

the malmesbury

Jackdaw



Malmesbury's Alternative Community Magazine
21st Edition Autumn 2024

Backbridge
Farm Bridge



Old Station
Railings



Signs of Improvement

Park Road



Tetbury Hill
Manhole



Delivered free to homes and businesses in Malmesbury

Welcome...

... to the Autumn edition of *The Malmesbury Jackdaw*. We're sorry it's a little later than planned, but illness in the camp threw us behind schedule.

Here's hoping that everyone enjoyed the season loosely termed 'summer' and is ready for whatever winter throws at us. At least, as shown on our front cover and inside, there are finally some repairs happening around the town – well done and thank you to all who acted voluntarily and 'about time' to those who are in positions of responsibility and are paid to keep things in good repair. Please place any adjective you wish in front of 'time'.

We'll let the magazine tell the story of what happened during the summer as it's impossible to even summarise it in these few words.

As always, thank you to our advertisers, your support is hugely appreciated. Thank you also to our lovely team of deliverers who have been treading the pavements to bring you this magazine.

At this time of year, we can't let the opportunity pass to pay our respects to those who served in the conflicts that preserved the freedom we enjoy today. Without their sacrifices, we would probably not be writing this magazine nor you reading it.

Richard, Raphe & Andy

The Malmesbury Jackdaw Team

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Cost of Living Support

Money Saving Tips

If you're not on a water meter and have more or the same number of bedrooms as people in your house, then there is a reasonable chance you will save money by switching to one. Wessex Water even offer a guarantee: if, during the first 2 years, you find you are worse off after having one installed, you can revert to being billed on rateable value and get a refund for the difference. Speak to Wessex Water to learn more (0345 600 3 600).

If you are on a low income, you might be able to save money by switching to a social tariff, again contact Wessex Water and check if you are entitled.

Contact & Information

We're always looking for stories to include so if you're aware of something interesting or important relating to Malmesbury then please check out the editorial policy on our website (www.themalmesburyjackdaw.com) and submit an article. If you would like to discuss any ideas you might have first then drop our editor an e-mail. To contribute contact Andy at editortmj3@gmail.com. To place an advert contact Raphe at ral43.tmj@gmail.com. For the website or distribution contact Richard at richard.harris61@icloud.com

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Coming To Malmesbury Soon

Planning Update

Since we last reported there has been one new application. Except where indicated, several are awaiting decisions from Wiltshire Council planning department, and are past the original decision deadline or a decision has been deferred.

PL/2024/06897: A new application for 55 homes in the field on the righthand side as you leave Malmesbury on the Sherston road. Decision date was 29th October.

PL/2023/09930: 21 homes on the field behind the cemetery on Tetbury Hill. This would be an addition to the Backbridge site. Decision date is 15th November.

PL/2023/08687: 71 homes, Filands (phase 3). Decision date was 30th August.

PL/2023/07797: 43 homes on part of the field opposite the allotment entrance on Park Road. Decision date was 20th September.

PL/2023/05471 23 homes on the land opposite Huws and Gray in Park Road. This was approved on 19th September despite concerns over flooding.



PL/2023/04996: 92 homes (40% affordable housing) on the land between Milbourne and the by-pass. This application was refused on 26th September.

As always, more information is available on the Wiltshire Council website.

Lime Down Solar Park Update

The developers have completed the community consultation stage. They have also submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate. The next step is for the Planning Inspectorate to respond with comments which the developer will need to consider when undertaking the Environmental Impact Assessment.

New Planning Regulations

It is too early to know exactly what the impact of Labour's reforms to the planning system will mean, but they have submitted a draft proposal to the county councils for comment. Wiltshire Council recently held a public online meeting to discuss this and answer questions. The final legislation will be issued towards the end of the year after central Government has considered the comments received.

As the proposal stands, Wiltshire Council is being asked to increase its housing target by 81%. The issue of providing increased infrastructure (improved roads, doctors surgeries, secondary schools and other community resources) to support this has not been addressed in the proposal. Councils are also being instructed to give greater weight to renewable energy schemes, business expansion and growing the economy.

Fees for planning applications will go up, to help finance this, and Wiltshire Council has announced an additional £1 million investment in its planning department, although it is unclear how many years this investment will be made over.

Crime Update

The latest crime figures relate to July.

For Malmesbury Town, reported crimes were Violence and Sexual Offences, 18; Anti-social Behaviour, 8; Public Order, 3; Criminal Damage and Arson, 2. For the rural area surrounding Malmesbury, the figures were Other Theft, 6; Burglary, 5; Violence and Sexual Offences, 4; Anti-social Behaviour, 3.

Wiltshire Police's current priorities for our area are:

- Anti-Social Behaviour in Malmesbury Town Centre
Pro-active operations are being actioned for the night-time economy and reassurance patrols will continue for the foreseeable. Priority areas to check - Cloister Gardens, Jubilee Gardens, areas around the Town Hall and Market Cross.
- Burglaries and Rural Crime
Burglary in rural properties - community reassurance patrols and intelligence gathering will be in effect.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Issues - Fosse Way and Somerford Common.
Off road motor bikes using the Fosse Way - unlicensed and no helmets. 4x4 vehicles and motor bikes going off the highway on Blackberry Lane damaging the flora and fauna. Reassurance patrols ongoing.

To get involved and participate in the exchange of information with Wiltshire Police, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, Get Safe Online and Neighbourhood Watch - sign up to Community Messaging via www.wiltsmessaging.co.uk.

Snippet

There are plenty of places to properly dispose of rubbish so why use Brokenborough Lane?





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From Malmesbury Primary Care Centre

ALCOHOL AWARENESS

Did you know drinking alcohol can have a negative toll on your health, including increased risk of accidents and injuries, mental health struggles and strain on relationships and families.

If you or someone you love needs help or advice regarding alcohol or drug misuse, you can get confidential help here at Malmesbury Primary Care Centre.

Whether you'd like to cut down your drinking, receive treatment for drug use, or get advice on how to support a loved one you can now drop into Malmesbury Primary Care Centre every Friday, between 10:00am – 12:00pm, to speak to a team member from Turning Point/Connect.

You will have a private space to speak freely and in confidence.



NO MORE 8AM RUSH

At Malmesbury Primary Care Centre you can now book ahead to see the GP of your choice. That means you can contact the surgery any time of the day to request a non-urgent appointment.

