

FREE



Christmas InDownton



No Cuckoo Fair in 2024

The Cuckoo Fair Board of Directors has announced the cancellation of the 2024 fair. They describe the decision as being taken with great sadness and disappointment. Despite a successful 2023 fair, the high



Cuckoo Fair 2023 (photo by Paul Prince)

numbers of visitors and scope along with the departure of key members of the core scheme means that there isn't the capacity to undertake the planning required for 2024. The fair has become the largest free event in the county with an average of 18,000 visitors. The announcement from the board states that, "we have considered a variety of options to run the Fair next year but sadly the reality is that it would be financially and organisationally challenging for us to run the event in 2024 and cancellation is our only viable option." The board acknowledged the impact this will have on the fund raising for local groups and have given their apologies. The board is now focussing on how the fair can continue to run in future years. The board's full statement is on page 8.

Comment

Welcome to our Christmas issue.

On page 4 you can find out how to purchase copies of our 2024 InDownton calendar packed with high quality photos of around the village taken by our readers. At least £5 from each purchase will go to the Downton 4 Family charity.

We've also got an exclusive deal for InDownton readers to get 10% of food orders at The Bull during January. More details on the back page.

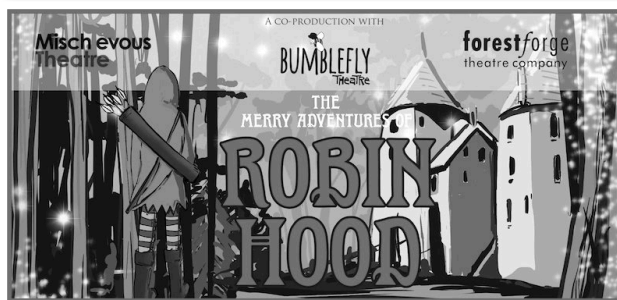
Thank you for your support throughout the year. We wish you a happy and peaceful Christmas from everyone involved in the newsletter.

The editorial team

ROBIN HOOD IN DOWNTON!

Robin Hood is coming to Downton in the New Year, in a production by Forest Forge, Bumblefly and Mischievous Theatre. It's at the Memorial hall on Friday 12 January at 6:30 pm, with doors opening at 5:30pm. Tickets £10 for adults, £5 for children under 16. Refreshments (including licensed bar) will be available.

The show, suitable for all ages, is billed as "A swashbuckling tale of derring-do and ridiculousness! Can Robin and his barmy band of brigands save the poor people of the Forest from the scheming Sheriff? Can they thwart his greedy plans? Can they find a way to level up? And can Robin right the wrongs, with mischief and merriment, without getting into a terrible mess? With quirky storytelling, merriment and



mischief, the Travelling Players present a stout-hearted tale of epic proportions. With live music, puppets and far too many trees, this co-production will hit the target this festive season."

Tickets from the Borough Cafe (cash only) from 4 December or text 07760415818 to pay by BACS, giving name and number of tickets. For further information call the number above.

DOWNTON COMMUNITY CHOIR

The choir, directed by Kate Edgar, performed a charity concert in the village recently. Kate says: "The choir is still basking in the glow of their concert, where they, along with women's shanty group All At Sea, played to a full house and raised a massive £1500 for Downton4family. Thanks go to the audience, the choirs and the local businesses who gave such fantastic raffle prizes. We will definitely be doing another concert next year!"



Rehearsals have now switched to preparing carols to sing around the village over the festive season. They'll be at The Christmas Tree festival on Saturday December 2, at the village carol service on Sunday 10, and at the Good Companions Christmas party at the memorial hall on Tuesday 19 December. They will also be joining Downton band for a free concert at St Laurence Church on Sunday 17 December. They will be singing outside The Goat on Christmas Eve.

If any one in the village is organising any fundraising events, and would like the choir to sing, contact Kate, as the choir welcomes the opportunity to 'step out and sing'. The choir is always happy to welcome new members (especially men!). It is a non-auditioned choir, with a wide range of musical ability, but a common love of having fun and expressing themselves through song - a friendly group who just love to sing. Rehearsals are from 7.30 - 9pm every Wednesday evening during term time, at The Sherwood Room on Wick lane. More info: email Keedgar@aol.com or visit kateedgarmusic.com.

DOWNTON TYRE AND AUTOCARE AT 30

Local family-run business Downton Tyre & Autocare has just celebrated its 30th anniversary. Established in November 1993 by Tony Mayes, the day-to-day operations are now overseen by his son, Anton. The company is a member of the Point S network of similar businesses and benefits from this support.

Anton says, "This is an exceptional achievement for us and the rest of our team. We are extremely proud of the foundations that we

have laid here in Downton, and are looking forward to what the future holds. We are grateful for the incredible support of our customers, many of whom are long-term members of our local community. Retaining our independence has always been essential for us, and we are delighted that we have been able to do so whilst having the backing of a global brand, Point S."




SCOUT POST

The Scout Christmas Post is running again this year at a cost of 30p per card. Stamps and posting boxes are available at the Chemist, Borough Cafe, Baptist Church, Hair Design and St Laurence Church. Last posting date is Wednesday 6 December. Cards can be delivered

to Downton, Charlton, Redlynch, Woodfalls, Lover and Morgans Vale as well as a number of other villages local to Salisbury. The full list can be found at sswscouts.org.uk/christmas-post/





Downton Link
 Notice is given that the Annual General Meeting of Downton Link will take place on **Friday 16th February 2024** at 7.15 pm
Sherwood Suite
Downton Football Club
Wick Lane, Downton SP5 3NF

Welcome to all comers

Interested in joining "The Link" as a volunteer driver, coordinator or to serve on the Committee? Please contact: info@downtonlink.org.uk or phone 01725 513807.

