

Hitcham and Taplow Society

Newsletter 121: Spring 2024
£3.50 to non-members



www.taplowsociety.org.uk

Hitcham and Taplow Society

Protecting and enhancing Hitcham, Taplow, and the surrounding countryside for the local community

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Cover picture: Rainbow above Boundary Road Stables by Jacqueline Parker
All material by Roger Worthington unless otherwise noted

Editorial

The good news is that finally the Jubilee Footbridge is being replaced, Work is scheduled to start in May and run into June. Just a bit late to report on for this issue but we will update in the autumn. The Cookham Bridge has now also been restored and it will be interesting to see how effective the ANPR cameras will be in cutting out heavier lorries. Together with the aggressive bollards on the Marlow bridge the councils are clearly trying to protect these fragile bridges. Frustration mounts over the deaf ear of the County for the resolution of the parking around the station.

We have previously indicated that we needed to replace our unreliable antiquated record systems. Our treasurer Mike bravely stepped up to the challenge and we must congratulate him on a great result. We now have a software membership package "Membermojo" that appears to handle all our needs and Mike has taken the opportunity to overhaul all our membership records. We have a facility to accept credit card payments and we are moving from Evenbrite to a cheaper system for

ticket bookings. We are finally in the 21st century! Thank you Mike.

We do our best to fill the Newsletter with things of interest to Taplow but are conscious that our population is steadily changing and we are sure we are missing out on all sorts of interesting things happening and the unearthing of bits of our history. So please let us know what we are missing or (better) write an article for us or send in an interesting photo and see your name in print! Thank you.

Village Green Party

18:00 – 22:30

22nd June 2024

www.taplowsociety.org/vgp

Sheila Horton 1936-2024



Sheila with Rachel

A few years ago, a party of ramblers was trudging through Taplow. They stopped to marvel at The Old Rectory's colourfully painted gates and hanging hubcaps featured in a full-page spread in *The Sunday Times*. Who lives there? Someone with admirable artistry and a super sense of fun. Two passing locals overheard the conversation. They smiled, assured in the knowledge that Sheila's vibrancy was enriching the lives of everyone from her family and close friends to neighbours and even passers-by unaware of her even greater triumph in the nearby Village Hall.

Sheila was born in Shrewsbury and educated in Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset, and at Cheltenham College of Art, where she met Brian. They married in 1957 and after ten years in Elibank Cottage (now The Old Coach House) moved to The Old Rectory to raise three artistic daughters: Sophie, Serena and Clemency. She loved her six grandchildren, seeing Shakespeare at Stratford, reading, bird-watching, her garden, sunflowers, cherry blossom, frivolous fancy-dress parties, Wales (especially Pembrokeshire) and animals (especially Jessica, the

African Grey Parrot forever on her shoulder). And somehow she found time to serve the Society for 18 years as Vice-President (1985/2002).

She exhibited professionally in several London galleries, at Royal Academy Summer Exhibitions, where her prints were best-sellers, and at the West Wales Art Centre, where her works have been popular for years. The National Library of Wales displays her pictures of rural Welsh life but perhaps she was most proud of her critically acclaimed etchings of the TS Eliot poem *The Wasteland*. Her illustrations of his poetry collection *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* sold extremely well to audiences of *Cats*, the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical.

However, while her creations were widely appreciated, please excuse this Newsletter for being parochial. Many homes hereabouts are graced by her paintings or prints but, better still, in 1990/93 she marked the centenary of our Village Hall by adorning its internal walls with *A Celebration of Taplow*, an absolutely fabulous documentary snapshot capturing in brief and brilliant brushstrokes the life, times, people and places of Taplow. Over 300 faces feature, many at the Village Green Party. Taplow Court and Elibank stand proud. There is your house, here is mine. There are two churches: St Nicholas no more and St Nicolas now. Reverend Alan Dibden twice leads our prayers. Children maypole-dancing. The Parish Council deliberating. A naked foursome frolics at Cliveden. Nurses at the Canadian Red Cross Hospital. Queen Elizabeth II at Taplow Horse Show. Windsor Castle aflame. The legends of Tæppa's Mound and Bapsey Pond. Equestrians, cubs, cricketers, the station, the church fete and the long gone gasometer and post office.

