



Photo courtesy of Tricia Watson

Eastcombe, Bussage & Brownhill Newsletter

WELCOME TO THE APRIL ISSUE. To receive a **FREE** digital copy of the newsletter every month, by email, please contact eastcombebambnews@gmail.com.

Printed copies are available at 60p each from **Eastcombe Stores & Post Office, Frith Community Café & Chalford Parish Centre.** The newsletter is also available to customers of **Head First & The Lamb Inn.**

Please send items for the May issue to eastcombenewsletter@btinternet.com by **NOON on 17th April.**



FLYING THE FLAG FOR EASTCOMBE!

Eastcombe is to have its own flag!

With the children of Eastcombe Primary School providing the artistic inspiration, artist Chris James has created a unique Eastcombe flag. The children of Eastcombe Primary School will raise the new flag for the first time on **Friday 12th April, at 2:30pm on Eastcombe Village Green.**

We hope that parents and members of the local community will come along and support this special occasion.



Do you enjoy being outside in the garden?

For the past 4 years a small group of us, who live locally, have been working to develop a community allotment in our area. The idea was to have a communal plot in Brownshill, named the 'People's Patch', a welcoming garden space where people can meet and chat together, while growing fruit and veg.

Over the last 4 years we have had a variety of items donated, like our shed, and have managed to build raised beds to support our growing plans.

As spring approaches, we welcome local people who would like to join us for some gardening, with the chance to meet others with a shared interest in growing fruit and vegetables, building relationships within the community. We want to be as inclusive as possible, and hope in the future to create spaces with access for everyone, with or without any green fingered expertise!

So, if you like to be outdoors and growing things, meeting new people over a cuppa, or know someone else who does, please contact us. We want to work together to create something special for one another in our community.

We currently meet on a Monday morning from around 10am until midday, but are open to other suitable times.

Contact us at: sissonscott@gmail.com



Family inclusive cricket club

NEW PLAYERS WELCOME

Training starts March 11th
Free taster session for new players
16+
1st XI - GCCL Div 7
2nd XI - Stroud Div 2

Contact James
07429 667879

[join now](#)

BROLLY BIRD IN BUSSAGE!

Congratulations to eagle-eyed Bussage resident, Esau It-first, who spotted an unusual visitor to the hilltop recently.

It's thought that South American native the *Long-wattled umbrellabird* may have ventured to our shores due to the exceptional spring rainfall.

Have you seen our unusual bird?

Please

[Contact the Newsletter](#)



BISLEY-WITH-LYPIATT PARISH COUNCIL NEWS: APRIL 2024

<https://bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk/>

Local Elections – 2nd May 2024: As you are no doubt aware, this year is an election year for the nation, as it is for both the Parish Council and Stroud District Council. Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council comprises 3 wards, each represented by 4 councillors. Provided that the number of candidates standing does not exceed the permitted number of councillors, no election is necessary and those candidates who have put themselves forward for nomination are automatically elected.

The Parish is represented on Stroud District Council by a single councillor.

The **Annual Parish Meeting** takes place on **Wednesday 1st May at Bisley Village Hall, commencing at 7.30pm**. This is a public meeting where you can find out what the Parish Council has been doing over the last 12 months. It is also the time for local organisations and groups who have received grants from the PC to come along and explain what their grants have been used for. At the end of the meeting there will be an opportunity to talk to the councillors whilst enjoying some light refreshments. Do come along!

Next Parish Council Meeting: Bisley Village Hall on Wednesday April 10th at 7.30pm. This is a week later than normal to avoid the school holidays. All are welcome to attend.

ChalCAN Update

ChalCAN

It's **good news for cyclists** this month: a new bike rack has now been installed at Frith Youth Centre, taking our total to five including Chalford Sports & Social Club, Bussage Primary School, Eastcombe Scout Hut and France Lynch Church Rooms. Thank you to everybody involved! Also, keep an eye out for our new local cycling route signs. This is a family friendly 5km cycling circuit on gentler hills and quieter roads. See our website for more details: chalcan.org.uk.

