

February/March 2025

FYFIELD



FOCUS



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Village Diary

Date	Time	What	Where
Sun 2 nd Feb	1.00pm	Paint and Plonk	Village Hall
Sun 2 nd Feb	10.00am	Ramblers	From Village Hall
Tue 4 th Feb	10.00am	Coffee Morning	St Nicholas' Church
Sun 9 th Feb	10.30am	Community Worship	St Nicholas' Church
Sun 16 th Feb	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Nicholas' Church
Sun 2 nd Mar	10.00am	Ramblers	From Village Hall
Tue 4 th Mar	10.00am	Coffee Morning	St Nicholas' Church
Thur 6 th Mar	10.00am	Coffee with Cops	Village Hall
Sun 9 th Mar	10.30am	Community Worship	St Nicholas' Church
Sun 16 th Mar	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Nicholas' Church



I've learnt that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. Maya Angelou

I married for love. But the obvious side benefit of having someone around to find your glasses cannot be ignored. Cameron Esposito

If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to be a hundred minus one day, so I never have to live without you. Winnie the Pooh

Valentine's Day - A potted history

We all know that Valentine's Day is a celebration of romance and love. However, the origins of this day are not quite so loving! It is widely believed that the name comes from a Roman priest in the third century AD. Emperor Claudius II had outlawed marriage as he believed single men without a wife or family were better soldiers. The priest, Valentine, thought this was unfair and so performed marriages in secret and was imprisoned for his actions. In this popular story it is said that Valentine fell in love with the daughter of his jailer and he signed a letter to her *'from your Valentine'*. Later



Valentine was executed for his beliefs on 14th February. In 496AD, Pope Gelasius I canonised Valentine and decreed that his Saint's Day should be honoured on 14th February to detract from the old Roman feast days.

The association between Saint Valentine's Day and lovers is the fault of one Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1340–1400). In his late 14th-century comic dream-vision, the *Parliament of Fowls*, he describes a group of birds who gather together in the early spring – on *'seynt valentyne's day'* – to choose their mates for the year. Some scholars have suggested that the poem was written for King Richard II (1367–1400) during the negotiations over his marriage to Anne of Bohemia in 1380. This theme was taken up by Charles, Duke of Orleans whose love letter to his wife written on 14th February 1415 while he was a prisoner in the Tower of London after the battle of Agincourt, is the first known Valentine letter. It is now in the British Museum.

As the years went on, the holiday grew sweeter. It is believed that in the Middle Ages, young men and women would choose names from a bowl, and this name would be their Valentine, which they would wear on their sleeves. Shakespeare romanticised it in his works, and it gained popularity throughout Britain and the rest of Europe.

It had long been the tradition on Valentine's Day to give and receive gifts, but it wasn't until much later that greetings cards were introduced, and the tradition of the anonymous Valentine's card or note became customary. In 1797, a British publisher issued *The Young Man's Valentine Writer*, which contained scores of suggested sentimental verses for the young lover unable to compose his own. Printers had already begun producing a limited number of cards with verses and sketches, called 'mechanical Valentines'. Paper Valentines became so popular in England in the early 19th century that they were assembled in factories.



In Victorian England, the cards were incredibly delicate, with lace paper and ribbons often with hidden panels which housed secret notes.

In 1835, 60,000 Valentine cards were sent by post in the United Kingdom, despite postage being expensive.

Since the 19th century, handmade cards have given way to mass-produced greeting cards. In the UK, just under half of the population spend money on their Valentines, and around £1.9 billion was spent in 2015 on cards, flowers, chocolates, and other gifts.

X - the kiss

The tradition of the 'X' sign representing a kiss started with the Medieval practice of allowing those who could not write to sign documents with an 'X'. This was done before witnesses, and the signer placed a kiss upon the 'X' to show sincerity. This is how the kiss came to be synonymous with the letter 'X', and how it came to be commonly used at the end of letters as a kiss symbol.



Since the human heart has long been associated with emotion and pleasure, the shape was eventually co-opted as a symbol of romance and medieval courtly love. It grew especially popular during the Renaissance, when it was used in religious art depicting the Sacred Heart of Christ and as one of the four suits in playing cards. By the 18th and 19th centuries, meanwhile, it had become a recurring motif in love notes and Valentine's Day cards.



Roses are associated with love primarily because of their connection to Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, in mythology; stories often depict her being closely linked to the rose, with the red colour of the rose often symbolizing her blood, which stained the petals when she injured herself on a thorn while rushing to her lover Adonis' side; this association with love and beauty carried through to Roman mythology where Venus, the equivalent of Aphrodite, was also linked to the rose.



