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Oakley Green, Fifield & District Community Association

Autumn Newsletter

October 2020



www.ogafcap.co.uk

Welcome to the OGAFCA Autumn newsletter...

.... Get your creepy costumes and your deadly decorations ready for the Halloween Trail! Saturday 31 October...



...Scarecrow Festival to thank our local heroes was enthusiastically supported!...



...At last, Gigaclear ducting is now being installed to bring ultra fast Broadband to all ...

The OGAFCA newsletter is edited by Alison Brayshaw
Printed by DRAYTON: www.drayton.co.uk
Published by Oakley Green, Fifield and District Community Association Limited by Guarantee
Postal address: OGAFCA, Woodlands, Oakley Green Road, Oakley Green, Windsor. SL4 4PZ
The views expressed in the OGAFCA newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the editor.
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Chairperson's Message

As we head into Autumn and Winter it seems the restrictions are still with us, waxing and waning in their complexities. It is now more important than ever to keep ourselves, and our loved ones, safe and to not allow the frustrations and tedium of these restrictions to tempt us to let down our guard.

All of our plans for this year have had to be altered or cancelled but we did have a very successful Scarecrow festival which gave us all something to smile about over the August Bank Holiday weekend and we are planning to take part in a Halloween trail, more information to come.

Although the VE day celebration was cancelled, members of the Committee laid wreaths at the Oakley Green Memorial to commemorate VJ day and as, once again, we will be unable to hold our usual Remembrance Day service on 8 November, we plan to do the same again. During this 75th Anniversary year we have still managed to celebrate many heroes of the Second World War, so it seems only fitting that in the next few newsletters I dedicate our "Animal Tales" to the heroic animals who fought beside us and were awarded Dickin Medals for their bravery.

Our AGM took place on Zoom this year, attended by a very select few! I have sent out notes to all members and you will see a brief synopsis of the meeting in the following pages. All the notes and the financial accounts can be found on the website www.ogafcap.co.uk

Although, on the whole, the meeting went quite well we missed the interaction and the contributions from our community, and it was particularly sad to be unable to share a glass of wine with you all. Let us hope that next year we can return to the Braywood Memorial Hall for our open meetings.

This Christmas we will be unable to hold our Carol singing event but we will, of course, still put up our trees and we hope that they radiate a little festive cheer. Why not make a special effort yourselves this year to decorate your homes and break out the fairy lights? Let's send a message that although we may not be able to celebrate together our community spirit shines a light through the winter gloom.

Have a safe and happy Christmas. "God Bless us Everyone!"

Please submit Winter Newsletter contributions by Monday 4 January via the web site or email to alison.j.brayshaw@gmail.com



AGM Thursday 17 September 2020

Due to the Covid Pandemic it was not possible to hold our AGM in Braywood Hall and members were invited to attend on Zoom. The presentation, including the financial report is available on our website www.ogafcap.co.uk and the following notes are a synopsis of the meeting which will also be added to the website. The meeting was led by Barbara Frame, current Chairperson, ably assisted by committee members, Alison Brayshaw, Bill Collier and Paula Grevett. Unfortunately, Trish Pottinger could not join us.

The first item on the agenda was the financial report which was presented by the treasurer, Paula Grevett. This was followed by a summary of activities of the Association during the year, 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

Communications - We publish a quarterly newsletter which is delivered, free of charge to all local households and a website which is managed and updated by Rod Lord. He is currently undertaking a large project to revamp the website and make it more dynamic and suitable for the 21st century. We also now have a facebook page (listed as OGAFCA) which has been created by Trish Pottinger and is full of information and local events.

There are still issues with broadband reception but Gigaclear are on the way and Grenville Annetts gave a comprehensive update on progress so far.

Community Safety - There have been a few break-ins in our area but generally we are not considered a problem area and therefore we have very little police presence. As the nights draw in it is important for us all to ensure that all sheds and garages are locked up.

Roads & Transport - The 7.5tonne restriction came into force this year. The 40mph to 30mph speed reduction promised has hit a brick wall so there is more to be done to see this implemented. We are keen to reduce the 60mph limit at the top of Fifield Road and working closely with Bray Parish Council to improve road safety throughout the parish.

