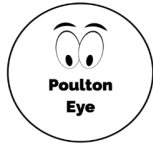


THE POULTON EYE



COMMUNITY - NEWS - INFORMATION

It's February 2024; it's a Leap Year!



In this month's Edition

It's Results Time on the Farm

Custom Made Travel - Made Right Here in Poulton

Plans for the Playground

Herb of the Month... Rosemary

What We Can Learn from a Humble Sparrow

Welcome to the February edition of the Poulton Eye

This February is special, because 2024 is a Leap Year. So February 2024 will have 29 days and, traditionally it's on that one day that happens only every four years, the 29th February, that women could propose to men. We all know Leap Years happens, but do you know why?

- ☛ It's all to do with the sun. It takes the Earth about 365.24 days (365 days, 5h, 48m and 45s) to circle once around the sun, so if we didn't add an extra day to our shortest month about every four years, we would lose almost six hours every year - that's 24 days every century.
- ☛ Julius Caesar introduced the first leap year around 46 B.C., but his Julian calendar had only one rule: Any year evenly divisible by four would be a leap year. That created too many leap years, but the maths wasn't tweaked until more than 1,500 years later.
- ☛ The extra day every four years was too much of a correction. As a result, there's a leap year every year that is divisible by four, but century years (those that end in 00) must also be divisible by 400. So, the year 2000 was a leap year, but the years 1700 and 1900 were not.

Babies who are born on the 29th February in a Leap Year are called "Leaplings" or "Leaplets" and your chances of being born on that date are approximately 1 in 1,461. So now you know!

Have a lovely Leap Year February...

Rosie and Lizzy, poultoneye@gmail.com

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MESSAGE FROM THE RECTORY



Dear Friend

At the start of February the season of Christmas comes to an end (I bet you thought it was over in December!). The 2nd February is the Feast of Candlemas when the church remembers Jesus' parents talking their baby to the Temple in Jerusalem, as was the custom, to be presented before God. It is a time in the church calendar between Christmas Day and Easter. Of course we have the 'Twelve Days of Christmas' – which run from Christmas Day; and then the Feast of the Epiphany, when we remember the Wisemen seeking out the Christ Child in Bethlehem. This joyful season of Epiphany lasts for a month.

At the same time as lots of people are starting their New Year regime, following New Year resolutions – buying gym membership or weight watchers, or doing 'Dry January' - the church is still 'Feasting' until Candlemas!

But then – paraphrasing the Dog's Trust – the church is not just for Christmas, we are here all the year round - offering Sunday Services in our parishes, the opportunity to join together in song, prayer, praise and fellowship. It's great that our churches are where people can meet and make new friends.

There are always those life events too – a wedding, wedding blessing or a baptism, when the church will be there to celebrate with you and make these times really special. Or in different times to draw alongside in time of trouble, and from time to time to mark the passing of a loved one, both mourning their loss yet celebrating their life.

We have some beautiful, ancient, special buildings which are open each day for visitors to use for prayer or simply to enjoy their peace and beauty. And if you ever want to talk – about anything at all – please simply call.

'The church' is not just for Christmas!

Yours as ever - John

The Rectory, Ampney Crucis, Cirencester, GL7 5RY | 01285 851309 | ampneyrector@gmail.com | www.ampneychurches.info

LENT LUNCHES

You are invited to join us for a Lent Lunch (homemade soup, cheese and a roll)
at The Rectory, Ampney Crucis – opposite the Village Hall

12.30 on Tuesday 27th February

12.30 Wednesday 27th March

Donations towards Youth and Children's Work in the Cotswolds.

Please let us know if you are planning to join us. You will be very welcome. Thank you.