For those interested in biodiversity, we have some cracking events coming up:

- **Saturday 18th May: Morning Bird Walk:** find out more about our local birds and how to identify them.
- **Saturday 15th June: Butterfly and Bumble Bee:** Wander through the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust Blackness reserve.
- **Saturday 6th July: Guided walk through Dimmelsdale GWT reserve** with reserve manager Grove Sykes. Grove is manager of all the reserves in the Golden Valley and will talk through the wider conservation plans for our area.

For further information and to reserve a place, contact info@chalcan.org.uk.

Look out for further activities and workshops later in the year, including guidance on composting, working with nature in the garden and allotment, an evening bat walk, and more.

As ever, if you want to find out more or get involved with ChalCAN, get in touch with us via info@chalcan.org.uk.

Chalford Sports & Social Club

CHARITY AFTERNOON TEA
in aid of Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis
on **Sunday 21st April, from 2pm.**

£15 per person.

Booking essential:

Contact Ali 07595 882 948.



BRIMSCOMBE MILLS... Many on the hilltop will be dismayed at the news that The Long Table and associated enterprises are having to leave their home at Brimscombe Mills.

This message from The Long Table explains how you can help to support all those at the Mills at this difficult time:



'We are deeply grateful for your support and solidarity. Our values and community have guided us through many challenges before, and we believe that together we can navigate this situation and emerge even stronger. Thank you for standing with us. To get through this we need to do it together. Please come to one of our events, sign up for news or contact us via email. Any ideas are welcome and we trust that through this process good will prevail.'

Ways in which you can help now and in the months to come:

- **Keep visiting the mill and using its organisations** - come for a meal, donate or buy with [Stroud District and Cirencester Furniture Bank](#) and [Stroud District Kids' Stuff](#); get your bike fixed at [The Bike Drop](#).
- Come along on **Wednesday 10th April, 6-8pm**, when we will be hosting a **Community Planning Session**.
- **Sign up as a Friend of The Long Table!** Join over 400 Friends who donate weekly to make sure there's a meal for everyone in the community who needs one. Sign up on Donorbox: <https://donorbox.org/thelongtable>
- **Partnerships:** Your support can help sustain the services vital to our district. If you feel your organisation might be able to help us, please let us know.
- **New home:** If you know of a large building in the Stroud area, suitable for us as a new home, please let us know.
- **Finally, spread the word:** tell a friend, share a post on Facebook or join our mailing list (visit: [Get involved — Brimscombe Mill \(brimscombe-mill.org.uk\)](#)). You can also email us at stroud@thegracenet.org.uk

Thank you for your support. Now, more than ever, amazing things happen when we eat together.'

All at Brimscombe Mills

CHALFORD PARISH COUNCIL NEWS:

Chalford Parish Centre, 50 Gerald's Way, Chalford, Stroud, GL6 8FJ;
01453 887204; info@chalford-glos.gov.uk www.chalford-glos.gov.uk. [Facebook](#).



Save the Date: Our **Annual Parish Meeting** will be held on **Thursday 16th May** at **France Lynch Church Rooms** at **7pm**. This is a meeting for residents and everyone is welcome. More details to follow but we would love to see as many people there as possible.

Mini Food Bank at the Parish Centre: As you may be aware, we have a table in the Parish Centre, which is usually full of dry goods and household products that residents can help themselves to. This is a valuable resource and is used on a daily basis. However, our stocks are now depleted. We would be very grateful of donations of goods such as rice, pasta, tinned products, pasta sauce, tea, coffee, long-life milk, breakfast cereal, jam, squash etc. If you are able to donate any items, please drop them into the Parish Office, which is open Monday to Thursday 10am until 3pm.

Friday Lunch Club: At the **Frith Youth Centre every Friday 12 – 2pm**. Lovely home-made soup, bread, cheese and biscuits, tea, coffee and cake all await you! This is a lovely social event, and it is a great way to meet new people. If you would like to volunteer to help, please get in touch.

Footpaths: new kissing gate installed: Chalford Parish Footpath Volunteers have replaced what was an awkward stile at the top of the path down to Strawberry Banks from France Lynch with a wooden kissing gate. You can now walk all the way from France Lynch to Oakridge or through Three Groves Wood to the road along the Golden Valley without having to clamber over a stile! Strawberry Banks is a nature reserve managed by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. Part of the Golden Valley Way, the name of Strawberry Banks is thought to come from the banks having once been used to grow strawberries.