Fyfield Parish Council News

Dear Residents

In the next month or so we are looking forward to getting back the beautifully refurbished Noticeboard outside the shop, thanks to the Shed Club.

On 6th and 7th September this year we will be holding a big Harvest Festival with races, stalls, music, bouncy castles, an evening event and much more on the Saturday, and a treasure hunt and harvest service on Sunday. And we are hoping that Essex Air Ambulance will be showing off their helicopter by the Sports Field. We have had loads of great ideas so far and need as many people as possible to ensure it is a success – please contact us if you would like to be involved.

Would you like to be a Parish Councillor to represent the community and plan village events, review planning applications, footpath and road issues, maintenance of the sports field and burial ground and other village assets? If so please email the Clerk,

Dan Webster
Chair

The next two Parish Council meetings will be held on Monday 3rd February and Monday 3rd March at 7:30pm in the Village Hall. Everyone is welcome.

All Fyfield Parish Council news and minutes can be found on the Parish website <https://fyfieldpc.wixsite.com/fyfieldparishcouncil> and on the Noticeboard.

Councillor Contact Details

Chair - Dan Webster	01277 899405	fpcwebsterd@gmail.com
Vice Chair - Sandra Mead	01277 899519	fpcmead@gmail.com
Cllr. Michael Brawn	07510 377435	fpcbrawn@gmail.com
Cllr. Gaillies Codd	07982 909159	fpcodd@gmail.com
Cllr. Tim Wadey	07778 270362	fpcwadey@gmail.com
Cllr. Lizzie Webster	01277 899405	fpcwebsterl@gmail.com
Kim Hanley, Clerk	fyfieldparishcouncil@gmail.com	
Burial Ground	fpcburalground@gmail.com	

Marriage is a wonderful invention. Then again, so is a bicycle kit.
Billy Connolly



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Village Hall

I hope you had a wonderful Christmas and that 2025 will be good to you all.

Throughout the festive period the children enjoyed our annual Christmas party with Santa's Elf providing the entertainment, followed by tea and cakes. The Luncheon Club team also provided a first class and delicious Christmas Lunch. Guests were entertained by Tracey Q singing a selection of festive songs and everyone joined in as backing singers. The team are all volunteers who put in a huge amount of effort and time, not only at Christmas but also throughout the year. Fyfield are so lucky to have them. Thank you to all those people who sent in a decoration for our Christmas tree. It really made the tree special to the village.

We begin the New Year with a freshly decorated hall, which looks lovely. Kevin and his team have done a brilliant job and worked around the regular clubs and activities. These essential jobs cost a surprising amount of money and we are hoping to hold a variety of fund raising events in 2025 to top up the funds. These include Family Bingo, A Night at the Races and lots more.

Plans are ongoing together with the Parish Council and St Nicholas' Church for the Fyfield Festival in September. To be able to run these events we need as much help as possible. There are vacancies for committee members so if any Fyfield resident would like to be involved with the running of our lovely village hall, please contact us. If you would just like to volunteer your help that would be really appreciated too.

Penny Ovel
Chair

RONNIE BUCKINGHAM
Spiritualist Medium

will be appearing at Fyfield Village Hall for a night of clairvoyance

Come along and see Ronnie for an evening of fun, tears and laughter

Tuesday 25th March

7pm for a 7.45 start

£20 each – pay on the door



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District Matters

Happy New Year to everyone - we wish you all the best for 2025.

By the time you read this article lots of things will have happened which we don't know about now. For example, we will have a new President of the United States in a couple of weeks' time and some experts say we should tighten our seat belts because there may be some turbulence. We also have a Mr. Musk who seems to delight in making comments regarding everybody and that should be interesting as well as watching his progress, especially with Mr Trump as President. That leaves us with today and our latest news from the District and I suppose the best thing I can say, which I mentioned in the last article, is that our new TVS Refuge Service is working very well at all levels; compliments have been coming in, the people are working very hard, and they are delivering the goods. This is really good as we need good news nowadays and this is certainly very, very good news. My only comment is they come very early in the morning where I live so they wake me up, but I am not going to complain about that.

My second point is devolution of local councils which is raising its head and no doubt will, in the next few weeks, become clearer as to what may or may not happen. I am referring to changes of boundaries and may be Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) will be part of Harlow or vice versa or Brentwood or Chelmsford and there are talks about a Mayor of Essex. All of these things are up in the air, but they may happen. Again, I don't know what is going to happen and may be by the time you read this we will all know what the outcome is.