What a unique and historic treasure. A truly wonderful legacy. A marvellous memorial to an immensely talented and much loved Taplovian whose enduring philosophy was to live for the moment. Always colourful, convivial, kind and generous, Sheila was all things bright and beautiful as sunshine throughout her 67 years in our midst.

Nigel Smales



Planning

Nice to start off with good news. Not only is the Cookham Bridge open, relieving the queues on Berry Hill but we have the schedule for the restoration of the Jubilee Footbridge! Work is due to start May 7th with completion 14th June. We will report on this in the autumn issue.

We sympathised earlier with the County planners tasked with producing the new Local Plan for Buckinghamshire. They still do not have a definitive set of government rulings to permit a fully detailed Plan to be produced safely and now face the possibility that a change of government (and of County Council?) will occur before they can complete a plan. This matters particularly for us as our current plan is the 2011 SBDC one. This is so out of date that developers are likely to be able to ignore it, leaving us powerless to defend against undesirable projects.



The hot topic of the moment is of course the ongoing parking problems around the station. In our last issue we reported on discussions with TfL over the south side station park. We are very pleased that TfL were extremely responsive and have fully overhauled the surfacing, layout and marking of the south park to create more useful space.



While demand is likely to always outstrip supply in the long term, the capacity might now be enough to accommodate the Approach Road numbers if they could be banned from there. However the County has been essentially unresponsive. They require a survey to assess solutions to the parking situations but are not prepared to pay for it. The Beeches community board is reluctant to fund it as they have been burned previously with funding surveys at £10k+ which has been wasted money when the County then refuses to fund the proposal. The problems are entirely created by forces outside the control of the Parish and it is disappointing that the County does not step up to the problem. The problem is becoming widespread as Elizabeth Line traffic grows. Ellingtonia is pressured as one of the few unregulated parking streets in the area. Yellow lines and limited parking zones loom. Wrangling continues.

Much distress has been created by the unacceptable behaviour of certain landowners / companies in trashing fields and meadows in the parish. County Planning has issued Enforcement notices (and most recently a STOP notice) but the process is painfully slow to get to full clearance and restoration of the land.



A not unexpected consequence of the opening of the Elizabeth line is that land values in the area have shot up. In particular it is putting many of the equine businesses in the area under threat. National legislation supports the conversion of equine buildings to residential under certain conditions and current prices make it very tempting for a stable owner to sell up. At the higher level this is simply economic reality but a consequence may well be that the fields and hedgerows that make up a large part of Taplow will cease to be well maintained as the horses that use them disappear.

The battle over the future of the main house at Cliveden Stud continues. The house is subject to covenants restricting its occupation to agricultural or equine workers. The closing of the stud made these restrictions most onerous to the current owners. They appealed against the covenants on the basis that the house as built was not the same as that for which planning permission had been granted and therefore the restrictions didn't apply. They lost the appeal but have put yet another application on a variation of the argument. The more general question must soon arise which is that most of the properties on the estate have similar covenants and if the site continues not to be an equine



PROPOSED HOUSE AT CLIVEDEN STUD FARM, BUCKS. VIEW FROM SOUTH EAST. ARCHITECTS: C. & J. B. BUCKINGHAM ARCHITECTS, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200.

Architectural perspective

or agricultural business will they remain empty indefinitely? We have noticed recently that after receiving planning permission for house extensions and modifications there has been a tendency to ignore the details of approval, many of which were there to protect neighbours interest (opaque windows, patio layouts etc). Is this an emerging disrespect for planning or has it always been there?

Buckinghamshire Design Awards

The winners for 2022/23 were announced on 2 October 2023.
Public Spaces Winner – Riverside Taplow!



Taplow's Place in Aviation's Hall of Fame

Taplow is so close to one of the world's busiest international airports that it would be remarkable if it didn't have some connection with aviation.

Well before Heathrow came into use 77 years ago, some of the aircraft designers who were associated with White Waltham lived in the village. That was why, in the days when the Post Office was in Rectory Road, customers could sit comfortably in an old aircraft seat whilst waiting to be served. (Opposite, Fairey Aviation occupied the grounds of Wellbank Priory during the war, prior to it being knocked down in the 1960's and Wellbank as we know it now being constructed).

