

THE Grapevine

NEWSLETTER

FROM THE SUTTON HALL
STOCKCROSS
August 2025 No: 134



Pub Crawls, Rounders on the Rec., Wine tasting evenings, Opera at the church and much more are just a few of the wonderful things that have happened in Stockcross... so far! Get involved and have fun.... Support your village and join in!



The Editor

Any contributions for the **November edition 2025** of the Grapevine must reach me no later than **Thursday the 16th October** and before **3.30 pm**.

Have a great summer!

If you would like a PDF file/ email copy of the Grapevine (in colour) and regular updates then please email me (Glenn) at :

stockcrossgrapevine@gmail.com

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



HAPPY SPRING!!

Wow, has it been hot!! All is beige and brown with little green as I write this.

Following our wettest Winter, we have the driest, every hottest Summer for many years. I hope by the time this Grapevine edition is published and into your hands we get a day of rain for every day of sun. Better yet – sunny every day and rain every night (I think the heat has got to me!).

Since I last wrote many of you shared a VE day celebration luncheon together at the hall - complete with many in outfits from the war period, a great display by SASHA of Stockcross in the war years, military jeeps to in-

spect and music from the 40's. It is so wonderful to have events where the community can gather. Very sorry to miss it.

But my husband and I did not miss the Pub Crawl!! Once again almost 40 of us joined in a hot jaunt from Speen to Stockcross. We walked from Pub to golf course bar to the garden of a 5-star hotel to our Village Hall – I think we spanned the gamut of establishments and had a lovely and lively time!! Many people sat, chatted and refreshed at the Village Hall, enjoying themselves so much we had to call time late in the evening! More recently the (almost) annual North v South Rounders match has been fought. The South won but I am told it was close – and VERY HOT. Congratulations to the South. Well done to all players for braving the heat.

The proposal for a “small hall social club/ pub” is slowly progressing. We are waiting on the results of grant proposals to get an idea of funding. We have had a generous donation from a local resident and have earmarked the profits from drinks sales at the hall at the end of the Pub Walk toward the project. We will keep you informed. Meanwhile the village hall committee is looking for ideas for other events to keep the idea alive; to show engagement from the village; and to have some fun in the community. If you have some ideas, do contribute. Can you run a Quiz night or a racing evening? Do you want a beer tasting? Or a comedy or movie night?

The AGM this year for the Sutton Hall Charity is on the evening of October 8th. Please join us. There is time after the formalities for a chat about your ideas, feedback, etc. And for now, enjoy the good weather, be careful of your sun exposure and have a great Summer.

Liz

CONGRATULATIONS TO ANNE AND RON CUMMINGS ON YOUR 65TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



STOCC UPDATE AND FUTURE EVENTS

Wednesday 30 July at 2pm

'Sashiko' - an arty crafty afternoon with guest Wendy Lloyd.

Wendy is a Newbury textile artist and printmaker who will be showing us the Japanese art of Sashiko. This is a creative and fun way of doing visible mending which is very 'on trend' in these days of up-styling, restoring and sourcing preloved clothes.

Also, we'd love to find out what art or craft you enjoy doing yourself so please bring something along - plus there will be suggestions of courses available locally on a variety of creative interests. All together this should be a very enjoyable afternoon with plenty to talk about. Do come along - all welcome. As always, cost is only £3 per person and includes refreshments.

August - no meeting

24 September - 'Friends of West Berkshire Community Hospital. Mary Murphy will be explaining the aims and achievements of this local charity which is surely so important to all of us.

29 October - 'Who do you think you are Hugh Pihlens'. The discovery of an escape, bravery and success - a story which will be enjoyed by all.

26 November - Christmas tea event. Details later.

The future of Stockcross Two O'Clock Crowd.

This group is in danger of folding up if you don't use it. Circumstances have been making it difficult for several to attend lately so we need more people to turn up and help keep this group going. The organisation which goes into arranging a variety of interesting events deserves more support. Don't let this facility which helps retired and semi-retired people get to know each other fail! For more information call Jane on 07771511317

Upcoming meetings:

Wednesday 10th September 2025

Didcot, Newbury and Southampton Railway
by Richard Coghlan,

A synopsis is a history of the railway line, it's construction at various stages, links with other lines, the stations, it's use for commercial and passenger traffic (and it's significance in WW11), the engines and trains running, and the eventual closure.

Our speaker is a railway enthusiast who is involved in the Watercress Line near Alresford, Hampshire, and particularly Locomotive 80150, for which he is raising funds for restoration.

Wednesday 8th October - Members meeting

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Wednesday 5th November - Speaker TBA

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Wednesday 10th December. - Christmas Tea

Come and join us for tea, mince pies and nibbles

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All Welcome:

Guest: £5.00/meeting

To find at more about S&SHA visit our website: www.stockcrosshistory.org
or our Facebook page: Stockcross and Surroundings History Association.

