



DECEMBER 2025 ISSUE 263

# NEWSLETTER



Editor: [stfilica@mail.com](mailto:stfilica@mail.com)

03 Dec	Coffee Morning
06 Dec	Father Christmas & Advent window switch on
16 Dec	Parish Council Meeting
16 Dec	Copy deadline for January
<b>22 Dec</b>	<b>Fish &amp; Chips CHANGE TO DATE</b>

Every December we return to rituals that seem to glow with their own warmth; the scent of the tree, the hush before a church service, the chaos of families gathering under one roof. Christmas traditions, whether ancient or improvised, serve as anchors in a world that moves too fast, they remind us that meaning often lives in repetition, in baking the same cakes and mince pies our Mothers and grandparents made, in telling the same stories we heard as children, in exchanging gifts that say 'I know and love you' more than 'I spent all this on you'. Yet traditions aren't relics, they evolve, many families blend customs from around the world, adapt old practices to new circumstances or create rituals that reflect modern values, less consumption, more connection.

What matters is not how closely we imitate the past but how we intend to celebrate the present. In the end, Christmas traditions endure because they give us pause, a pattern and a place to belong. In a season defined by light, they help us share it with one another. May you all enjoy a wonderful Christmas and a Happy and Peaceful New Year. Ed



## VILLAGE HALL LOTTERY - DECEMBER WINNERS

Vanda Bayliss, Adrian & Kim Bird, Rob Wilks & Alexis Thompson

Congratulations and thank you all for your continues support  
Pauline Care Peacock Farmhouse 01367 860969

See page 9 for a lottery update



**THE CHURCHES OF ST PETER  
BROUGHTON POGGS CUM FILKINS**



## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**SUNDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER – BROUGHTON POGGS**

**6PM CANDLELIGHT ADVENT CAROL SERVICE**

**MONDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER – FILKINS**

**6PM CAROL SERVICE**

**CHRISTMAS DAY – FILKINS**

**10.30AM CHRISTMAS DAY COMMUNION**

And suddenly its Christmas! Do come and join us for Advent Carols by Candlelight at 6pm at Broughton Poggs on Sunday December 7<sup>th</sup> ((bring a torch and a warm coat!), and then for traditional Carols and Lessons at 6pm at Filkins on Monday December 15<sup>th</sup>. Please do stay on after both services for a glass of something suitably seasonal and mince pies.

We will also again be holding a service on Christmas Day – Holy Communion at 10.30am to celebrate the special day of Christ's birth. It was wonderful to see the church so full last year and once again you and all your families and visitors are especially welcome!

**WISHING YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS**

**FROM REV HARRY, REV CANNON DENNIS AND THE PCC**

Rector:

Reverend Harry MacInnes 01993 845954

harrymacinnes@yahoo.co.uk

Associate Vicar:

Reverend Canon Dennis Stamps

01367 860555

dennistamps@gmail.com

Churchwardens

Gill Allison 01367 860787

gillian.allison@zen.co.uk

Charlie Payne 01367 860529

broughtonpoggsmill@hotmail.co.uk



## Filkins and Broughton Poggs Gardening club news for December

So the frosts have arrived as we hunker down from the cold. Hopefully tender plants have been rescued and are settled in the home or greenhouse.

On November 16<sup>th</sup> another group of willing volunteers planted more bulbs at the top end of Filkins which should provide a welcoming display in spring.



The committee are meeting in January to discuss future events for the year so please do contact us if you have an idea for a visit. Our annual meeting will be on March 6<sup>th</sup> 3pm in the village hall, all garden club members are invited.

### Jobs for December

Prune dormant trees and shrubs

Clear and bag leaves to make leaf mould

Protect tender plants that are outdoors

Clean, oil, sharpen tools and equipment

It is also a good time to plant bare-root hedges, trees and roses

Tidy the greenhouse

Enjoy your garden, possibly from the warmth of the sitting room!

So wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and good gardening for 2026

More information can be found on the Filkins website or please contact our membership co-ordinator Julie Tridgell (julietridgell@outlook.com).

Sue (sue.ashforthsmith@btinternet.com)





## SWINFORD MUSEUM

With Remembrance Sunday last month it reminded me of Thomas Moss, a young labourer born in Kencot in 1780, who enlisted in the 11th Regiment of the Light Dragoons and served from 1798 until 1819, in fact he fought for 22 years and 94 days. He returned to live in Broughton until his death in 1861. His wife Louisa died in 1853 and was also buried in Broughton.

His service began in 1799 when he was fighting in the Anglo-Russian invasion of Holland where he was wounded in the left hand by a sabre.