Taplow's association with aviation goes back much further than both Heathrow and Fairey Aviation. Over a century ago, an aircraft was under construction at Amerden Bank under the direction of its Scottish designer, Mr G O Davidson, the 4th son of the Laird of Inchmarlo by Banchory in Aberdeenshire. Such was his ambition to reach for the skies in the late 1890's and the early years of the 20th century that he became known across north east Scotland as 'Fleein' Geordie, 'The Birdman of Inchmarlo'. In 1898, well before the Wright Brothers had made history at Kitty Hawk, he lectured the Royal Aeronautical Society on the flying machine of the future. He dreamed of the day when people would be transported by 'aerial locomotion' between continents and eerily predicted the deployment of planes to 'drop dynamite' on the enemy during conflict. A prophecy that was to come true fewer than 20 years later in WW1.

Later, far from being convinced that the type of aircraft demonstrated by the Wrights and Santos Dumont had the best potential, he designed a gyropter, a rotary winged flying machine. He had built one of these in Colorado but in 1908 he came to Taplow and, by 1910 he had a staff of 16 working on the construction of another one in a hangar at Amerden Bank (near Bray weir). He claimed that 27 years study convinced him that, although the monoplane and biplane were 'marvels of ingenuity', they would not be as successful as his Flying Machine which had mechanical rotary wings which would do the same work 'as the reciprocal (sic) wings of birds'. By 1910, having spent £12,500 (roughly £1.2 million by today's values) on his gyropter, he was appealing for investors, even

putting a model on display at London's Olympia Exhibition Centre. However, his venture was being rapidly overtaken by events; it was in the years 1908-1910 that names like de Havilland, Rolls, Moore-Brabazon and Bleriot became famous in Britain and they were all associated with more mainstream development. With adequate finance, Davidson might have got his gyropter airborne beside the Thames, but it is unlikely that its performance would have been remotely as good as he claimed.

Having taken his design to the United States, reinvented as the Gyrocopter, he eventually admitted defeat due to lack of support and money and retired reluctantly back to his beloved Inchmarlo. He died there in 1939 aged 80. Despite the fact that none of his flying machines reached the skies, Geordie Davidson was a genuine pioneer. One can't help thinking that if he were to come back today and see the helicopters which occasionally buzz over Taplow and Hitcham, he would be right to point and say "I told you so".

Cat Howard

DAVIDSON'S "GYROPTER" or ROTARY WING FLYING MACHINE.

If you want to make money, and at the same time help towards the British Supremacy of the Air, send along your contribution to the expense of the construction of the "GYROPTER" Flying Machine. Don't whine about other countries getting the better of us, and at the same time button up your pocket. You know we as a country will have to pay pretty heavily later on if the public do not contribute NOW, and you personally will miss the profits.

Upwards of £15,000 has been expended by Mr. Davidson on his experiments during the last 20 years. The construction of the present machine which is fast approaching completion, has cost £6,000 during the past year. A few thousand more still required to complete.

Five fully-paid shares in the Davidson's Gyropter Flying Machine Ltd., will be given for every £10 now contributed.

The Syndicate (owning the entire right, title, and interest in the invention, which will be sold to a larger Company at a big profit), is divided into 60,000 shares, all issued and fully paid, ranking equally. 50,000 of these will be distributed amongst those who have rendered services, and in the proportion of Ten shares for every £50 contributed in cash during the past or now.

The Machine at present being constructed (see illustration) will be capable of travelling with automatic stability, at a speed of upwards of 200 miles per hour, carrying from 20 to 50 passengers with greater safety than by rail. The satisfactory completion of this machine is a matter of National importance, and it is hoped that the public will generously contribute; especially as each contributor will share in the profits of success, and otherwise participate proportionately in privileges and preferences which will not be accorded to those who do not now contribute. Mr. Davidson is willing to show the machine during construction to his subjects who have some idea of contributing when they are satisfied that the undertaking deserves their support, but an appointment must be made by intending visitors.