Environment - Last year we put up Christmas Trees in the village and planted daffodil bulbs on the Open Space in Fifield. We are working with BPC to put some more trees and shrubs on the Open Space and summer floral baskets on the bus shelters in Oakley Green and Fifield.

It has been difficult to pursue the drainage issues because of the 'lockdown' but Rod Lord gave us information on progress so far.

Local Planning - Martin Hall from OGFRA gave us an update on current planning issues namely the Borough Local Plan and the proposed Aldi store at Wyevale Garden Centre site.

Social Activities - 2019 was a busy year for us. Thanks go to Bill Collier who was the power behind most of our local events. The surplus raised helped to swell the OGAFCA coffers and put us into a healthier financial position going forward into 2020.

Fifield Fun Day 2019 - Paula talked us through the accounts, the total amount raised after outgoings being £5,054.36.

Election of Directors: By rotation is was Barbara Frame's turn to stand down at the AGM. Barbara was the only person who was nominated and seconded to serve so Barbara was duly appointed for another term.

Resolutions: There were no Resolutions to discuss

Any Other Business: Grenville asked about the Bray Studios, we received the following answers from Alison Knight; The new temporary stages, workshops and offices were granted a temporary permission for two years on 4th June 2020. The landscaping is 'work in progress' some of the large mounds of soil near the front of the site have been removed/relocated. Further landscaping works along the front of the site are planned which will include tree planting. The Phoenix Gym club remains on site. Farmglade have been incredibly supportive, charging no rent since 2014. and prior to that had not increased the rent since they acquired the site in 2001. The planning permission for the housing remains in place, with the film studios being currently let for a major new TV production, it is not envisaged that housing will be built in the near future.

Ken Elvin (Chairman Bray Parish Council) advised that the Parish Office has now re-located to the Braywood Memorial Hall. The Parish Clerk is in situ and available from 9-12 daily although due to the size of the building and current restrictions an appointment should be made before visiting the office.

<u>The Future:</u> We will continue to organise social events to bring the community together and raise funds for the Association and charities. We are working with BPC to 'green up' our villages, we are keen to see reduced speed limits introduced and general improvements to road safety. You can help us by joining a workgroup, delivering newsletters, writing an article for the newsletters or just by attending events.

And finally, Barbara thanked Rita Haynes for continuing to litter pick, Barry, David, Doreen, Sarah and Nicola for watering our hanging baskets, our workgroups for all their work behind the scenes, our excellent newsletter deliverers, all our members for their continued support and all the community for their magnificent response to the 'lockdown', coming together to support one another and ensuring that all our vulnerable residents were taken care of.

Local History: Bishops Farm Close, Oakley Green



Bishops Farm Close is situated on the north-western edge of the hamlet of Oakley Green, some 800m to the south of the river Thames. The site is quite flat; at a height of approximately 26m above Ordnance Datum. The geology, is London Clay. The archaeological background for the Close derives in the main from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley, from which numerous sites have been identified by a variety of methods (Ford, 1987; Gates 1975; Foreman et al. 2002). Approximately 400m to the north a Bronze Age 'burnt mound' has been located by trial trenching (Pine 1996) and immediately to the east lies the early 15th-century timber-framed hall of Bishops Farmhouse Manor, a grade II listed building. Earthworks visible in the adjacent field may also be of medieval origin, comprising a possible three-sided enclosure and ridge and furrow (remnants of medieval cultivation).

One of the oldest properties in the Close is Bishops Farm Manor which was recorded in the Bray Church records of 1288 as being occupied by Michael Bisshop and Edith Busshoppe (hence Bishops Close??). The Bisshop, Bysshop, and Bishop family lived in the Manor until 1707 and



were involved with the neighbouring estate of Bullocks Hatch around 1292. The rental of the Manor was 12s in 1650 and by 1658 had increased to £1 5s 11d per annum. By 1836 the Manor was occupied by Lady Jane Lindores, then by various bankers, doctors, builders and . It was leased in 1958 by a Mr and Mrs Frederick Henderson Jee for £1000 who eventually acquired the Freehold in 1960 for £3000. In 1968 Mr Henderson Lee died leaving his wife, Joan, the owner. In 1961 Mrs

Henderson Lee had met a Mrs. Lambert in Oakley Green who told her that she had worked in the kitchens at 'Bishops' when she was 16. She recalled that "In the early 1900's Edward V11, then The Prince of Wales, used to take a pony and trap ride down from Windsor Castle to 'Bishops' to join his

theatrical friends. The hustle and bustle in preparation for a visit from His Highness, she recalled, can well be imagined" (by Joan Jee).

