nothing much here: three short quatrain-stanzas, a bog standard AB rhyme and a subtle use of four and six-syllable lines that any half-decent versifier could produce. Well, no - here simplicity conceals great art. Even at his apparently most simple and accessible, the pleasures of

recognition are subtly layered and delicately resonant. The closely seen, smelt and felt haymaking countryside in early summer. An entire landscape is imagined with visionary precision. All of this in three short stanzas comprising two sentences. The pleasures here are of a sharply felt recognition - why yes, we know this landscape and marvel at Larkin's having fixed it within poetry's evocative form. And other satisfactions arise from Larkin's poetry - the ways in which this poem resonates against the rest of his work, the world it celebrates and whose passing it regrets.

For Larkin, poetry always seeks recognition from within our actual working lives - at an agricultural show, for example:

The men with hunters, dog-breeding
wool-defined women,
Children all saddle-swank, mugfaced
middleaged wives
Glaring at jellies, husbands on leave
from the garden
Watchful asweasels, car-tuning curt-
haired sons -
Back now, all of them, to their local
lives ...
To winter coming, as the dismantled
Show
Itself dies back into the area of work.

Poetry, as Larkin knew better than most, 'shadows much greater gestures'. It celebrates the living arc of the reader's life, light and shade, promise and regret, achievement and failure, living and dying. As with Keats, his enduring achievement lies in opening the eyes and hearts of his readers to the ancestral voices and perennial ambivalent pleasures from which each human life forges its own significance in the face of extinction. 'Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the
Spring adieu.'

A Home Survey helps you buy with confidence!

Buying a home is one of the most significant financial commitments most people will ever make. In an effort to reduce upfront costs, it can be tempting to skip a home survey, but this decision can carry real risks.

Research shows that many buyers still overlook this important step. In the first quarter of 2025, just 15% of homebuyers commissioned a survey, and only 45% of homeowners have ever had one carried out during a property purchase. This is often due to uncertainty about what a survey actually provides. In reality, it is one of the most valuable tools available when buying a property.

According to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), buyers who did not commission a survey faced average unexpected repair costs of around £5,750 after moving in, with some paying more than £12,000. In contrast, 40% of buyers who did have a survey were able to

use the findings to negotiate price reductions or repairs, typically saving between 5% and 10% off the asking price. In some cases, savings have reached £40,000.

RICS Chartered Surveyors are highly trained, regulated, and insured professionals who provide clear, independent advice on a property's condition. Their reports can reveal hidden defects or, just as importantly, confirm that a home is in sound condition. For such a major investment, a professional RICS home survey offers reassurance, clarity, and valuable financial protection.

For further information, please visit www.thehousesurveyors.co.uk or call 01905 676169



We pride ourselves in our local knowledge, value for money service, expertise in property of all ages and excellent customer service.



Talk to our team of Chartered Surveyors



Scan the QR code to find out more

GJS Dillon

The House Surveyors

t: 01905 28684

www.thehousesurveyors.co.uk

FIRMFIX

Windows, Doors & Conservatories

BEST EVER PRICES ON FIRMFIX WINDOWS

FOR ORDERS PLACED IN JUNE

White uPVC window as shown

Any type, any style.

BEFORE OFFER PRICE	£1,295.00
PRICE WITH OUR 30% OFFER	£995.00
YOU SAVE	£300.00

WHY CHOOSE FIRMFIX?

HIGH-QUALITY, ENERGY-EFFICIENT DESIGNS

WIDE RANGE OF COLOURS AND FINISHES

EXPERT INSTALLATION BY TRUSTED PROFESSIONALS

BUILT FOR SECURITY, COMFORT AND LASTING PERFORMANCE

MULTI-SAVINGS AVAILABLE WHEN YOU ORDER MORE THAN

2 ITEMS!

LIMITED-TIME JUNE OFFER

- ✓ Huge discounts on our range of windows
- ✓ Free no-obligation quotations
- ✓ Multi-buy discounts also available
- ✓ Competitive pricing with no hidden costs

DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY
TO TRANSFORM YOUR HOME WHILE MAKING SAVINGS THIS JUNE.

CALL TODAY
to arrange your free quote and secure your June discount.

www.firmfix.co.uk

t. 01684 296603

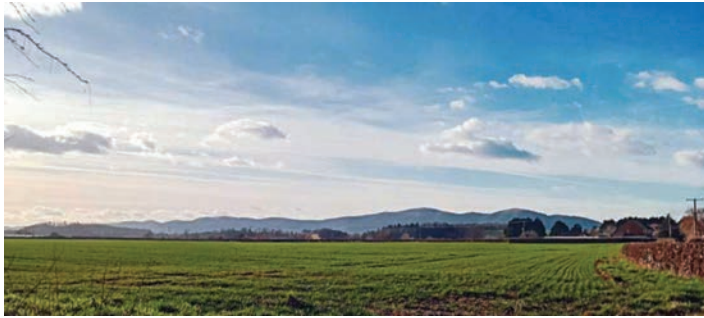
Showroom Opening: Mon - Fri 9am to 5pm & Sat by appointment only.

Oakfield Close, Tewkesbury Business Park, Northway, Tewkesbury, Glos. GL20 8PF

FINANCE OPTIONS AVAILABLE ON OUR ENTIRE RANGE OF PRODUCTS

Victoria Systems Ltd FRN: 911558 trading as Firmfix Doors & Windows are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. We are a credit broker not a lender - credit is subject to status and affordability, and is provided by Novura Personal Finance, a trading style of Mitsubishi HC Capital UK PLC. Terms & Conditions Apply. 0% interest is available over a maximum of 2 years, other finance options are available.

From the Parish Council



Further funding secured for community projects

Kempsey Parish Council has invested much effort into pursuing funding opportunities during the last year supporting the Council's longterm goals for sustainability, youth provision, and community wellbeing. These include a grant of £40,000 from the District Council's Community Facility Legacy Grant Scheme towards installing solar panels and battery storage at the Youth Centre, Plovers Rise, which will reduce energy costs and contribute to the national switch to renewable energy and the wider objective of net zero carbon emissions. The Parish Council is providing the required counterpart funding of £10,000 for the project to ensure its successful delivery. This investment will make the building more energy efficient and more affordable to run, enabling more resources to be directed into supporting other activities and community facilities. A second application to the same District Council Grant Scheme is being progressed for a new

small building adjacent to the Youth Centre to serve as IT and Youth Hub. The Hub will support digital inclusion, offer a welcoming modern space for youth engagement, including dedicated internet gaming events, and provide opportunities for skills development and community events.