The works are at Amerden Bank, Taplow, about 200 yards below Bray Lock, on the River Thames, just over a mile from Taplow Station by road.

Contributions should be made payable, and addressed to GEORGE L. O. DAVIDSON, or CH. LEWIS HALL, C.B., Amerden Bank, Taplow.

To G. L. O. DAVIDSON, Amerden Bank, Taplow.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed I beg to hand you cheque for £..... as a contribution towards the construction of your "Gyropter" Flying Machine, the receipt of which please acknowledge.

Yours truly,

Date:.....

Signature:.....

Address:.....

Wellbank, Stockwells and Fairey Aviation

The article on the previous page mentions Fairey Aviation working at Taplow Priory during the second world war. This caught my eye as David Long of Amerden House (do you know where that is?) had sent in a set of Sale documents from when the Priory had been offered for sale in the early nineteen thirties. Even more serendipitous was an email that followed from Jane Winfer offering photographs taken in 1940 by her father, who worked for Fairey Aviation and whose team had spent this time in Stockwells (the original house). So we were able to tell her where her father had worked round the corner at the Priory. The Priory and Stockwells have it in common that they are both no more, being replaced by Wellbank and the twelve houses at Stockwells.

Roger Worthington



Photos from Jane Winfer's family collection



25 and 50 Years Ago

In 1974 Cedar Cottage was refused extension. Today it is twice the size and called Larchfield House:

Cedar Cottage, Heathfield Road, - Application for extension opposed on grounds of disproportionate size of proposed extension relative to existing cottage. This application was rejected by the ERDC since when a new application has been submitted.

The large houses on the Bath Road have been under continuous assault. Silchester Manor has already been sanctioned for replacement and we can expect more:

Norfolk House, Bath Road - After the rejection by the ERDC of a plan to demolish the existing house and build six new ones a further application was made to build three of the same area as the existing ones; this was also rejected but an appeal has been made.

In 1999 HTS was ably represented at the Heathrow Terminal 5 inquiry by Derek Walker. Does this item sound familiar?

Our early background

Both Taplow and Hitcham villages stand significantly above river level. The significance of the height being that aircraft taking off from Heathrow may according to their instruments, be at a reasonable height when passing over this area. However due to the hill feature referred to, they are relatively lower. This fact has caused concern in the area in the past when noise from overflying - departing aircraft - caused the Society to arrange a public meeting to which British Airways and the C.A.A. were invited. The result of that meeting successfully contributed to a decision to re-route aircraft such that a 'fan' pattern of departure routings came into being instead of a 'funnel' pattern. That all took place approximately twenty years ago and followed the installation of the 'Burnham Beacon'.

The problem being experienced today is the 'funnel' has reappeared and the noise from increasing aircraft movements has increased, particularly at night.

Meanwhile in 2024...

The Jubilee Footbridge is being restored. If you would like to watch progress here are some key dates from the plan (weather dependent of course). The detailed schedule is up on our website on the Planning page.

Starts 7th May for 6 weeks. The work will be based at the Mill Lane bridge and there will be some local re-arrangements there.

May

8th-15th Set up scaffolding and pontoons

10th Spider crane arrives

31st Install bridge

June

14th Completion?

The Parish Council

Jamie Barnard has stood down as chairman of the Parish Council due to pressures of work and travel. He has led a strengthening cooperation within the council and opened the council to a very positive engagement with residents. He will be greatly missed but we welcome Alan Sinclair as our new chair. Although unconnected to Jamie's leaving, three other councillors are standing down. Claire Price

has served us well as finance chair, guiding us successfully through the Covid period difficulties and the major expenses incurred in renovation to the Hall. Rachel Horton-Kitchlew and Zoe Hatch are also standing down. Fortunately we have had a high level of interest from residents who would like to join the council and we are welcoming Jennifer Thomson and Simeon Human.

Andrew Findlay, Jennifer Thomson



Jamie Barnard



Jennifer Thomson

Taplow Station in Miniature

The Slough and Windsor Railway Society is building a model of Taplow Station in the late forties / early fifties on an "00" gauge scale. (You can see their building if you look south from Slough station platforms). They have compiled extensive documentation but are in search of as much detail as possible. If you have any photos etc from that period they would be most grateful. They are particularly interested in exploring the work of the goods yard and sidings to local businesses, to illustrate the way in which the station was connected to and supported the local area. Details of the various buildings on site,

including the former station master's house at the end of the goods yard, are also important in recreating the overall scene. If anyone would like to be involved with the project or can offer any information, please contact virginiasilvester@gmail.com.