Please still call on the day for urgent medical matters that cannot wait.

You can also avoid long hold times when we're busy by selecting the call back option when you ring in – you maintain your place in the queue and we call you back when you reach number one.

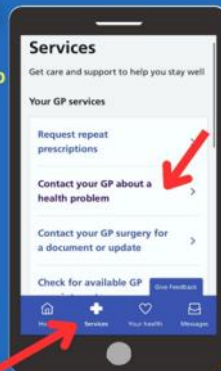


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Please note this should be used for routine matters only, please call for urgent matters that cannot wait.

Request via the app by selecting 'services' followed by 'contact your GP about a health problem.'



A Point of View

With Malmesbury's Athelstan 1100 celebrations having taken place during the summer, we were intrigued to receive this article from Disco Dave's Valet which provides food for thought.

The First English King

It would be nice if history was clear-cut, but it is often more complex than that.

Take the title King of the English. The title was claimed by many late Saxon kings before Athelstan: for example, Offa and Alfred the Great. Each had a reason for making the claim, which demonstrates that forming a nation is more of a process than a single event.

Forming a nation is also about more than establishing borders. Other changes are also important: establishing a stable currency, a sense of identity, a universal legal and tax system. These evolved over many centuries and helped to establish the England we identify with.

There are good reasons to give the title to Athelstan, but we should remember that recognising nations is a modern concept and the outcome of a long history.



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Sweetnam & Bradley Ltd

Like many Malmesbury residents, we've often walked past Sweetnam & Bradley wondering what goes on inside its factory on the Gloucester Road Industrial Estate. We were, then, really pleased when Managing Director, Christian Olejnik, agreed to let us have a look round.

On arrival, we were met by Commercial Manager, Andrew Metcalf, and were soon joined by Christian for a very informative and enjoyable chat about the business. Here's what we learned.



Our hosts, Christian and Andrew

Founded in 1958, Sweetnam & Bradley Ltd. has been owned since April 2019 by Nigel and Bella Roberts of Megasteel Ltd, a Malmesbury-based steel importer and distributor. Sweetnam & Bradley is a market leader in sheet metal fabrication, assembly and finishing which means, to us layfolk, that they make things from sheets of metal. They offer a wide range of products and aim to support customers from prototype design right through to manufacture and delivery.

To achieve this, a company needs great people and equipment and they certainly have both. They employ around 40 staff, of which 80% live in or near to Malmesbury. They also offer an Apprenticeship programme using local colleges; take students on work experience and participate in the sponsorship of skilled workers from overseas. Since the announcement of redundancies at the top of Tetbury Hill, Sweetnam & Bradley has been keen to talk to some of those affected and, whilst obviously unable to accommodate all enquiries, has been able to make referrals to other companies in their network which may have suitable positions. This is a good example of the philanthropic nature of the company and also shows the value of keeping on good terms with other companies, even your competitors.

There is opportunity for advancement which is evidenced by Nigel Johnson, who has recently retired after more than 40 years with Sweetnam & Bradley. Nigel started there as an apprentice and went on to become Managing Director.



Wynand operating the laser cutter

The team is supported by an extensive array of machinery. It's important to stress that the machinery has been acquired to undertake some of the bulk, repetitive roles allowing human hands and minds to focus on more intricate tasks. The factory boasts a fibre laser cutting machine which we saw being expertly operated by Wynand who's been at the company for three years. This hugely impressive piece of kit can perform precise cutting of a range of metals including stainless steel, aluminium, copper, brass, titanium and thin gauge mild steels. We also saw computer guided machinery punching and bending metal into identifiable forms, the welding bay (from outside only!), the finishing area where powder coating and wet spray paint is used and the automated screen and pad printing section.

They have a loyal UK customer base (over 25% of their customers have been with them for 15 years or more) and also export overseas. Major customers include Gloucestershire-based Renishaw, Siemens Mobility in Chippenham and London Underground. Sweetnam & Bradley products can be found across the London Tube network, with an example being the trapdoors on Bakerloo line trains. They further support the network when warranties with larger suppliers expire by taking over the supply of bespoke components and assemblies. We were also shown some pedestals that were being made for HS2. Their customers are very demanding on quality and timeliness and even conduct their own audits on Sweetnam and Bradley's processes.

Other examples of their diverse product range include guitar effects pedals for a rock star (yes, we do know which one!) and cabinets for defibrillators of which there is a fully operational example on the exterior of their premises. They also now produce bright red cabinets for bleed kits which are designed to be placed in public areas and hold some of the medical aids needed to treat the victims of stabbings. Christian tells us that there is strong demand for them which, we think, is of immense credit to Sweetnam & Bradley, but a terrible indictment of parts of our society. Again, an example of the bleed kit can be seen on the wall of their premises.

This brings us on to gadgets – we like gadgets. During lockdown, they designed and produced the CoronaGadget, an ingenious little device you can use so that you don't have to touch surfaces such as doors, drawers, pedestrian crossing buttons, door bells and ATM key pads. Its surface has antimicrobial properties. It comes in several designs one of which is in bright pink and bears the logo of the Lady Garden Foundation, a charity supporting research into gynaecological health. 40% of the money received from the sale of this version of the gadget goes to the charity - another reason to love this local company. They've also designed the PeloGadget which holds a phone or tablet whilst users torture themselves on peloton bikes! They're available on their



The Lady Garden CoronaGadget

website. On a slightly different tack, they offer the Manhole Guardian which protects users from potential falls whilst working on manholes and the like. Whilst it's a great idea and very popular, we're glad it wasn't around when Only Fools and Horses was being written as it could have ruined a whole episode.

The company is doing well and has ambitious sales targets. The team is regularly updated on performance figures via electronic notice boards and, when a particular objective is achieved, everyone is treated to fish and chips or pizza!



There's a very professional but convivial atmosphere in the workplace and they're not averse to a laugh or two. As an example, Christian smiles as he relates how, when visiting the enclosed yard at the back of the factory, he got locked in and had to climb over walls to escape. Unbeknown to him, the whole episode had been caught on CCTV, but this had not gone unnoticed elsewhere. A couple of days later, a video of Christian's exploits appeared on social media, perfectly choreographed to the theme tune from Mission Impossible. There's nothing like keeping the boss in his place!