Please contact us if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions.



BUSSAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL



World Book Day: We were honoured that local author Hannah Shaw ran workshops for all our children. She has written & illustrated 6 books about a character called Unipiggle. The children loved learning about the adventures of Unipiggle and



Princess Pea and had a go at being illustrators themselves. On World Book Day the children dressed as an 'interesting word' of their choice.

Cross Country: A group of KS2 runners went to Thomas Keble to compete against runners from local

schools. The enthusiasm and team spirit was fantastic. It was lovely to participate in a local event and super support was given by team mates and parents.

Gloucestershire Youth Choir: Nominated by the school as a talented and enthusiastic singer, Seth, in Y6, attended a 2 day singing workshop in Gloucester. The result of this hard work was performing as part of Gloucestershire Youth Choir in Tewkesbury Abbey alongside the Youth Orchestra. He will also be performing with the choir at Stroud Subscription Rooms.

Rainbows visit Boho Bakery: Rainbows enjoyed a sunny walk to Boho, where they liked choosing their own drinks, making tiger masks and listening to *'The Tiger who came to Tea'* by Judith Kerr. **See photo on Page 7.**

Hall Lettings: Our school hall is available for hire. Great for clubs, choirs, even children's parties, with opportunities to hire on evenings and weekends. Please contact the school office for more information.

Visit us! New to the area? Have a child who will be starting school soon? We would love to show you around our school.

Please contact us for details on 01453 883205.

EASTCOMBE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The children had so much fun at our wrap around care after school club creating spring crafts! Easter activities are planned for the coming weeks!

If looking for before or after school care, we have places available; contact the school office for details.



What a lovely time we had at the Country Dancing Festival at Stratford Park!

The children looked incredible in their fabulous costumes on World Book Day!

Owl Class loved their latest art work lesson. They have been exploring the work of set designers and sculptors (such as Rae Smith and Fausto Melotti). Using many medias, they created their own 3D set inspired by a Viking Story film clip. Each finished set was completely different and reflected the mood and narrative of the film.

For more information about Eastcombe Primary School:

call 01452 770227,
visit www.eastcombe.gloucs.sch.uk/
or email
admin@eastcombe.gloucs.sch.uk



VILLAGE MATTERS...

THIS MONTH, SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT LITTER...

We all agree that litter is unsightly – and that it can be dangerous to people and wildlife. But some people **STILL** deliberately drop litter – why?



You may have heard of the *Broken Window Theory* – the idea that people follow what others do and treat the world around them according to how it looks. Put simply, if an area is neglected, with broken windows, people are more likely to neglect it further, whereas if an area is clean and well-cared for, people make more effort to keep it that way. Why is this relevant? Well, if we get used to the idea of litter blowing around our villages, we notice it less and take action less often than if it's an area that is usually litter free.

So what can we do? The answer is both simple and less so. The first and most effective action is **don't tolerate litter!** Pick it up when you see it and make sure you don't add to it, doing your bit to keep the environment around you clean.

The less simple part is that you need to **keep doing it.** We live in a packaged society and there will always be more litter appearing. Just keep picking it up. In the same way as we're encouraged to do a 2 minute beach clean when we are on holiday, you can do a bi-weekly 2 minute litter sweep around your property, or on the route of one of your regular walks. You can also join an organised litter pick, or a group such as the Five Valleys Wombles.

Dedicated volunteers make a real difference to high litter areas, but **it's up to all of us to do our bit** (and pick up a bit!) on an daily basis. If you do this – and so does everyone else – there will be no litter, our environment will look clean and well-cared for – and others will treat it as such.



Not a broken window or torn wrapper in sight!

HILLTOP GARDENING CLUB HAPPENINGS...

www.hilltopgardeningclub.org.uk

Kevin Ward, Museum Development Manager at The Museum in the Park, Stroud, was guest speaker at our first evening meeting of 2024, in Eastcombe Village Hall. His fascinating talk was called *'Unlocking the Secret Garden at the Museum in the Park'*. It described the transformation of a wild and unruly plot into the stunning walled garden on view today.