In 1812 he served in the Peninsular War against Napoleonic France and fought at Waterloo in 1815 where his horse got wounded. He was 38 years of age when he returned to Broughton to his wife Louisa. In the 1851 census Thomas's occupation is given as 'Chelsea Pensioner' and he was in receipt of 9d a day pension. He died in 1861 but he must have seen some amazing things for a lad from the 'sticks' but probably, like many servicemen, he never spoke of his experiences. He was awarded a medal for Badajos and one for Waterloo.

We will be organising another living history in the Spring which will feature the Village Centre when you can learn about other villagers with interesting military careers.

Please don't forget to come and buy your Christmas stocking fillers and presents at the Coffee Morning on Wednesday 3rd December in the Village Hall, 10 – 12.

*Diane Blackett*



**Please join us in decorating our villages this year by lighting up your windows on Saturday 6th December to coincide with the visit of father Christmas. He would love to see lots of festive windows all lit on the same night as he switches on our tree.**

**A great way to get the whole family involved in the pre – Christmas preparations - get those creative juices flowing!**



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**STOP PRESS**

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Father Christmas, along with his little helper Mr Fuddles, is coming to Filkins to turn on the lights of our Christmas Tree  
Please join him at

**5.45pm on Saturday 6th December**

by the war memorial, then afterwards for mulled wine, mince pies, sweets and carol singing, in the Church.

Everyone welcome, cash donations gratefully received





## Filkins & Broughton Poggs Parish Council

The S19 Flood report for Broughton Poggs has been published and is available on the village website – we will be meeting with WODC and OCC – it mentions many responsibilities but no actions and we will be pursuing which of these are going to be taken forward and which we will be pushing for. We will also be discussing what further actions we can take as a Parish Council. The works on re building the bund have been completed. After many months of emails and phone calls we managed to get the drains cleared throughout the village – they still need jetting as it is some 4 years since they were done and have compacted.



We would urge all residents to look at the Preferred Spatial Options Consultation which is available on the website or by copying the link [local-plan-preferred-spatial-options-consultation-october-2025.pdf](http://local-plan-preferred-spatial-options-consultation-october-2025.pdf) into your web browser. It is a long report but we would draw your attention in particular to a site at Alvescot Downs (opposite the mobile home park on B4477) where they are proposing to build between 600-1,000 houses and trying to include a railway line as well. This will increase the amount of traffic passing through Filkins and Broughton Poggs by a large proportion.

There are several sites around Carterton, Brize Norton and Shilton which will also have this effect. The Parish Council will be commenting in due course but we would ask all residents to look -this development will adversely affect the Shill Valley and Shill Brook.

There have been a spate of thefts/burglaries in all of the Broadshire villages and we are asking residents to be vigilant please. The most recent suspicious activity being in Broughton Poggs. This has been going on for several months and we are liaising with the Community Policing Unit in Carterton but their resources are limited. Please ensure you lock your cars and sheds – buy a Faraday box for holding car keys and ensure with the dark evenings that your outside lights are operating correctly. We did invite TVP to attend our May meeting unfortunately they were called out just before the meeting started but we will arrange another time.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be 16 December at 7.30pm

If you have any items for discussion at the meeting please contact the Clerk – [clerk@filkins.org.uk](mailto:clerk@filkins.org.uk)  
Communication

Thank you to all the residents who have completed the online form. It is still available if you have not done so.

We are trying to improve communication to residents and have set up an online form to be completed giving us permission to contact you and stating how you would like us to do this. There is a link (please copy and paste into your browser) and QR code below to complete the form. There will also be printed forms in the Village Shop if you want to complete in person. Please leave at the shop and the Clerk will collect

<https://forms.office.com/r/9S4X1FfwN>





## Ghosts & Ghoulies 2 - Be afraid, be Very afraid....

On the night of 31 October, the eve of All Saints' Day, when ghosts and ghouls are believed to be abroad Filkins Theatre performed a series of diabolical ghost stories. The cast and crew 'Tricked' us with the most extraordinary special effects and 'Treated' us to some frightful ghost stories.

It takes a brave Theatre Company to stage a series of ghost stories in Filkins Village Hall, already full of spirits, the ghosts of past productions, forgotten props, and that one spotlight that flickers despite Charlie Payne's best efforts. But the cast of Ghosts & Ghoulies 2 seemed perfectly at home with things that go bump (and occasionally weep) in the night.

From the moment the lights dimmed, the production had the audience deliciously unsettled, the kind of tension where you can hear a pin drop, right before Lorraine Chitty nervously drops her bag of bulbs (Lorraine never leaves home without them). The air was thick with smoke, unsettling sound effects (congratulations to Andy Hoad), whilst the stories stumbled deftly between dark humour and unspeakable terror.