Updates on both projects will be available at

www.kempseyhub.co.uk

In addition, an application to the FCC Communities Foundation is in progress for a replacement bridge at the Rocky and, as previously reported, funding from the District Council's Rural Fund helped pay for the partial refurbishment of the Pavilion at Plovers Rise and the equipping of the Pavilion Community Café. We are also extremely grateful to Cllr Martin Allen for the Worcestershire County Council funding that enabled the purchase of the outdoor seating. If you have not visited us already, the café is open each Friday from 10.30 to 5.30, serving fresh coffee and wonderful home-made cakes,



and is becoming a valued local meeting place for residents.

If you would like to volunteer an hour or two and be part of our outstanding, friendly team, please drop in and speak to our Café Manager, Chloe Wright.

Thank you to Cathy Garner and best wishes for the future

The Parish Council would like to express its sincere thanks to Cathy Garner, our Community Builder, as she moves on to the next chapter of her career. Cathy's role was funded through grant support from central government and the District Council, which has now concluded. During her time as Community Builder, Cathy made a real and lasting difference by strengthening community connections, supporting residents to access services and activities as well as helping to reduce isolation across the parish. Her warmth, dedication, and ability to bring people together have been invaluable. We thank her wholeheartedly and wish her every success in the future.

A Change of Lengthsman

We also say a heartfelt goodbye to Simon Bott, who has served our community as Lengthsman for many years. Simon's hard work, reliability, and exceptional attention to detail have helped

keep Kempsey looking its best through every season. We are extremely grateful for his long service and commitment. As Simon steps down, we are pleased to welcome Tim Hughes, our new Lengthsman, and Ian Hope, our new Maintenance Technician. They join us at the busiest time of year, with summer grounds maintenance now in full swing. Their early focus includes grass cutting, play area checks, vegetation management, and drainage maintenance - all essential to keeping the parish safe, tidy, and well cared for.

Reporting issues

A reminder that guidance on how to report issues such as potholes, damaged pavements, street light faults, or other highway concerns is available on the Parish Council website: www.kempseyhub.co.uk Reporting directly to the responsible authority ensures problems are logged and prioritised efficiently.

For more information regarding the activities of the Parish Council, please refer to our website

www.kempseyhub.co.uk

For all enquiries, please contact Sharon Dunn, Parish Council Clerk and Financial Officer on 01905 828183 or by email at clerk@kempseyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Charity Tractor Run fundraising success!



A huge thank you to everyone who supported the Charity Tractor Run on Saturday 16th May. The event raised an amazing £1035.60 for the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity! Thanks to everyone who took part, donated,

helped organise, or came along to support! A special thank you to Digaway for sending Skippy Pink Hire's lorry & Andy Parsons & everyone involved in organising it for everything they continue to do for charities.

What's On
Plant Sale - Saturday 6th June, 10am-12pm
 St Mary's Church, Kempsey
 Free Entry
*All welcome to the Save the Children sale of plants and herbs.
 Refreshments and greeting cards sale.
 We would be very grateful for any donations of cuttings, bulbs, seeds and herbs!*

TRIMPETS
 Dog Grooming
 Kerswell Green, Kempsey WR5 3PF
 01905 371329
 One to one grooming
 Small to medium dogs
 Over 50 years' experience

Hughes & Company
Foil Blocking and Embossing Services
 Gun slips, Belts, Handbags and more
 Prices starting from £15
 01386 803803 

The Gutter Consultant

*All makes and styles fitted or replaced. Square, Round and O'Gee. All colours. Repairs undertaken, or refitted where necessary etc.

*All debris and plant growth removed from guttering.

For a local friendly service call **Tim Davis** for a **FREE** quote.

01905 820137 • 07889 445353



The Devereux Centre

Are you keen to learn or update your first aid skills for work and personal safety?

The Devereux Centre offers Life Saving Skills Training Courses



- CPR and Defibrillation
- Fire Safety and Practical Fire Extinguisher
- Emergency First Aid at Work
- Emergency Paediatric First Aid
- Mental Health First Aid, Levels 1, 2 & 3

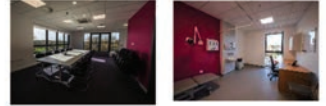
See our website for 2025 course dates

Rooms to Rent

Consultation, Counselling, Conference and Meeting rooms are available for hire. If you are interested and would like a tour, please contact us.

T: 01684 214333

E: info@thedeveuxcentre.co.uk
www.thedeveuxcentre.co.uk



Worcester: 01905 820 629
 Mobile: 07546 043 006
 Email: john@kjbcarpetcleaning.co.uk

KJB

Carpet Cleaning

We are a local family run business providing a friendly, professional, high quality Carpet & upholstery cleaning service.



- Fully Trained & Insured.
- Domestic & Commercial.
- One off, Regular, End of tenancy carpet cleaning.

Please Call or email For A Free No Obligation Quote
 115 Main Rd, Kempsey, Worcester, WR5 3JY
www.kjbcarpetcleaning.co.uk

DAVID MARTIN & SON LANDSCAPING, MACHINE & GROUNDWORKS

❖ **MACHINE & DRIVER HIRE AT COMPETITIVE RATES**
 Established over 25 years in Kempsey.
Fully Insured.
 References available upon request.



❖ **SEASONED LOGS FOR SALE**
£80 per bulk bag.
Free delivery locally.
 Smaller or larger amounts available upon request.



CALL: 07985 464718 FOR FURTHER DETAILS

GRANT BOOKS Ltd

1971

Publishers



Since 1971 we have published limited edition fine art books on Golf History, Biographies, Course Architecture, Golf Book Collecting and Club Histories

email: golf@grantbooks.co.uk website: www.grantbooks.co.uk
 Pershore Worcestershire
 Telephone: 01386 803803

Bedwardine Funeral Services



A caring and sensitive Service • Available 24 hours a day
 Private Chapel of Rest • Pre-paid Funerals

One of Worcester's most respected, independent funeral directors. Established in 1991, with an emphasis on serving the local community. We pride ourselves on providing a traditional, modern and bespoke service, which is second to none.

Focused on caring for families of the bereaved and making sure their requests and their loved one are met with the utmost compassion and professionalism.