After Andrew had given us a comprehensive and hugely interesting tour of the factory it was time to leave and reflect on what we'd learned. Our overriding feeling was admiration for a business that produces high-quality, essential products for some very high-profile customers, and does so with a smile on its face whilst finding time to help others. A mix that little old Malmesbury should be justifiably proud of.

We can't finish without mentioning the chimp sculptures outside the main entrance, purchased through a large donation to the World Wildlife Fund because "the money went to a good cause and it seemed like a fun thing to do". Christian reports that they have proven a great success in almost all aspects with some people visiting them daily and young children loving to pat and stroke them – you can see the shiny patches that have resulted from this. Some of our canine friends, however, seem to view them with a great deal of suspicion. Well, you can't win 'em all!

Editor's Note: Our heartfelt thanks to Christian and Andrew for meeting with us and showing us round. We're absolutely delighted to be able to share their story and wish Sweetnam & Bradley every success in the future.

For more information, please see www.sweetnam-bradley.com

Malmesbury Carnival 2024 Photo Review



TETBURY GOODS SHED

A R T S C E N T R E

HIGHLIGHTS AT TETBURY GOODS SHED

- October 13 Tetbury Comic-con: Comic book dealers, artists and creators with cosplay for every age and level! 10.30-4.30. Admission Free
- October 20 Tetbury Wool Fair: Yarn manufacturers, spinner, dyers will be on hand to demonstrate or you can just knit and natter! Plus screening of Shaun the Sheep for kids – and real sheep to meet. 10-4. Admission free
- October 26 Dusty, Cilla, Lulu and Pet: Songs by the four singers who helped define the Swinging Sixties re-created by Samantha and her live band. 7.30 Tickets £18 in advance.
- November 2 Ensemble Perpetuo and Emma Abbatte: Part of our classic series, the piano quartet will play a variety of traditional and contemporary chamber music. 7.30 Tickets £24 in advance.
- November 10 Gardeners' Question Time: Our panel of experts answer your horticultural hassles. 2-3.30. Tickets £6.50 in advance.
- November 23 This Flight Tonight: an intimate tribute to the music of singer songwriter Joni Mitchell by five piece band Zervas and Pepper. 7.30. Tickets 23 in advance.
- December 4 A Winter's Tale: A Playtime Christmas Special for children 2+ and their adults. Come and support Ratty and friends and their Christmas revels. 10 and 11.30. Tickets £7 under 1 free.
- December 7 Christmas Fair: stock up on Christmas presents from local crafts people and artists. 10-5. Admission free.
- December 14 Johnny Coppin – All On a Winter's Night: The singer-songwriter's ever popular concert for all ages featuring both his much much-loved older music and new releases. 7.30. Tickets £20 in advance.
- December 21 Kim Cypher and her Band: Kim and her band return for a Christmas special. 7.30. Tickets £18 in advance.

For more details of our other events including film, talks, exhibitions, and afternoon tea concerts and to book tickets visit our website:

www.tetburygoodshed.co.uk

Autumn Reflections

By Rev'd Oliver Ross

*Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run,
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core; ...* Autumn by John Keats. 1795 – 1821

Autumn is truly with us, attended by rain and a slight chill and the hope of an Indian summer. Yet it also comes with the remembrance that Harvest has passed and from looking back we look around us. Christmas celebrations are about 60 days away!

We have entered the strangely reflective time of year. We have rejoiced at the wonder of creation and given thanks for its bounty at the hand of God and the hard work of the farmers. The gardens need a lot of work. The newspapers are full of violence and electoral fears.

It has been said that there are 56 conflicts large and small raging across the planet. We have only had three days of peace across the world since World War II.

While we recognise the wonders of creation and the fact of peace in most parts of the world, yet we are horrified at what is going on and the innocence that is laid waste by the plans of violent men. War and violence too often seem the ever-present dark colours woven through the tapestry of life. Life is riddled with paradox.

It has been said that it is only human to react. Yet rage and its sister outrage often rush like a tide through our emotions and lead to the most heated words and acts of retribution. Hatred of one another is stoked by this fuel.

Yet anger is so very different. While it can slew into rage and impotence, there is an opportunity for it to focus and motivate us to action. For most of us our part will be very small, but for others there is the opportunity to make a huge difference and build a future without bullet and bomb. For most of us the call is to do what we can to support those whose hands are at work on the frontline of all that we read in the newspapers.

As we read our newspapers this autumn may we not descend into the ranting of rage and outrage but fired by an anger which focuses on seeing and acting for change and peace. As we stand for two minutes silence at Remembrance let us reach out to God to have mercy upon us, to turn the hearts of those in power who seek violent ends and to strengthen the hearts of those trying to succour, defend and make a peace that will last.

Join many Malmesbury folk for an hour for peace. One hour of silence for all. Come for as long as you can. This is not a service – open to all! Wednesday 23rd October 7.30pm at The Abbey. No speeches, no posters, no flags.

An old prayer for peace

O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom: Defend us, thy humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Snippet

Niagara Walls

Malmesbury's very own green cascade in Burnivale.

Photo: Dave Witt



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New Headteacher at St Joseph's

Paul Bacon has begun work as the new head teacher of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. Paul was one of the two interim heads who supported the school last year and already knows the school community well.

Mr Bacon has extensive experience of teaching and school leadership at home and abroad. Early in his career he taught for two years at the British Primary School in Kathmandu. Always up for a challenge, he made his way home, partially overland, across India.

Later, he went to work in Gabon for Shell where he was headteacher of a school for the children of oil workers. As the children came from many nations, the school was split into three language streams where the working language was either English, French or Dutch.

Mr Bacon commented "Working in Gabon was a privileged opportunity and experience as the school was situated on the edge of a lagoon in a remote area of rolling grassland and encroaching rainforest. Every day held surprises, be these incredible insect life, visits from gorillas, monkeys or the frequent encounters with forest elephants who walked through the camp where we all lived.



Working abroad in countries where access to the resources and services we take for granted was limited meant we all had to be resourceful and adapt to the situations. I've learned that life experience and opportunities are as important as the curriculum in creating rounded children.

For that reason, it was fantastic to work with staff at the end of the last academic year to tailor children's learning to hands-on experiences during the three weeks we celebrated the Athelstan 1100. During this time, we taught the children what life might have been like for them during the Saxon period. The activities we chose to do this through included weaving, using hurdle fences to make structures, cooking on an open fire and simple pottery. Not many people know, but our site is on the edge of the historic town walls leading down to the river so we opened a pit for the Big Dig and smaller areas for the children so they could put their new archaeology skills to the test."