Other things, as always, budget constraints are foremost in our minds now and with less money to spend on our vital services we have to save and cutback where we can; obviously without affecting our statutory services like waste collection and housing etc. We have to look at the way we operate ourselves and start saving some money on how we operate and not just this year but we suspect next year as well. We are having a hardish time as our councils all over the country are; in some way we are in a better position than other councils. Nevertheless, we must try very hard to balance the books.

If anyone travels up to the multi-storey car park in Epping you will have noticed that the new Leisure Centre is progressing very well with cladding going up and probably the roofing will be going by up by the time you read this article which would be great news. Hopefully the Leisure Centre will be open soon in the Spring/Summer which will provide great facilities to those who can reach it in Epping.

So, in summary, it's a reasonably quiet time at the Council although with a lot of uncertainty but nevertheless with hope for the future. This is coming from someone who was recently run over by a bicycle on his way to hospital and I can assure you the pavements around Whitechapel are very hard!

Look after yourselves.

Ian Hadley

Cllr. Ian Hadley – 07765882001 Cllr.ihadley@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Cllr. Ray Balcombe – 07774973611 Cllr.rbalcombe@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Cllr. Richard Morgan – 01279731243 Cllr.rmorgan@eppingforestdc.gov.uk



Fyfield Village Store & Post Office				
Opening Times	Village Store	Post Office		
Monday	}	}		
Tuesday				10am to 5pm
Wednesday				7am to 5pm
Thursday				10am to 2pm
Friday				10am to 5pm
Saturday	8am to 4pm	10am to 12.30pm		
Sunday	8am to 12.30pm	Closed		
Tel: 01277 899201				

 1st Moreton & Fyfield Scout Group 			
Squirrels	Tuesday	4.45-5.45pm	4 - 6 years
Beaver Scouts	Tuesday	6.00-7.15pm	6 – 8 years
Cub Scouts	Thursday	7.00-8.30pm	8 – 10½ years
Scouts	Friday	7.30-9.30pm	10 – 14 years
Explorer Scouts	Tuesday	7.30-9.30pm	14 – 18 years
All sections are co-educational and meet at Fyfield Scout Headquarters. For details contact Sandra Mead on 01277 899519 gemkia@aol.com			

Luncheon Club

What a great success our Christmas celebration was. Our wonderful resident Vicar Sam led us in prayer giving thanks for our food and was a great help with serving and clearing up. She can certainly come next year!



Everyone had a wonderful time! A big thanks to Lesley for her cooking skills and to the rest of the team (Julie, Linda, Pam and Christine) for all their hard work leading up to and on the day.

Our next luncheon club will be February 12th we look forward to seeing you there, if you would like to join us please call Sandra on 01277 899519
Best Wishes for 2025.

Jan Hall

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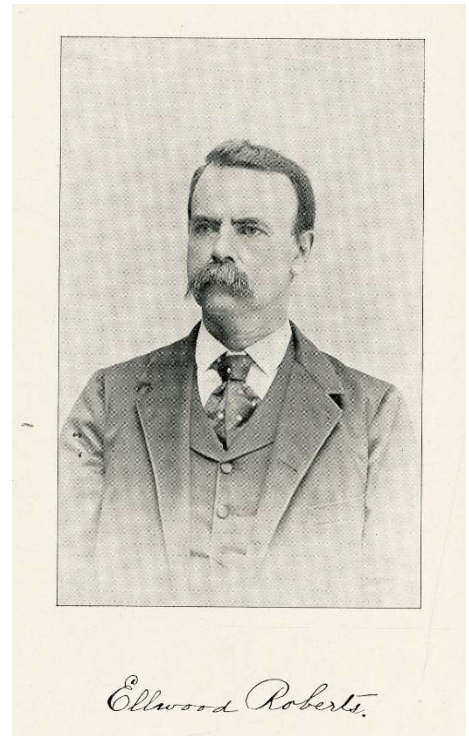
February Days by Ellwood Roberts

The icy northern blast sweeps by,
From wild wastes of the Arctic snow;
Above us droops a wintry sky,
A bleak white landscape lies below.
But, 'neath the chilly Polar blast,
A low, sweet undertone I hear:
"The wintry storms will soon be past,
And pleasant Spring-time days are near."

The air is icy, keen and chill,
All Nature lies in sleep profound,
That seems like death—so cold, so still—
But flowers are biding underground.
The sun mounts up, from day to day,
His beams each morn more full of cheer.
And to our hearts they seem to say:
"The Spring-time days will soon be here."

The ice and snow will soon be gone,
The Spring-time waits the sun's warm rays,
Already we can trace the dawn
Of brighter, warmer, sweeter days.
Each morn we watch for signs of Spring,
Each evening feel its coming near.
All Nature's voices seem to sing:
"The Spring-time days will soon be here."