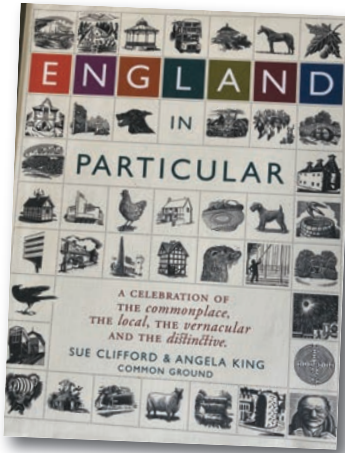
The Coach House, 30 Bromyard Road, Worcester WR2 5BT

01905 748811

www.bedwardinefuneralservices.co.uk

Local Post Offices

Tim Hickson



vanished. So I am not surprised to see the accompanying decrease in the number of post offices shown on my OS maps.

There is a fascinating 2006 tome entitled *England in Particular*, which is a compendium of ordinary things from allotments to windmills, Cornish pasties to stiles. Its entry for Post Offices says, 'For more than a century, the post office has been at the heart of a place. With the introduction of the Penny Post in 1840, the volume of mail began inexorably to increase and post offices began to appear in cities.' 'Village post offices were established, often in a room in a house or a shop. Town and city post offices were more likely to have been purpose built.'

However, in the years after WW2, 'many buildings were considered too grand for their purpose and were sold off'. That is just what happened, eventually, to Pershore's splendid post office building.

In 2004, there were around 580 post offices and 16,000 sub-post offices run by private individuals (many later to become victims of the Horizon computer scandal). Now, there are, according to the House of Commons Library, 111 of what are called Crown Post Offices (since April 2025, no longer managed by the Post Office Ltd.) and just over 9,000 of what were called sub-post



A fantastic example of an old posting box can still be found further afield, outside the Post Office in Oxford

One more gleaning from old Ordnance Survey maps concerns Post Offices. Remember the days when we all wrote letters - in many cases with a fountain pen? Not long ago. Prior to going on duty, the Wednesday morning volunteers at Croome Court were discussing the way to communicate most efficiently. We concluded that the most effective means was face-to-face talking, next telephone conversations, then letter-writing (as it makes one think carefully before putting pen to paper), then e-mails and worst of all, texting with a smartphone (where auto-correct often doesn't!). However, I recently went to my normal supplier of writing paper only to learn that he had stopped stocking it, as sales had almost

offices. The book goes on to comment, 'The importance of the subpost office is deeply underestimated. So much of its role is invisible and unquantifiable in maintaining the viability of the sole shop in a village or suburb and the consequent vitality of the community, which seeks advice, leaves messages and passes news through these informal hubs of local life.' My old maps showed P for post offices at places such as Broadway, Childswickham, Hinton on the Green, Elmley Castle, Wick, Defford, Birmingham, Eckington, Strensham, Wadborough, Upton upon Severn, Hanley Castle,

Hanley Swan, Madresfield, Callow End, Kempsey and so on. (On Station Road in Pershore, one map showed P.A., and I wondered what that was. Then I learnt that it stood for 'Workhouse'.) I have, as a bookmark, a postcard received in the early 1900s by my grandmother, then living in London. There were then eleven deliveries a day and her postcard from a friend, posted in the morning, said, 'See you for tea.' Today, on 12th May, I received an important letter posted, less than a mile away in Pershore on 1st May! Times have changed.



The old post office in Eckington



Pershore's old post office building, now the Town Hall

Mozart's Clarinet Concerto

The highlight of Worcester Philharmonic Orchestra's Summer Concert is Mozart's Clarinet Concerto. This much loved work was Mozart's last but one to be completed, and is often considered his Swan Song. It was composed for the virtuoso soloist of the day and we are delighted to welcome George Blakesley, an exciting young artist as soloist for this performance. In 2020, despite the pandemic, George embarked on a Master's of Music at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. This included training with the CBSO wind section. After winning a scholarship at the Royal Northern College of Music, he completed a Postgraduate Diploma. As well as freelancing with the Hallé Orchestra and Opera North, George joined the Sound World Group in Bristol, a brand-new contemporary music ensemble dedicated to performing accessible contemporary music concerts in the South West. Presenting classical music in an accessible way is part of his

wider passion in music education. The myths and magic element of our programme are represented by Mendelssohn's overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream and Weber's overture to Oberon. These works were both inspired by Shakespeare's masterpiece. The music brilliantly evokes the imaginary world of the enchanted forest where the play is set. Mendelssohn's 5th Symphony was completed in 1830 for inclusion in the 300th anniversary festivities of key event of the Protestant Reformation. However, he missed the deadline and it wasn't played then. The symphony was not published until 1868, twenty years after his death. It was his sister Fanny, who named it the Reformation Symphony. Dan Watson, the WPO's inspirational music director will conduct this popular programme. *Saturday 13th June at 2.30 pm in Pershore Abbey*
 Tickets: £17 (Under 16s: £5)
worcesterphilharmonicorchestra.ticketsource.co.uk

Clarinet George Blakesley

Conductor Dan Watson
Leader Graham Longfils

**Worcester
Philharmonic
ORCHESTRA**

SUMMER CONCERT



Saturday 13th
June, 2:30pm

Pershore Abbey
WR10 1BL

Mendelssohn - Overture:
A Midsummer Night's Dream
Mozart - Clarinet Concerto
Weber - Overture: Oberon
Mendelssohn - Symphony No 5

Tickets: £17 (£5 under 16s)

Tourist Offices: Worcester/Pershore*/Malvern (*cash only)

Ticket Enquiries: 07805 077279

Online www.ticketsource.co.uk (booking fees apply)



Midsummer Brass



Pershore Midsummer Brass is back this July for a sparkling day of live music, summer atmosphere and standout performances. More than twenty-five bands will fill the town with everything from brass favourites to thrilling new sounds. From 10am to 10pm, one wristband gives access to four fantastic venues: Pershore Abbey, The Angel riverside gardens, Number 8 arts centre and the free open-air stage in St Andrew's Gardens. Add great food, independent shops and a buzzing festival feel, and you have the perfect summer day out. Since 1990, Pershore Midsummer Brass has brought music, community and celebration together. Whether you are a devoted brass fan, a family on a day out, or simply looking

for something special this summer, you can expect a warm welcome and a festival to remember. *Wristbands £15 (children free) can be bought from www.pershoremidsummerbrass.org/event/pershore-midsummer-brass-2026 or in person from Pershore Tourist Information Centre or Number 8*



Bredon Wine Fayre 2026!