EAR2CLEAR

Ear Wax Removal

Nicola Daley-Cook
07894 532199



Email Nicola.ear2clear.uk@gmail.com

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

This year, the Downton Christmas Tree Festival takes place on Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 December at St Laurence Church, from 10am - 4pm each day. The programme promises the usual mix of Christmas exhibits, gifts to buy, raffles, children’s activities and refreshments. There will be a full programme of musical entertainment on offer as shown below - including contributions from the Downton Bands, the Community Choir and Trafalgar School. The group who put on the Coronation concert in the summer are planning “a short, jolly, yuletide entertainment”. This year proceeds will be split between St Laurence Church and Wilton Riding for the Disabled Association.



On Friday 1 December at 7pm there is a Choral Evensong at St Laurence with a visiting choir and organist. Seasonal refreshments will be available afterwards.

Saturday 2 December	
10.00	Downton Training Band
10.40	Susato - recorder concert
11.20	Downton Beginners Band
12.00	Downton Community Choir
12.40	Wessex Folk Orchestra
1.20	All at Sea
2.00	Millstream Winds
2.40	Fordingbridge Handbells
3.20	Trafalgar School Musicians

Sunday 3 December	
10.00	Recorded Music
10.40	Downton Jubilee Brass
11.20	Recorded Music
12.00	DADA
12.40	Northumbrian Pipes
1.20	Woodfalls Village Singers
2.00	Mandolins
2.40	Briddon Musicians
3.20	Barber Shop

CHRISTMAS TREE SALE

Locally grown Christmas Trees will be on sale on Friday 1 December, from 3 - 6pm, at Long Close Park (the old cricket ground), The Borough. 4ft / 5ft / 6ft Nordmann Firs will be available with payment by card or cash. There will also be luxury handmade

wreaths on offer, from £35. Refreshments will include hot chocolate, mince pies & mulled wine. Proceeds to the Moot Trust.



Last year's sale



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 Ashley Grange, Lode Hill, Downton, Salisbury, SP5 3 PP

INDOWNTON PHOTO CALENDAR NOW AVAILABLE

The 2024 InDownton Calendar is now available to purchase. It has lots of local photos by local photographers. Even more photographs than last year were submitted, and it was a difficult task to select what to include.

The calendar is available to purchase online by going to the InDownton website (indownton.org.uk) or from a number of local outlets including the Borough Cafe, Woodfalls Post Office and Hair Art in The Headlands. Also watch out for it at various other events in the next few weeks including the Downton Primary

School Christmas Extravaganza on Friday 1 December.

The price is £10 and a minimum of £5 goes to Downton 4 Family. The calendar can be ordered online and delivered to any Downton address free, or it can be sent to anywhere in the UK for an extra charge to cover postage. It includes an envelope.

It's an ideal Christmas present, and there are limited numbers available so don't delay

See opposite page to see the front and back pages of the calendar.

DOWNTON FREEMASONS

Downton has had a Freemasons' Lodge for forty years when it was established in the upstairs room at The White Horse.

While Freemasonry is one of the oldest charitable organisations in the world, it has sometimes been seen as secretive. Today's organisation is more open and Freemasons cherish four important values that help define their path through life: Integrity, Respect, Friendship, and Service. Freemasonry provides a structure for members to come together under these common principles, and creates opportunities for people to make new and long

lasting friendships. Local Freemasons make contributions to the local community and local charitable causes.



Membership is open to men over the age of 18. Downton Lodge meets on a Monday, once a month, for a meeting and dinner at The Sherwood Suite of the Downton Football Clubhouse.

To find out more about Freemasonry, contact secretary, Clive Emerson at L9064@wiltshirefreemasons.org.uk or go to the Wiltshire Freemasons website at pglwilts.org.uk.

COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICER P C 0081 HARRY MURPHY WRITES:

As we head towards the festive season, it's a good idea to take the time to evaluate security of your home. One of the best ways to prevent crime is to make it as physically difficult as possible to steal anything from either inside or outside your home. Loud alarms, motion sensors and CCTV all have a role in highlighting suspicious behaviour and providing the alert to call 999. Make a note of serial



numbers on any tools you have, especially power tools. When you see officers out on their patrols, do stop and chat to them and let them know any issues you may be facing. If we receive the information we can act upon it. I wish you all a very happy and jolly December and look forward to seeing you out and about. Please take care and look after yourselves and each other.

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Tea/coffee and mince pies available
 Donations to the Breast Care Unit, Salisbury Hospital
lynn@thecornmill.plus.com

PARISH COUNCIL PLAY AREA REFURBISHMENT

The Grand Opening of the newly refurbished playground in the Memorial Gardens took place in October. Olympian Lloyd Wallace, ably assisted by Elsie Smith, the winner of the Parish Council's poster competition, cut the ribbon at a special ceremony. Lloyd is a freestyle aerial skier who has taken part in the last two winter olympics - and he proved very popular with the children, who were excited to meet him. Parish Council chair, Jane Brentor, thanked all the children who entered the poster competition (197 of them!) and congratulated both Elsie and the runners up: Effie, Lacey, Sienna, Toby and Trixie. She went on to thank all those involved in the project - especially Bev Cornish who began the project in 2021; Mel Camilleri, the Parish Clerk who worked unstintingly on managing the project; Councillors Randall, Watts, Roberts and Jalland, who organised the opening; and Vitaplay the providers who worked through all weathers to get the project completed in time for the opening. DPSA provided face-painting and sold ice-creams. Parish Councillor Stephanie Jalland said: "Thank you to everyone who came, who braved the wet weather and the mud. Thanks to Lloyd for inspiring a sense of adventure - and also to the volunteer First Aiders and face

painter. It's autumn, it's wet - think how wonderful it will be in the sunshine with the grass grown."