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CHURCH DATES FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday 4th February 2nd Sunday before Lent	10am 10am 6pm	Parish Communion Word & Worship Prayer & Praise - contemporary songs, prayer & teaching	Down Ampney Harnhill Fairford Church
Wednesday 7th February	8.30pm	Compline - The Night Service A reflective quiet service	Harnhill
Sunday 11th February Sunday before Lent	10am 10am	Parish Communion Word & Worship	Down Ampney Harnhill
Wednesday 14th February Ash Wednesday	6pm 8.30pm	Holy Communion with Ashing Compline - The Night Service A reflective quiet service	Ampney St Peter Harnhill
Sunday 18th February 1st Sunday in Lent	8am 10am 10am 4pm	Holy Communion Parish Communion Word & Worship Choral Evensong	Ampney St Peter Ampney Crucis Harnhill Cirencester Parish Church
Sunday 25th February 2nd Sunday in Lent	8am 10am 10am	Holy Communion Parish Communion Word & Worship	Harnhill Poulton Harnhill
Wednesday 28th February	8.30pm	Compline - The Night Service A reflective quiet service	Harnhill

South Cotswolds Team Ministry

2024 LENT TALKS

Exploring the Grace of God

7pm on Wednesdays at Poulton Church

7pm Wednesday 21st February

A Saving Grace

The Reverend Canon John Swanton, Team
Rector

7pm Wednesday 13th March

There but for the grace of God...

7pm Wednesday 28th February

Falling from grace...

7pm Wednesday 20th March

Goodness gracious me!

The Very Reverend Andrew Zihni
The Dean of Gloucester

7pm Wednesday 6th March

The Grace Network

The Rev'd Adrian Beere

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.**



Cotswold Friends

**Reducing isolation and
supporting independent living**

Give More in 2024

Are you looking to give some of your time or make a regular charity donation in 2024?

Cotswold Friends has lots of opportunities to get involved with the work we do, whether you have a few hours free every few months or can make a regular weekly commitment. We would love to have your help in supporting our work to reduce loneliness and isolation in the Cotswolds and to have you become part of our incredible community of volunteers – all 340 of them! You could help us in a variety of ways – such as volunteer driving, helping once a month at our pop-up charity shop, befriending or office admin to name just a few. Give our lovely Volunteer Manager a call on 01608 697007 or email volunteering@cotswoldfriends.org to have a chat about finding the right opportunity for you.

If you would prefer to support our work financially then a regular or one-off donation would be hugely appreciated and makes a big impact in our community. Please contact our fundraising team on giving@cotswoldfriends.org or on 01608 692812.

If you or anyone you know needs our support with Transport (medical or social), returning home from hospital, would like someone to visit them or call them every week (befriending) or would like to join any of our Community Activities, such as our Men-in-Sheds, Lunch Clubs and Friendship Café then please call us - 01608 651415 or email info@cotswoldfriends.org to see if we have something suitable where you live. You can also visit our website www.cotswoldfriends.org to find out more.

DOWN ON THE FARM

To start the New Year, we are going to review what happened last year 'Down on the Farm' in statistics.

Charles and Ed have compiled the chart below, which shows exactly what happened to all the crops and cattle we talked about over the year 2023:

SS Horton 2023 Farming Output In Commodities

Crop	Area (Hectares)	Product	Avg Yield per Hectare	Avg Total Tons 2023	Product from 1 Ton	Product per Hectare	Total product 2023 harvest
Malting Barley	274	Heineken Beer	6.1 tonnes	1671 tonnes	14,000 pints	85,400 pints	23,394,000 pints
Oilseed Rape	226	Rapeseed Cooking Oil	2.85 tonnes	644 tonnes	50 litres of cooking oil	1282 litres	289,800 litres
Milling Wheat	271	Hovis/Cotswold Flour	7.75 tonnes	2100 tonnes	1700 loaves	13175 loaves	3,570,000 loaves
Biscuit Wheat	126	McVities	7.2 tonnes	907 Tonnes	10 packets of digestive	15,120 packets	1,904,700 packets
Milling Rye	55	Ryvita	7.68 tonnes	422 tonnes	650 Packets of Ryvita	12,672 packets	696,960 packets
Milling Spelt	62	Northern Pasta Company	5.2 tonnes	322 tonnes	900 bags of Pasta	4,680 Bags	290,160 Bags
Peas	72	Canning for Export	3.7 tonnes	266 tonnes	3800 Tins of peas	14,060 Tins	1,012,320 Tins