Angela Tyler



Portadown Male Voice Choir



Centenary Choir Concert - A Night to Remember

St John's Church, Stockcross - 27th Sept, 7pm

- Celebrating 100 years of choral excellence • Internationally acclaimed choir & special lady soloist
- Charity event for urgent church repairs • Raffle prizes & cash bar

Tickets £10 via www.jumblebee.co.uk/portadownchoir - Join us for an unforgettable evening!

Village News

Stockcross's Best Kept Secret?



The Apollo Big Band; that means 5 saxophones, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones plus piano, bass, guitar and drums. This 17-piece ensemble also frequently features a singer. Apollo performs a wide range of big band music, from classics dating back to the 1940s up to contemporary selections, such as those by Michael Bublé.

The band's first ever rehearsal was on Thursday, January 18, 2001 in Newbury but moved to the Sutton Hall in June of that year. Thus, the band is nearing its Silver Jubilee anniversary and almost 25 years of rehearsals at the Sutton Hall.

Apollo has given numerous concerts at the Sutton Hall over the years and has recently been offering regular Jazz@Stockcross shows, featuring a singer or other local talent such as Simon Currie who is well known as a member of The Manfreds with Paul Jones.



The highlight of Apollo's year is a special event at a local professional venue. This year, the band will be performing at Arlington Arts on October 18th, with guest star Callum Au. Callum may not be widely known to the general public, but he is one of this country's leading modern composers, and arrangers who has written for the likes

of Michael Bublé, RAYE and the Metropol Orkest. He is also recognised as one of this country's leading trombonists and is often first call for studio session work as well as performances at the Albert Hall. So this will be a fantastic show at Arlington Arts and will be a very special occasion for Apollo.

Apollo also attracts singing talent to Stockcross. In December Amy Rhiannon Worth who is a great singer and one of the UK's freshest talents when it comes to sophisticated classic Jazz and Big Band swing will be performing with Apollo. Amy is also known as an actress who has played many TV roles including Coronation Street, the BBC's Doctors, Emmerdale and the film Dementamania. Amy will be performing with Apollo in Stockcross on 12 December.

Why not come along to one of the band's regular concerts at Sutton Hall? Visit the band's website at apollobigband.co.uk to keep in touch with Apollo's activities or listen the band on our FaceBook channel <https://www.youtube.com/@apollobigband> Come along and support your local Big Band: Apollo.



Village and Church news

STOCKCROSS CHURCH: SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

St. John's Church, Stockcross was built in 1839 and has therefore been a central feature of the village for almost 200 years. Here are some facts and figures about it which you may not be aware of.

HOW IS THE CHURCH RUN?

A **Parochial Church Council (PCC)** is responsible, amongst other things, for the finances of each church in the Church of England, for the maintenance of the church buildings and generally in managing church affairs. The Stockcross PCC members are currently Carolyn and Ernie Preece, Chris Moore, Charles Prior, Primrose and Edward Wilson. The Reverend John Toogood is the vicar of St. John's church and chairman of its PCC. John is also vicar of no less than eight other churches in what is called the East Downland Benefice. Stockcross church is one of 808 churches in the Diocese of Oxford. There are around 16,000 churches in the whole Church of England!



ANNUAL RUNNING COSTS

To give you a snapshot of a typical year in Stockcross church, the PCC is expected to contribute around £8000 to the East Downland Benefice and the Oxford Diocese. Then there are the annual running costs, such as heating and lighting, cleaning of the roof and gutters, insurance, maintenance of the church grounds and graveyard, maintenance of the organ, fire extinguishers and electrical appliances etc. **All of those currently cost around another £8,000 so every year it is necessary to raise at least £16,000, just to keep the church open.**

MAJOR RENOVATION WORKS

Of course, from time to time, with a building the size of Stockcross church, it is necessary to raise funds to carry out other more major but essential maintenance work to keep the church in good condition. For example, in 2024 the PCC had to raise a further £16,000 to replace leaking rainwater goods all round the outside of the building. Also, in 2024, the church clock was repaired and is now back in operation. That cost around £3000 plus a further £3000 for provision for ongoing annual maintenance.

The existing oil fired boiler heating system is not only ineffective but costly to run. The PCC is therefore applying to the Diocesan authorities for permission to replace it with electric under pew heating. **The cost of installing this system for the whole church is likely to be around £12,000.**

If you have been inside the church recently you will be aware that the internal walls are in very bad condition. The PCC has been advised that it will be necessary to remove large areas of crumbling plaster-work, replace it with lime plaster and then carry out a complete repainting of the internal walls. **This is expected to cost at least £60,000. It is a huge challenge for Stockcross PCC.**

HOW CAN ALL THIS BE PAID FOR?