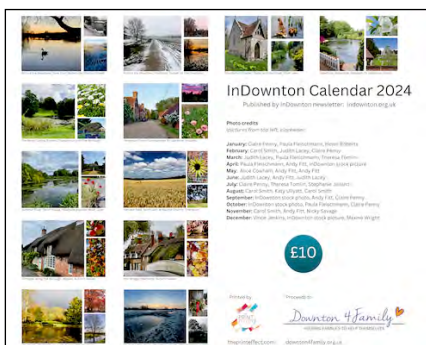
Charlton-all-Saints play park has also had an update with new and refurbished equipment.

The Moot Recreation Ground's refurbishment is next. The new equipment will consist of two main areas - one suitable for younger children and another suitable for older children, which will include a double zipwire. Because the site is next to the Moot and Bailey, "Scheduled Monument Consent" is required, which has meant an archaeological review and an application to Heritage England. The Minister of State's permission is now awaited and it is expected that work will start in early January 2024. More information about when this will be open will be available in the next issue.



INDOWNTON PHOTO CALENDAR NOW AVAILABLE

See article at the top of page 4



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LOCAL BUSINESSES: CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR OPENING HOURS

	Christmas Eve	Christmas Day	Boxing Day	New Year's Eve	New Year's day
Wooden Spoon	Food: 12pm - 8pm Drinks: 12pm - 10pm	Drinks only 12pm - 3pm	Drinks & Food: 12pm - 3pm 6pm - 10pm	Food: 12pm - 4pm. Drinks: 12pm - 12am	Closed
The Bull	Food: 12pm - 4pm Drinks: 12pm - 11pm	Drinks only 12pm - 4pm <i>Christmas Lunches available to book in advance</i>	Open as normal 12pm - 11pm	Sunday opening Food: 12pm - 6pm Drinks: 12pm - 1am	Open as normal 12pm - 11pm
The Goat	Drinks: 12pm - 11pm Food: (standard, not Sunday menu) 12pm - 9pm	Drinks only 12pm - 3pm	Food: 12pm - 9pm Drinks: 12pm - 10pm	Drinks & Food (Sunday menu) 12pm - 4pm	Closed 1 - 3 January. Reopens 4 January
Borough Cafe	10pm - 2pm	Closed	Closed	10pm - 2pm	Closed
Downton Grill & Kebab	1.30pm - 9.30pm	Closed	Closed	1.30pm - 9.30pm	1.30pm - 9.30pm
Stable & Wick	Closed, reopening Tuesday 2 January				
Co-op	10pm - 4pm	Closed	10pm - 7pm	10pm - 4pm	10pm - 7pm
Esso - Asda	Open 24 hours				
Downton Brewery	Shop: Open Wednesday 27 December - Friday 29 December 9pm - 4pm Closed Saturdays Tap Bar: Open Friday 22 December & Friday 29 December 4pm - 9pm				
Leisure Centre	Closed Saturday 23 December, reopening Wednesday 27 December. Closed New Year's Eve. Open New Year's Day 9am - 9pm.				
Downton Tyre & Auto	Closed Saturday 23 December, reopening Tuesday 2 January				

Information based on best information available before going to print. May be subject to change.



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Tuesday 6:30-7:30pm Fordingbridge Town Hall £6.50

Thursday 6-6:45pm Hulse Hall Breamore £6

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MEMORIAL HALL REPAIRS

The scaffolding on the Memorial Hall for the past month was for comprehensive repairs to the building. The Parish Council has funded repairs to the roof, the portico, the gutters and the soffits around the building, as well as commissioning repainting of the windows and the entrance hall. Jane Brentor, the Chair of the

Parish Council says, "The building is an essential part of Downton's history and future and it is vital that it is maintained to allow its safe use for years to come."



REFURBISHMENT OF THE CEMETERY

The Parish Council is to refurbish the cemetery, starting with the "cremated remains" section. The grass will be removed and each stone will be carefully removed, the surface replaced and the stone set back so that each grave is respected and remains in place. There will also be a pathway to the section from the

central path and kerbstones mark it. The work is planned to start in January 2024.

Where possible each relative has been individually contacted in advance.



MOMENTS FROM THE WARDROBE

Volunteering at The Wardrobe can have unexpected moments - its popularity has spread far and wide. October's event attracted over 100 visitors. A recent customer was so impressed by the variety of quality, free clothing on offer that she FaceTimed her Granny in India on the spot. Jerry, one of the organisers said, "I was serving refreshments, but it was quite surreal seeing and speaking to someone in India!"

many people - and confessed to sharing a love of musicals with her friend - this resulted in an impromptu sing-a-long of "I could have danced all night" from My Fair Lady.

Jerry again: "Sometimes you cannot make things up - even in tough times there are many joyful moments."



On another occasion a customer (originally from Spain) who had travelled from Poole was explaining about the change in her circumstances this year - as has happened to so

The Wardrobe takes place at Downton Baptist Church from 2 - 3:30pm, one Friday a month. The first few Wardrobe dates for 2024 are 19 January, 16 February and 22 March.

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REGISTERED MEMBER

STATEMENT FROM THE CUCKOO FAIR

“It is with great sadness and disappointment that the Cuckoo Fair Board of Directors announces that the Downton Cuckoo Fair 2024 will not be held. Whilst we appreciate that this may come as a surprise to many, given the success of the 2023 Fair, having undertaken a review of this year’s Fair, a number of issues have become clear. The size and increasing popularity of the Fair means that it cannot continue to operate in the same way or with the same small team of existing volunteers. We work tirelessly to make it happen but are a group, like many other volunteer groups, who are getting older. We are sincerely grateful to all those individuals who have stepped forward to help as a result of our recent recruitment drive. However, subsequently things have changed with the departure of some key experienced members of the core team, including our health and safety lead, for reasons of health, work or family commitments. To put this in context, we work with a lead in time of at least 7 months, so would be starting to plan now for 2024. To understand what is involved behind the scenes to put on the Fair visitors to the Fair receive a 4 page entertainment programme but the Fair is managed and delivered by a 70+ page Event Management Plan and a 150+ page Build Plan which is a huge undertaking to implement. These demonstrate how we meet regulatory and statutory requirements with the visitor safety paramount.