And though an Arctic wind sweeps by
From wildest wastes of ice and snow,
And though above us wintry sky,
And desolate white fields below—
Beneath the wind's wild organ-blast,
A low, sweet undertone I hear:
"The wintry storms will soon be past,
The sunny Spring-time days are near."



Ellwood Roberts, (January 22, 1846 - January 30, 1921), was an American poet genealogist and a devoted Quaker throughout his life.





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Dr Walker's Church of England Primary School

Happy New Year from all at Dr Walker's and we wish everyone a happy, healthy, peaceful 2025.



The autumn term ended in a flurry of activity with a movie afternoon, Christmas Bake-Off, KS1 Nativity and KS2 Carol concert in the school hall, a Christingle service at St Nicholas' church with Rev Sam, which included a live baby appearing from the Marvellous Christmas Magic machine. "It's baby Jesus!" exclaimed one astonished child!

The elves have all departed and the spring term is well under way with the children quickly settling back into the swing of their daily learning. We have held two open days and a stay and play session to showcase our delightful school and already the children have experienced a sports session from West Essex Sports Partnership, with every child taking part in athletics' session.

Other news is that Dr Walker's School is hopefully going to become affiliated to LIFE Education Trust in the spring, ahead of us officially joining in September. LIFE has a small number of rural primary schools similar to Dr Walker's under its umbrella and aims to *support schools to deliver excellent pupil outcomes, create vibrant, exciting environments and offer rewarding careers for staff*. Staff at Dr Walker's have been working closely with LIFE over the last few months and are very excited by the opportunities and prospects this partnership will provide for our school community.

The library revamp is well under way with all the books sorted and on shelves. The new seating has been installed and Mrs Spanton will be making more cushions to add to the brightness and comfort. And our new Site Manager, Chris Gibson, is also going to brighten the area with a splash of colour!

Children will be having timetabled library times when they can peruse the books, sit quietly and enjoy reading and sharing books with their classmates.

One of the Year 6 Prefects has taken on the role of lead librarian and will support Year 5 librarians checking books out and in, so that reading can be extended to the classroom, as well as home. We are also inviting parents and carers into school for Together Tuesday Stay and Read Sessions to further promote a love for reading.



We are looking forward to a productive, busy half term and embracing all the school has to offer the children as we head towards Easter.

Staff and Pupils of Dr Walker's School



Ron Cox 1946-2024

I would like to thank all our friends and neighbours who sent their condolences to myself and my family at the passing of Ron on 15th December.

Christmas and New Year was a very difficult time for us, but with such kind words and support it helped us through it.

Margaret and family

1st Moreton & Fyfield Scout Group and Dragonian Explorer Unit



All of us in Scouting would like to wish everyone a belated Happy New Year.

Some of our **Squirrels** and **Beavers** spent a day at Gilwell Park Scout Centre. They had been asked to take part in a photo/video day promoting Scouting throughout the sections. They took part three activities - den building, low ropes and crate stacking. It was a great experience which they really enjoyed.

Squirrels also made some bird feeders. They used apples filling them with either peanut butter or bird seed. They took them home to see which birds liked which food the most.



Beavers on their first night back enjoyed catching up with each other. They played some team games, which they enjoyed, and have a lot more exciting things planned for the new term.

At the end of last term they took a mountain of food to the church to donate to the Foodbank and were rewarded for their efforts with this certificate.

Cubs started back with a planning meeting where they all had a say in what they would like to do this term, and they had lots of really good ideas. They also played some team games.

Harlow Foodbank would like to thank

1st MORETON AND FYFIELD BEAVERS

For your gift of **87.9** Kg of food
to help your neighbours in Harlow.

This is enough to make **209** meals
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Harlow Foodbank redistributes gifts of food and other essential items donated by neighbours across Harlow, passing them on to others in our community who have a short term crisis.

You have been part of that neighbourly support. We are Harlow UNITED!

www.mrct.org.uk/foodbank

Find us on..



Harlow Foodbank is a project of the Michael Roberts Charitable Trust – Charity Number 1065006
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* The Feeding Britain APPG Report 2016 estimated that on average 2.38 meals come from a Kg of food.
Harlow Foodbank is an associate of the Trussell Trust



Scouts have had a couple of weeks back. They have been learning to sew on their own badges, took part in team games and enjoyed cooking on a campfire. They are looking forward to going to see a pantomime and there is some camping planned for later in the term.

This photo was taken of them all when they went bowling at their last meeting before Christmas.



Sandra Mead

Group Scout Leader

1st Moreton & Fyfield Scout Group

Tel: 01277 899519 Email: gemkia@aol.com

You can't blame gravity for falling in love. Albert Einstein

Puzzle Page

To celebrate Valentine's Day, the following songs all have LOVE in their titles. The numbers depict how many letters there are in each word.