Deer Park Vineyard opens for its annual Bredon Wine Fayre and Festival on Saturday 11th July 2026, promoting English Wines, with live music, fantastic views, delicious local food and award-winning wines from local vineyards to savour in the sun. This year, we are going for a more festival vibe, with live music - acoustic until 7pm and separate stages for a band and DJ from 7pm onwards. Tickets available enable you to sample multiple wines, both sparkling and still. Increase your knowledge with Cheese & Wine Masterclasses & vineyard visits. See the deer, enjoy great local food & a bar with live music in the most beautiful setting with one of the best views in the county.
www.deerparkwines.co.uk/

bredonwinefayre
 Or join us for one of our popular Sundowner Pop-up Events. Enjoy a couple of glasses of wine, soak up the sunset & our stunning views, watch the deer graze while you enjoy quality food & drink. There is also a full bar, so if you like a spirit, we have an extensive Gin Bar, or if beer's your tippie, we've got you covered with Hawkstone and Purity!
 Friday 29th May – *Pizza and the Food Genie Street Food*
 Friday 12th June and Friday 7th August
 A night out at Deer Park Vineyard is the perfect way to unwind - or book one of the weekly Vineyard tours and tastings.
www.deerparkhall.co.uk

'Border in a Box' at RHS Malvern



This year's RHS Malvern Spring Festival reminded me that show gardens aren't just built from timber, compost and planting plans - they're built from the small, steady moments that carry you through the chaos. Somewhere between the early starts, the last-minute plant swaps and the quiet pride of seeing visitors pause to take it all in, you realise you're creating something that means more than the sum of its parts. My garden, Reminders of Home, was inspired by my parents' and grandparents' gardens - places filled with memories of family, shared moments and the simple

pleasure of gardening together. I wanted the border to spark nostalgia and encourage visitors to reflect on their own childhood gardens and the people who shaped them. I was thrilled that the garden was awarded a Silver Gilt medal, which felt like a wonderful acknowledgement of the story behind it. The build began in glorious sunshine, but Malvern quickly reminded us who's boss. Two days of strong winds made it almost impossible to stand upright, blew plants in every direction and stripped the last blossom from my beautiful crab apple tree. But that's show

gardening - unpredictable, exhausting and strangely wonderful.

The garden was built by local landscapers, Instant Scenery, who installed the border edging from Everedge and a picket fence from Garden Trellis. Once the structure was in place, the planting could begin, transforming a blank patch of ground into a blooming border. I'm incredibly grateful to all my sponsors for their support - their generosity helped bring the garden to life. The picket fence divided the garden into two halves - one planted for sun and one for shade - to show that you can create a beautiful border regardless of light levels. The shady side was a visitor favourite, especially the planter filled with Heuchera 'Mulberry' and Hydrangea 'Euphoria Pink', underplanted with Ajuga reptans 'Burgundy Glow'. On the sunny side, the lilac Syringa 'Michel Buchner' stole the show, planted in a lavender-glazed pot and softened with hardy Nemesia 'Confetti'. As always, there were last-minute plant changes. Some hardy geraniums I'd grown on from last year didn't mature in time, so they were swapped for a charming little Phlox called 'Candy Stripe', which quickly



Nikki Hollier

nikki@borderinabox.com
@borderinabox
www.borderinabox.com

became another highlight. One of my favourite moments at Malvern wasn't part of the judging or the build. A visitor stopped to tell me she'd bought a Border in a Box kit years ago, and that it was the thing that got her into gardening. She's since moved house and recreated the same border in her new garden. Hearing that made my whole week. When you're knee-deep in compost and deadlines, it's easy to forget the quiet, long-lasting impact these little kits can have. If Malvern taught me anything this year, it's that gardens have a way of grounding us - whether we're building them, visiting them, or tending a single pot at home. They remind us to pause, breathe and find beauty in the small things.

June gardening tips

Reg Moule *BBC Hereford & Worcester*

Early June

Mulches help to conserve water, but the soil must be moist before they are applied. Sow quick-growing hardy annuals, e.g. Clarkia, Virginia stocks, for late colour in dull spots. When watering, concentrate on climbers on walls, container and basket plants, newly planted items, dahlias, sweet peas, leafy veg. crops, celery and fruit bushes. Dig up bare-centred alpine plants and divide them, replanting the young pieces from around the edge. If you use nematodes to control vine weevil grubs, buy them online or by mail order. June is one of the worst months for pest and disease attacks, so check plants regularly. If using a trigger spray product, remember to shake it first and there are lots of safer "organic" treatments available now.

Mid June

Make sure plants in tubs and baskets are fed regularly, as

well as watered. Many climbing plants can be increased by layering at this time of year. Mow the lawn to leave the grass 2.5cm (1in) tall. Makes grass more drought resistant. Treat established lawns with a lawn weed killer, but not if there is a drought. Deadhead rhododendrons after flowering to encourage new growth. If you need more fish in your pond, this is an ideal time to introduce them, but goldfish can be detrimental in a wildlife pond. When picking strawberries, always remove any rotting fruit, otherwise problems increase. Watch out for cabbage white butterflies around your brassica plants. If you do not like to use chemical sprays, try Grazers G3 organic caterpillar repellent. They also make good repellents for slugs and lily beetles too. Sow radicchio now for winter salads. Choose a good coloured variety like pallo rossa. Sow salad crops regularly, in small

amounts, sowing the second row as the first emerges. Tomatoes can be planted outdoors. Select a sheltered site and support the plants. Take cuttings from dianthus (pinks). They root easily now in a shady spot. Lettuce will not germinate in hot weather. Sowing in moist drills in the late evening helps. Shade the greenhouse, ventilate it well and spray water over the floor to raise humidity. Take softwood cuttings from shrubs. Remove 7.5 cm (3in) of shoot tips. Root in pots of gritty compost, placed in polythene bags, in a shady spot.

Late June

Lift and divide flag iris after flowering. Replant young growths, keeping rhizomes above soil level. Prune back side shoots on cytissus (broom) after flowering to keep plants neat. Deadhead roses regularly to prolong flowering. Remove any "suckers" as soon as they appear. Watch out for algae and



blanketweed in pools. The introduction of a product based on barley straw can provide an organic control measure. Feed tomato plants regularly from when the first fruits begin to form, using tomato food. Take out one-third of the older branches on deciduous shrubs, like Philadelphus, Weigela and Deutzia after flowering. Put cymbidium orchids outside in a sheltered, shady spot until late autumn. Keep them well watered and fed over this period. If pollen beetles infest your cut sweet peas, put them in water in a shed for a while. The beetles will fly into the window, attracted by the light.