The first ghost story opened with Sue Ashforth-Smith doing her best to look terrified whilst wearing a wig that appeared to have been stolen from Cher's garage sale. From there on, it only got better and occasionally intentionally worse in the scariest possible manner.

Particular praise must go to Jeremy Irwin-Singer, who managed to be both chilling and charming, a spectral masterclass in presence (and, at times, absence). The cast deserves credit too, for wrangling gothic melodrama with just enough tongue in cheek to keep us nervously smiling through our shivers.

The cast performed the supernatural shenanigans with gusto. Teresa Smallbone brought just the right amount of melodrama to her roles, the kind that makes you want to scream and offer her a Fisherman's Friend. Barry Heath, meanwhile, delivered a truly horrific performance of 'The Party Trick' with almost Faustian demonic relish, which is impressive considering the amount of smoke he had to perform through.

The Director, Trevor Milne-Day wisely resisted the urge to suffocate us with dry ice or cheap shocks; instead throughout the evening, Trevor allowed the stories' evil to slowly pervade the atmosphere in the Village Hall. The result was a production that lingers, like a ghost with dark unfinished business, long after the curtain falls.

Special mention must go to the lighting operator, Charlie, whose creative decision to illuminate the audience more than the stage allowed us to study each other's expressions of horrified disbelief in real time. A rare act of communal suffering.

It's not often you leave a theatre wondering whether the chill down your spine came from the performance or the draft from the rear fire exit. Ghosts & Ghoulies 2 delivered ghost stories so full of quiet dread, the audience half expected their chair to start levitating by the second act!

Bravo Filkins Theatre Company we wait, with barely containable excitement, for your next theatrical triumph....

*Alan Law*



### Filkins and Broughton Poggs Relief in Need (FRIN)

**Are you or someone you know facing a time of hardship, personal crisis, or needing financial assistance?**

If you, or anyone you know, would benefit from its help then please contact the Trustees via the post box outside the Village Shop, or by email: [frincharity@gmail.com](mailto:frincharity@gmail.com)



### Filkins Doctor & Hospital Runs

Just to remind you – now all requests for a lift should be made in the first instance to **Sue Hitchcock on 07887 566117**

as before, if Sue isn't available, then call either **Freda Shrouder on 07557 048667** or **Charlie Payne on 07810 158558** or **01367 860529**



Advance Notice

FILKINS THEATRE PRESENTS

### A MURDER MYSTERY

**January 1st at 7.30**

An evening of Supper & Sleuthing

More details in January

DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES....

### THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ST FILICA SOCIETY

will be held on 3rd February 2026

Filkins Village Hall at 8pm





# FILKINS VILLAGE HALL LOTTERY '26

There has been a Village Hall Lottery since 1992. I've just checked the records, and 30+ years later only 14 out of the first 100 members on the list still live in the village.

So plenty of change over the years... And now another change; for **Pauline Care**, who has so assiduously collected the Lottery dues for several years, is calling it a day.

*Thank you so much, Pauline, for you have done a great deal for our Village Hall.*

The Hall Committee are now going to try a new approach, and ask all villagers, friends, and relations to join our Hall Lottery '26 online.

Just email **richard@naturalbest.co.uk** to signal your willingness to join the Village Hall Lottery for 2026, and we will email you the details.



**Flooding in July 2007**

## WEATHER FORECASTING

Flooding continues to be a risk, in at least part of our village, for several reasons (which we could discuss), and '*normal weather forecasts*' are increasingly not very helpful.

On 13th November '*maybe 60mm of rain*' was predicted for the next day (*which would have been a 'once in 25 years event'*). Actually, 37.5mm fell. This hectic forecasting is one issue, another is that forecasts take little note of local conditions. When 37.5mm of rain fell on 14th November, there was no flooding, but on 24th November 2024, when 27.4mm of rain fell, there was significant flooding (*sorry for reminding those who suffered.*) The difference was that in 2024, 300mm of rain had fallen in the previous 10 weeks, whereas in 2025 less than 150mm had. So, the flood was not caused specifically by the quantity of rain on the day, but by the ground being already water-logged. There has also been flooding after periods of dry weather when the rain has run off the fields.

I think it should be possible to collate the evidence (there are excellent rainfall records going back to the 19th c), and predict whether particular patterns of weather and rainfall are likely to cause local flooding. There are other matters at play, and I would be delighted to discuss them with anyone who would be interested in these ideas for local forecasting, and also with anyone who'd like to help collate the incidents of flooding which would allow the forecasting system to be set up.

It would also be good to hear from anyone with dates and recollections of any village flood events.