Can you work them out?

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | 8, 2 Love | Queen |
| 2. | 4's Love 3, 2, 2, 4, 2 | Tina Turner |
| 3. | 6 Love | Justin Timberlake |
| 4. | 3't 4, 7, 2 Love | Elvis Presley |
| 5. | 3,3,4,3 Love 7 | Elton John |
| 6. | 3,3 Love | The Everly Brothers |
| 7. | 3,3,2 Love | Florence and the Machine |
| 8. | 5 Love 5 | Wings |
| 9. | 3,4,2 Love | Dusty Springfield |
| 10. | 3,3,4 Love 2,2 | Abba |
| 11. | 3't 3,2 Love | The Beatles |
| 12. | Love 8 | Justin Bieber |
| 13. | 4,2,3,4,2 Love | The Supremes |
| 14. | 1,4, 6, Love 3 | Whitney Houston |
| 15. | Love 5 | Taylor Swift |
| 16. | 4,1,3 Loves 1,5 | Percy Sledge |
| 17. | 4 Love | Coldplay |
| 18. | 4,2 Love | Ed Sheeran |
| 19. | 1,4,6, 2,3,1 Love 3 | Stevie Wonder |
| 20. | 4,3,4,2 Love | Adele |



Answers on page 34

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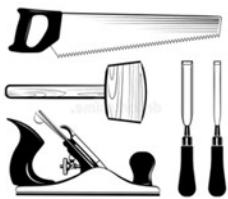
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St. Nicholas' Church

As I write this, it is just into the start of the new year and I am still struggling to remember to put 2025 when I'm required to write the date. It is a strange thing, the turning of the year - the events of last year can seem a world away even though they were only a couple of weeks back.

A new year can stretch out in front of us and either fill us with excitement at the prospect of new opportunities and adventures, or it can fill us with dread, or even a little of both. For all of us though, no matter who we are, one thing is certain, we do not know what 2025 will bring. For some of us we may think we know, and we may have quite detailed plans, but the reality is that we do not know for sure what this year will bring and that can be quite scary.

The following is a quote from King George VI during his Christmas broadcast in 1939:

'I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied, 'Go into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.' So I went forth and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night. And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.'

I can find no wiser words than those – to put your hand and your trust in the One who does know what lies ahead in 2025 and to walk with Him by your side trusting in His strength, His comfort, His peace and His direction – it is only with Him by your side that you will know complete safety and can walk ahead into this coming year with confidence.

Ali Burton
Church Warden

Church Services

2 nd Feb	10.00am	Family Communion	Bovinger
9 th Feb	10.30am	Community Worship	Fyfield
16 th Dec	10.30am	Holy Communion	Fyfield
23 rd Feb	10.00am	Family Communion	Moreton
9 th Mar	10.30am	Community Worship	Fyfield
16 th Mar	10.30am	Holy Communion	Fyfield





FREE

All ages welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Play in the park is an inclusive session.



Play in the park is all about playing games and having fun outdoors. No need to book, just drop in at any time. The Play in the Park team bring a range of sports equipment and arts & crafts resources for children and their parents/carers to enjoy together. The team will be there to help organise activities and games all totally **free of charge!**



Fyfield

The Sports Field, Houchin Drive, Fyfield, Essex, CM5 0RG

Friday 11 April 10:00 – 12:00

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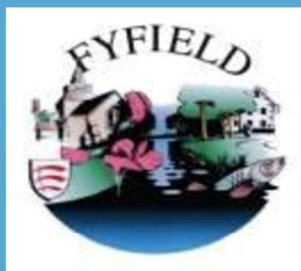
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District Council**

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For a full list of Play in the park sessions scan me:



Fyfield Pre-School

Fyfield Pre-School held a host of Christmas activities for the children. The children performed a show to parents and carers and even had a visit from Santa himself.

They also took a walk to the post-box to send their Christmas cards to their family and learnt all about what a post office does as well as road safety.



For information about the term time pre-school in the Scout Hut visit www.villagepre-schools.com

Fyfield Village Pre-School

*How lucky am I to have someone who makes saying goodbye so hard.
Winnie the Pooh*

*All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt.
Charles M. Schulz*



ΨIAMAS

SET LUNCH MENU (Tues-Sat 12-4pm)

2 COURSE - 20

3 COURSE - 25

SET DINNER MENU (Tues - Sat from 4pm)

2 COURSE - 25

3 COURSE - 30

SUNDAY SET LUNCH (12-5pm)

2 COURSES - 25

3 COURSES 30



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March Madness



March is named after Mars, the Roman god of war, and symbolizes the beginning of spring and new beginnings in many cultures.