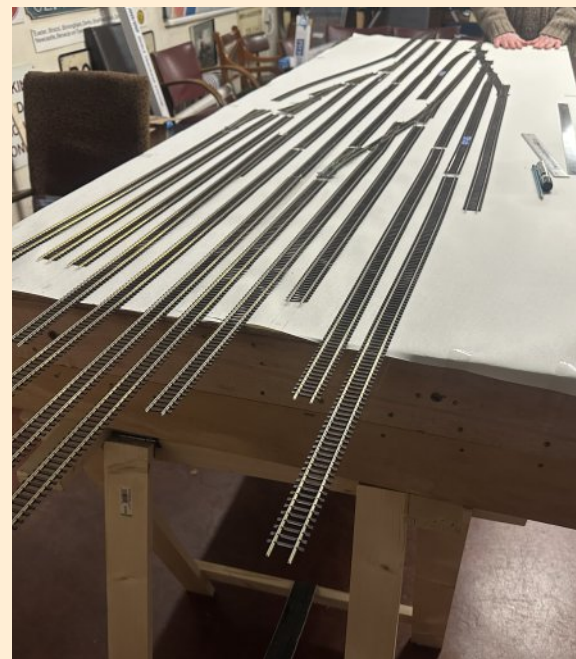
SWRS hopes to have an operational model ready for their model railway exhibition at Burnham Park Hall on 26/27 October. Tickets will be available from Eventbrite.

www.swrs.co.uk

We will track progress to hopefully finish with an exhibition of the model in the Village Hall.

Village Hall

Something else has gone wrong at the hall. This has been a recurring theme since our autumn 2022 issue. This time it is the heating. The gas heaters in the Reading Room date from the 1960s, have died, and are beyond possible repair. The gas boiler that heats the rest of the building and the hot water has now been condemned (1970s). So mild weather and some emergency convectors have sufficed and the whole system is to be replaced in the summer break. The council investigated very thoroughly the technologies available for renewal but concluded that a gas system was the only viable one – a common finding for old badly insulated buildings.



The Shop, Taplow Village



I live in a house with the wonderfully simple address of 'The Shop', a very clear and unambiguous description of what it looks like. When friends visited myself and my late husband Tony for the first time, it was, and indeed still is, instantly recognisable on the High Street with its dark green (now pale grey) Victorian shop front, reminiscent for us of a 'pharmacy' in a small French country town. We loved this visual quality with its references to other places we knew well.

On the question of names, the official address is of course Number Three The High Street, and the reason for this is that when we purchased the property the title in the deed was 'The Tudor Village Store' with the flavour of Anne Hathaway rather than middle France. We were united in that this was a name we could not live with and the District Council in their wisdom allowed us to choose another name. This proved a difficult thing to do and although we were tempted to call it just 'The Shop', in the end we opted for a

straight forward postal number. This was initially rejected by the Council for reasons we couldn't comprehend. We overcame this by spelling out No.3 in full... but The Shop will still do. I understand we were in the Guinness Book of Records as being the only High Street in the country which has only one shop.

We purchased the property in 1979. We were looking for a building large enough to convert into a house and studio. We were attracted by the location and the potential of refurbishing a near ruinous environment in the heart of the village. Whilst the building has a narrow frontage of 15 feet, it goes back a considerable way. We always thought of it being like a train – a series of compartments linked together: a progression of spaces leading through to the rear.

For most of the last century the premises have functioned as a local village food store, although it ceased trading as a grocer's shop a few years before we arrived in Taplow. In its last years of

commercial life the shop was run as an enterprise specialising in mail order garments of the kind seen on cut out coupons in Sunday tabloids – line drawings of pretty frocks. This seemed to be rather an odd activity for a shop in the centre of Taplow Village: at the weekend, Deane's, as it was known, attracted hordes of old ladies who would stagger wearily up the High Street to find a bargain. Behind the shop there was a wholesale warehouse.