The Stratford Park Estate's walled garden dates back to the 19th century. The Museum opened in the mansion in 2001, by which time the walled garden had been derelict for 20 years. Its restoration began in 2012. Work was made possible by the dedicated support of Stroud District Council, Museum Friends, the local community and funding bodies.

There were many problems. For example, Japanese knotweed had to be removed and the Victorian glasshouse was carefully demolished as it was riddled with asbestos. Despite the challenges, the pavilion building and new garden entrance were completed in 2015 and planting commenced in 2016. The artist Cleo Mussi designed the borders, using plants from her own and her mother's gardens, and local apple and pear tree varieties.

The walled garden was formally opened in 2016. Today it is supported and maintained by dedicated volunteers and enjoyed by a variety of community groups. For example, Stroud Buzzy Club has installed hives in the garden, and a local hedgehog hospital has put in hedgehog houses.

The annual snowdrop celebrations, first held in 2020, are popular: over 1,000 people visited 2024's event.

Next meeting: 7.15pm on 2nd April, in Eastcombe Village Hall. The guest speaker will be Rachel Golding-Barrett, of *Tetbury Flower Company*, growers of cut flowers. Attendance is free for members and costs £3 for non-members. **I hope you can join us!**

TABLE-TOP/BROCANTE SALE

of
pre-loved, nearly new & new items

Sunday April 7th
10am - 1pm
France Lynch Church Rooms,
Lynch Road

(Not far from Chalford Sunday Market - walk along Upper Lynch Road then footpath past the Band Hut)

BRING CASH AS WELL AS CARD PLEASE

Book a table: £10 (cash on the day)
Call Jane Calvert: 01453 731054
or email: janealvert43@gmail.com

Frithwood Surgery
Patient Participation Group

NEW
After walk refreshments now available

Need to lose weight?
Recovering from an illness?
Just need to get out and do some exercise?

PPG Health Walks
Recommencing on the **03/04/2024** and every alternate Wednesday thereafter.

At **10:00am** from Frithwood Surgery.

Flat 1.5 mile circuit.

If you are in need of exercise and company do come along. All welcome.

Registration forms at reception or sign up on the day

CSSC & Poperasops PRESENT...

SONGS FROM THE SHOWS
WITH TEA & SCONES

TICKETS £1.50
MEMBERS £5
UNDER 10s FREE

designed by freepik.com

SUNDAY 7th APRIL
FROM 2-5PM

A cup of tea and scones with jam & cream included with every adult ticket purchased.
Chalford Sports and Social Club Highfield Way, France Lynch

Eastcombe Baptist Church

A service is held on Sunday mornings at 10:30am at the church in Dr Crouch's Road, Eastcombe.

IT'S NOT ALL BAD NEWS!

How many of us can't face watching the news or reading a newspaper because everything seems so depressing?

Well, here is a magazine which is both hopeful and optimistic, with 'good news' stories from all over the world.



"I love your magazine. A source of such joy and inspiration. The world is a better place for it."

It's not religious OR political, but it IS uplifting! There are articles on a variety of subjects—just the thing to inspire the family.

Positive News is available quarterly, priced at £7 per issue. You can buy the next issue (April to June) from the Bookshop in the High Street, Stroud, or online from www.positive.news/shop.

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR HEDGEHOGS?



FRESH WATER IN A SHALLOW DISH

HEDGEHOG HIGHWAYS - MAKE HOLES IN YOUR GARDEN FENCE SO HEDGEHOGS CAN GET IN AND OUT.



MEATY FOOD (CAT OR HEDGEHOG FOOD)

NEWS FROM THE VALLEY...

Congratulations to local newsletter, the Quarterly-published *Valley News*, which has gone digital!

Valley News brings you stories and information about Chalford Valley. To receive a free copy by email, please contact 2017valleynews@gmail.com.

The *Valley News* ask that you share this news to friends near or far who may be interested in what's happening in Chalford valley.

For those who prefer it, some printed copies will also be available (free) from Chalford Village Shop.

No.88 Mar. 2024

VALLEY NEWS
CHALFORD VALE

EASTCOMBE VILLAGE GROUP

Our next meeting will be on **Monday 22 April at 7.30pm** in the **Eastcombe Village Hall annex**. Please come and join the discussion about future events and the way we should use our funds. You will be most welcome.

