

## Diary for February

All events at the Memorial Hall unless otherwise shown

|      |      |                  |               |
|------|------|------------------|---------------|
| Sun  | 2nd  | Dog Club - Field | 10.00-11.00am |
|      |      | Bowls AGM        | 3.00-5.00pm   |
| Tues | 4th  | Bowls            | 2.00-4.00pm   |
|      |      | NSYC             | 7.00-9.30pm   |
| Wed  | 5th  | Pilates          | 9.30-10.30pm  |
| Thur | 6th  | Gardeners        | 7.30-10.00pm  |
| Fri  | 7th  | Dancing Club     | 8.00-10.30 pm |
| Sat  | 8th  | Private Booking  | 4.30-9.30pm   |
| Sun  | 9th  | Dog Club - Field | 10.00-11.00am |
|      |      | Bowls            | 3.00-5.00pm   |
| Tues | 11th | Bowls            | 2.00-4.00pm   |
| Wed  | 12th | Pilates          | 9.30-10.30pm  |
|      |      | WI               | 2.00-4.00pm   |
| Thur | 13th | Bowls            | 7.30-9.30 pm  |
| Fri  | 14th | Dancing Club     | 8.00-10.30 pm |
| Sun  | 16th | Dog Club - Field | 10.00-11.00am |
|      |      | Bowls            | 3.00-5.00pm   |
| Tues | 18th | Bowls            | 2.00-4.00pm   |
|      |      | NSYC             | 7.00-9.30pm   |
| Wed  | 19th | Pilates          | 9.30-10.30 am |
|      |      | Parish Council   | 7.00-9.30pm   |
| Thur | 20th | Bowls            | 7.30-9.30pm   |
| Fri  | 21st | Dancing Club     | 8.00-10.30 pm |
| Sun  | 23rd | Dog Club - Field | 10.00-11.00am |
|      |      | Bowls            | 3.00-5.00pm   |
| Tue  | 25th | Bowls            | 2.00-4.00pm   |
| Wed  | 26th | Pilates          | 9.30-10.30 am |
| Thur | 27th | Bowls            | 7.30-9.30 pm  |
| Fri  | 28th | Dancing Club     | 8.00-10.30 pm |

## February 2014—Editor's notes



Apart from Valentine's Day, this month also brings several other anniversaries; were some of these really **that** long ago?!

100 years ago (2 Feb 1914)

The film "Making a Living" was released in the USA and Charlie Chaplin's first film appearance

80 years ago (23 Feb 1934)

Death of Edward Elgar, British composer

75 years ago (25 Feb 1939)

World War II: The first Anderson air-raid shelters were delivered to households in Islington, in anticipation of German bombs.

30 years ago (14 Feb 1984)

Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean won gold at the Winter Olympics in Sarajevo, scoring the first perfect 6.0 in Olympic ice-dancing history.

10 years ago (4 Feb 2004)

The social networking site Facebook was launched

And lastly, for those who have not yet heard, I have to report the very sad news that Roy Town died on 7th January. Ann Rich has kindly written about his life for us, see page 5.

Sue Gardner

Also this month:

**Regulars:** St Mary Magdelene and South Green Churches Service dates; W.I.; Poet's Corner; Cottage Gardeners; Rural Reflections

**Reports from:** Book Club;

**Notices & Dates:** Freighter information; Stockbury Observer Deadline dates 2014; Community Bus schedule; Library; Maidstone Symphony Orchestra; Stockbury Art Exhibition (November)

## Problem solved by Parody!



by John Cockett

Our village has started to grow  
With some very nice buildings you know!  
My neighbours and I had a fear  
That we just could not see them from here  
But with extra tall ladders and glasses  
We might view the very nice houses  
If it wasn't for the hedges in-between!

## Stockbury Parish Council Minutes

**The minutes for a parish council meeting will be approved at the following meeting and will then be published on [www.stockbury.org.uk](http://www.stockbury.org.uk) within 5 days of the meeting at which they were approved**

## St Mary Magdalene Church Stockbury



The services in February are as follows:-

2 February – 3.00 pm Sung Communion  
9 February – **no service**  
16 February – 3.00 pm Sung Communion  
23 February – **no service**

In the event of severe bad weather, the services advertised may have to be cancelled so please check with The Revd Liz Cox if in doubt.