The children also opened the Athelstan 1100 celebrations by performing *Oh! Athelstan* to a packed Malmesbury Abbey under the direction of teacher Debbie Cambray-Smith and, more recently, took part in Malmesbury Carnival.

What's next for St Joseph's?

"I'd just love to show people around. We're celebrating that we are a village school in the town. Our classes are very small so children get a lot of individual attention and we noticed last year that our younger children made a high rate of progress as a result.

"We want to build on this success and are hoping to open a nursery this year following a full consultation," said Mr Bacon.

Memories of Summer

Hey Folks, it's Kira and Lily, we're back from our summer holidays and we thought that we'd ask our school friends what they got up to over the summer. But first, we're going to tell you what we did.

Lily

This summer I went to America to see my Godfather and his family. We arrived at his house in Atlanta at midnight. It was SO hot! The next day, we drove up to his lake house. We had so



Me on the beach in Florida

much fun: swimming, tubing, going on his boat, jet skiing and jumping off the top of his dock (the lake water was 30°C!).

Once we got back to Atlanta we drove through Georgia and Alabama to Florida. We stayed in a little beach town on the

Gulf of Mexico called Navarre Beach. The sand was so fine that it squeaked under our feet. We saw pelicans, ospreys, dolphins and my favourite, sea turtles! My absolute favourite

thing was tubing behind the boat. It was so much fun - you flew through the air and the lake water sprayed you in the face, then they would turn the boat and the tube would go zooming the other way!



Tubing

Kira

This summer I went with my stagerschool troupe to Disneyland Paris. Our troupe's trip was even mentioned

in the Gazette and Herald. We were in 2 performances at the park. First, our troupe danced down Main Street in the parade – it was so exciting to be part of it! In between rehearsals we were lucky enough to have free time to enjoy the park, rollercoasters and rides (I LOVE rollercoasters). The second thing we



Doing my routine



Enjoying the rides with Evelyn

did was a stage performance in Videotropolis, one of the main indoor arenas at the park. It was so nice to have the lights on me and have people watching me perform.

When we went back to school, we asked our friends where they went and what their favourite thing was.



Archie

I went on holiday to Ibiza; my favourite thing was playing football on the beach.



Lucas

I went on holiday to Cornwall. I liked playing cricket on the beach with my friend Henry and going in the sea.



Eliza

This summer I went to Wolverhampton to watch my favourite football team, the Wolves, play.

I support the Wolves because wolves are my favourite animal.



Millie

This summer I went on holiday to Perpignan in France. My favourite thing was snorkelling. I really liked it because I saw an octopus.

Skyla:

My favourite thing about the summer was when I performed on stage at WOMAD. I was selected to perform with a samba band called Bloco B and on Thursday night we opened the festival. I was really nervous but when I got on stage I loved it. I'm really glad I gave it a go.

Lauren: This summer I went to Centre Parks and went on the River Rapids. I was also in 3 horse showing competitions.

Emily: I went to Pony Club camp and got to ride every day.

Leo: I went to Croatia

Joshua: We went to France with our cousins and I enjoyed going on walks.

Emma: I enjoyed going to West Midlands Safari Park.

Isla: We went to Minehead. I liked the journey.

Kendal: I went to Alton Towers twice and Legoland!

We also asked two of our teachers:

Mrs Wyatt:

I enjoyed going to Woolacombe bodyboarding and eating fish and chips and ice cream on the beach.

Mrs Harris:

I enjoyed snorkelling in Turkey and playing with my puppy, Obi.



Skyla at WOMAD

JOKE CORNER

Lily: What can cause dry skin after being in a swimming pool? A towel.

Kira: Why did Micky Mouse take a trip to space? He wanted to find Pluto.



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Malmesbury Mayor's Newsletter – Autumn 2024

Welcome to the second newsletter of my term, distributed by *The Malmesbury Jackdaw* magazine.

With winter fast approaching and the days shortening, it's an appropriate time to reflect on what's been happening through the summer and autumn.

CCTV

The installation of CCTV has now been completed. Cameras cover the High Street, Cross Hayes Car Park, Market Cross, Cloister Gardens and Station Yard car park. They provide very high-quality day and night time images which can be used to support police investigations. The cameras will not be used to spy on people and Malmesbury Town Council takes the management of sensitive information very seriously. The cameras will, however, demonstrate that Malmesbury is not a place where criminal activity will go unobserved.

Vote of No Confidence

Many of you will be aware that the Town Council raised serious concerns with Cllr. Richard Clewer, leader of Wiltshire Council, about two planning applications affecting Malmesbury and also about the future of the Riverside Centre.

In these instances, Wiltshire Council made decisions affecting Malmesbury and its residents without, we believe, following best practice or consultation.

In the case of The Riverside Centre, Malmesbury could possibly lose a much-valued resource without ever being consulted. Regrettably, the response we received was unsatisfactory and, on 3rd October, Malmesbury Town Council voted to issue a statement of 'no confidence' in the leadership of Wiltshire Council. More information is available on Malmesbury Town Council website.



With Mrs Kim Power outside the Riverside Centre

Malmesbury in Bloom and Children's Multimedia Art Competition

At the beginning of October, it was great to be able to present goody bags and certificates to the children who entered the art competition. We had over 200 entries and the standard was exceptionally high so the judges, former teachers Rose Scanlon and Suzanne Tennant, had a difficult job in selecting the winners. Later in the evening, I was also delighted to award certificates and cups to the winners of the gardening competition, judged by garden designer Kevin Franklin. Congratulations to the entrants, especially overall winner Roy Wain; you all really help to make Malmesbury a beautiful place in which to live.



Malmesbury in Bloom Winners Photo: Richard Harris

Community Park

A group has been formed to look into the provision of a community park in Malmesbury. It will comprise a skate park, pump track (a type of cycling track) and a MUGA (Multi-use Games Area). Malmesbury Town Council has agreed further investigation of a site at White Lion Park. The process is still in its early stages and we will keep you updated on progress.