Information Tent Team 2022

As organisers of what has become a large-scale major event, we are also acutely aware of the increasing risks, including terrorist threats nationally and the potential impact of those on such an un-ticketed event where we cannot easily control the number of visitors. As it is un-ticketed event our income does not increase with growing visitor numbers who also have rising expectations. The draft company accounts from the 2022/23 financial year show that we are around the break-even point. It looks like the difficult ongoing economic situation, the rise in inflation and the cost of living crisis may only get worse for 2024 onwards. With the known significant additional costs for 2024 and additional requests and requirements from those we needed to work with to hold the Fair this year, the Board has concluded that all of these factors combine to make it untenable for 2024.

We have considered a variety of options to run the Fair next year but sadly the reality is that it would be financially and organisationally challenging for us to run the event in 2024 and cancellation is our only viable option. This has been an extremely difficult decision to make and we recognise that it will no doubt come as a big blow to those local organisations, groups and societies for whom the Fair is the single biggest fundraising opportunity of the year and would like to send our sincere apologies to them. We are also mindful that there will inevitably be financial implications for the Fair’s contractors, traders, local landowners and our village community.

Going forward we really need more positive support from all parts of the community, including a willingness to engage with or be a part of the event team as well as active involvement in running the Fair or contributions from some of those larger village-based businesses operating within the bounds of the Fair, who benefit significantly from the financial income which a well-organised and well-attended Cuckoo Fair brings them. We have run the Fair for and with the village for over 40 years and will be taking some time to look at how we can continue to run it as a high-quality, sustainable Fair with strong and positive village involvement for the next 40 years. Downton wouldn’t be Downton without the Cuckoo Fair!”

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BOWLING CLUB

It was a difficult year weather-wise for the club, with some games postponed for heavy rain and some for intense heat. The Men's New Forest Team won a knockout cup. The Mixed Triples team won the Westbrook Mixed Triples League and The Downton Dragons Open Player Triples Squad won The Bournemouth & District Division Five.

The Club rounded off the playing year with the finals of the Club internal competition.

Winners were: Triples - Marie Clarke, Nick Purkis, Ivan Buss; Men's Pairs - Lewis Ambler & Nick Purkis; Ladies Pairs - Ann Noble & Marie

Clarke; Men's Singles - Alan Waters; Ladies Singles - Marie Clarke.

During the winter months, club members play short mat bowls indoors. Sessions are at the Sherwood Rooms in Wick Lane on Thursday afternoons, starting at 2:15pm. The last session before Christmas is on 14 December, with sessions starting again on 11 January. The club holds Coffee Wednesday Mornings every other Wednesday in the Clubhouse at 10am - the next one being on 29 November.

For more information contact Mike Hallam on 513359 - or just turn up to see what goes on.

CREATIVES EXHIBITION

A group of local artists and makers are holding an exhibition and sale of work in the Memorial Hall on Saturday and Sunday, 2 & 3 December 10am - 4pm. Organiser Ginny Whiting says "This will be a chance to look at - and buy - a blend of high quality artwork and craft including wood-turned items and wood

carving by Viv Broughton, paintings and jewellery by Sue Sutherland, paintings, cards and gift items by Teresa Rogers, spun yarn and woollen gifts by Liz Tanner, stained glass and mosaic items by Jan Hawker, paintings with stitch and collage and cards by Wendy Jump and textile art and clothing by Alison Hulme."

CARE HOME WORSHIP SERVICES

Downton Baptist Church has a team of people who visit local care homes, to lead worship services and spend time with residents. This includes familiar hymns and prayers, and reading together from the bible. Baptist Minister, Katy Ulliyatt says "These are times filled with much laughter and friendship and are deeply valued by everyone." If you would like to join one of these services over Christmas,

visitors are welcome but you are asked to confirm your attendance with the care home in advance. December services (at 2:30pm) will be at Ashley Grange Care Home (Wednesday 6) and The Cedars Care Home (Tuesday 12).



PETER COX
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DAVE'S WING WALK

A wing walk by Downton Leisure Centre's Dave Taylor has helped to raise at least £3000 for charity.

Dave took to the air strapped to the wing of a Boeing Stearman biplane operated by the AeroSuperbatics Display team, based at Rendcomb Aerodrome, near Cirencester.

He took two flights. The first was a simple 15 minute trip at 800ft, but in the second he was taken to 3500ft before the plane looped the loop and barrel-rolled over Cirencester.

Dave's business partner Mathi and DLC member Gus Yee also took the 800ft trip.

"It was surprisingly warm at 800ft," said Dave, 60, whose company Gymies runs the leisure centre, "but at 3500 ft the wind chill at

160mph was -1C. I should have followed the example of the pilot, who had a warm leather jacket, but I was absolutely freezing in my T-shirt. I'd recommend it to anyone. It's a real adrenalin buzz, and the views – especially at 3500ft, were fantastic."

The money raised will go to the Salisbury Hospital Stars appeal and several other local charities. More information, from Dave Taylor: 07791 112268



Dave Taylor on the plane

LEISURE CENTRE CHRISTMAS FAMILY FUN DAY

Santa Claus will be appearing at Downton Leisure as the star attraction of the centre's Family Fun Day.

Entry to the event, from 11am until 4pm on Sunday 17 December, is free. There will also be free food, and free entry to Santa's grotto.

"There's no catch" says DLC's Dave Taylor. "We just want people to come down, enjoy

themselves, and see what we do. Our summer event was very popular, and we're hoping to repeat that success."