We are planning the **Wine Walk on Sunday 28th July**. Please save the date, and if you would like to help please let me know.

Other plans include possible remedial work on the Millennium Wheel on Eastcombe Green, the raising of the new village flag, designed with the help of the children of Eastcombe Primary School (see front page), and organising an event for the autumn.

Peter Scott: peterhscott@btinternet.com



St Michael's & All Angels, Bussage

Visitors are always welcome. Our services this month are:

- **April 14th: Holy Communion at 9.30am**
- **April 21st: Morning Prayer at 9.30am**
- **April 21st: Hilltop Cafe Church, 2.30pm,**
- **Eastcombe Village Hall (see poster)**

Please Note: The **Annual Parochial Church Meeting** will be held on **Wednesday 10th April at 7pm** in **Bussage Primary School**.

On other Sundays there are services in different parts of the Benefice. Visit www.bisleybenefice.org.uk for details, or join our mailing list: pewslipsbisley@hotmail.com.

For weddings, funerals & baptisms, contact Revd. Sue Murray: vicar@bisleybenefice.org.uk

EASTCOMBE WI



The February meeting saw a good gathering of members and 2 visitors, all welcomed by our president, Pauline. We had notices of local and Gloucestershire federation events: a local walk, a coffee morning, a trip to the SS Great Britain, and a flower arranging demonstration, as well as craft workshops were discussed.

Our speakers, Judy, Pauline and Teresa, guides at the National Trust's Newark Park, led us through the history of the house.

The original building was a hunting lodge for Nicholas Poyntz in Tudor times. A square, 3 storey building was later altered to an L shape and then a U shape, with subsequent owners including the Clutterbuck family, who wanted a home for 'future generations'. The house was rented out from 1800, with the longest lease to the King's family. In 1949 it was handed to the National Trust in memory of a son killed in WW1. Tenants included 2 nursing homes, until Robert Parsons, an American, restored it with the blessing of the National Trust. This beautiful house and listed garden are well worth a visit. The speakers were thanked by Mary Brooks.

Eastcombe WI are a friendly group of women who enjoy friendships, good speakers and outings. Most meetings are open to visitors for a small fee and new members are welcome.

Meetings take place on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7.15pm at Eastcombe Village Hall, and usually include some form of entertainment.

For more information please contact the Secretary, Glenys Sharpe, on 01453 886298.

A gardeners guide to... Bird Nesting Season

The nesting season runs from March to August - but some birds nest earlier/later

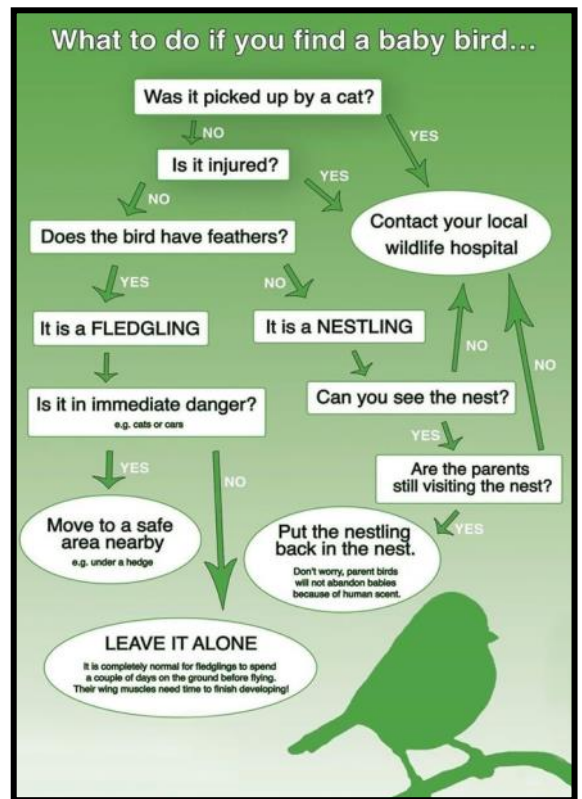
Nests are often well hidden, so you might not know they are there

Birds may be nesting in your trees, shrubs, ivy, hedges, nest boxes, under eaves and on the roof

All wild birds, their nests & eggs are protected by law - this includes gulls, pigeons & crows

Do not cut back hedges, trees and other vegetation during nesting season - this risks disturbing nests

Trim hedges once a year in winter if needed - this gives wildlife the chance to eat any berries



The latest book by Chalford Parish Local History Group was recently reviewed. So, what did the reviewer think?