Animals
 Dairy cow 9 months lactation cycle: 9000-12000 litres of milk
 Beef Cow 1 calf per year - calf fattened over 14-24 months, producing 350kg of meat
 Sheep 1.7 lambs per year - lamb fattened over 5-11 months - each produces 21kg of meat
 Pig A sow will produce 10 piglets per litter, 2.5 times a year. A piglet takes 7-9 months to fatten, bacon pig 120kg fat weight carcass, porker 80-90kg fat weight carcass

Environmental
 As well as producing food for people we also provide a lot of space to produce food and habitat for wildlife.
 48 Hectares (118 football pitches) of wild bird food, a mixture of cereals, sunflowers, linseed, mustard, radish, linseed and millet to
 36 hectares (89 football pitches) of Pollen and nectar producing flowers, such as clover, vetch, oxeye daisy, vipers bugloss, wild sage, wild geranium, wild carrot providing food for bees, wasps, ladybirds, moths, butterflies and other pollinators
 71 hectares (175 football pitches) of wild flower and grass margins, producing tussocky over winter grasses for invertebrates to hibernate in and masses of pollen and nectar during the summer months

The Malting Barley has quenched the thirst of millions with over 23 million pints of Heineken Beer, transforming 274 hectares into a sea of golden suds. The Oilseed Rape has filled over 289,800 litres of cooking oil, whilst the Milling Wheat fields, spanning 271 hectares, are the unsung heroes behind 3.57 million loaves of Hovis and Cotswold Flour bread. The Biscuit Wheat has crumbled delightfully into 1.9 million packets of McVities digestives, and the Milling Rye has crisped into 696,960 packets of Ryvita. Not to be outdone, the Milling Spelt and Peas have been parcelled into 290,160 bags of pasta and over 1 million tins of peas for the Northern Pasta Company and export, respectively.

Beyond the grains, the farm's dairy cows have contributed between 9,000 to 12,000 litres of milk in their lactation cycle, while each Beef Cow raised on the farm has provided a substantial 350kg of meat after a careful 14-24 month rearing period. The Sheep add to the country's meat supply with 21kg carcasses, and the sows produced an impressive 10 piglets per litter, twice in the year, fattening into substantial pork and bacon carcasses.

But it's not just harvest and yield. It is a commitment to the environment. The farm dedicates 48 hectares to wild bird food, sustaining farmland birds through the winter. A further 36 hectares are alive with the buzz of pollinators, nourished by a myriad of flowers from clover to wild carrot. And for the creatures that dwell among the undergrowth, 71 hectares of wildflower and grass margins offer sanctuary and sustenance throughout the year.

The round up of figures for the year at Poulton Fields Farm forms part of the chronicle of British agriculture, where every hectare tells a story, every grain, every animal, and every harvest contributes to the vibrant mosaic of our rural economy.

In 2024 we will continue to follow the vagaries of farming life from our local farmers, especially Charles, but next time you walk around the barley, rape or wheat fields, remind yourself that it has produced over 6 tonnes of Heineken, nearly 3 tonnes of cooking oil or nearly 8 tonnes of bread flour.

That 'happily ever after' feeling



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SJP Approved 09/01/2024

SJP14649_DS BI (11/23)

New Playground Equipment

As mentioned in the last edition of the Eye, the Parish Council are working to upgrade and enhance some of the play equipment on the recreation ground adjacent to the village hall. This will include replacing the tower play system, the previous one having been removed due to safety issues. We are also looking to replace the 'agility trail' as it has begun to rot in some places. In addition to this, it has also been decided to add a basketball hoop with surrounding all-weather surface to the recreation ground.