*Contact: Richard Martin 07713 636415 richard@naturalbest.co.uk*

# “SINGER & SUPPER”

**FRIDAY**  
**27TH FEBRUARY**  
**7.30PM**  
**(BAR OPENS 7PM)**  
“Great singer”  
“Fabulous  
entertainment”

**FILKINS  
VILLAGE  
HALL**

## LAURA THORNTON

Glam rock to Jazz  
A true performer

Laura promises a great night's  
entertainment, and says:

*“I guarantee to have some  
of you up, and dancing!”*

*There's an offer you can't refuse...*

**£15**

Excellent Supper included

Get your tickets from Cotswold Woollen Weavers or Filkins Shop  
or from 07713 636415 / [richard@naturalbest.co.uk](mailto:richard@naturalbest.co.uk)

For  
Filkins  
Village  
Hall



## ‘Laura at The Village Hall’

Enjoy a great night's entertainment, an excellent supper  
... and support our Village Hall as well.

*Please buy your tickets now.*

## Christmas Pudding Ice Cream (serves 6-8 as dessert)

I first shared this with you in 2016 and feel its worthy of a repeat! It is easy, and absolutely amazing. I don't have an ice cream machine so this does require a bit of an effort and lots of time. If you do have an ice cream machine just adapt to suit.

I have made this (like the picture) as a pudding or just had a plastic tub of it in the freezer to scoop. I have also served it as a canape in small chocolate cups, in large chocolate cups and in brandy snap baskets as a dinner party dessert. Endless options!

Start the recipe 48 hours before you plan to make it to allow the full marinating time. Prepare the ice cream early in the day to allow for the time required between beatings and freezing. Don't do what I did once, I started making it in the evening and had to stay up half the night!

### Ingredients

120g mixed dried fruit  
 4 tbs Rum  
 2 tbsp Port  
 425g single cream  
 3 egg yolks  
 4oz caster sugar  
 15g whipped double cream  
 grated rind of 1 orange  
 1 tsp mixed spice



### Method

Mix fruit, rum and port together and marinate for at least 48 hrs. Once they have marinated, beat the egg yolks together with the caster sugar until thick and pale yellow. Gently heat single cream to simmering point. Pour cream onto egg and sugar mixture, stirring constantly.

Strain the mixture into a heavy based saucepan and stir with a wooden spoon over a low heat until the mixture thickens to represent a custard consistency and coats the back of spoon. Take off the heat and allow to cool.

When cold, fold in the whipped cream, marinade and fruit, orange rind and mixed spice. Mix well. Pour into a freezer container/pudding bowl (with lid or cover) and freeze.

Remove the mixture hourly for the first few hours and beat to mix and break up any large frozen areas. Do this at least 3 times. Return to the freezer as soon as possible. Once this has been completed, label, seal and return to freezer until required. As with any ice cream, remove from the freezer 5-10 minutes before serving.



Normal shop hours up to and including Tues 23rd December

### Christmas Hours

Wed 24	9.30 -11	closed pm
<b>Thurs 25 &amp; Fri 26</b>	<b>closed</b>	
Sat 27	10 -11	3 - 4
Sun 28	11 -12	closed pm
Mon 29	10 -11	3 - 4
Tues 30	10 -11	3 - 4
Wed 31	10-11	closed pm

**Thurs 01 January closed**

Normal hours resume from January 2nd 2026



### Another busy month for your village shop

**Cutler & Cashin/Kelmscott Meats** - We will be placing orders for meat/poultry from Cutler & Cashin & Kelmscott Pork. Forms are available in the village shop. Meat orders must be in by Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December. Orders can be collected from shop on Christmas Eve from 9.30 till 11am.

**Christmas bread orders** – These are being taken for Blakes Sourdough, cinnamon buns & Co-op croissants & baguettes. Deadline for these orders is Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December. Avoid the queues & order from us. Please note, bread orders are on the same form as meat.

**Breast cancer Christmas hamper raffle** - Please join us on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December from 10am where we are holding our annual Christmas Hamper raffle/ coffee morning in aid of breast cancer. Raffle tickets are available now in the shop.

**New logo** - Congratulation to Sarah Thomas from Filkins who is the winner of our competition. There were some great entries, thank you to all who entered. Look out for our new logo on the 2026 St Filica calendar.

**Veg boxes** - We will be at Carterton market Thurs 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. No market operating 25<sup>th</sup> & 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. Our veg boxes will be back up & running from 8<sup>th</sup> January 26.

Don't forget we have a large variety of wine, spirits, beer & cider for all your Christmas celebrations.

**Thank you all for your support over the last year & to wish you all a very Merry Christmas & Happy New Year.**

Green/recycling

grey/household

Friday 28 November

Friday 12 December

Monday 29 December

Friday 5 December

Friday 19 December

Monday 5 January