

**GRETA'S TWEETERS – DID YOU SEE IT?**

Bold as brass, June 2004 (European Election Day) as male sparrowhawk perched on the 1st chimney pot in New Road. Sans specs, let alone binocs, I was transfixed by this hadnsome, grey-backed bird with horizontal bars across its breast, the sun catching the yellow-orange patches on its cheeks. I was so busy showing it to everyone entering the Institute, I nearly forgot to vote. When I eventually did, the blighter took off while I was inside! He was probably fed up with being gawped at.

A male sparrowhawk is a regular visitor at Anson Close. He zigzags low between rear gardens near the field swooping in at great speed to pick off an unsuspecting sparrow or other small bird, usually defeathering it on the spot. (I wish I could train it to catch starlings instead.)

Last summer, one hot afternoon whilst tending the garden, I felt the wings of a bird virtually touch the back of my head. Blackbirds being all around, I presumed a short-sighted one had a near miss. Moments later I glanced at the bird perched on the fence and saw it was a male sparrowhawk, so if I'm seen wearing a bobble hat in high summer, that's why!

*Picture this:* A cock pheasant scurrying along a well-worn dog walkers' track in a straight line – who said bird don't have brains? Short legs, short grass, quickest way from A to B. This character has also taken to strutting his stuff around Anson Close occasionally stalked by William, a sleek, handsome grey tabby who blends into the tarmac. We know William has got too close for comfort when the pheasant takes off squawking noisily and shoots between the houses in low missile-like formation. Reminded me of the whisky advert with the hopping, skipping grouse.



I wonder where the polling station will be when the General Election is held – it has gone very quiet on the Institute front, perhaps we'll read something soon?

GG = ○ ○ ○ ○

**WANTAGE CONCERT CLUB**  
**12 Mar 7.30 pm** St Peter and St Paul Parish Church, Wantage  
 Winterreise *Samian Thantry & Peter Hewitt*  
 More details from: Wantage Concert Club, The Old Bakery, Bakery Lane, Clanfield OX18 2SD. or the Tourist Information, Wantage.



**Sobell House Bereavement Support Volunteers**

Do you:

- Have around 12 hours a month to spare?
- Have your own transport?
- Enjoy a challenge?
- Want to make a difference?

Are you:

- Warm and empathic?
- A good listener?
- Able to cope with other people's sadness?

We provide:

- Full training commencing September 2005
- Ongoing support and supervision
- Travel and phone expenses
- Rewarding work in a friendly and supportive team

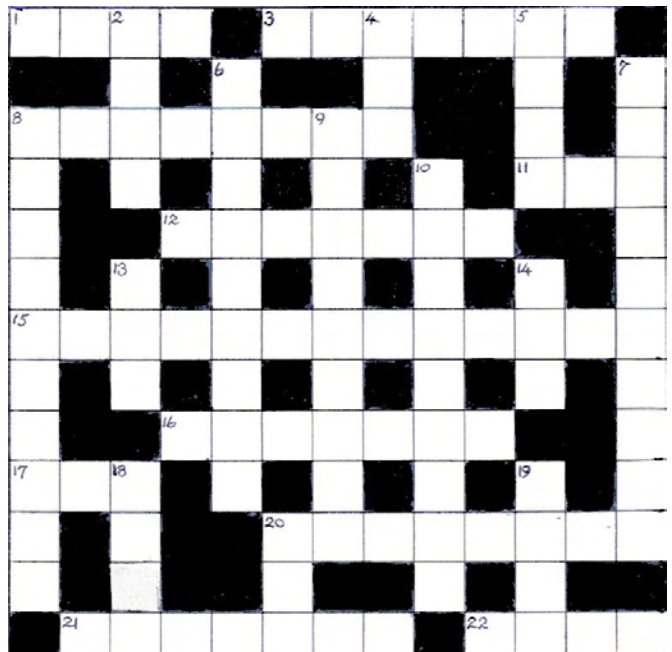
Come along to one of our **INTRODUCTORY SESSIONS** in May or June to find out about this rewarding work and meet some of our existing volunteers

For details please phone Jane Elliott or Di Rivers on: (01865) 225878

*We do not recommend this work for those who have been bereaved within the last two years*

**THE B&Q 'YOU CAN DO IT' AWARDS 2005**  
 is offering £100,000 in grants. Twenty awards worth £5,000 of B&Q products will be donated to community and charitable organisations across the UK and Ireland.  
 Call 0845 300 1001 for an application form or go to [www.diy.com/awards](http://www.diy.com/awards). Any community-based organisations such as local charities, disability, environmental and youth groups are eligible to apply. Closing date 18 March 2005.

**WHEN IS EASTER?**  
 The simple answer is that in Western Christianity Easter Sunday is the first Sunday after the first full moon after vernal equinox. So this year it is on 27 March. There is also a much longer answer that uses Golden Numbers, Epacts and other calculations. In the Orthodox church it is completely different and Easter will be on 1 May 2005.



**March Crossword by Alisa**

- |                                      |                                  |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                        | <b>DOWN</b>                      |
| 1 Angle (4)                          | 2 Vessel (4)                     |
| 3 & 21 Place west of Culham (7,7)    | 4 Anger (3)                      |
| 8 The bit outside its container (8)  | 5 Sole (4)                       |
| 11 Yourself (3)                      | 6 Removal of clutter (9)         |
| 12 Saint for March (7)               | 7 Fake (10)                      |
| 15 Society's subject for March (7,6) | 8 Small coastal building (4,6)   |
| 16 Branch of knowledge (7)           | 9 People like Stuart Mabbutt (9) |
| 17 Spinner (3)                       | 10 Game (3,6)                    |
| 22 Little star (8)                   | 13 Can (3)                       |
| 21 See 3                             | 14 Finish (3)                    |
| 22 Drama (4)                         | 18 Big cat (4)                   |
|                                      | 19 Boars or Foxcombe (4)         |
|                                      | 20 Tot (3)                       |

To get an article included please write to the editor by 20th month latest