The attractions include games, class demonstrations, bouncy castles, and live music. Visits to Santa must be booked in advance at downtonleisure.co.uk

HEARING AID CLINIC FROM RNID: CORRECTION

The local Hearing Aid clinic takes place on the first Thursday of the month from 10am to 12pm for NHS hearing aid users. Hearing Aids can be cleaned and new batteries supplied. The last issue of InDownton gave the wrong day, for which we apologise. More information from Gill Drayson, gillian.drayson@rnid.org.uk 01722 580014 or 07570 670643.

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LOVER REPAIR CAFÉ

The Repair Cafe recently welcomed Dr. Phil Harding as their special guest, celebrating the fact that in the four years they've been open, they have raised over £30,000 for local charities. Every donation received for a repair goes straight to a number of local charities such as Stars Appeal - Salisbury District Hospital's Charity, Wiltshire Air Ambulance and Home-Start South Wiltshire. A spokesperson for the cafe said, "This £30,000 would have been impossible without the dedication and energy of our repairers - and, of course, the support of every one of you who have donated after having had something repaired."

On 22 December, the Cafe will be holding a Christmas Hamper raffle - and refreshments will include mulled wine and mince pies.

The Repair Cafe volunteers run a 'donation shop' for items that they have refurbished but

are now in need of a new home.

Various items are available such as a hedge trimmer, radio alarm clocks, anglepoise lamps, a steam iron, and bikes. Contact them for the latest list (details below).

The cafe is at Redlynch Village Hall and is open on Friday mornings, 10 - midday. New volunteers are always welcome - at the moment there are vacancies for a computer repairer / trainer and a caterer. If you are interested you can call in and talk, call 510753 or email: loverrepaircafe@gmail.com.



Phil Harding meets volunteers

GOOD COMPANIONS: CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

Good Companions have got a festive programme planned for December - including games and a Christmas quiz, a Christmas Bring and Buy sale and a tea party (on 19 December) with entertainment from Downton Community Choir. The New Year programme starts on 2 January with a Bring and Buy for unwanted Christmas gifts. On 9 January, the speaker is Kevin Patience with a talk / slides entitled "Treasures from the Deep". This is the story of

man's endeavours to recover gold and silver bullion out of the depths of the sea - from the earliest times to present day, including the recent recovery of 110 tons of silver from a shipwreck lying 17,000 feet deep.

Good Companions meet in the Memorial Hall on Tuesdays from 2 - 4pm. There is no meeting on Boxing Day. Regulars pay £2 and visitors £2.50. Refreshments are included. More information from Julia Whitmarsh on 510586.

CAMPAIGN TO SAVE FOXLEASE

Sally Gemmell, of Fordingbridge Trefoil Guild, is part of a campaign which was started in response to the Girl Guiding Association's decision to sell Foxlease Activity Centre in Lyndhurst. This has been a venue for camping and other activities for Brownies, Guides and Rangers - as well as other local, national and international organisations, including Scouts and schools. It was donated to the Girl Guides over 100 years ago, and the first 'world camp' took place there.

Sally says: "Many children from our local villages will have benefitted from spending time at Foxlease. It is an invaluable facility for the development of young people: a place of unique history providing a myriad of opportunities. This decision to sell has been made without any

consultation with those from the Guide organisations who regularly use the centre."

"Foxye's Future" is a charity which has been set up to purchase Foxlease so that it can be restored and preserved for future generations.

Sally again: "There is an immediate need to raise capital to support the purchase, anticipated to be in the region of £3 million. Donations will help to save this wonderful place. If you support this effort we would be very grateful if you would make a donation on the crowdfunding website: crowdfunder.co.uk/p/foxies-future---help-buy-foxlease."



DOWNTON DOWNTIME

Downton Downtime will be resuming after Christmas on 9 January. The group will be singing at the Christmas Tree Festival at St Thomas's church, Salisbury on Tuesday 5th December, 2:45-3:15pm.

Downton Downtime runs weekly from 10 - 12 every Tuesday at the Sherwood Room, during school term time. Sessions alternate between a social meet up and Move and Make Music, run by Liv McLennan and Kevin Plummer of Sounds Better CIC. Although intended for people experiencing issues around memory, they are open to anyone in the vicinity who feels isolated and lonely.

DOWNTON GRILL & KEBAB

Downton's new takeaway shop is opening shortly despite some delays while key equipment was delivered and installed. It will be open Monday - Saturdays 1.30pm - 9.30pm with an online and telephone ordering service available.

It's locally owned and managed by Recep Altinok who ran the takeaway in Morgan's Vale.



DOWNTON BAPTIST NEWS

The Garden at Downton Baptist Church is a place to share, to sow, plant, and gather together - a place to grow food and flowers for the community, which will be given away in The Larder. Sunday sessions are 2:30pm - 4:30pm and family sessions are on a Thursday, 3:15pm - 4:15pm, providing an opportunity for parents and children to garden alongside each other. 165 saplings have been delivered from the Woodland Trust and it is planned to plant these over the winter period.

The Larder is open on Wednesday mornings 9am - 10am, and on Monday evenings 6pm - 7pm. Everyone is welcome to come and select from the donated food items. The Larder will not be open on Christmas Day, but will open on the following Friday evening (29th). The following week's evening opening will be on Tuesday 2 January, not New Year's Day.

The Playroom Toddler Church is hosting the Farm Nativity on Wednesday 6 December, 9:30 - 11am, complete with visiting animals. Pre-schoolers and their parents / carers are warmly welcomed to this free event - there will be refreshments and crafts to take part in.

There will be a family **Crib Service** at 4pm on Christmas Eve, and participants are invited to dress up as shepherds.



Farmyard nativity

WEEK OF CHRISTIAN UNITY 18 - 25 JANUARY 2024

Downton Churches Together are holding a week of Christian Unity in the New Year, from January 18 - 25, with a special church service on Sunday 21 and opportunities to gather in unity at the village churches. St Laurence Church will be open every day with an area of themed prayers and reflections especially for the week.