This Manor, part brick with an old tile cabled roof, was a 3 framed bay house built of a part timber frame encased in render with many false timbers over the rendering. There have certainly been a number of alterations to the property since the 15th Century, including one bay being demolished to extend the property.



Charlotte Evans, who currently lives in one of the properties at Bishops Farmhouse Manor, sent these photos of the interior and the Snooker Room with viewing gallery as it was many years ago. If anyone else has any further history or stories to share about the properties in Bishops Farm Close please do get in touch via the Editor and we will include it in future newsletters.

Sarah Grace

Les and Stella Collicot

Sadly, Les Collicot, founder member and chairman of the Bowls Club at Braywood Memorial Hall, passed away on 24 September and his wife Stella shortly afterwards on 8 October.

Les and Stella lived in Fifield for over 35 years and both played at the Bowls Club for many years. Les was also chairman of the Hall Committee and Stella the cleaner for the village hall. Our thoughts and sympathies go out to his daughters and family.

Fifield Art Group

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What a strange summer!

After several discussions with the Government, we finally got to play cricket.! The new rules imposed were hard to follow - wipe the ball and sanitise hands every 6 overs, only one player can touch the ball, and no celebrations within two metres of one another. But we got through it, and had a great half season. We played 9 league games, and a host of friendly games.

The 1st team won 7 matches, lost 1 and had one abandoned. The 2nd team won 6 matches and lost 2. The 1st team won the league and the 2nd team came second. So overall, it was a successful season.

Let's hope we all have a better 2021 and can all get back to normal life. Stay safe.

Brett Carter - Braywood Cricket Club Chairman

Drainage update

The successful completion of the Coningsby Lane project last summer proved itself last winter but there are still major remaining challenges posed by the passage of surface water from the high ground of the Drift Road northwards towards the Thames. These cannot realistically be improved by simply trying to expedite the onward flow.

We know that in the past Streetcare did not dismiss the idea of trying to hold back or delay the full flow at various points along the different routes. We don't know if Project Centre now consider this a viable idea but we had a meeting scheduled with RBWM Highways to discuss the possibilities, Due to COVID-19 this was postponed till proper attention and focus could be hoped for and as yet has not been rescheduled.

In the meantime there is a "wet spot" which is ostensibly one of the simplest to deal with but which needs constantly repeated attention. This is the ditch at the speed bump on the Fifield Road near Longlea Nursing Home. Some years ago we managed to get Streetcare to carry out the necessary work as the adjacent landowner denied that it was their responsibility. Nothing has been done since then even though the task needs to be done annually. So is likely to be causing problems again this winter. We will raise the issue again with Highways in hope that something can be done.

Send your comments on any issue relating to our community via OGAFCAP.co.uk or by post to the address on the inside front cover

Scarecrow Festival

We had to cancel the Fifield Fun Day this summer due to Covid-19 so we held a Scarecrow Festival over the August Bank Holiday weekend. This was enthusiastically supported by many and an incredible 27 scarecrows attended throughout the area!

They ranged from large scarecrows to a small pig sipping Pina Colada and one lucky enough to have his own tractor! There was even a witch flying, or should I say "crashing", in the village and the vet's scarecrow made his way somehow to Jealotts Hill where he was apprehended by his owner!

Thank you so much to all those who took part - your scarecrows were wonderful. I have had many requests that we do it again next year. Photos of your scarecrows are on the OGAFCA website and Facebook page.

Trish Pottinger



Would you like to advertise in this Newsletter?

Please contact Bill Collier on 07811 953071 or via email: fifieldartgroup@gmail.com or adverts can be submitted via the website www.ogafcap.co.uk

Christmas Raffle to Refurbish Phone Box



OGAFCA need to raise £2000 to refurbish the vintage phone box in Oakley Green Road back to its original condition to house a defibrillator. So we are holding a Christmas Raffle to fundraise and of course any donations will be gratefully received to bring our village phone

box back to its former glory. If you can help and would like to buy Christmas raffle tickets or sell some for us please contact:

- Bill Collier on 07811 953071 fifieldartgroup@gmail.com
- Or via contact us via the website www.ogafcap.co.uk



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Halloween Trail for all!