The PCC is therefore active in applying for grants towards these major projects and in running fund raising activities. Last year the PCC ran an entertaining event called Hymns and Plims which was well supported by village residents. This year Kennet Opera provided an excellent concert in June and **on 27th September there will be a concert by Portadown Male Voice Choir, an internationally acclaimed choir which this year is celebrating its centenary with a tour through England.**

PLEASE SUPPORT STOCKCROSS CHURCH SO THAT IT CAN BE KEPT OPEN! THANK YOU!



Kennet Opera

A big thank you to Stockcross from Kennet Opera for being such a wonderful audience for our concert in June. You made us feel really welcome and we enjoyed singing for you.

If anyone is interested in having a go at opera, we will be holding a workshop evening at the beginning of September, exact date to be confirmed. This will be on a Wednesday evening at 7.30 pm at the Majendie Hall in Speen Church. No previous experience or audition necessary.

For further information please contact me on 01488 608672 felicitymerchant@gmail.com or check our Kennet Opera Facebook page.

UPCOMING EVENTS

AGM – October: Wednesday 8 October.

Harvest Supper: Panto 2024: dates fixed for 5 + 6 + 7 December.

Village Hall Christmas Drinks: Saturday 21 December at 6.30 pm.

COMING EVENTS



Church Services

10th August - 11.00am - Parish Communion

24th August - 11.00am - Parish Communion

14th September - 11.00am - Parish Communion

28th September - 11.00am - Harvest Festival

12th October - 11.00am - Parish Communion

26th October - 11.00am - Parish Communion

The Kite Primary Federation

Lunchtime Controllers

Salary Grade B £12.26-£12.45 per hr 6.25hrs a week 12pm-1.15pm

The Kite Primary Federation is made up of two small, rural primary schools on the outskirts of Newbury in easy reach of the A34 and M4. Stockcross C. of E. Primary School and Welford and Wickham C. of E. Primary School were federated in 2020 with the current Executive Headteacher taking up post in September 2022.

We are looking for Lunchtime Controllers to support our team.

The role is at the heart of the schools; helping pupils during lunchtime in the dining hall and supporting them during their playtime. The successful candidate will be kind, professional, efficient, and have a good rapport with children. If you are interested in a role which never sees a dull moment, then come and join us!

For further information and an application pack, please contact hrkite@kpf.org.uk

Daily

Snooker & Billiards – stockcrosssnookerclub@gmail.com

Weekly

Monday Evening	Dance	Cheek2cheekdance@hotmail.co.uk
Tuesday Evening	Hatha Yoga flow 6.45-8.00	Beth Trotter 07790 015762 www.beyoga.co.uk
Tuesday Afternoon	TOFFS bridge 13.30	Brian.hill83@ntlworld.com
Wednesday Morning	Gentle Hatha Yoga to ease & relax 9.45am-10.45am	Beth Trotter - As above
Wednesday Evening	Tango Dance	Justtango.co.uk Hespinosa1111@gmail.com
Thursday Morning	Life drawing classes	arranmiles@googlemail.com
Friday Morning	Baby Ballerina	www.babyballerinas-newbury.co.uk
Friday Afternoon	TOFFS bridge 13.30	Sharon Moore 07770825191
Saturday morning	Baby Ballerina	Brian.hill83@ntlworld.com As above

Monthly

2nd Tuesday of the month – hall committee meeting, small hall, 20.00

Last Wednesday afternoon of the month – STOCC. Jane_batt@btinternet.com

Second Wednesday afternoon of the month – SASHA – contact Angela Tyler to confirm
ange.sunflower@gmail.com

Hall Hire Rates (£ per hour)

From 1st August 2024 (time booked must be sufficient to include set up cleaning afterwards)

Minimum hire 2 hours

	Small	Large	Both
	Hall	Hall	Hall
Resident	11.5	15.75	20
Non resident	17	23	27.5

Call Jay on 01488 608769 to book or visit our website

www.suttonhallstockcross.org

or email

suttonhall642@btinternet.com

OPEN MORNINGS 2025/6

STOCKCROSS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

9.15am Welcome and presentation from our Executive Headteacher followed by a tour of the school with our children.

Wed 9/7/25
 Wed 24/9/25
 Mon 13/10/25
 Wed 19/11/25
 Thurs 11/12/25
 Tues 13/1/26

BOOK NOW VIA THE OFFICE OR ONLINE. Bespoke times also available to suit you

office@stockcross.w-berks.sch.uk
Stockcrossprimaryschool.org