The first day of March is the Welsh celebration of St. David's Day. So pick your daffodils, the flower of March, and eat some leeks!



Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and this year almost exactly matches March starting on the 1st and ending on the 29th. It is observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection, and community.

March 8th is a day of empowerment and celebration - International Women's Day.

The expression "mad as a March hare" refers to wild and unpredictable behaviour, often applied to anyone, human or animal. It is now thought that hares 'boxing' are unreceptive females using their forelegs to repel amorous males early in the season!

Holi, the Hindu festival of colours, love and spring is on 10th March this year. It celebrates the eternal and divine love of the deities Radha and Krishna and signifies the triumph of good over evil.

March 44 BC saw a major power play by Julius Caesar. With a stroke of his pen, he added ten days to the year and shifted the start of the year from the end of March to January 1st, cementing his place in history as a ruler who not only conquered lands but also manipulated the very fabric of time.

But March 15th, the Ides of March made famous by Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, saw his assassination and a warning against betrayal.

March 17th marks St. Patrick's Day, a global celebration of all things green and Irish. St. Patrick was an Englishman captured by Irish pirates from his home and credited with introducing Christianity to Ireland in the fifth century.



The Vernal Equinox on 20th March is one of two moments in the year when the Sun is exactly above the Equator, it balances the scales of night and day and signals the start of a new season of growth and renewal. Birds return, flowers bloom, and the earth awakens from its winter slumber.

But the month is also known for its unpredictable weather, giving rise to the saying "In like a lion, out like a lamb."

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The Black Bull in Fyfield is a family run pub set in the beautiful west Essex countryside. It is a Grade 2 listed building dating back to the 1400's. We serve good food and drink and we are very pleased to be able to offer accommodation in our hotel adjacent to the pub.

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Fyfield Ramblers

Rambling continues, meeting on the **first Sunday** of the month:

Sunday 2nd February and 2nd March

10:00am from the Village Hall

Our walks are usually 4 – 5 miles through our beautiful countryside. Everyone is welcome, including well-behaved dogs.



Coffee Mornings at St Nicholas' Church

We are delighted to be able to invite everyone to our Coffee Mornings, which take place on the **first Tuesday** of each month from **10am** till **12pm**:

4th February and 4th March

Do please join us for delicious cake and coffee, and the opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new ones!



Carol, Trish and Pam

Mobile Library

The Essex library visits Fyfield every three weeks on a **Monday** morning from 10:00am – 10:30pm in Queen Street. It parks just down from the back entrance to the school/playground. Did you know you can order books, magazines and more? And you can access lots digitally too.

See <https://libraries.essex.gov.uk> for updates

Next Dates -

**3rd and 24th February,
17th March**



The Rodings & Ongar u3Aa

A world of new experiences is open to you at Rodings and Ongar u3a so what's stopping you?

The u3a gives you 'Active Retirement' opportunities to develop your interests, make new friends and have fun. There are more than 1,000 local u3as in the UK with members right here in Rodings and Ongar, making the most of life in retirement by continuing their creative, educational and social interest in a friendly, encouraging atmosphere.

Join us at a general meeting, usually the 1st Tuesday of the month, 2.00pm in Fyfield Village Hall. From walking to talking, ukulele to badminton to pool, or start a group to share your interest—with support—the choice is endless—and the decision about what to do is made by the members for the members.

Meetings start at 2pm, coffee and biscuits are served before the talk. Come along, you will be given a warm welcome.

On Tuesday the 4th February Rev. Albert Watson will be relating his early years with 'My life with the Stars'.

01277 362260 U3asites.org.uk/rodings-ongar/welcome

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WD 50+

Exercise club for ladies and gentlemen held in Fyfield Village Hall, postcode CM5 0RG on Fridays. Please arrive at 11.30am to start promptly at 11.45am for one hour.

Contact Liz Bird on 01277899324 for more information or to book



You don't love someone because they are perfect, you love them in spite of the fact that they're not. Jodi Picoult

MORETON AND DISTRICT WI



Meetings are normally held in Magdalen Laver Village Hall on the 2nd Thursday of the month.

For the first WI Meeting of 2025, which is on Thursday, 13th February, Linda Calvey will be giving us a talk about her life and the books she has written.

Do come, you will be given a warm welcome. Delicious sandwiches and cakes are served following the talks and we hold a raffle.

£5 for a taster visit.



THE LAVERS & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



We normally meet in Moreton Village Hall on the 1st Monday of the month, doors open at 7pm for a 7.30 pm start

On the 3rd February Maggie Piper's talk will be 'Plant Hunters'

Delicious cakes, coffee or tea will be served following the talk and a raffle.