Trick or treating might not be happening this year so we are giving the kids something to keep Halloween alive! We are organising a Halloween trail around the village. Anyone who would like to take part can display a letter of the alpahbet in their garden on 31 October. We will create a map showing where the houses are so the kids can hunt the letters and put them together to discover the spooky secret word!

When they have cracked the code, they can head to the final destination (to be confirmed) to collect their treats!

If you would like to take part, either by displaying a letter or just to be sent the map, please email Stacy at Fifieldtrail@gmail.com by 25th October.

More details available on the website and Oakley Green & Fifield Community Group Facebook page.



Bray Parish Office moves to Braywood Memorial Hall

Bray Parish Office has now moved from behind Holyport Memorial Hall to the Jubilee Room at the back of Braywood Memorial Hall.

The Parish Clerk is in situ and available from 9am to 12 noon daily, although due to the size of the building and current restrictions an appointment should be made before visiting the office.

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Dates for your Dairy 2020

- Saturday October 31 OGAFCA Halloween Trail 5pm onwards
- Sunday November 8 Remembrance Service, Braywood Memorial,
 Oakley Green Road 3pm OGAFCA Committee attending only
- Monday January 4 Editor's Deadline for Winter Newsletter

Volunteers are needed to help on OGAFCA Work Groups. If you would like to get involved please do contact us through www.ogafcap.co.uk

Gigaclear Update

Gigaclear are working in partnership with Superfast Berkshire to provide ultrafast full fibre broadband to homes and businesses. This is fibre to every property unlike BT Openreach who just have fibre to their local cabinet and then slow copper wires to premises from there.

Our area has been split into two projects, Fifield North and Fifield South as Gigaclear call them. The projects will deliver full fibre capability to every premise, residential and business, with Superfast speeds up to 1000 megabits per second. There has been and will continue to be some disruption on local public highways during the build phase.

Fifield North Project began in February 2020 and includes Drift Road, Fifield Lane, Forest Green Road, Oakley Green Road and Dedworth Road. Major ducting is all installed, apart from some lanes which are private and easements are still being arranged and the eastern end of Oakley Green Road which will be installed over school holidays when there is less traffic. The Control Centre has been built inside a big green cabinet opposite Braywood Memorial Hall. Connection Boxes have been installed on the public highway outside every premise ready for connection later. Fibre Optic Cable will be "blown through" soon. There is room in the ducting for other providers. Gigaclear will install their fibre optic cables inside their part of the ducting first . We expect these to start to become live in the next 3 to 6 months in this part of the project.

Fifield South Project began a few weeks ago and involves 14 km of fibre optic cabling connecting all 655 Premises. Ducting is now installed in Coningsby Lane and will be installed in Fifield Road during September and October. Stewart Close, Meadow Way and Manor Grove will be installed at the end of October. Then later the A308 West, Huxtable Gardens, Oakley Gardens, Tithe Barn Drive, Monkey Island Lane to Monkey Island, Weirbank, A308 East and Water Oakley to Oakley Court Hotel. All completed by Q3 2021 about a year from now. Properties in Fifield close to the Control Centre at the Memorial Hall could be connected up much earlier.

What happens next? Once your area is made live you will be invited to connect up from the small black box on the public highway to your property. There may be a charge if they are a long way apart. Gigaclear has a number of internet packages to choose from - the faster the service, the more expensive it is. But we will not be restricted to use Gigaclear. The network installed will be "Open Access" so any Internet Service Provider (ISP), that

wishes to, may provide services in our area and can compete. Currently there are 8 other companies involved. To receive build updates and notification when your connection is live, please register at: **gigaclear.com/mycommunity** or go to the OGAFCA Website for more information.

Communications Work Group

Bray Studios update from Alison Knight Consulting

Work continues apace on Down Place House, the Grade II listed building which forms part of the original Bray Studios site. The building is not yet water-tight so the scaffolding and roof covering will remain in place whilst the major work continues this Autumn. The west elevation, which was the original entrance to the house, has been completely rebuilt using thousands of hand-made 2-inch bricks, replicating the original. Throughout the building in the roof, external and internal walls and floors, many rotting timbers have had to be replaced. The southern part of the roof has been replaced and is now complete with repaired castellations and new grey natural slates. The rest of the roof will be finished this Autumn, and the chimney on the north elevation will be rebuilt. The iconic portico overlooking the river has had to have extensive new steel works but is nearing completion. This river-facing elevation has had several new bespoke window frames installed, as well as refurbishment of as many of the original Georgian sash windows as could be salvaged.