Art Show

Our annual Hight Street Art Show was launched by Deputy Mayor, Stephen James, and ran during August and September. The High St+ Art Gallery included 52 works of art displayed in the windows of the town's shops and businesses. The artwork was created by both newcomers and more experienced artists, ranging from paintings and photography, to glasswork, ceramics, mixed media, mosaic and even iconography. Congratulations to all involved. Whilst on the subject of art, I must also mention the fantastic Flying

Monk Art Trail staged by Malmesbury arts development agency Caerbladon in September. This event showcased the work of over 30 local artists and makers working in the area and was set in locations around Malmesbury and the surrounding villages.

Carnival

Congratulations to everyone involved in this year's successful carnival. There were some tremendous events including the Folk & Roots festival and the ever-popular procession. A great time was had by all who attended and lots of money has again been raised for local causes.

Just a reminder here that my good causes for 2024/25 are:

HEALS of Malmesbury - HEALS makes a big difference to a lot of vulnerable individuals and families lives by helping and supporting at times when they most need it. The recent cost of living problems have increased the need for their services dramatically. Please see www.healsmalmesbury.co.uk

Malmesbury Boxing Club - The Boxing Club was originally founded by the late Tony Stannard MBE and is now led by Mike Rees. The Boxing Club continues to accept young boys and girls and helps them along a structured and disciplined lifestyle.

Twinning with Bad Hersfeld

I was delighted to be able to travel to Bad Hersfeld in Germany with Cllr. Ray Sanderson; Claire Mann, Town Clerk; and Julia Bowen from Malmesbury Twinning Association for the signing of the town twinning certificate. I'm grateful to the representatives of Bad Hersfeld and Malmesbury who have gradually developed a



Folk & Roots Photo: Jackie Peel



Signing the Agreement

strong relationship since 2011 and it is right that our two towns are now formally twinned. There is an even longer standing link as St Lullus, a monk from Malmesbury Abbey, travelled to Germany in the 8th century where he was associated with the spreading of Christianity and the founding of an abbey in Hersfeld. Lullusfest is the oldest festival in Germany and is celebrated around the anniversary of his death – 16th October 786. Our twinning agreement was signed exactly 1238 years later!

As Heinz-Jörg Kretschmer, chairman Bad Hersfeld's "Friends of Malmesbury", said: "The purpose of our town twinning is to promote understanding and tolerance. In a world that is often marked by conflict and misunderstanding, this connection allows us to get to know our cultures better, learn from each other and discover common ground." Through the exchange of young people, artists and experts, "bridges of knowledge and personal contact" are to be built.

eat : Malmesbury

I was back in time from Germany for Malmesbury's first major food and drink festival on 19th October. The event was organised by eat: Festivals, an award-winning, not-for-profit West Country social enterprise that aims to connect communities with producers. The event theme was 'Taste Cook Grow', encouraging visitors to try something new, cook and extend their palate.



eat : Malmesbury in full flow Photo: Richard Harris

There were more than 60 stalls in the town along with our great range of shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs. The event was well attended and Malmesbury was very much at its best in the autumn sunshine.

Late Night Shopping

Late night shopping this year will be on Friday 6th December. The shops will be open late and the High Street lined with stalls from local community groups and traders. Food and drink will be available from stalls and the town's pubs and restaurants. We'll also get a visit from Santa! It's a very atmospheric and popular event - I look forward to seeing you there!

Cllr. Phil Exton – Mayor of Malmesbury

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Bells and Ribbons

*Malmesbury Morris were approached last September by **Joe Jordan** (MA student) about being involved in a short documentary about Morris Dancing. This is Joe's account.*

Coming off the back of a documentary in Morocco, I was confronted by a strange feeling of guilt that I had told someone else's story without the right to have done so. I thought about myself as the person behind the camera for the first time and considered what unique story I can bring to the world. A story that, without my involvement, people may not access otherwise.

Reflecting on my upbringing, a middle-class kid growing up in the Cotswolds, I considered my history and culture as an Englishman. I thought back to going to Beavers in the town hall, my primary school having services in the Abbey and the colourful dancing I saw at the summer fêtes.



Photo supplied by Malmesbury Morris

When I mentioned to my peers in London that I was considering making a documentary on Morris Dancing, their first question was invariably, 'What's Morris Dancing?' Regardless of being English born or not, they were unaware of something I thought was so ingrained in our culture and synonymous with English summertime. I was confused as to why other nationalities took so much pride in their culture, and the English did not. Why is it mocked and ridiculed when Scottish highland dancing or Irish river dancing is celebrated? I was curious about the role of Morris Dancing in the 21st century and what the future of the 'colourful dancing' from my childhood holds.

I nervously reached out to the 'Malmesbury Morris' to see if they would be willing to take part. Despite their justified scepticism, I was allowed to accompany them on one of their days of dance. They were immediately open, honest, unbelievably accommodating and kind. I was honoured that they were willing to put as much time and effort into my film as I was. I am sure that having a wannabe filmmaker hanging around, sticking microphones in one's face every weekend and filming every dancing move, is not the most comfortable of environments!

I had many conversations touching on worries for the longevity of Morris Dancing with a lack of younger members picking it up. I decided to give the film a modern twist in the hope of thrusting Morris Dancing into the 21st Century. Taking the traditional sounds of Morris and mixing them to create modern music or pushing the colour to feel even more vibrant and as much of a spectacle as I remember it to be.

I spent months researching Morris as an artform, trying to pick apart its origin, cultural standpoint and presence in the modern world, but it was only by spending week after week with these lovely people that I truly started to grasp what Morris Dancing means in the 21st century ... community. I hope I have achieved in letting people see it as I did; a place of belonging that is of the utmost importance for many in the more rural parts of our country, which will be just as important in the future as it is now. (cont)

The short documentary is called 'Bells and Ribbons,' and is on YouTube.

If you like the idea of helping us to continue this wonderful tradition, why not come along and have a go, either as a musician or dancer, you will be made more than welcome. No previous experience required, just a desire to have fun. We meet every Thursday evening between 7:30pm and 9pm in Malmesbury Town Hall from September and outside in Station Yard during the summer months. The winter is the ideal time to have a go, as we are less busy dancing out and have more time to teach.

For more information, search Malmesbury Morris on Facebook, contact our Squire, Beth, on 07969 618300 or email malmesburymorris2019@gmail.com.