After discussion with a number of suppliers, a tower product has been chosen and is in the final stages of design – this will include a raised covered tower, a slide, various climbing activities and other fun features. We are currently finalising the costings for the overall project. The Parish Council has already ear-marked some funds towards this project, however we will also need some other significant fundraising. One important step will be to enter the March round of Cotswold Crowdfunding, which will hopefully enable us to receive a chunky contribution from Gloucestershire County Council. To increase our chances of success in achieving this, we need to be able to demonstrate that there is a high level of local community support for the project from the village in the form of local fund-raising and as such, in the coming weeks, you will see a request for donations. Any amount is of significant benefit to the efforts to raise these funds, and whilst large donations would obviously be extremely welcome, we are advised that the key to demonstrating wide support is to get multiple small donations from as many residents as possible – so for example, 50 donations of £20 sends a stronger message than a single donation of £1,000.



Static Speed Cameras

The other significant project is the introduction of up to 4 static speed cameras in the village. Locations have now been selected and agreed with the police. We are currently awaiting Highways Authority sign-off and timing for installation, but are hoping to have them in place later in the Spring.

Ed Hyslop & Tom Gillibrand, on behalf of Poulton Parish Council

POULTON DEFIBRILLATOR DETAILS

The yellow defibrillator is located on the outside wall of the village hall, on the pub side.

The code is C159X

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CUSTOM TRAVEL - PUTTING CUSTOMERS FIRST

Poulton's Kristina Miles talks to the Poulton Eye about her travel agency, Custom Travel... Embracing Old-Fashioned Values in a Digital Age

Following last month's dive into the exotic world of the Viadi group, purveyor of some of the world's most upmarket travel experiences and, extraordinarily, located in our small village, we wanted to highlight another fabulous Poulton travel agency – Custom Travel, founded by Kristina and her business partner, Claire.

Kristina's journey in the travel industry began at the tender age of 15, when she started her working life in a local travel agency. This early experience laid the foundation for a lifelong passion for travel and customer service. Alongside Claire, who now operates from Northern Ireland, Kristina has built a business that thrives on personal connections and customer loyalty.

Custom Travel distinguishes itself by its commitment to understanding and meeting the unique needs of each client. Whether it's booking mainstream holidays with big names like Jet2 and Kuoni, or creating bespoke itineraries under their ATOL certificate, Kristina's Custom Travel ensures every holiday is tailored to the client's specific desires and budget.

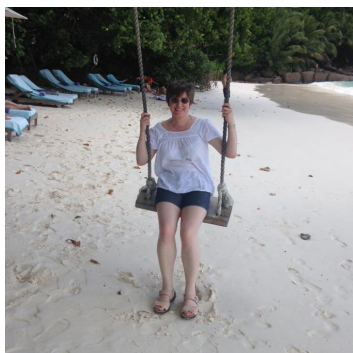


A testament to the quality of their service and personal holiday-organising expertise is the business' high level of repeat customers and word-of-mouth recommendations. Their clientele spans generations, with Kristina now booking holidays for the grandchildren of her original customers. This deep personal connection with clients is something that online platforms struggle to replicate.

Kristina and Claire take pride in maintaining a human touch in all their interactions. They believe in the power of a physical ticket, a symbol of the holiday experience, over a digital copy. This balance of old and new reflects a deep understanding of their client base's preferences.

They have had to be very adaptable over the years – coping with the impact of various global crises, including avian flu, ILG bankruptcy, the 9/11 tragedy, the Icelandic volcanic ash cloud, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these challenges, Kristina's Custom Travel has continued to evolve, providing exceptional service and curated travel experiences.

Among the myriad of stories that Kristina shared with us was a honeymoon planned for a couple that involved trekking up Kilimanjaro. This wasn't just any honeymoon; it was a surprise planned by the groom. The bride was looking forward to a relaxing beach holiday, but no! Kristina was very concerned that they might be divorced by the end of the honeymoon as a result. Fortunately, the honeymoon was a success and she has gone on to book many more trips for the (still married!) couple.



Another client recently rang her in great distress because she couldn't find the tickets Kristina had sent in the signature green Custom Travel wallet. After calming her down and suggesting places that the client might have put them, the tickets turned out to be in...the microwave!

These stories are more than just anecdotes; they represent the essence of the business. Kristina says "It's a repository of memories, where clients' dreams and aspirations are understood and turned into reality. Our approach to travel planning goes beyond the transactional; it's deeply personal and carefully tailored to each client's wishes".