Visit to Oporto, 1854

Compiled by Allan P. Ledger, Stow-on-the-Wold



The Taylor's Port factory today.
Taylor's celebrated its 330th anniversary in 2022



Historical Oporto

These extracts are taken from the diary of Mary C. Leicester Penrhyn, who married Morgan Yeatman in 1850. In the late Queen Elizabeth II's reign, the port company, Taylors, received its Royal Warrant. Pedro Fladgate Barbosa was director of viticulture for the Fladgate partnership, the wine group now behind Taylors, Forseca and Croft. Morgan Yeatman was a wine merchant from Dorset and he had been a customer of Taylors for many years. In 1854, Morgan and Mary set off from Liverpool Docks on Thursday 3rd August on the HMS Rattler, a nine-gun screw sloop of the Royal Navy. On their way, they passed the ninety-foot Tuskar Rock Lighthouse off Waterford, Ireland.

Thurs 3rd August

Foggy drizzling morning not propitious for the outset of our foreign tour, however we were off before eight and had good time to get across from the Waterloo to the Euston square station, where we met our young companion, Pedro Fladgate, and some more luggage. I bought a book 'Darnley' to read by the way and at 9.15, we were off. The weather cleared by degrees and was fair when we got to Liverpool. Windham and Augusta very kindly came to meet us at the station and wish us good speed. We had to drive at once to the docks and get on board the Rattler as she was just ready to sail. She looked very dirty and not quite so large as I expected. We were told at first there was to be another lady, however she has not turned up, so we have the ladies' cabin, and Pedro the one next to it. We were soon

moving out of the docks into the open river, but there we were obliged to wait for some time for the ship's papers, which at last arrived. The boat that brought them took away the former captain of the ship, who seemed a very nice man, and several people who were onboard with him. We were off, I suppose, about half past six. At half past seven, we had some mutton chops and then came on deck again and saw the sun sink into the sea like a beautiful red globe. Just as it got dusk, we came to the bell buoy and soon after this, the pilot left us and the new captain took the command, but we did not see him all evening and supposed he was studying his chart. We turned into our berths about half past ten, Morgan in the upper and I below, and were tolerably comfortable all night.

Friday 4th August

Got up about six, dressed and went on deck in time to see the last of the English coast, Holyhead, which we had just passed. It was very fine and very smooth all day and there is very little noise or motion in the vessel in consequence of the way in which the screw is placed. I suffered from seasickness a little last night and this morning, but got pretty well afterwards, and was able to eat some dinner at four o'clock though the ship's cook is none of the best. Pedro was much worse and did not make his appearance till the middle of the day. We spent most of the day on deck and in the afternoon had a good view of part of the coast of Ireland with Tuskar lighthouse and the Saltes Islands. The afternoon was not very bright, but we had

a promising sunset. We have seen a good many vessels today and plenty of birds, both gulls and ducks.

On Tuesday 8th August, they arrived off the Portuguese coast near Viana and sailed onto São João da Foz, a part of Oporto, where Mr Fladgate lived. São João da Foz is famous for its June Festival and Fado Show.

Wednesday 9th August

Woke at three o'clock by the ship rolling very much and found that the anchor was being weighed and we were going over the bar. Morgan went on deck. I stayed below for some time, but finding I could see nothing from the cabin window, I went up too at last. We were just over the bar and coming to an anchor again just at the beginning of the city, and there we had to wait till the health officer came on board. It was a sort of dim moonlight and the rugged hills on either side and white houses dotted about formed a curious sight. However, we soon went below again, and back to bed for about three hours more when we got up and dressed ourselves ready for coming ashore. Morgan performed the operation of shaving, which had been omitted since leaving England. I was on deck again just in time as we began to steam in up the river to the custom house. A little boat (like a gondola, only much gayer) came alongside with Mr Fladgate's clerk, bringing a message that he would be here himself very soon and, in due time, he arrived and soon made arrangements for Pedro and me to be rowed at once to the Foz and get some breakfast, while

he and Morgan went in old-fashioned chariots. The bullock carts are very primitive affairs. Some of the streets are very steep, but they are improving in road making and have actually mac-adamized some of the streets. The houses are very irregular and very various in colour, most of them white or yellow, but some pink and some blue; one, I noticed, was all covered with bright blue dutch tiles and bright green venetian blinds. The roofs are tiled but whitened to keep out the sun, so that they look as if covered with snow. After walking about till I was tired, we came down again to our boat and found it quite cool on the water. When we landed we came a shady way up the hill and got here about half past four. Dinner at half past five. Mr Knowsley came in the evening. I thought at first he was a Portuguese Baron, whom Mrs Fladgate had told me she expected, and I was surprised to hear him speak very good English. M and I were both very sleepy by bed time, but we have not had to complain at all of the heat yet.

Until the 20th century, bullock carts were used in Portugal for moving agrarian goods and timber. The carts were attached to a team of oxen by a chain and a yoke, with the driver seated at the front. These carts were also used for transporting port wine pipes along the hilly roads from the vineyards on the River Douro.

On Thursday 10th August, Morgan and Mary visited the Factory House in Oporto. It is an 18th century Neo-Palladian building and is still associated with the influence of Britain in the port wine industry.

How the ice age affected Worcestershire

Richard Catford



Since the beginning of the geological eras, there have been five major ice ages. The last two have had the most effect on the landscape of Worcestershire. The first of these was the Anglian Glaciation about 450,000 years ago, when the ice sheet reached as far south as the northern edge of the Cotswolds. The second was the Devensian glacial period about 150,000 years ago, when the ice sheet reached the northern edge of the Malverns. The ice sheets and glaciers had a profound effect on the landscape, farming and economy of the area. The ice sheets and glaciers moved slowly across the land, scraping and grinding the rocks beneath them. As they melted, they left behind a mixture of stones, clay and sand, known as glacial till.