On the wider studio site, you may have noticed that much of the surplus spoil has been relocated, and landscaping work is ongoing. New Covid safety measures such as additional wash hand basins and sanitising stations are being installed, and it is envisaged that staff will return this Autumn to begin set and prop making.

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Welcome Pack

If you are new to the area and have not received a "Welcome Pack" please contact us at www.ogafcap.co.uk

Local Planning Matters

Borough Local Plan - Progress with the Borough Local Plan remains slow, with the initial consultation starting back in 2016. However Examination of the Plan is resuming in accordance with Government COVID-19 guidelines and the Inspector issued her Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) for Stage 2 of the Examination in June. OGFRA made a submission to the Inspector on the MIQs and asked to participate in the Stage 2 Hearings which are scheduled to take place online over 15 days in October and November.

After the Hearings, and if the Inspector determines that the Submission Version of the Borough Local Plan can be made 'sound' subject to certain changes, a further consultation would then take place on those changes (known as 'Main Modifications'). This could ultimately lead to formal adoption of a modified Plan by RBWM in 2021.

Aldi store at Wyevale Garden Centre site - Aldi submitted formal plans for its proposed discount store at the Wyevale Garden Centre site back in May. Whilst many Windsor residents would welcome the availability of a discount store in the Windsor area, the view of OGFRA (and many other organisations/residents) is that this is not an appropriate site. The next step is for the application to go to the Borough's Development Management Panel.

One of the concerns with the proposed store is the effect of the additional traffic generated on local roads, including the already congested A308.

A308 Corridor Study - RBWM (with adjoining authorities) was awarded £90,000 back in March 2018 towards a study to enhance connections and manage traffic along the A308 corridor. The study should assess the impact of multiple developments currently planned along the A308 both locally and beyond and set out options to mitigate these and the associated noise and air pollution. OGFRA has been pressing for completion of this crucial study, but RBWM has not given it the priority it deserves. We have consistently argued that a prerequisite to any development proposals along the A308 should be (a) completion of the A308 corridor study and (b) the design and availability of funding of all necessary improvement works

However, RBWM is now belatedly moving forward with the first stage of the study, looking at all modes of travel along the A308 corridor including walking, cycling, public transport, freight and car. As well as the A308 itself,

RBWM wants to know what issues there are on parallel transport routes and roads that join the A308. This first stage is being conducted through an interactive map to which comments can be added. This is being run by Project Centre and the interactive map can be found at https:// consultprojectcentre.co.uk/a308 . The closing date for comments is $\underline{9}$ October, we hope that the results will remain accessible after this date.

This article has been provided by the Oakley Green & Fifield Residents Association (<u>www.ogfra.org</u>)

New year, new normal for Braywood School



Due to the pandemic and the requirement to self isolate, our neighbours will probably be aware that we are operating different drop off and collection arrangements for the children. We have staggered times when the children are coming into school and parents are not staying on site so the turnaround is a lot quicker. These arrangements will continue through the winter months.

The children have been so excited to come back to school and apart from the additional organisational procedures, school is continuing as normal. The children have had their usual forest school experiences around the campfire and later in September, once our pupils from last year were settled back in, we were able to welcome our new children. Due to the weather we have had lots of lessons outside which have been great fun!

Susan Calvert - Head Teacher

OGAFCA Website redesign

A new look and feel has been developed for the website but it is a large and complex site and requires a lot of time to implement. A substantial amount of work has been done but much remains but may take till Spring to complete.



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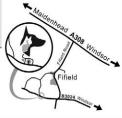
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Roads and Transport update

The Oakley Green Road weight restrictions have been in place for six months now and I think it is fair to say that there are fewer lorries using the road but there are still serial offenders. We have now conducted a second lorry watch but did not record a large number of transgressors. We still need to put in place a robust system of reporting these vehicles to Trading Standards. Some residents have been conducting their own lorry watches and anyone wishing to do so can take a form from the OGAFCA website and return it to Barbara Frame to add to the ammunition.