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Snippet

Hannah Twynnoy

As reported in recent editions of *The Malmesbury Jackdaw*, the condition of Hannah Twynnoy's gravestone has been causing some locals and visitors concern. So, we were delighted to receive this message and photo from Fiona Hocken, Operations and Communications Manager at Malmesbury Abbey. Well done to all involved and we hope it will now be kept in good order.

"Hannah Twynnoy's gravestone in the Malmesbury Abbey graveyard has been cleaned, with the agreement of the Bristol Diocesan Advisory Committee.

We are very grateful to Mr Chris Brooks at Brooks Independent Funeral Directors for his kind gift in covering the costs of the cleaning and repainting of the headstone.

We are delighted that the people of Malmesbury, as well as visitors, can now come to see and read this monument to one of the historic characters of the town."

Jackdaw comment: That's a lovely gift to the town, Chris. Thank you.



Chris Brooks and Rev. Oliver Ross. Photo supplied by Malmesbury Abbey.

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Malmesbury Voices

By Bill Reed

Here are some extracts and notes on recordings recently added to the Museum's collection of spoken memories.



Round Britain Non-stop

Ray Sanderson has contributed memories of his childhood in Brokenborough, his work as a driving instructor, and the astonishing "Round Britain Non-Stop Drive" he organised to raise money for charity.

"We refuelled at various RAF stations because obviously we couldn't refuel on the road. And what would happen is that a helicopter had underslung a cradle, the cradle had 20 gallons of fuel in four jerrycans. Range Rover adapted the vehicle with a filler cap actually in the roof, and they put in a large sunshine roof. Where the back seat should have been, was an additional fuel tank. We then poured the petrol into a funnel into the filler cap in the roof, and then off we go. I think we stopped totally from start to finish about ten minutes. A few minutes obviously at traffic lights or things like this. And every time we refuelled, the helicopter would winch one of us out, and then lower another one in."

Linolite

The Linolite story continues. Mike Hayes was chosen as "Apprentice of the Year" in the early 1960's, and Victor Beuttell, the owner of the plant, gave him his own micrometer gauge as a prize. Mike has used and cherished it all his life, and recently kindly donated it to the Museum. This prompted me to contact him for his memories, which he allowed me to record for the Voices collection.



Victor Beuttell's micrometer gauge Photo: Bill Reed

"It was Victor Beuttell's personal micrometer, and after a couple of years doing my apprenticeship, I was given it as Apprentice of the Year. So ever since all through my engineering career, although not being used all the time because it was in Imperial - things turned to Metric later in my life - it still travelled with me. And yes, was my companion, it brought me luck through my engineering career."

Youth Exchange Memories

If you missed the September exhibition "70 Years of Friendship" created by Malmesbury Twinning Association, you can catch up with memories of the Youth Exchange by Bob Brastock, Chris White and Jill Stephens on the Voices screen in the Museum. They are also on the "Listen Again" page at Flying Monk Community Radio, where in addition you will find a fascinating profile of Malmesbury's legendary youth worker, Cyril "Skip"

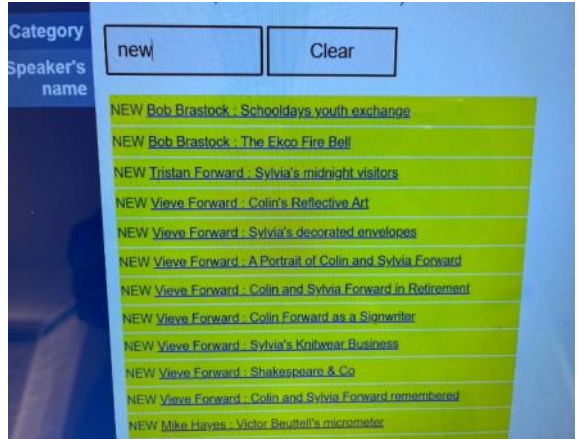
Cartmell, by John Fairhurst. Please see <https://flyingmonkcommunityprojects.weebly.com/listen-again.html>

Elmer

Tony McAleavy and I were interviewed by Dan McAleavy for a podcast on Elmer, the Flying Monk, and the 1962 re-enactment of his flight. This was broadcast on Flying Monk Radio over the Carnival Weekend. If you missed it, you will find it on the "Listen Again" page

Voices Screen Upgrade

Museum Volunteer Peter Holland, who provides invaluable technical support for the Voices project, has improved the "search" function by adding an on-screen keyboard. You can now access items by typing in part of the name of the contributor, or of the topic. A nice aspect of this is that if you type in "NEW" you will get a list of all the items added recently. I would like to thank Peter on behalf of the Museum for the time he has devoted to this task.



Voices Screen. Screen by Peter Holland. Photo: Bill Reed

Snippet

What Parking Problem?

An eerily quiet Triangle. No cars? Was Malmesbury closed that day?

Photo: Dave Witt



Malmesbury and District Natural History Society



Flittermouse is the old English name for a bat and it refers to the fluttering of their wings as they fly.

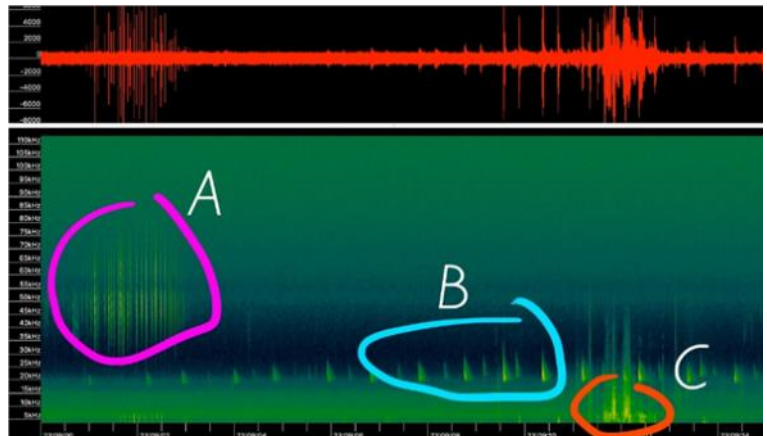
Every evening, between April and October, while you are indoors with the curtains closed bats come out to feed in Malmesbury and the

whole of the surrounding area. In fact, there are many unusual bats living in north Wiltshire and the Malmesbury and District Natural History Society is aiming to find out more about what bats there are and where they can be found.