We look forward to seeing you there, you will be given a very warm welcome.

Contact Christine Davis if you would like more information: 01277890283 or email davis.christine.d@gmail.com

A guy knows he's in love when he loses interest in his car for a couple of days. Tim Allen

An archaeologist is the best husband a woman can have. The older she gets the more interested he is in her. Agatha Christie

Catholic Parish of St Helen, Ongar & St Margaret of Scotland, Doddinghurst

As I write this article for the January deadline, we are experiencing a bout of wintry weather so it seems very apt to be writing about a Christian festival which has its roots in a pagan holiday celebrated in the Northern Hemisphere to mark the midpoint of winter. Candlemas is exactly halfway between the Winter Solstice on December 21st and the Spring Equinox on March 20th and was a celebration of light as the days got longer and the worst of the winter weather was hopefully over.

The feast of Candlemas is celebrated in the Christian calendar on February 2nd and commemorates the 'Light of Christ' being brought into the world by his mother when she presented Jesus in the Temple in Jerusalem forty days after his birth. Christians take candles to church on this day to be blessed for the coming year.

The Christmas season actually continues right through to Candlemas so there is no need to rush to take down the decorations and put the cribs away although most are taken down on 12th night on the feast of the Epiphany.

St Helen's, 87 High Street, Ongar CM5 9DX

St Margaret of Scotland, Doddinghurst Road, CM15 0QJ

Please contact the Parish office 01277 362645 for Information on Baptism, Funerals and Wedding Services and other information, or visit our website www.catholic-parish-ongar.org.uk email: ongar@brcdt.org

Services and Information

St. Helen's 9am Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

St. Helen's 11am Thursday followed by tea/coffee and a chat.

St. Helens 5.30pm Saturday

St. Helen's 8.45am – Sunday

St. Margaret's 10.30am – Sunday

Activities in the parish

Doddy drop-in. A social get-together on the second Tuesday of the month at St Margaret's Hall, Doddinghurst Road, Doddinghurst. All welcome for a chat or to play board games or card games. Refreshments are served. We hope to see you there!

LENTEN LUNCHES

Lent is the period between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday when, traditionally, people ate more simply and tried to help others less fortunate.

During this time, you can enjoy a simple lunch and get together at **St. Margaret's Hall, Doddinghurst Road.** All proceeds to charity.

Saturday 8th 15th and 22nd March from 12 midday.



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Puzzle Page Answers

1. Somebody to Love,
2. What's Love Got to Do with It,
3. Summer Love
4. Can't Help Falling in Love,
5. Can You Feel the Love Tonight,
6. Bye Bye Love,
7. The End of Love,
8. Silly Love Songs,
9. The Look of Love,
10. Lay All Your Love on Me,
11. Can't Buy Me Love
12. Love Yourself,
13. Stop in the Name of Love,
14. I Will Always Love You
15. Love Story,
16. When A Man Loves a Woman,
17. True Love
18. Give Me Love,
19. I Just Called to Say I Love You,
20. Make You Feel My Love.



The Robin

The robin is many people's favourite and has been adopted as Britain's National Bird. Its orange-red face, throat and breast make identification easy but robins can be recognised even in silhouette or at twilight by their plump shape, upright stance and sudden movements.



Males and females are identical but young birds are golden brown and distinctly speckled.

Robins may be seen around gardens, in woodland, hedgerows and parks searching for insects and earthworms in the warmer months, fruit, and berries in winter. Please remember that their food is in short supply now so offer them something to eat to survive the cold winter. Fat balls, seeds, suet pellets and mealworms are all appreciated by robins and other birds.

In the warmer months, robins also perform acrobatic flights to catch insects on the wing.

You may hear them all year round and at all times of the day, and they will even sing at night if perched next to a street light.

Despite their cute appearance, they are aggressively territorial and are quick to attack other robins and drive them away.

In wintertime both males and females occupy their own territories and, to defend them, the females sing and display just like males. In spring, the females have to convince the males to stop fighting and start co-operating in raising a family. To do this, when they encroach into the males' territories, they behave like young birds begging for food.

After successful pairing, the female robin produces a clutch of 4 - 5 white or pale blue eggs marked with reddish spots. In March the first clutch is laid and up to two more clutches in the following months. Incubation is by the female only but the young are fed by both parents. The typical lifespan is around two years, although the maximum recorded age is over 8 years.