We had to postpone a meeting of the Roads and Transport Group recently but we hope to be able to arrange one soon before the restrictions tighten any further. Items on the Agenda will be further lorry watches, measures to pursue the promised reduction in speed limit on Oakley Green Road and a reduction on the northern end of Fifield Road where it is currently National speed limit.

Ongoing concerns are improvements to the footways in Oakley Green and Fifield and the creation of a roundabout at the Fifield Crossroads.

Recent weekend closures of the M4 have caused congestion on the A308 and surrounding roads. Best avoided!!!

Art Classes return

The art class has had a bumpy ride these last few months. We had 42 students in March when like all clubs we had to close due to Covid-19 and then we were allowed to return to class in August but found that because of the virus a lot of the students didn't want to risk coming back. The result is that I have had to reduce my classes from 4 to 2 and the numbers from 42 to 15. I am hoping however that if things ease and it may be possible to get a few more people coming back to join us.

On the 12 May this year it was 10 years since the Art Classes started but sadly we were not allowed to celebrate so we will just say "Happy Birthday" to the Art Classes without a celebration this year.

During the warmer weather some of our students went out on Sunday mornings to sketch in the surrounding area and found some little gems to draw and paint. So thank you to Lavinia for organising those trips. I am keeping my fingers crossed that we will all be meeting again soon.

Bill Collier.

ANIMAL TALES: Simon - the Ship's Cat

There have been many Dickin medals awarded to animals over the years but only one has been awarded to a cat. That cat is Simon, the ship's cat of the HMS Amethyst who saved a crew from starvation.

HMS Amethyst was a Royal Naval frigate sent to Nanking to relieve the destroyer HMS Consort during the Boxer Rebellion in 1949. A cat and dog formed part of the crew of the ship. They provided companionship and helped to boost the morale of the crew. Simon enjoyed wandering around the ship, spending time in the Captain's cabin, strolling around the guests at dinner and sitting on the ship's charts. He tolerated Peggy the dog.

During a patrol on a very foggy day the ship was attacked. A direct hit killed the Captain and 17 men and severely damaged the hull. The steering mechanism was also damaged and the ship drifted onto a sandbank and became beached. The Communists kept watch on the bank planning to wait until the crew were starved into surrender. The crew had salvaged most of the food and distilled their own water but rats were breeding quickly and eating the supplies and there was no sign of any assistance reaching them.

In spite of being wounded during the attack, Simon rose to the occasion. He began catching rats in vast numbers so that the crew began to record them on a chart in the officers' mess. This was a huge boost to the morale of the crew and meant that their rations, already halved, were going to last a lot longer. Simon, realising his importance began to spend his relaxation time in the Captain's quarters or the officers' mess.

Finally, in July, after months stranded on the Yangtze, under the command of Commander John Kerans who had been helped on board by the Chinese Nationalists, the Amethyst made a dramatic escape and reached Hong Kong where they made repairs. Whilst in dock Simon continued to kill a rat a day.

In October they sailed back into Plymouth where the story of their miraculous escape had made worldwide news. Simon was declared the hero of the hour and was sent letters and telegrams as well as cat food and money to buy cream. The PDSA awarded Simon the Dickin medal for gallantry and for "behaviour of the highest order". Sadly, his wounds took their toll and he died on 28 November 1950. He was buried with



full military honours in the PDSA cemetery in Ilford surrounded by bouquets of flowers sent from all around the country.

Taken from 'The Animal Victoria Cross' by Peter Hawthorne

Lest we Forget - Remembrance Day 11 November

Covid-19 restrictions will make it difficult to attend Remembrance Day Services in the usual way this year. To say thank you and remember those who lost their lives in conflicts we would like to pass on, and fully support, a recent suggestion that OGAFCA residents and businesses may like to put a poppy drawing or painting in their window or make poppies to display in some other way for Remembrance Day on 11



To help here are a few ideas of red poppy pictures including purple poppies for animals who lost their lives

in the war and white poppies for a culture of peace.

For a small donation you can download a poppy to colour in from the British Legion website: www.britishlegion.org.uk

And there are many other ideas for Remembrance Day poppies and artwork on the internet so do take a look and show your support if you can.