Last year, on the 23rd of June, we went on a bat walk around Malmesbury town armed with our bat detectors. We recorded and saw plenty of Common pipistrelles and Soprano pipistrelles before going our separate ways at the end of the evening. Then, just as we were walking over the bridge towards Station Road car park we spotted some Daubenton's bats skimming the surface of the river using their feet and tails to scoop up their prey. This

image shows A, the Daubenton's calling as they flew low over the river, B a Noctule bat flying high over our heads and C, the sound of excited humans squealing with delight!

This September we decided to take another stroll on the lookout for bats



and again detected a lot of Pipistrelles, both Common and Soprano. A Noctule was detected at Goose Bridge and Daubenton's were detected at two new locations: close to the play area near King's Wall and close to the Fire station. We would now like to extend our knowledge of the bats in the surrounding area. Working in partnership with Wiltshire Bat Group and the Braydon Forest Farm Cluster we are installing acoustic bat detectors for a period of 5 nights at each farm and will be analysing the data over the winter evenings. We know there are other rare bats living in the local area. In February, Gareth Harris of the



Purple - Common pipistrelle; Pink - Soprano pipistrelle; Orange - Noctule; Red - Daubenton's

Wiltshire Bat Group, gave a talk for us on the Bats of the Braydon Forest. Gareth told us about his work studying Bechstein's, Barbastelles, Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats close to Minety. If they are living there, they may be living in other places nearby...

Meanwhile, a Luckington resident, contacted us to say that a Lesser Horseshoe bat had

appeared in their kitchen! As I'm sure you are aware, these are exceedingly rare bats and until this point there were no records of them in that area of north Wiltshire! We were very interested as you can imagine but a little cautious at the same time. It turned out that it was very definitely a Lesser Horseshoe bat. It had been injured and was taken to a bat carer who confirmed the species and that it was a juvenile. Sadly, the bat did not survive. But the fact that it was young indicated one interesting notion – it is



likely that it had come from a maternity roost in the area. The bats will have long-since dispersed but maybe next year we could follow this up.

Our plans are at the earliest stages but, in 2025, we are hoping to carry out a bat survey in Luckington to see if we can get to the bottom of this mystery.

Website: malmesburynaturalhistory.co.uk

Facebook: Malmesbury and District Natural History Society

Email: malmesburynaturalhistory@gmail.com



Snippet

Road Repairs?

It's good to be able to report that work finally commenced to repair some of Malmesbury's roads, although it's difficult to work out how St John's St/Baskerville got repaired ahead of Park Road, amongst others. At the time of writing, the rapidly deteriorating Abbey Row is not due for resurfacing until next year. We were going to write a daft article about this, but decided we couldn't make it any dafter than it already is. Presumably, the same sort of logic that Wiltshire Council used to give the go ahead to the 23 homes on Park Road-sur-Mer was applied. At least we've found out what 'Surface Dressing' is, which is the term applied by Wiltshire Council to the work in St John's St/Baskerville. It means, just dump tarmac at varying depths on the existing road surface ensuring that it doesn't go the full width of the road and leaves plenty of gaps for weeds to grow through whilst carefully avoiding bits that really need repairing like the bridge. Oh, and don't forget to make it all really goopy so it sticks to car tyres and ruins them. So now you know.



How We Remember Them

They went and saved something and never came back. What it was they saved I cannot exactly tell, but I do know that I have never seen anything since 1918 that was worth their sacrifice.

J.B. Priestley, *The Lost Generation* (1930)

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More Tea Vicar? Nourishment for Body and Soul

Gordon Williams has been unable to purchase his favourite treat at the Abbey Café.

Our town is blessed with many fine cafes where you can find an excellent cup of coffee or lemon muffin. I have to confess my favourite is the Abbey Cafe, a place of calm peacefulness and friendly staff who offer a great Americano.

In ancient times, the Abbey was required to offer hospitality to pilgrims bringing relics as gifts or paying to hold our relics. It would have been much like a B&B; providing towels, a bed, washing facilities, etc.



Gordon looks on as Lorna and Nicola serve coffee

There's another food connection. Did you donate a favourite recipe to the Abbey Cook Book? 'Quick Orange Mousse' caught my eye. My guilty pleasure, I admit, is the bacon sandwich - we all need a treat now and then! But, for many months now, this indulgence has not been available, so I dropped in to meet cafe manager, Nicola Twist to find out why.

Nicola, how come the bacon sandwich is off the menu?

An extension was placed on the side of the abbey in 1928 with a flat roof and the room was used as an office and place for the flower arrangers. It's where the café is now. In the November of 2022, a new kitchen was installed, but the concrete had deteriorated and the roof leaked. So, we had to stop your sandwich as the problem has taken a long time to sort out.

When did the cafe first open?

In 2012, providing the hospitality of the Abbey to the community. In 2023, the cafe sold 18,000 hot drinks and 8,000 portions of cake, which shows how popular it is.

How many folk work here?

We have five people on a sort of part-time basis, two of whom are 6th formers from our local school. It helps with their pocket money, but I see it as an opportunity for them to be part of the community, learning skills on how to interact with people of different ages and abilities.

Your opening hours are 9:30 to 3:30 (not Sunday for obvious reasons); open to all, dogs welcome.

But we close the cafe when there is an event such as a wedding or funeral in progress. Afterwards, we can provide refreshments, if required.

What's currently on the menu?

Sandwiches, toasties, homemade soup, coffee, cake, scones ... the usual fare!

Do you source locally?

Our bacon comes from Leonard Walker, milk from the Co-op and bread from Hobbs House Bakery. If we can buy it locally, we will.

Is there such a thing as a typical day?

Every day is different, but we have regular events. On Monday it's Little Stars, a pre-school club. The bouncy castle is next to the altar. Thursdays offer "time for chat", an opportunity to enjoy other people's company for a few hours. We put on free Cafe Concerts once a month. There's also a men's hospitality fellowship where we offer breakfast in a bap. Again, it's an opportunity for people, who perhaps seek companionship for a few hours, to come together to chat. And there is, of course, late night shopping when we enjoy the carol singing and mulled wine. A wonderful service.

What are the plus points of working at the Abbey?

I just enjoy being part of the community. I love meeting and chatting to visitors. We build up a rapport with local customers, have a laugh and banter, so when they return, they enjoy the visit even more.

And the challenges?

Making sure the larder is full! We do our best to work within the restrictions of the space available.

What is the nature of the comments you receive?