As the travel industry evolves, the agency remains a cherished reminder that in a world of constant change, the personal touch never goes out of style.

Rosie Arkwright

Page 13



*It's Fabulous February
and there are plenty of reasons to
celebrate...*

*Whether wining and dining with friends or family
or treating your loved one to a Valentine meal,
we look forward to offering you a warm welcome...
and a warm fire as well!*

NATURE NOTES

Spring and a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of love

So says Tennyson in his poem "Loxley Hall" which tells of the loss of a childhood sweetheart and marked his rising success before becoming poet laureate in 1850.

Well, it is early January and already the crows and rooks are paired off and if you listen carefully the bird song is starting to change.

One of the most consistent songs you will hear in deep winter in Poulton is the European robin, which unlike most birds defends his territory throughout the year. The robin has two main songs, one a short repetitive "keep out" call designed to deter intruders and another more complex melodious song which appears in the early spring, often January if the winter has been mild. Like most bird song this is driven by the need of males to attract a female and this peaks in early spring, declining to almost silence in late summer.



Amazingly this is associated with a substantial increase in nerve cells (neurones) in the brain area devoted to song (known as HCV a.k.a. high vocal centre) which in the white crowned sparrow (picture below) amounts to a 70% increase in neurone numbers. This little bird and its HCV has stimulated an avalanche of research with over 500 papers in the last decade.



The reason why neuroscientists are so excited about this little sparrow is that until a few decades ago the perceived wisdom was that the brain was a rather fixed structure and you had all the neurones you were ever going to have by the age of 2-3 years.

Studies of the HCV have disproved this by showing that this area of brain is highly plastic with neurone numbers increasing under the influence of male sex hormones which rise in early spring before mating. Recent discoveries have shown that the new cells come from stem cells in the hippocampus, a primeval part of the brain that is critical for both memory and emotion and is atrophied in late-onset depression.

Understanding this process has become a priority in neuroscience. The sparrow skull is a rigid structure so if one bit of the brain expands another bit has to shrink and in this case it is the part of the brain that controls navigation. This same area expands later in the year when the birds migrate. Neuroscientists want to know how the brain removes and then recreates neurones because loss of neurones is a critical feature of depression and stimulating neurogenesis is thought to underpin the mode of action of many antidepressants.

Recent work has shown how the non-neuronal microglial cells that support neurones contribute to the breakdown and removal of unwanted neurones. It is also known that exercise stimulates hippocampal neurogenesis and can prevent cognitive decline associated with ageing, at least in mice. Understanding these underlying mechanisms may lead to better antidepressants or perhaps exercises to treat depression.

Meanwhile the beautiful tones of the robin song are guaranteed to bring a smile to your face and elevate your mood even in the depths of winter.



SNOWDROPS AT COTSWOLD FARM

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GARDEN NOTES

When deciding what to write about this month, I remembered a favoured TV show *The Herbs from my childhood*. In the programme Bayleaf, the gardener, works hard for Lady Rosemary to keep the errant herbs in check.

In fact it was another Rosemary who inspired my move to the Cotswolds. Rosemary Verey was a renowned garden designer as I started out on my horticultural journey and a wedding anniversary provided the perfect excuse for a weekend stay at the Barnsley House Hotel to explore her wonderful garden there. After touring the gardens Ed and I visited Cirencester to window-shop at the estate agents, and the rest is history!

The gardens at Barnsley House are now open to guests of the hotel or restaurant and, each year as part of the Barnsley Festival (14 May 2024). I look forward to enjoying an afternoon tea in the gardens this summer (no pressure Ed!)



Plant of the month: Rosemary (*Salvia Rosmarinus*)

Rosemary is another evergreen mediterranean herb, with fine pine-like needles for leaves and attractive light blue flowers in spring. The name means 'dew of the sea' although some claim it is associated with the Virgin Mary. Like Bay, it enjoys a sunny position and well-drained soil and can live happily for many years as a pot plant. Rosemary used to be classified in a family all of its own but in 2019 the RHS reclassified it as part of the *Salvia* genus following DNA analysis, showing that even in the slow-moving world of horticulture plants change is ever-present.