'Hilltop & Valley: Stories from Chalford Parish & Eastcombe' by members of Chalford Parish Local History Group, edited by Camilla Boon, Hilary Burgess, Roger Carnt & Peter Drover. 376 pages, illustrated. Paperback, £10.

This substantial book comprises 37 articles by no fewer than 16 members of Chalford Parish Local History Group, and also acknowledges the assistance of many others. The editors are to be congratulated for co-ordinating the research by such a large number of authors into a coherent whole.

Articles are divided into broad topics including People, Houses, Churches, Schools and Landscape. Some include personal recollections and all are illustrated with photographs from the collections of local historians and Chalford residents. There are many quotations. Sources of information are collected in a section at the end of the book and, while these are useful, it would have been helpful to have had more detail as to which source was used for which aspect of the article ... although references are sometimes given in the text. An index could have been a useful addition.

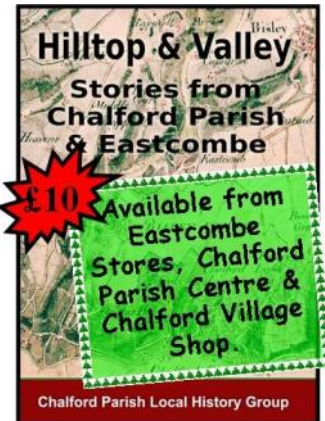
The book is presumably aimed mainly at readers who live, or used to live, in Chalford or Eastcombe. It will certainly appeal to anyone with a family connection. I would have appreciated clearer maps to show where places are or were.

It might be a book to dip into, but I read it from cover to cover and found it well-written and edited and very interesting both in finding out more about Chalford, and also the general picture of development of the local area. The extreme poverty and suffering caused by the swift decline of the handloom weaving industry and the changing focus of local occupations was clearly drawn and reflected the experiences of other villages in the Stroud area. The story of how parishes gradually came to support the less fortunate and work together to improve the lives of the poor also came across well. I particularly enjoyed the school memories – being a child of the 1950s!

The "Shaping of the Hilltop" articles give a good picture of the development of the area from ancient times until today. There are also some updates on the information given in previous publications by the Group, including the lives of Chalford people in the two World Wars, which make interesting reading in their own right. A lighter touch is added in the stories of entertainment and traditions in the villages.

This is an excellent record of the history of Chalford and nearby villages ... giving a flavour of what it was like to live in the area in past times.'

Vicki Walker
Gloucestershire Local History Association



Cirencester Science & Technology Society
Lecture Programme September 2023 – June 2024

APRIL 10TH: A combined meeting with Cirencester Archaeological & Historical Society.
Professor Peter Sarris, Professor of Late Antique, Medieval and Byzantine Studies at Cambridge University:
'The Plague of Justinian & the End of Antiquity.'

Open to all. £15 annually or £3 per lecture. Students free. Lectures start 7.30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of the month in the Sir Emrys Jones Lecture Theatre at the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester. Tea, coffee & biscuits served at 7pm. Free parking. Visit www.cirensience.org.uk for more details.

CAROL'S COOKERY CORNER:

CREAMY PRAWN & SALMON GRATIN

This recipe can be a treat for two or a starter for 4-6 people. Quick and easy to make.

Use a heat proof dish 25 x 15 cm approximately, or 4 smaller dishes if making starters.

INGREDIENTS:

- 175g raw king prawns
- 1 fillet of salmon
- 2 teaspoon olive oil or a spray of fry light oil
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- Clove of garlic, crushed
- 4 tablespoons bread crumbs
- 6 tablespoons Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped.
- 3 tablespoons finely grated parmesan cheese



METHOD:

1. In a frying pan, heat the oil. Add the salmon fillet and fry for 8 minutes, turning frequently, until almost cooked through. Add the prawns and fry for 3 minutes.
2. When cool, flake the salmon into small pieces and add to the pan with the prawns, yogurt, garlic, lemon zest and half the parsley. Season well.
3. Put into a heat proof dish, or (for starters) 4 small dishes.
4. Sprinkle the breadcrumbs on top, then the cheese.
5. Grill under a high heat, until it turns brown.
6. Sprinkle with the remaining parsley. Serve with a salad.