Thursday 18, DBC, 10:30am: Traditional Ecumenical Church Service, with refreshments

Friday 19, DBC, 2pm - 3:30pm: The Wardrobe, clothing exchange with refreshments

Saturday 20, DBC, 7 pm: The Engine Room, an evening of modern worship music

Sunday 21, StLC, 10:30am: Service of Christian Unity, led by the congregations of Downton

Churches Together, with groups for young people

DBC, 2:30pm - 4:30pm: The Garden - a time of fellowship

DBC, 7 pm, The Inner Room: An evening of contemplative prayer

Monday 22, DBC, 9am - 10am: Morning Prayers

Tuesday 23, The Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd, 6:30pm: Online Catholic "Service of the word", with readings and prayers

Wednesday 24, StLC, 10:30am: Roads to God, a prayer morning for the village

DBC, 9am - 11am: The Playroom, Toddler Church

Thursday 25 January, DBC, 10:30am: Traditional Ecumenical Church Service, with refreshments, followed by a free community lunch at midday.

DBC = Downton Baptist Church, StLC = St Laurence

DOWNTON BANDS

Downton Band have continued to celebrate their 150th anniversary preparing the performance of a new march, 'The White Horse', especially written for them by award-winning composer Andy Wareham. The band was originally formed in the village pub 150 years ago. The band performed the world premier at the Wessex Festival of Brass at the end of November - and will be performing it at their Christmas concerts in Downton, Lyndhurst and Charlton All Saints.

Christmas is the band's busiest periods. This year the band will be joined by Downton Community Choir (conducted by Kate Edgar) for their annual Christmas concert in St Laurence, which takes place on 17 December at 5pm - entry is free. As usual, the band will be carolling around the village during the festivities. Paul Williams, the band's musical director says: "If you hear us please give generously (card payments accepted) as this income helps the band with running costs,

including offering low cost musical education."

Hear the band in the village in December:
 2 and 3: Downton Christmas Tree Festival (Beginners, Training band & Jubilee)
 10: Carol service at St Laurence church 6pm
 12: Charlton All Saints Xmas concert 7.30pm
 17: Joint Concert with Downton Community Choir in St Laurence Church, 5pm – free entry
 Carolling around the village (7pm to 9pm unless otherwise stated) Thursday 7: Moot Lane; Monday 11: Sidings; Thursday 14: Catherine Cres. area; Monday 18: Bachelor Way & Mesh Pond; Tuesday 19: The Borough; Wednesday 20: West Wick/Greenacres 6.15pm from Band Hall; Friday 22: Morgan's Close & Brewery 6.30pm; Sunday 24: Co-op Downton 10am – 5pm.

Anyone any age can learn a brass instrument at Beginners Brass on Monday nights. The new term begins 8 January 6pm. £1 per session (or free if you can't afford this) and includes the loan of an instrument. More information from secretary@downtonband.org.uk.

VILLAGE CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

The Parish Council would like to invite everyone to join them for a festive singalong at the lighting of the Downton Christmas Tree on Maypole Green on Sunday 3 December at 5:30pm. Free refreshments will be on hand.

Children are advised that Father Christmas and one of his hard-working elves will be passing through, so there is an opportunity to bring your letters along.

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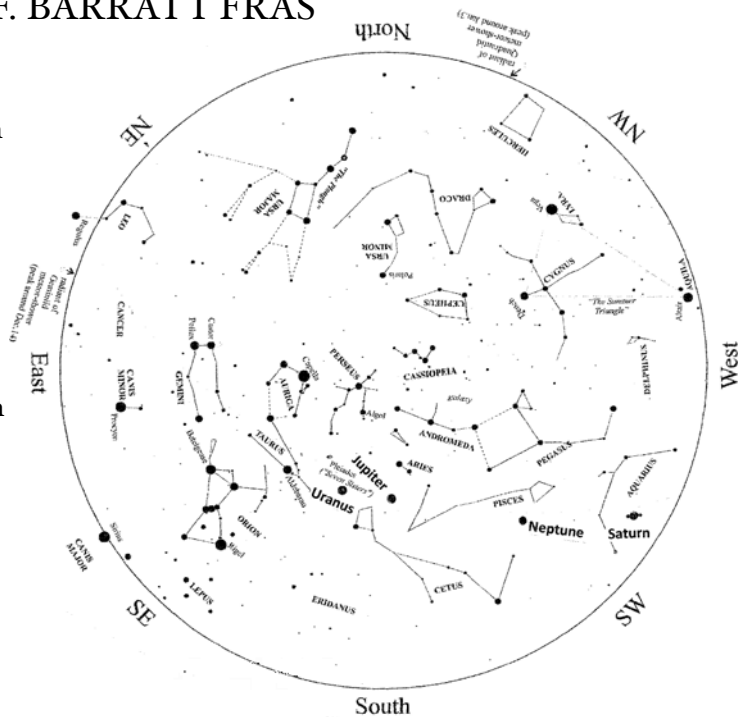
SKY AT NIGHT BY MICHAEL F. BARRATT FRAS

Highlights to spot include prominent constellations; the Pleiades (Seven Sisters) open star cluster is in the east, together with its sister open cluster, the Hyades, both in the constellation of Taurus (the Bull).

The Sun has been very active recently with a multitude of sunspots and magnetic storms creating displays of the Northern Lights, visible as far as south as Dorset. As the Sun reaches its maximum activity over the next eighteen months or so, the greenish glow of the aurora is something to look out for in the northern skies.

The full moon on 27 December is appropriately known as "The Cold Moon".

Mercury will be found at the beginning of December very low down in the evening's south-western sky – best found using binoculars. It will have disappeared into the evening twilight by the middle of the month. Jupiter lies in the constellation of Aries (the "Ram") and will be shining for the whole of the evening, not setting in the west until about 3.30 am. Venus then rises at around 4am in the east and will be easy to spot with its brilliant shine. The crescent Moon can be seen in the same sky on the morning of 9 December - with both planet and moon being visible with the naked eye.