There's rosemary, that's for remembrance

Rosemary has long been associated with love, fidelity, memory, and remembrance.

The ancient Egyptians used rosemary as part of the embalming process when preparing their dead for burial, whilst the ancient Greeks associated the plant with Aphrodite, the goddess of love. The ancient Greeks used to take rosemary with them into exams, supposedly to boost their performance. In more recent times, a sprig of rosemary is worn on ANZAC day by army veterans as a memorial to their comrades who fell at Gallipoli.

Medicinal properties

Rosemary has anti-bacterial, antioxidant and anti-viral properties which makes it particularly useful- an 'all-rounder'. It also gives off an attractive and very distinctive aroma when the leaves are crushed or burnt, meaning that it was often used as a sort of mediaeval air freshener.

Not surprisingly Culpeper names a long list of diseases that can be treated with rosemary, stating 'it helps a weak memory, and quickens the senses.' When the oil is made into a balm it is said 'to take away spots, marks and scars upon the skin.'

Given the many beneficial properties of rosemary it comes as no surprise that it was used as the base for early cosmetics. In the 14th century rosemary oil was used to make 'Hungary Water', an early cosmetic that was produced for the Hungarian Queen Elizabeth. Rosemary continues to be used by the cosmetics industry today.

Rosemary in the garden

As an evergreen herb, rosemary is particularly valuable as it can be picked all year round for use in the kitchen. It is also strongly flavoured, so you won't need to use much and once established, a single plant should provide enough for the family. If you have space, it also works well as a low hedging plant as an alternative to lavender or box. There was a magnificent example of this on a recent wintery visit to Dunster Castle in Somerset. Spectacular to see, and smell, whilst the rest of the gardens were comfortably asleep.

Rosemary is strongly scented so it is a good companion plant as it repels many of the common pests that affect vegetables. It is recommended as a companion to carrots (as it masks the scent of the carrots that attract carrot fly) as well as brassicas.

One reason that rosemary is not ubiquitous though is due to the old wives' tale that where rosemary thrives the woman of the house is in charge – rather like in *The Herbs*. This is said to have caused some husbands to remove healthy rosemary bushes from their gardens for fear of being exposed. Men of Poulton you have been warned!



CHAMBERLAIN WINES

Hello. My name is Mark Chamberlain, and I have lived in Poulton with my family for more than ten years. If we haven't met, you may have seen me walking the dogs around the village!



I am an Independent Wine Merchant. I have almost twenty years' experience in the Wine Trade, including living and working in Saint-Emilion. I have run my own Wine Merchant's business for more than a decade.

I list wines from all over the World, and in a wide range of styles: crisp, dry whites; richer, fuller bodied whites; pale and refreshing Provençal rosés; light, supple reds; full-bodied fruity reds; luscious pudding wines; an array of sparkling wines including some excellent Grower Champagnes; a selection of ports and sherries; classic Clarets, Burgundies, Riojas and Barolos; lots of interesting wines from off the beaten track. In essence, anything that I like and I think represents good quality and good value for its type and origin. I don't list anything I wouldn't drink. And I always try to be amongst the most competitively priced for the wines I list.

I don't have a shop, but I do offer a range of traditional Wine Merchant services – expert advice, naturally; free local home delivery (or I can send wine anywhere in the country using a reliable courier service); glass loan for events; gift boxes. If I don't stock a wine or style you're looking for, I will do my best to find it for you. In short, all you could want from a Wine Merchant, on your doorstep!

As I live in the village, Poulton residents get 10% off the list price of any order.

If you want to see a list of the wines I have currently, join my local email list, or have any other questions, please do get in touch: mark@chamberlainwines.co.uk or on the mobile, 07894 528 580.

All the best!

THEN AND NOW - THE OLD VICARAGE

For many centuries the parish church of Poulton was a small 14th Century building up at The Priory. It is for this reason that the earlier churchyard is there now.