We had in fact purchased a retail outlet with a series of utilitarian spaces at the back, none of which were domestic in character. The whole structure was lashed together with endless security wiring. There were window bars everywhere and this gave the interior a gloomy prison like atmosphere. We had to create a house from scratch and get rid of all traces of Deane's, a difficult task. There were few domestic amenities and no bathroom. With two small children we camped out for months with just a Baby Belling. The original structure has been extended over time, most significantly with the addition of the Victorian shop front we have today. This photograph taken in about 1885 shows the Taplow Village Store in its full glory as a grocers shop, bakery and post office (when we moved in the post office had long relocated to what is now Wellbank Cottage on Rectory Road). The young man with the horse in the side passage was named Charles Fryer, which by some strange coincidence was also the name of my father. It is remarkable just how little the appearance of the Shop has changed from this image. When relaxing in the sitting room we often thought about where the counter was with its cheeses and sides of bacon together with the general bustle of a village store.

Although essentially only the shop front and external structure remain, inside there is another visible symbol of the past – the baker's oven. This splendid piece of cast iron was built in Hammersmith in 1888 and is engraved to that effect. Other small traces also remain. The odd trace of the original blue paint, a large hook in the ceiling and very old bottles surfacing out of the garden... A vivid reminder of Taplow's history.



Sarah Meats

Glis Glis: Friend or Foe?

Mysterious scratching noises at night? Holes chewed in cables? Trees missing bark? The Glis Glis, otherwise known as the Edible Dormouse (Upper-class Romans used to roast them with honey and pine nuts), might well be the culprit.

The 6 Glis Glis brought to Tring in 1902 by the 2nd Baron Rothschild quickly found their way into the wild and now they number around 30,000 across the Southeast. It seems that we are rather confused about how to approach these small, fluffy creatures; they are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act of 1981 whilst simultaneously being classified as a Destructive Introduced Species. However, with increasing appearances in and around Taplow, the problems these pests cause have rapidly eclipsed their cuteness factor. According to PestUK, some of the havoc they can wreak includes hygiene issues, risk of fire from chewed electrics, entering water tanks and damage to young trees. This is not to mention the sleepless nights suffered by their unwitting hosts. What's more, in Germany Glis Glis are called 'Siebenschlafer' (seven-sleeper) because of their 7–20-month hibernation period that can lull you into a false sense of security.

So, what can one do about these pesky critters? Firstly, you need to make sure what you are seeing are actually Glis Glis – they are often confused for ordinary grey squirrels. The main differences lie in the position of their eyes, their smaller ears, and their larger feet. There are a few general recommendations to help prevent these unwelcome guests. These include being scrupulous about crumbs and food left out, keeping bins sealed, blocking up external holes, ultrasound devices, cats, and even cinnamon sticks (apparently). However, especially in older houses, they can be incredibly difficult to coax out and there is a penalty should you accidentally 'permanently remove' one. Therefore it is generally wisest to call pest control as soon as you become aware of the issue as they have licences to remove them.

They may be sweet but Glis Glis are tenacious creatures who at best will cost you just the price of removal (currently around £250) and, at worst, cause hundreds of pounds worth of damage.

Lyra Browning



Herwig Winter
CC BY-SA 4.0

Wild Wonders of a British Garden

Louis Plumley grew up and lives in Taplow and is a zoology student at Bristol University. He is passionate about all things wildlife and conservation. 'Wild Wonders of a British Garden' is his first film, entirely shot by Louis in his family's back garden in Rectory Road during summertime. It is available to watch on Youtube and, although it is only 8 (joyful) minutes long, it beautifully showcases the nature on our doorsteps.



What is the film about?

The film follows two unique stories of two very different animals. The first follows an animal we all know and love, bees, and the specific relationship that they have with a particular flower. However, all natural relationships are fragile, and this relationship has its challenges. The second story is about a young blue tit who is adapting to life in the garden and is trying to cement her place in surprisingly competitive territory: the bird feeder. This isn't easy when there are bullies who dominate the feeders.

Why did you make this film?