Map of night sky in mid-December (around 2100 hours)

The meteor shower Andromedids is on the night of 2 December with "shooting stars" possibly appearing every minute. The Geminids will be at their best on 13/14 December, and as there is a new moon, the display should be good - it's one of the best meteor shower shows of the year. Contact Michael at mootastro@yahoo.com with observations or questions.

HELP WITH READING AT THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Downton Primary School is looking for volunteers who are able to read with the Year 1 and 2 children from 9 - 9:30am, one morning a week (or more!) - any morning except Monday.

If you are interested, or know of anyone who would be, contact the admin team at admin@downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk

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Special Church Services this Christmas

Wednesday 6th	9am Farm animals visiting The Playroom, Baptist Church Field
Friday 8th	7pm Evensong to start the Christmas Tree Festival, St Laurence
Sunday 10th	10.30am Christmas Interactive Service for Children & Families, Baptist Church 6pm Churches Together Village Carol Service with Downton Band, St Laurence
Thursday 14th	10.30am Christmas Carol Service with Fordingbridge bellringers followed by Christmas Lunch, Baptist Church
Sunday 17th	6.30pm DBC Carol Service followed by refreshments
Wednesday 20th	6.30pm Mass and Carol Service, Church of the Good Shepherd (Roman Catholic)
Christmas Eve 24th	10.30am Morning Service, Baptist Church 4pm Crib Service for families, Baptist Church 5pm Christingle Service, St Laurence 11.30pm Midnight Communion, St Laurence
Christmas Day 25th	10.30am Christmas Morning Communion, St Laurence 10.30am All age Christmas Celebration, children invited to bring a present, DBC

For details of other Roman Catholic Services at Christmas go to salisburycatholic.org

DOWNTON LIBRARY

Downton Library is entering into the Christmas spirit this year with its events for children.

There is a free Christmas trail to discover six Christmas themed “book nooks”. On Friday 22 December, 10:30am- 11:30am, there will be a storytime and craft session. Rhyme Times in December will be festive.

The library offers a variety of regular events. Every other Monday, there is a ‘Crafternoon’, from 12:45pm - 1:45pm, where anyone can take along their craft of choice - be it knitting, sewing, origami or any other craft, and meet other creative people. There is also a Reading

Group, which meets on the third Monday of the month from 7pm - 8pm and a “Happy to chat” group which meets every Thursday from 10am - 1pm.

For more information call in or ring 511003.

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DOWNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Primary School has been awarded the Bronze Healthy Schools Award in recognition of the work that the school does to improve the health and wellbeing of its pupils. During the accreditation process, the panel was impressed by the work of the School Council and Eco Council. Their latest initiative is to put up signs outside the school to ask drivers not to keep their engines running when waiting, to improve air quality.

Back in October, a team of Year 4 and 5 pupils competed in the Salisbury Games Tri-golf tournament, emerging as the champions and winning gold medals. This success has earned them a spot in the upcoming county finals. Earlier in this month, local MP John Glen visited the school and had a question and answer session with pupils.

Readers of the Term trip was to the Rocketship Bookshop, where each child was able to select a book that caught their eye and were then treated to a story-telling session. The morning finished with a trip Boston Tea Party.

The Christmas Extravaganza takes place on Friday 1 December at 4pm on the school playground, where there will be an array of festive offerings with mulled wine and hot food for everyone to enjoy.



Readers of the Term

DUCHESS OF EDINBURGH VISITS DOWNTON

The royal visit to Wick Farm took place in September. As well as visiting the farm shop to meet the Stable & Wick Team, the Duchess met the Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire Sarah Troughton, NFU President Minette Batters, Wiltshire Council Leader Cllr Richard Clewer and Parish Council Chair Cllr Jane Brentor. Children from Downton Primary School were there to say goodbye.

HRH met with local suppliers and sat down to chat all things farming, food production, sustainability and environmental stewardship.



Above: In the farm shop (photo: Stable & Wick)
Left: meeting school pupils

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REMEMBRANCE DAY 2023

This year wreaths were laid at the Memorial Hall by Cllr Rich Rogers (Wiltshire Council), Cllr Jane Brentor (Downton Parish Council), Col. Melissa Emmett MBE, (Royal British Legion), Kiera Tappenden (Army Cadet Force), Ivan, Svitlana, and Zinovii Kondzelia (Ukrainians), William Henney (Freemasons), Georgia Poole (Guides), Jessica Fryer (Scouts, Cubs and Beavers), Ana Gibbons (Brownies) and Ivy Musselwhite (Rainbows). Downton Band led the procession through the village to the Remembrance Service at St Laurence Church. (photos on next page)

GOLDEN CHRISTMAS DEMONSTRATION

Forest Edge Flower Arranging Society is 50 years old and is celebrating with an evening of floral demonstrations entitled “A Golden Christmas” on Monday 4 December at the Downton Memorial Hall, at 7:30pm. (Doors open at 6:30pm for refreshments.) The guest demonstrator, Michael Bowyer MBE, is a past President of the National Association of Flower Arranging Societies and a national speaker, judge, demonstrator and teacher who lives in Salisbury. The last few tickets (cost £15, including refreshments) are available from ticketsource.co.uk/fefas, from Julie on 514875 or at forestedgeflower@gmail.com.



LOVER BABY BANK

The Lover “Baby Bank” collects good quality, pre-loved items such as clothes, toys and equipment, and distributes them to families in need. All items are cleaned and, where necessary, safety checked. The charity can also distribute new items donated directly from the public, and is linked with local food banks.

The Baby Bank has been set up to help alleviate families experiencing hardship in Salisbury, Downton, Fordingbridge and surrounding villages by providing new and good quality pre-owned items, in addition promoting recycling and reducing unnecessary waste. Donations should be in good, clean condition, with clothing being freshly washed and sorted

into bags labelled with the correct ages. The charity’s Facebook page has an updated list of what they currently need. Some items cannot be accepted for health and safety reasons, eg. mattresses; car seats; breast pumps; drop sided cots; cot bumpers; sit in baby walkers.