In the mid 19th Century, as the old church was crumbling and the village was established some distance away, it was decided to erect a new church. The old church was demolished and much of the stone was used to build our present church on land donated by Edmund and George Hill, prosperous local farmers. It was designed by William Butterfield, a well-known ecclesiastical architect, and completed in 1874.

At about the same time the Vicarage was built by public subscription. The architect was Ewan Christian and the house was completed in 1868 - the date on the hoppers around the gutters. It had large gardens, which included Vicarage Cottage, the school teacher's residence, sold in 1955, and also the land on which Glebe House now stands, sold in 1962.

In 1984 the Vicarage was sold by auction, after the last Vicar, Robert Nesham, retired.

With thanks to Diana Price for sharing the history of her beautiful home.



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Film Nights at Poulton Village Hall

“Poulton One & Nines”

First and third Tuesdays of each month

7.30pm for pre-film drinks - Films start at 8pm

Tuesday February 6th & Tuesday February 20th

Email poultononeandnines@gmail.com for more information

Books, Bickies & Beverages – “BBB”

Village Coffee Morning

First Saturday of the Month

10.30 to 12.30pm - Saturday 3rd February

Pop in for a pot of coffee or tea and homemade biscuits

Meet other villagers and visitors

Browse the selection of good quality pre-read books, including Children's titles

We accept donations of paperback novels (not too many & in good condition please!)

Hope you can join us

Estd



2010

Poulton Hill

ESTATE

Celebrate Valentine's Day
with award-winning Cotswold wine

This Valentine's Day, why not share a glass of our award-winning Bulari Sparkling Brut with local Bibury Smoked Trout. Visit our Cellar Door or purchase online.



www.poultonhillestate.co.uk

Opening times

We are open Tuesday – Friday 9-4pm and Saturday 11-3pm

If you wish to visit outside these hours, it may be possible by appointment. Please call 01285 850257

FROM THE CELLAR DOOR

Preparing and protecting our vineyard with the help of our four-legged friends

Poulton Hill Estate's Natalie Barker on winter work and Valentine's Day treats

Stormy weather in January led to flooding around the Cotswolds. At the vineyard we have our own way to deal with drainage issues to protect our soil from erosion – our flock of Babydoll and Black Jacob sheep. The sheep are back in the vineyard and their hooves help to break up compacted soil to improve the drainage. However, they also help the vineyard to be more biodynamic and reduce the need for chemical pesticides, weedkiller and fertiliser. They do a great job of nibbling the grass and weeds that spring up between the vines and they help to fertilise the soil!

The sheep also like to assist our gardening team by nibbling on the roses that we plant at the end of each row of vines, which saves on pruning. Roses are traditionally planted in vineyards as an early warning system as they attract insects such as aphids before the vines, and they also develop fungal diseases such as black rot and mildew before they reach the vines. Once the weather warms up and our vines start to come out of their dormant state, the sheep move to pastureland to protect our precious buds and leaves.

Winter pruning and replacing rotten or damaged posts continues in the vineyard this month. The hard work in the cold and wet now will pay off in the spring and summer when our vines grow, thrive and produce lots of fruit.

All stocked up and ready to serve up a romantic treat

St Valentine's Day is coming up and if you are looking for a special treat for your loved one, we have a whole range of special wines and spirits, including our award-winning Bulari sparkling white and sparkling rosé wines. You can buy them as a gift or serve with a romantic meal. You could also make classic cocktail, such as a Kit Royale, using our Bulari sparkling white wine with a dash of crème de cassis blackcurrant liqueur. Check out our wines online www.poultonhillestate.co.uk or come to see us at the Cellar Door in Poulton. We are open Tuesday to Friday 9am to 4pm and on Saturday from 11am to 3pm.

Our Cellar Door also stocks smoked trout and trout pâté from our sister company Bibury Trout Farm. Alternatively, you can order any of their trout products online at www.biburytroutfarm.co.uk and ask for them to be delivered to the Cellar Door. So if you are looking to add some special Cotswold flavour to your Valentine's Day, you can pick it all up in one place. For details of Poulton Hill wine and Bibury trout pairings, visit our website to read our blog <https://www.poultonhillestate.co.uk/a-fantastic-festive-pairing/> or our menu of the month for February <https://www.poultonhillestate.co.uk/menu-of-the-month-february/>.