This material was deposited in layers, creating the rolling hills and valleys that we see today. The meltwater from the glaciers also carved out deep valleys and gorges, such as the Ironbridge Gorge in Shropshire. The rivers Severn, Teme and Avon were also affected by the ice ages. The meltwater from the glaciers caused the rivers to overflow their banks, creating wide floodplains. The rivers also changed course several times, leaving behind oxbow lakes and abandoned river channels. The glacial till left behind by the ice sheets has had a significant impact on the soil in Worcestershire. The clay-rich soil is fertile and ideal for growing crops such as wheat, barley and potatoes. The sand and gravel deposits left behind by the

meltwater are also used for construction and road building. One of the most noticeable features of the glacial landscape in Worcestershire is the presence of boulder-clay, also known as 'Till'. This is a mixture of clay, sand and stones that was deposited by the glaciers. It is often found on the higher ground and can make farming difficult due to its heavy, sticky nature. The ice age did not end rapidly. There were fluctuations in temperatures. In the cold periods, woolly mammoths and woolly rhinos roamed. Indeed, a fossil of a woolly Mammoth nicknamed 'Millicent' was discovered during the construction of Strensham Service Station in the 1960s. Warm periods existed during this time. Approximately 120,000 years ago, the climate was warm

enough for Hippos to wallow in the Severn as the ice further north continued to melt, only to swing back to a cold snap that caused the sea levels to drop and offer a route for animals to escape to the warmer zones across 'the land-bridge' where we now have the English Channel. In its final stages, climate change from Tundra conditions (similar to the landscapes of Iceland, Northern Norway and Siberia) saw Human activity begin to arrive about 40,000 years ago - mainly Neanderthal.

More information on Worcester geology is available from Malvern Hills Geo Centre The Earth Heritage Trust 01905 855184 The Geopark Trail guide is £15

Men's Health Week: Small Changes, Big Impact

When was the last time you checked in on your health? With Men's Health Week running from 15th–21st June, now's the perfect time to take stock - and it doesn't have to mean big changes to make a difference. Across the UK, men are less likely to seek help for health concerns, yet more likely to face conditions like heart disease, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers. The good news? Small actions can have an impact. It could be as simple as getting moving - aim for 30 minutes of activity a day. A brisk walk, a bike ride or time in the garden all count. Pair that with a few tweaks to your diet, like adding more fruit and veg or cutting back on processed foods, and you're on the right track.

Your mental health matters too. Life can feel pressured, and many men feel they deal with things alone. You don't. Whether it's opening up to a friend or joining a group, support is out there. Groups like We Are Men United offer a space to talk, while Men's Shed are a great way to connect with others while learning or sharing practical skills. Both groups can be found locally in Pershore, Evesham, Malvern and Worcester and welcome new members. You can also get support through your GP practice. If you're aged 40–74, you maybe eligible for a free NHS Health Check - a way to spot any issues early. Social prescribers and well-being coaches can provide support with non-medical issues that are having an impact on your health.



They are happy to have an informal chat first, if you are not sure if it is for you. This Men's Health Week, take one small step. Your future self will thank you.

*Lisa Smedley,
Primary Care Network Manager*

for Abbottswood Medical Centre, Pershore Medical Practice and Upton Surgery



Ailsa's Kitchen *Ailsa Craddock*

We are very lucky to live in the Valley of Evesham, one of the homes of British asparagus. I know you can buy this most of the year from abroad - but there is nothing like the real thing from just around the corner! Asparagus is a highly nutritious, low-calorie vegetable rich in folate, fibre, and vitamins A, C, and K. It promotes digestive health through prebiotic fibre, supports heart health by lowering blood pressure and cholesterol, and provides strong anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties –and is just delicious! Try some of these alternative ways to serve it – or just cook lots of asparagus and serve simple, hot with lashings of butter - using crusty bread/toast to soak up the juices.

Crab and Asparagus with Thai Mayonnaise

- Asparagus spears
- Crab meat
- Sliced sourdough bread
- Olive oil
- Handful of rocket leaves
- 2 - 4 tablespoons of good mayonnaise
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed
- 1/2 - 1 red chilli
- Freshly grated zest of 1 lime
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce (if this is the first time you have used it, please don't be put off by the smell - it tastes much better!)
- Chopped coriander

Cook the asparagus in boiling water for 2 - 4 minutes, drain and refresh under cold running water. Stir the garlic, chilli, zest, fish sauce and coriander into the

mayonnaise. Season if necessary, fold in the crab meat and set aside. Toast the bread, drizzle with olive oil and scatter over rocket or spinach leaves. Pile the crab mixture on top. Toss the cold asparagus spears in a little olive oil and arrange over the crab meat. Asparagus and wild garlic have roughly the same season, and this is a simple brunch using both.

Sautéed Asparagus

- Olive oil
 - 1 pound asparagus, trimmed and sliced into 3-inch pieces
 - Salt and black pepper
- Optional Toppings
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
 - 1 shallot, chopped
 - 1 lemon, zested and juiced
 - 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
 - 1/3 cup jar roasted red



Sautéed Asparagus

peppers, drained and chopped - 1/3 cup feta cheese (or more to your liking), crumbled Heat a cast iron pan over medium-high heat. Once it's hot, add enough oil to generously coat the pan (about 1/4 cup) and wait until it's shimmering. Sauté the asparagus. Add the asparagus and a good pinch of salt and pepper. Cook 2 minutes, tossing regularly. If you're adding the toppings, skip to the next step. Otherwise, continue to cook until the asparagus is tender and

lightly browned, about 3 minutes more. Serve immediately. Optional: Add the Toppings When the asparagus has lightly softened and is still a bright green, add the shallots and garlic. Cook, stirring frequently, until the asparagus is tender and lightly browned, about 3 minutes. Season. Remove from the heat and stir in the lemon juice, zest, and red pepper flakes. Top with the roasted peppers and feta cheese.

Be a tree friend this summer

Karen Rose

Do you remember last year's weather rollercoaster? We started with endless rain, then suddenly found ourselves in the driest spring and summer for 150 years. Who knows what this year will bring, but chances are we'll face some hot, dry spells again - and that's when our young trees need a helping hand. Newly planted trees haven't yet grown the strong roots they need to fend for themselves, so a little care can make all the difference. Wychavon District Council planted over 150 new trees last year in parks and green spaces and this year we're tagging some of the new trees to invite passersby to show them a bit of love. If you spot a tag, feel free to stop and give that tree a drink. If there's a young

tree outside your home, or one you pass on your daily walk, consider adopting it for the summer. If the weather is hot and dry, just empty a bottle of water at its base on your way to work or school, or reuse washing-up or bath water if you live nearby. Every little helps. Watering early in the morning or later in the evening helps the roots soak up every drop. And here's the payback - trees are not only great for wildlife and the planet, it's been shown that spending time with trees boosts your own wellbeing too. So look after them, and they'll look after you.

Karen Rose is a biodiversity officer for Wychavon District Council



100 years ago ...

In June 1926, the All-England Lawn Tennis Club celebrated its Golden Jubilee meeting at Wimbledon. This meeting marked an era where lawn tennis became a highly respected and serious competitive sport.