Access to support from Lover Baby Bank is based on third-party referral by professionals such as community midwives, health visitors and family support workers. To donate items, email loverbabybank@gmail.com, message on Facebook, or visit loverbabybank.co.uk.



TALKABOUT AT WOODFALLS METHODIST CHURCH

December’s TalkAbout is entitled “A Slightly Alternative Christmas” and the speaker is Bonny Sartin, a founder member of the Yetties. It is billed as “an original, entertaining and decidedly different take on Christmas”. The event is at Woodfalls Methodist Church on Thursday 7

December at 10:30am. Admission is £4 and includes refreshments. Car parking is available at the rear of the church, and there is no need to book.



Bonny Martin

DOWNTON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Society recently hosted a talk “Inspiration from Tresco Abbey Gardens”, given by an expert speaker who had worked in the gardens for many years. He talked about some of the unusual trees and shrubs from around the

world that flourish there.

The committee is planning next year’s events, and putting together an exhibit for the Christmas Tree Festival. More information about the society from Gordon Bishop 511475.

Remembrance Ceremony: wreath layers line up & band lead the procession through the village.



ASHLEY GRANGE NURSING HOME

There are several Christmas events happening during December.

On Monday 4 December, a free Music and Storytelling event is planned, starting from 2pm. This is a collaboration with Celebrating Age Wiltshire and the organisers invite you to "Come and enjoy the very best in traditional folk music and storytelling with a festive flavour". Tea and cake will be available afterwards - contact the home to book a place. On the same day from 5:45pm, Phil Harding, the archaeologist who became a familiar face on the Time Team series on channel 4, will be switching on the Christmas Lights, alongside Ashley Grange resident Doris, an avid fan. Doris keeps a signed picture of Phil in her room. After the switch-on you are invited to stay for festive drinks and nibbles.



Phil Harding

Ashley Grange will also be participating in Elf Day on 6 December in support of The Alzheimer's Society - and holding a Christmas Jumper Day on 7 December in aid of Save the Children. Any contributions to either charity would be greatly appreciated.

Every Thursday at 1:45pm there is a free afternoon for older people, offering a variety of activities / entertainment and refreshments. There will be a Christmas concert on 7 December featuring a singer who has performed in the West End. The Christmas Fair takes place on 14 December with an opportunity to make Christmas wreaths and purchase last minute gifts. On 22 December (a temporary switch to Friday for this one) there will be a party, with guest singer Retro Rita.

Ashley Grange has places for new residents and is currently offering £250 off for new 2-week respite stays. For more information, visit or call 512811.

For further information about events email lynn.kinsey@hartfordcare.co.uk.

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What, Where, When

November

Sat/Sun	25/26	10 - 4pm	Lynn Purcell Open House, The Corn Mill SP5 3PE	Page 4
December				
Friday	1	3 - 6pm	Christmas Tree Sale, Long Close Park, The Borough	Page 3
Friday	1	4pm	Primary School Christmas Extravaganza, Downton Primary School	Page 16
Friday	1	7pm	Choral Evensong, St Laurence Church	Page 3
Saturday	2	10am - 4pm	Christmas Tree Festival, St Laurence Church	Page 3
Saturday	2	10am - 4pm	Creatives Exhibition, Memorial Hall	Page 9
Sunday	3	10am - 4pm	Christmas Tree Festival, St Laurence Church	Page 3
Sunday	3	10am - 4pm	Creatives Exhibition, Memorial Hall	Page 9
Sunday	3	5.30pm	Christmas Tree lighting, Maypole Green, The Borough	Page 13
Monday	4	2pm	Music and Storytelling, Ashley Grange	Page 18
Monday	4	7.30pm	Golden Christmas Flower Arranging Demonstration, Memorial Hall	Page 17
Wednesday	6	9.30 - 11am	Farm Nativity for pre-school children, Downton Baptist Church	Page 12
Wednesday	6		Last Date for Scout Post	Page 2
Thursday	7	10am	Talkabout: A Slightly Alternative Christmas, Woodfalls Methodist Church	Page 17
Thursday	7	10am - 12 noon	Hearing Aid Clinic, Downton Baptist Church	Page 10
Sunday	10	6pm	Village Carol Service, St Laurence Church	Page 15
Sunday	17	11am - 4pm	Family Fun Day, Leisure Centre	Page 10
Sunday	17	5pm	Downton Band with Downton Community Choir, St Laurence Church	Page 13
Friday	22	10.30 - 11.30am	Story time and craft morning, Downton Library	Page 15
Sunday	24	4pm	Crib Service, Downton Baptist Church	Page 12
Sunday	24	5pm	Christingle Service, St Laurence Church	Page 15
Friday	29	10am - 12 noon	Fridays Community Cafe, Memorial Hall	
January				
Sunday	7		Deadline for contributions to InDownton winter issue	Back
Friday	12	6.30pm	Robin Hood, Memorial Hall	See Front
Friday	19	2pm - 3.30pm	The Wardrobe Clothing Exchange, Baptist Church	Page 7
Saturday	20		Publication Date for InDownton winter issue	
Friday	26	10am - 12 noon	Fridays Community Cafe, Memorial Hall	
Monday	20	1 - 1:45pm	Tinney's Firs talk, The Library	Page 12
Friday	24	10am - 12 noon	'Fridays' Community Cafe, Memorial Hall	

PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Melanie Camilleri

Telephone: 07798 698199

Office Hours: Monday - Friday
10am - 3.30pm

clerk@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

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WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

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Rev Philip Rhoades: philip@downtonbaptist.org 07468 491143

Rev Katy Ulyatt: kathy@downtonbaptist.org 07786 248880

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