I made this film to display the incredible wildlife we have in Britain. After seeing other documentaries on British wildlife such as Wild Isles I became aware of just how breathtaking our wildlife can be. However, it isn't just found in remote areas, but even in our back gardens, you just have to look a little harder. Even when we think we know an animal, there is always more to learn. Whilst gardens may at first appear like paradises for an insect or bird, they do come with many challenges, as this film demonstrates. As we all know, British biodiversity is amongst the lowest in the world, with 1 in 6 species currently at risk of extinction. It is more important than ever that we maintain what little biodiversity we have left. This can be done on an individual level simply by making the right choices in your garden. Conservation is so important in maintaining, and one day increasing, biodiversity levels in Britain. A small wildlife-friendly change, such as leaving an area to rewild or planting wild flowers, can benefit a disproportionately large number of species, some that you may not even know are there, but that are very important to the health of the ecosystem.

What is the take home message of the film?

I want people to realise just how amazing British wildlife can be, and to try and protect it. I hope that after watching the film people will care more about the life found within their garden or allotment.

Louis Plumley

Robert Harrap

Congratulations are due to Robert Harrap. Robert has been the general director of SGI-UK at Taplow Court and a good friend to Taplow. He is now taking on new challenges as Co-Chair of SGI Europe but will remain based at Taplow Court. His UK responsibilities are being picked up by Justine Marchant who we welcome to Taplow and look forward to getting to know her.



Robert



Justine

Dr Daisaku Ikeda

We are sad to record the passing of Dr Daisaku Ikeda, the president of SGI International, "Sensei". Dr Ikeda led the growth of the Soka Gakkai from its modest origins in Japan after the second world war to its international presence today. He will be missed by millions as a great humanistic teacher of Buddhism. He strongly supported the purchase and restoration of Taplow Court for SGI-UK and officially opened the centre in 1989.

In 2015 the Society made a presentation to Dr Ikeda in recognition of SGI's contribution to Taplow life.



SGI

Nigel Smales

Congratulations to Nigel Smales. He has been a member of the Windsor Ceremonial Wardens since 2015 and has now completed over 250 duties with them. In 2023 the Ceremonial Wardens were awarded the Kings Award for Voluntary Services (equivalent to an MBE for voluntary groups).

Nigel was one of the members personally presented with the award by the Lord Lieutenant of the Royal County of Berkshire at Windsor Guildhall in March this year. The Wardens were also recognised by Thames Valley Police with a commendation in January this year.



Stewart Turkington

Taplow Cricket Club

Drew Somerville



Cricket has been played at Taplow since 1850. Situated at the top of Berry Hill, on the edge of the village, 'Ten Acres' is your quintessential English village cricket ground – a fact often mentioned by estate agents when selling houses in the area! The picturesque surroundings are an ideal place to spend a summer evening or lazy Sunday afternoon watching cricket.

The clubhouse uniquely has trees growing through the veranda, adding to its cozy charm. At the far end of the ground is Wickenden House. The original owner and past Club President, John Midlane, redesigned the house to incorporate his love of cricket: look out for the three chimneys that resemble a wicket. Wickenden House is so imposing we often need to correct visitors who assume that the residents own the club! The ground is private land and held in trust, with a dedicated group of volunteers who help run the club. We are always looking for new volunteers; please get in touch if you are interested in helping us maintain the ground/clubhouse or would like to join as a playing or social member.

Those of you who regularly use the public footpath alongside our woods will know that on occasions there are tree branches that fall. For example, during the storm in February 2022 we had two branches go through the clubhouse roof and veranda, plus we had to clear 50m of debris from the path. Consequently, we invest a sizeable portion of club funds on managing the trees on our land. No-one can account for 'acts of god', but please be assured the club does employ tree surgeons to regularly conduct tree surveys and we manage the risks accordingly.

We are looking forward to another exciting summer of cricket for all ages and abilities. This

year we are offering two National Programmes: All Stars Cricket (for children aged 5–8 years old); and Dynamos Cricket (for children aged 8–11 years old). Both courses offer 8 weeks of jam-packed fun, activity and skills development for boys and girls. All kit is provided. You can book your place on the courses through the ECB.co.uk website.