'The reasonable man adapts himself to the world, the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends upon the unreasonable man.'

Bernard Shaw, 'Man and Superman' (1903)

Ukraine Freedom Company

Since 2022, Ukraine Freedom Company (UFC) has been providing humanitarian support to the Ukrainian men and women fighting on the front line against Putin's illegal invasion. Pershore resident, Brian Watkins, has outlined in a number of articles published in the Pershore Times, the vast range of aid that continues to be sent - 'comfort boxes' for individual troops, trauma packs and other medical supplies to the front line and to hospitals treating wounded soldiers and civilians alike. Working closely with local Rotary Clubs, UFC have assisted with the provision of 4x4 vehicles, ambulances packed with medical items, generators, supplies for schools and orphanages, baby formula and nappies for women's refugees, pet foods and much more. UFC are now pleased to announce forthcoming fundraising projects, beginning with a display stand at Waitrose Malvern on 22nd - 24th May 2026. Malvern Community Partnership, together with the new Malvern Unity Rotary Club, are organising a number of events over the course of 'Midsummer

Malvern'. First, at 7pm on Monday 15th June at Great Malvern Priory, what should be an entertaining and informative evening 'In Conversation with Kingfinder, Philippa Langley, MBE' - best known for her part in the discovery of the remains of Richard the Third beneath a Leicester car-park. It is hoped that UFC's distinguished Patron, Major General Arthur Denaro, CBE, DL, will open the event with a short address. Proceeds will be split between the Priory funds and UFC. Tickets, including booking fee, are £23.53 (students up to 18 - £12.50) and are available from Malvern Theatres Box Office (01684 892277). On the evening of Wednesday 1st July, at the Coach House Theatre, Malvern, a showing of the Oscar-winning documentary, '20 days in Mariupol' - location of one of the more harrowing events of Ukraine's war! (Readers of the Pershore Times may have read the serialisation of Denys Bielov's 'Escape from Mariupol'.) Tickets will be £12, including a booking fee, and also available from Malvern Theatres Box Office.



In addition, 'Midsummer Malvern's' Artist in Residence, Margret Hallmark, will be showing her work in Great Malvern Priory, in particular her Ukrainian triptych entitled 'Give Peace a Chance'. Proceeds from sales will be donated to UFC. UFC will continue to support Ukraine, where the war continues to wreak havoc but rarely makes our news. However, we can only do so with donations and contributions from organisations like Rotary and

similar groups, and of course, individual members of the public. However hard times might be in the UK, nothing can compare to the hardships and dangers daily experienced by many Ukrainians. Please consider buying tickets for the above events, or contribute in other ways - UFC can guarantee that all contributions are used wisely and target those in greatest need. For further information, contact Brian Watkins on 07771 694000 or email lovelacewatkins@uwclub.net

Calling All Photographers!

Cover Photo Competition!



We are looking for six photos for our papers:
Pershore, Upton, Kempsey, Powick,
Whittington & Broadway

Each photo should be high-resolution and landscape, capturing what makes your local area special

Please hand in or email your submissions to:
news@hughes.company

(including your name and which paper you would like your photo to be considered for)



Deadline:
20th of each month

Hughes & Company
8 Church Street, Pershore,
Worcestershire WR10 1DT
01386 803803

A.J. TAYLOR LTD.

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

www.ajtaylor-electrical.com 218 Worcester Road, WR14 1AG

Looking for a EV Charger Installer?

give A.J. Taylor Ltd a call on 01684 569 357

or email us at enquiries@ajtaylor-electrical.com



Domestic EV Charging



Workplace EV Charging

Smart EV chargers and load management options available

£350 OZEV grant available for workplace schemes*

*Terms and Conditions Apply



Romy's Uni Life

Romy Kemp *Liverpool University*



Officially Done

I have submitted my final assignment. It is a waiting game from here. My graduation is in July and I should have my results by then. Although there is nothing left in my hands now, I am still incredibly stressed about the final assignments I submitted. Two all-nighters really were a crazy way to end my degree. That said, I need to get it off my mind now. I have a few weeks

left in Liverpool until I come back to Worcestershire and I am excited to go home. Taking all of my things home in the car with me may be a struggle - I tend to forget how much I have! I'm hoping I don't need to do two trips. My family moved house recently, so there will be a lot of decorating over the next couple of months. There is a lot of change happening at the minute: my brother has moved out; my

parents have moved house; I'm moving out of my university house. Going home to a different house will be rather strange at first because I spent sixteen years in my old one, but I do enjoy a change too. I look forward to helping my parents clean, decorate and organise because who doesn't enjoy making a house their home! The hunt for a graduation dress has begun, but there has been no luck yet. I want to buy the heels as soon as I can because I cannot walk in heels properly, so I need time to learn before having to walk in them all day (I will be taking flats too!). I am looking forward to it, I think, but honestly, the thought of getting up on stage brings me a level of anxiety that should be studied. As an over-thinker, I'm just hoping everything works out in the end because I have been stressing a lot recently. Since finishing my assignments,



I have been exploring the Wirral and, fortunately, the weather has helped make my experience even better. The wind has settled down and the sun has been shining. The majority of the time, I have been in West Kirby - the beach is lovely and the marina lake walk is a must (as long as you don't wear nice shoes because they will get wet)! I plan on going to some other beaches before going home for summer because I definitely won't have the same opportunities to just nip on a thirty-minute train to get to a beach from Worcestershire!

A Place to Meet

Chloe Pickstock



"A soldier gets injured. The commanding officer, Sergeant Tina, goes in to see him, and the sight of him makes her cry. The soldier says, 'Don't cry for me, Sergeant Tina...'"

A classic dad joke Rodger tells me each week when I greet him and Richard for their regular coffee and flapjack. I actually happened to bump into Rodger and Richard again on the opening night of 'Evita', presented by WODS, which made me laugh. I suppose this really is a small city - the kind of place where you can run into familiar faces just about anywhere.

For anyone who managed to see 'Evita' this past month, I'm sure you'd agree that the level of performance was incredible. As a member of WODS myself, it was even more exciting to watch the production unfold and see some of my closest friends shine on stage. Whether you're a theatre lover or not, I think most would agree that local theatre plays an important role in our community. It boosts the local

economy, encourages social connection, and nurtures creativity and the arts. On a personal level, being part of local theatre has helped me in so many ways. I've loved performing since I was young, but somewhere between exams, teenage insecurities, and life, I drifted away from it. Joining WODS in my twenties gave me the chance to rediscover that passion. It's brought me close friendships and confidence in myself. After a couple of particularly rough years, local theatre helped rebuild me. It gave me distraction, joy, and community exactly when I needed them most.