EASTCOMBE SCREEN ON THE GREEN

presents
ONE LIFE

Director: James Hawes

Starring: Anthony Hopkins, Johnny Flynn, Helena Bonham Carter



A 2023 drama based on the true story of British humanitarian Sir Nicholas Winton, as he looks back on his efforts to help groups of Jewish children in German-occupied Czechoslovakia just before the beginning of World War II

Venue: Eastcombe Village Hall

Date: Saturday 20th April

**Time: Doors open 7pm,
Film starts 7.30pm**

Admission: £4 per person

Ice Creams £2 each

ALL WELCOME!

WHO'S WHO ON THE HILLTOP? Daniel Joseph asked BOHO ON THE HILL...

Lately, getting a coffee in Chalford and Eastcombe has been easier, with all our local pubs serving coffee and the Barn Shop at Middle Hill Farm doing takeaway coffee and cake. But only in recent years has a dedicated coffee shop, initially Scrumptious and now Boho, opened. We decided to go along and chat with Pennie, who runs Boho.

Like any other business, Boho has costs, suppliers, wages and rent to pay, but Boho does not exist simply to make money. Pennie acknowledges that nobody in hospitality is in the business to get rich, but for her the important thing is community.

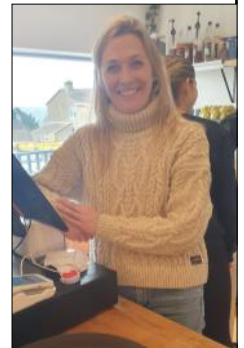
Pennie was brought up in Minchinhampton in surroundings that she described as "idyllic", but her parents stressed that a supportive and comfortable village life was not something experienced by all. As Pennie grew up she saw the value of recreating the closeness she had felt as a child. A career in secondary teaching led to frustration with bureaucracy, and Pennie moved around the UK, initially as a Pilates teacher. After learning to bake, Pennie was mentored in Glasgow by Three Sisters Bake and then, with the support of the Prince's Trust, set up Boho 8 years ago with the aim of "creating communities in a transient world". After catering on the road both in the UK and overseas, Pennie saw the need to put down roots, initially at Kitsch in Ebley, and then, thanks to a bequest from her late father, in the Barn in Kings Stanley. Looking for an opportunity to expand into Chalford (Pennie's Mum lives in Bussage), Boho were offered the Scrumptious premises. Shortly afterwards, a rent hike meant that the Saxon Barn outlet was no longer viable, so in September 2023 the Boho collective moved to Boho on the Hill.

Pennie sees Boho as a solution to the isolation caused by social media and working from home, offering somewhere where the community can come together. While we were there customers included young mums, workmen in overalls and elderly people. Pennie also believes in having a happy staff and often employs younger people that have struggled to find a way in the working world. While not taking all the credit, Pennie has seen several of these young people go on to greater things.

Boho has a lot to offer with their car meets, 'Coffee Cab' and celebration cakes, but they have also spoken with the parish council to find out what the community needs. Tackling the issue of isolation of elderly people and seeking to contribute to greater use of the Frith Youth Centre are other areas of expansion.

Is this all done purely altruistically, we asked? In answer, Pennie tells how a lovely customer, isolated while recovering from an operation, recently gave her a hug and thanked her for the interest shown to him by the café staff. She admits that seeing customer satisfaction is the real return she gets from the café.

Daniel Joseph



VILLAGE HISTORIES... Long-time resident Paul Beer's memories evoke the hilltop of the 1960s to the 1980s. **This month, Paul recalls SHOPS AND OTHER SUPPLIERS...**

'Downhill from our part of Bracelands, past the entrance to The Lindens, is Eastcombe's triangular village green. At the top corner stands the Stores; this and the Post Office have been run from various houses in the village, but on or near the green after WWII. When I was growing up, there were few supermarkets and the Stores supplied us with food and other essentials. Groceries, even some meat, were delivered from the Stores by Ken Davies in an Austin van. He was from Chalford Hill and lived near the Duke of York pub.