For a very special romantic treat you could organise a private wine tasting at our Cellar Door here in Poulton. Contact us at info@poultonhillestate.co.uk for more information or to book.

2023: an award-winning year

Now we are into 2024 we have had a bit of time to reflect on 2023. We had a great year in the vineyard, culminating in a bumper harvest. We started to open our Cellar Door on a Saturday and increased our number of tours and tastings, with tasting sessions continuing in the winter months.

We also received recognition for our hard work, with awards for our Arlington White wine (a Bronze Medal from Wine GB West), our Cotswold Brandy (a Silver Medal in the International Wine Society Awards), our Bulari sparkling white (a Silver Medal in the international Glass of Bubbly Awards) and our vineyard itself (Best Vineyard in the Cotswolds in the Cotswold Awards 2023).

We are very excited about the year ahead and hope you will continue to share our journey with us. We send out two newsletters a month to our subscribers, which contain all the latest vineyard news, our new stockists and any special offers we are running. If you would like to receive our newsletter, the sign-up is at the bottom of our website: www.poultonhillestate.co.uk.

Natalie Barker



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Poulton Village Website	www.poultonvillage.co.uk
Poulton Facebook Page	https://www.facebook.com/groups/959278000806216/?multi_permaLinks=4503302606403720
Poulton WhatsApp Group	Please contact Rachel Hutchinson to be added to group; 07557 006623
St Michaels and All Angels Church, Poulton	Vicar: The Rev'd Canon John Swanton 01285 – 851309; ampneyrector@gmail.com Church Wardens: Lizzy Roughton - pryorlizzy@gmail.com ; rosie.arkwright@icloud.com
Village Hall	Available to hire for parties, wedding breakfasts, clubs or meetings - kjclapton@gmail.com
Playing Field & Allotment Charity (PFAC)	pfactrustees@gmail.com
Post Office	In the Village Hall. Tuesday 1.30 – 3.30
Parish Council	Chairman: Simon Collyer-Bristow scb@crfc.co.uk Clerk: Heather Harris poultonclerk@gmail.com
District Councillor	Lisa Spivey: lisaspivey4@gmail.com
Poulton Action Group (solar farm)	poultonactiongroup@gmail.com .
Refuse Collections	Food bin weekly Friday 7am. All other bins & bags on alternate Fridays.
Poulton Sports Club	David Knight: knightd@hotmail.co.uk
Poulton Football Club	www.poultonfootballclub.co.uk
Poulton Cricket Club	Club Secretary: Will Bathurst w.m.bathurst@gmail.com www.poultoncricketclub.co.uk/
Poulton One and Nines	Films in the village hall every 1 st and 3 rd Tuesday of the month. Contact poultononeandnines@gmail.com
Books Bikkies & Beverages	Village get-together 1 st Saturday of each month, 10.30 – 12.30 Poulton Village Hall Judith – 01285 851230
The Falcon Inn	www.falconinnpoulton.co.uk email: bookings@falconinnpoulton.co.uk 01285 850878



Down Ampney Village Shop

SHOP ♦ CAFE ♦ POST OFFICE

Come to our community shop where we sell a wide variety of essentials including:

Newspapers, drinks, dairy products, bread, pastries, savouries, confectionery, ice creams, toiletries, household products etc. If we don't stock what you're looking for we can try to get it for you.

The cafe is open selling drinks, sandwiches, pastries and savouries to order.

Special offer: Coffee or Tea and a piece of cake only £4.00

Opening hours:

Shop 9am - 12 noon every day

Post Office 9am -12 noon Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

The shop is run by volunteers and we badly need new ones to help out, even if only occasionally.

If you're interested or for more information please contact:

Tony Peel 07751 723399 simpeel@btinternet.com or Peter Baillie davs2016@hotmail.com