Robins are well adapted to life in this country as shown by the number of breeding pairs, estimated to be around six million. British robins are mostly sedentary although a few migrate to Spain and Portugal for the winter. In addition, large numbers from northern Europe overwinter here while others pass through Britain before continuing to spend the winter in Iberia and northern Africa. These migrants can be recognized by their greyer bodies and duller orange breasts. Robins from northern Europe are woodland birds and do not frequent parks and gardens in Britain, which makes them shyer birds than their British cousins.

Christmas cards would not be the same without the robin. A possible explanation is that when early Christmas cards were produced in the mid-18th Century, they were delivered by postmen wearing bright red coats. The postmen became known as 'Robins' or 'Redbreasts', and the bird on the Christmas card represented the postman who delivered it.

The robin is often known as Cock Robin, a name that originates from an old English folk tale entitled *The Marriage of Cock Robin and Jenny Wren* together with a nursery rhyme called *Who Killed Cock Robin?* To remind you of it, here are the first and last verses:

Who killed Cock Robin?
I, said the Sparrow,
With my bow and arrow,
I killed Cock Robin.

All the birds of the air
Fell a-sighing and a-sobbing,
When they heard the bell toll
For poor Cock Robin.



The rhyme is thought to refer to the death of the legendary Robin Hood. The words describe how help was offered from all quarters following the death of cock robin and may reflect the high esteem in which Robin Hood was held by common folk. Another explanation is that the rhyme refers to the fall of the government of Robert Walpole in 1742, for Robin is a diminutive of Robert and the first printing of the poem can be traced to about that time.

Keith Snow

Marriage is a wonderful institution, but who wants to live in an institution? Groucho Marx

Ongar Art Society

The New Year brings an interesting variety of demonstrations to the Society.



On February 13th we will have a watercolour demonstration by Phil Biggs, followed on March 13th by Eleanor Mulinder, who will be demonstrating her lino cut work.

Meetings are held from 8.00pm to 10.00pm, at Tipps Cross Remembrance Hall, Blackmore Rd, Hook End, Brentwood CM15 0DX. Visitors are welcome (£5.00), but your first meeting will be free. For more information about the Ongar Art Society, please see our website: ongarartsociety.wixsite.com/arts, or find us on Facebook and Instagram.



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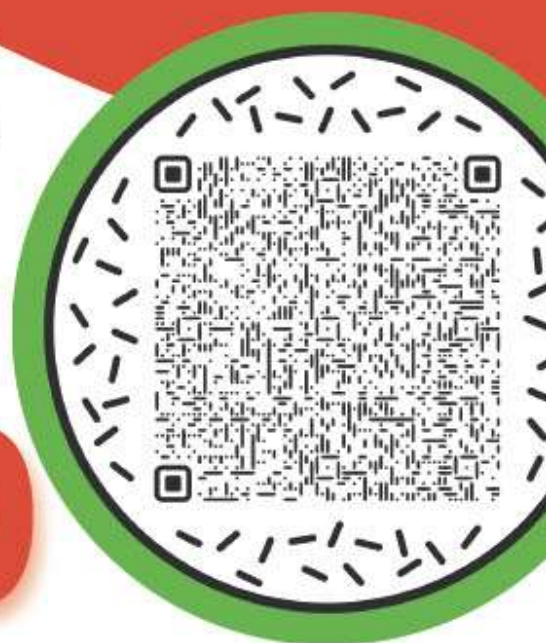


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Fyfield Focus – Advertising and Editorial Details

Advertising in the Fyfield Focus

The Focus is published bi-monthly, on the 1st of the month, with six issues a year covering Feb/Mar, Apr/May, Jun/Jul, Aug/Sept, Oct/Nov and Dec/Jan delivered to +390 homes.

Contributing Articles to the Fyfield Focus

We welcome contributions to the Fyfield Focus. Our deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the publication date (i.e. January, March, May, July, September and November). Articles will be published subject to available space. No anonymous submissions will be included. The Editorial team's decision is final regarding suitability for inclusion and all material will receive joint editorial review.

Advertising Rates

Adverts can be as text, picture or PDF. We can help you design yours, if required. All adverts will be placed in the Fyfield Focus Magazine and via the PDF on our website fyfieldfocus.wixsite.com/home. All requests for advertising should be directed to Steve Turner, with requests to be received by email no later than the 10th of the month prior to publication (i.e. January, March, May, July, September and November). Payment for all adverts is to be received in advance of publication (full advertising terms and conditions are sent out with all invoices).

Size	Per Issue	Per Year	Size	Per Issue	Per Year
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The Fyfield Focus Team:

Production team: Margaret Dines, Sally Wallden, Dan Webster – fyfieldfocus@gmail.com

Finance, Advertising & Delivery: Steve Turner – steve.turner31@gmail.com

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