But groups like these require a lot more than passion to be sustained. With financial pressures and declining audience numbers, amateur theatre needs support now more than ever. That's where support from audiences, volunteers, and local businesses becomes essential. Funding, participation, and visibility are all essential in helping these societies not just survive, but thrive.

So, from one fellow thespian to you: come and support your local productions. Buy a ticket, volunteer, or even take part yourself. And if reading this makes you think, I'd love to be part of an amateur dramatic group, then I'd encourage you to reach out to your local societies. Chances are, they'd be absolutely thrilled to welcome you.



Gregory's World!

Turner



Self-portrait, c.1799
Courtesy of Tate Britain

If you still carry cash and you're fortunate enough to have a £20 note on you, why not take a closer look at it? The design of our current bank note celebrates a great artist. Two artists, technically - the King is a mean watercolourist in his own right. However, let's focus on the young man featured on the back of the note. Enter: Joseph Mallord William Turner. He's considered one of (if not *the*) greatest artists our nation's ever had. It's a funny coincidence, then, that he was

born on 23rd April (a symbolic day - for England, at least - synonymous with St George and Shakespeare).

A childhood diet of *Peter Pan* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*, along with holidays in Cornwall, and day trips to the SS Great Britain in Bristol, embedded the image of a galleon on the high seas deep in my psyche. I find the old-fashioned ships comforting, awe-inspiring, exciting, and romantic. Turner's been on my radar ever since Mum bought me a framed print of 'The Fighting Temeraire' (1838) from a car-boot sale when I was little. Often regarded as Turner's most famous painting, the 'Temeraire' also features on the £20 note. I saw it in the flesh when I visited the National Gallery with school. I got an extra kick out of the fact that the same display featured in the James Bond film, *Skyfall*, the painting providing a neat metaphor for Bond - the romantic, larger-than-life hero - having to contend with a murky, modern world. When I went to uni, I took the framed print with me and displayed it on my desk; the ethereal galleon, the sooty steam tug, the burnished sunset, attracted my wandering eye as I typed out

Gregory Sidaway

essays long into the night. For me, art is like classical music, WiFi, or the human brain: I don't pretend to understand it on a technical level, but I appreciate it. For years, Tate Britain (home to the world's largest collection of Turner artworks) has been on my London bucket list. A few weeks ago, after reading in a coffee table book that 'Turner's work cannot be reproduced. Even the best print only serves to awaken one's curiosity about the original', I couldn't resist any longer. I hopped on a train to London, reunited with my paintballing brother-in-arms, Bman, and spent a very thoughtful afternoon in the Turner wing. His paintings are full of wrath. Smoke billows. Waves soar. Light whorls. His ships are ghostly, stencilled against a sunset or listing in the swells, emblems of Britain's maritime expansionism. I wondered what Turner would paint if he were around today. Do we have equivalent romantic emblems any more? A human being dragged away by an AI doesn't quite have that same artistic flair as the Temeraire and the tug, but maybe I'm not being visionary enough.



Like all the greats, Turner never finished honing his craft. From watercolour to oil-on-canvas, realistic to abstract, he worked to capture the experience of particular moments - a shipwreck, a passing train, an early-morning hunt. In an age before photos, TV or cheap Ryanair flights, he positioned his viewers amidst the sublime natural phenomena of a Europe which was only just emerging from the Napoleonic Wars. His self-portrait, featured on the £20 note, stands out to me - probably because of my age. He is twenty-four and has just fulfilled a lifelong goal of becoming an Associate Member of the Royal Academy. He stares directly at the viewer, well-dressed, confident. Yet I see someone who is still so visibly young, finding his feet in the world. He has made a commendable effort so far. Now, he braces himself for the adventure ahead.

Evie's Adventures

Evie Aubin Oxford Brookes University

Packing. I've decided that the worst thing about university is packing. I'm still not sure whether this is a universal experience or just me. Most people would probably say the assignments are the worst part, or noisy housemates and first-year shared kitchens. But no - for me, it's the packing. Now, to avoid any misunderstanding between us, I'll be honest: it's probably completely my fault. Actually, scratch that - it is completely my fault. I don't know how I manage it, but every single year I leave university with at least twice as much stuff as I arrived with. Clothes, posters, random knick-knacks, tiny trinkets, bowls, curtains, a chair - you name it, somehow it's been miraculously crammed into the car. I think the worst part is standing there surrounded by all the things I've collected throughout the year, wondering how on earth I'm supposed to move it all back into my room next year ... and more importantly, how it's all going to fit. What made it even more disappointing this year

was that I wasn't actually finished with university yet. Moving home before handing in my final assignment felt completely backwards. Usually, there's an order to these things: first, the assignments get finished, then come the endless pub trips and late nights out (I do at least get the work done first), then the packing, and finally the journey home. This year, however, I had the joy of packing up my entire room whilst simultaneously trying to complete the biggest assignment of the year. Not fun. Would not recommend. My clothes were folded neatly into suitcases and bags, posters peeled from the walls alongside stubborn bits of Blu Tack, and the house had that strange end-of-year atmosphere where everything suddenly feels temporary again. Stressful as it was, it was also emotional. Packing everything away and seeing reminders of the entire year - both the good and the bad - made me realise just how quickly it had all gone. The thought that the next time I move back into my room in

Oxford will be my last has slowly been becoming more real, quietly gnawing away at me. Going home before everything was officially over felt strange too. Instead of celebrating the end of the year, I was carrying my laptop around the house like an extra limb. Technically, I was home, but mentally I was still in Oxford, thinking about deadlines, bibliographies, journal articles, and all the reading I still had left to do. Starting my new job definitely helped distract me from the looming assignment deadline, though - a very welcome break from academic stress. And you'll all be pleased to know that I'm no longer serving coffee, but instead working at the best place in Pershore. That's right - you can now find me at Hughes & Company, where I've learnt that Mondays are apparently the best day of the week and, more importantly, been reassured that publishing is still the career path I want to pursue. But don't worry - no university assignment or job could keep me away from my favourite



thing in the world: concerts. I've given you all a brief break from my constant rambling about them, but I can't hold back any longer, especially when my summer lineup just keeps growing. It only took two weeks of being home before I found myself back in Oxford seeing Maisie Peters, and a week later, I'll be heading to the Royal Albert Hall in London to watch Mitski perform. But that's all from me for now. Until next time - toodles!