"We love your coffee!". We use only Fairtrade Kingdom coffee. Customers enjoy our venue because it gives them reason to be in a religious space and an opportunity to relax and take in the history and peaceful atmosphere of the building.

My final question must be "when do you hope to fully reopen the cafe?"

We hope to open fully on 7th October! (it did!)

Thank you, Nicola, for finding time to let me know when things will get back to normal. Hopefully, by the time you read this article, I will have munched many a bacon sandwich and will have had many stamps on my loyalty card.

I'll leave the last word to Nicola who sums up the importance and success of the Abbey Cafe ... "I hope people feel that the relaxed setting of the cafe is like an extension of their living room....'I'll treat myself to a cup of tea'... an opportunity to meet folk.



The author showing his delight at the return of bacon sandwiches to the menu



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Athelstan 1100, Malmesbury's celebration of the 1100 years since Athelstan became king and the special relationship he had with Malmesbury held centre stage in June and July. With 36 events, banners in the streets, over 100 local organisations and local businesses and hundreds of volunteers involved and something for everyone, it attracted thousands of residents and visitors to town this summer. The national and international attention it is generating



Commemorative Plaque



Athelstan Play

about Athelstan's place in Malmesbury's history and Malmesbury as a place to enjoy spending time will be a lasting benefit for years to come.

It is hard to separate favourite moments. Malmesbury's Big Athelstan Dig was a huge hit and we are looking forward to seeing the cleaned up finds back in town next Spring. The live performances – 'Oh! Athelstan' and 'Athelstan – A United Kingdom' – created and delivered by

superb local talent were hugely enjoyed and showed off our Abbey in all its brilliance. The Athelstan Museum pulled off a triumph with its world class exhibits loaned from national museums. The talks by internationally famous speakers and our own local heroes were great.



Athelstan Museum



Anglo Saxon Village

And we loved the banners, the creativity, music and story-telling, art, picnic, fair, Athelstan themed products, bunting, embroidery, trails and Anglo-Saxon village...

Not bad for a little town in North Wiltshire!

British History Quiz 3

1. Which other country was Britain at war with during the Napoleonic Wars: (a) USA, (b) Russia, (c) China?
2. What was the average life expectancy in Liverpool during the 1850s: (a) 17, (b) 37, (c) 57?
3. In the early 19th century approximately what percentage of the adult population were eligible to vote: (a) 1%, (b) 10%, (c) 50%?
4. During which war did Florence Nightingale become a household name: (a) Napoleonic Wars, (b) Crimean War, (c) Boer War?
5. During which war was the concentration camp first deployed: (a) Crimean War, (b) Boer War, (c) The First World War?
6. Which party first introduced the state pension: (a) Conservatives, (b) Labour, (c) Liberals?
7. Where did the 1929 Great Depression start: (a) USA, (b) Germany, (c) China?
8. The period from 3rd September 1939 to 9th April 1940 was known as: (a) The Battle of Britain, (b) The Cold War, (c) The Phoney War?
9. Who became Prime Minister in 1945 after a landslide victory: (a) William Churchill, (b) Lloyd George (c) Clement Attlee?
10. When was one adult one vote first introduced: (a) 1918, (b) 1929, (c) 1948?

Answers at the bottom of the page

Snippet

Pop up car park appears in Malmesbury.

Photo: Dave Witt



Answers to History Quiz: 1(a) 2(a) 3(a) 4(b) 5(b) 6(c) 7(a) 8(c) 9(c) 10(c)



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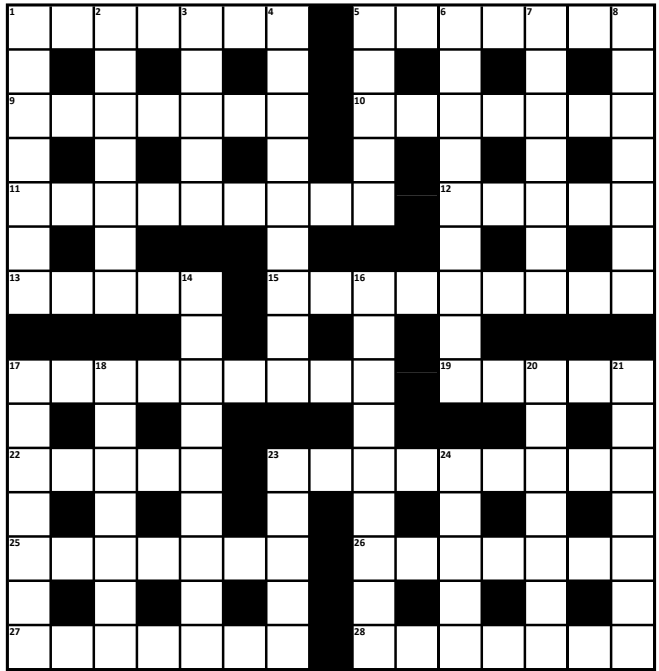
The Crossword

ACROSS

- 1...The art of getting knotted? (7)
 5...Breathe a word! (7)
 9...Ended a rally? (7)
 10...Clear it ready for a performance (7)
 11...Crucial to bring in an insect (9)
 12...Clever but wet when head is missing (5)
 13...Illicitly copy a blacksmith (5)
 15...Sounds like breaktime for a sprite left its mark (9)
 17...Gentle arc formed an oblong (9)
 19...Black, haw or buck? (5)
 22...Repeat repeat, for example (5)
 23...Not recognised as an American citizen? (9)
 25...Ha! Cared about making pretence (7)
 26...You may need to do this to create 25. (7)
 27...Sounds like the least weighty fibber may have to take this (3,4)
 28...Home containing organ is most adjacent (7)

DOWN

- 1...Dog hearing big argument (7)
 2...Park warden? (7)
 3...Not Tarzan's Jane but McCartney's (5)
 4...Nine raged but were cute (9)
 5...We hear this sausage is not the best (5)
 6...Popular now it's flowing in (9)
 7...Spit tea about bun fillers (7)
 8...Told late head replaced by monarch (7)
 14...Convoluted cheer around half an island (9)
 16...Scavenging from pet on raid (9)
 17...Harmful if free (7)
 18...Small house in terracotta gets sold (7)
 20...Cut open Lawrence after show (7)
 21...Developing northern climb (7)
 23...Good person hides little treat (5)
 24...Clever Icarus hides a lady (5)



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