Our junior section will be playing in the Berkshire Youth League U11 and U13 mixed-team competitions this season. New junior members are always welcome. Come along and join us for coaching on Friday evenings from 6pm, starting 19th April. The bar and BBQ will be running every week during the summer.

We run two Senior cricket teams on Saturdays, playing in the Thames Valley League. If you are looking to get back into the game, or want to play something less competitive, then Sunday cricket may be just for you. Taplow CC has a packed schedule of Sunday fixtures and plays host to friendly touring teams from across the region. More importantly, we still provide a traditional cricket tea on Sundays.

This year we are planning to update the interior of the clubhouse. A group of volunteers from the village are on the case, and we hope to start once the cricket season ends. We are very grateful to the Taplow and Hitcham Recreation Grounds Association (THRGA) for their donation that will go towards the refurbishment. Also, thanks to the lovely team behind 'Tapsloe Gin' who donated their profits to the cricket club. I can foresee a summer of sloe gin cocktails being served at the bar!

For more information find us at taplowcc.org.uk or contact Drew Somerville (Chairman of Cricket) on 07748674750

Tidy Up Taplow

Thank you to all who participated in the TUT Event on Saturday March 16. We had a great turnout of people with 36 bags of litter cleared from all over the Taplow area. Our event is a small part of a countrywide campaign. The Great British Spring Clean aims to clear rubbish at a time of year when wild plants are just emerging but not too tall, birds are thinking about nesting but not sitting on eggs and the weather is improving. On Saturday we were blessed with beautiful sunshine and a warm start to the day. Participants went out on routes carefully planned by Mike Turner, litter picks and bags in hand and returned with full bags, jackets around waists and smiling rosy faces. Collecting litter is actually fun! (Although we'd all prefer it wasn't there in the first place).

Congratulations! Together we made our environment a better place for humans, animals, birds...

Jacqueline Turner



Mike Turner

Swans making their nests with plastic waste among the reeds



Jacqueline Turner

Scarecrows!

Seventeen amazing scarecrows turned out for the festival in St Nicolas Church in October. Here are just a few of them.



Andrew Findlay



Lincoln's End

Remembering Lincoln Lee

Don't miss...

Hedsor House is hosting an Open Day on 19th June. This is in conjunction with St Nicolas Church as part of the Heart of Buckinghamshire Community Foundation. Tickets can be reserved in advance at www.hedsor.eventbrite.com for £10, under 12 free. Pre-booking essential, bring your own picnic.

Taplow Court Open Days

The house and grounds will be open to the public on the following Sundays:

5th May, 2nd June, 7th July, 4th August, 1st & 8th September (National Heritage Day)

'A LIFE DEDICATED TO PEACE'

An exhibition celebrating the life of Daisaku Ikeda (1928-2023), Buddhist philosopher, peacebuilder, educator, author and poet, who dedicated his life to fostering a lasting culture of peace through dialogue.

EVERYONE WELCOME Grounds open from 12.30-5pm House open from 2pm-5pm

Tea and cakes available to purchase from 2pm. Admission and parking free.

Titan of the Thames The life of Lord Desborough: A recently released book by Sandy Nairne and Peter Williams

The Almost Annual Christmas Day Football Match

The Oldies (shored up by Lyra Browning and Amelia McNulty) versus the Young Men of Taplow kicked off in high spirits on Christmas morning on Taplow Village Green. After several controversial goals, it was a 6-5 victory to the YM of Taplow as Sandy Reeve dispatched the ball past his father into goal. High fives and a team photo were followed up by a well earned drink in The Oak and Saw.

Cat Howard

Carols on The Green 2023



Carols on the Green proved to be as popular as ever. We had clear skies and a wonderfully festive evening of singing accompanied by the marvellous Neil Matthews on the piano. Thank you to everybody who helped and to those who donated all the delicious cakes, flapjacks and chocolate treats and to Miv Wayland Smith for his calm reaction when I blew the Christmas tree lights just before kick off! You all sang beautifully and donated generously. We made £220 for the Brett Foundation to help those who are struggling locally. I look forward to seeing you all again next year.

Cat Howard



Cat Howard

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Unless otherwise stated, the views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Society or its Committee.

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