At the foot of the Green stands The Lamb Inn, which was run with a firm hand by Ron Saunders, along from the red public telephone box, much used then as few people had a phone at home. The building behind, previously part of the farm that became The Lamb and now converted to the house Two Pillars, was where Gerald Gardiner ran his coal yard. Sandy-haired Gerald worked by himself, wearing a distinctive grey képi with a leather peak and a leather cover on his back when making deliveries. He delivered coal to us every 2-3 weeks, always very obliging. His nearest rival was Smarts' near the roundhouse at Chalford bottom, but we preferred Gerald as he would turn out any time you had run out of coal. He lived in a bungalow set back between The Ramblers and Hilltop in Bracelands, but, sadly, died not long after retirement.

Below the phone box, Gerry Lowe and family lived in a new building, from which Gerry ran the Post Office, moved up from Beam Ends (in Wells Road) and taken over from the parents of his wife, Dorothy Ridler-Dutton. He also sold other things if a profit seemed possible.

In Bisley there was a legendary shop run by Doreen Kilminster. She was a very good business woman, selling not only groceries, but a great range of goods stacked upstairs. Going to her store was a unique experience, with a wooden seat for customers at the counter. Once a month Doreen would load her estate car to the roof – nobody could have crammed in more than she did and it would not be legal today! – and drive a round that included Bracelands. The most amazing thing was that she always knew where everything was.

Another caller was Winstone's ice cream van, which at 4pm every Saturday set Bracelands ringing with its 'Blue Danube' chimes. It parked there for 20 minutes and was very popular.

A money-making opportunity that has disappeared from children's lives revolved around returnable glass bottles. We would collect as many as we could. Most were from Corona fizzy drinks, delivered by van to Eastcombe Stores once a week. We took the empties back to the Stores and were given the deposits. Even Domestos bottles were worth 2 pence. Beer bottles were worth 3 pence each; landlord Ron Saunders didn't like us coming inside to the off-licence hatch, but after a bit of grumbling he would let us have the money.'



With grateful thanks to Paul Beer

HILLTOP CAFE CHURCH
Christian worship for those of all faiths and none.
Sunday 21st April
2.30PM
EASTCOMBE VILLAGE HALL
BROUGHT TO YOU FROM THE PARISH OF BUSSAGE & EASTCOMBE

EASTCOMBE ALLOTMENTS
Are you an allotment holder at Eastcombe allotments?
Join our new WhatsApp social group.
Email your contact number to Chris (warden) 07511899464 to be added.

CHALFORD MARKET
CRAFTY & DELICIOUS @ CHALFORD
10am-1pm
Sunday April 7th

WHAT'S ON in APRIL?

- 2 April:** Hilltop Gardening Club, 7.15pm, Eastcombe Village Hall
- 3 April:** Frithwood Surgery Health Walk, 10am, Frithwood Surgery
- 7 April:** Chalford Sunday Market, 10am-1pm, CSSC **AND** Table top Sale, France Lynch Church Rooms, 10am-1pm/Songs from the Shows, CSSC, 2-5pm
- 10 April:** B-w-L Parish Council meeting, Bisley Village Hall, 7.30pm/Brimscombe Mills Community Planning Session, 6-8pm, Brimscombe Mills
- 12 April:** Eastcombe flag raising, 2:30pm, Eastcombe Village Green.
- 10 April:** Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 7pm, Bussage Primary School/Cirencester Science & Technology Society Talk, 7.30pm, RAU
- 20 April:** Eastcombe Screen on the Green, Eastcombe Village Hall, 7.30pm
- 21 April:** Charity afternoon tea, from 2pm, CSSC/Hilltop Café Church, Eastcombe Village Hall, 2.30pm
- 17th APRIL: DEADLINE FOR MAY NEWSLETTER**
- 22 April:** EVG Meeting, 7.30 pm, Eastcombe Village Hall annex

NAME THAT VIEW! **How well do you know our villages?**

March's photo showed the view from Vine Farm, Brownshill, looking towards Minchinhampton Common. April's photo is once again taken in or around the 3 villages.

Can you identify its location?
The answer will be revealed in the May issue.