Details of the range of services held within the benefice of the six parishes, to which Stockbury belongs, can also be found on the parishes' website – [www.thesix.org.uk](http://www.thesix.org.uk). or contact The Revd Liz Cox .

For Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals please contact The Revd Elizabeth Cox – tel 01795 435184

Penny Stevens—PCC secretary

## SOUTH GREEN CHURCH

No services will be held at South Green during February but during this period you will be most welcome at the 10.30 am service in Sittingbourne Methodist Church.

We will be pleased to welcome you at South Green when services are resumed at the usual time of 10 am on Sunday 2nd March

## Saturday Freighter Service Stockbury Village Hall



The next collection date is 22nd February from 10:15 to 11:00

For more information : <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk> and search for *Saturday Freighter Service Dates*

## POLICE CONTACT POINT DATES

A Police Contact Point will be available outside the Stockbury Village Hall every fortnight. This is a chance to discuss local concerns with your PCSO

**Sunday 9 February 2014 12.00 pm - 1.00 pm**  
**Sunday 23 February 2014 12.00 pm - 1.00 pm**

## M B Farms Opening Hours

Monday to Saturday 8.00 am—5.00 pm  
Sunday 8.00 am—3.00 pm

**National Lottery now available**  
*Find us now on Facebook!*



## Stockbury WI

Our first event in 2014 was an enjoyable and informative presentation by Chris Spree on the Walled Garden at Owlett House, Cobham. Chris and his family were residents for 17 years and completely restored the extensive gardens over a period of 10 years. Produce grown (with hard work and rich local manure) ranged from king sized leeks to tall, elegant delphiniums and a stunning 100 year old Wisteria—sadly now removed. Owletts is a red brick Charles 11 house. It is occupied today as a family home and is administered on the National Trust's behalf by a descendent of the donor. It was the former home of architect Sir Herbert Baker, who was extremely successful in designing overseas buildings. On his death in 1946 he left his house to the National Trust.

We say a fond farewell to Bridget who is leaving us after 26 years. Our very best wishes Bridget for a happy future and many happy memories of Stockbury WI.

Our craft group are taking on the exciting project/ challenge of designing and making our own banner (a replica of Stockbury village sign). Poppies will be included in the design to commemorate the 100 year war. Anybody interested in helping this project would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Wendy Gibson.

Reminder that the next two meetings are:

Ian Porter Suffragettes on 12th February.  
Celia Hamilton-Jones Pilates on 13th March.  
Both meetings start at 3 pm

Maureen Mannering

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## Mobile Library

The mobile library stops out the front of Stockbury Village Hall every Thursday between 10.00 and 10.20 am.

## Post Office hours

Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri 9.00 am—5.00 pm  
Wednesday 9.00 am—4.00 pm  
Saturday 9.00 am—12.30 pm

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Got a question for Stockbury Parish Council? Send us an email to [parishcouncil@stockbury.org.uk](mailto:parishcouncil@stockbury.org.uk)

Visit us on:

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# THE HARROW PUBLIC HOUSE STOCKBURY

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EMAIL: [theharrowstockbury@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:theharrowstockbury@hotmail.co.uk)



Roy and Di wish you a warm and hearty welcome to The Harrow, a 200 year old public house. We hope you enjoy your meal: if you do then please tell others, if you don't then please tell us!

Our Opening Times are:

|            |                     |
|------------|---------------------|
| Mon        | 11.00 am – 9.00 pm  |
| Tues & Wed | 11.00 am – 11.00 pm |
| Fri & Sat  | 11.00 am – 11.00ish |
| Sun        | 12.00 pm – 9.00 pm  |

We carry a wide range of Beers, Wines and Spirits many of which are not on show so please ask if you cannot see your favourite.

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Please check out our Facebook page for updates and information.

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AND OTHER THEME NIGHTS**

To contact the editor: Email:

[stockburyobserver@googlemail.com](mailto:stockburyobserver@googlemail.com)

All stories, notices, letters, recipes, articles and pictures welcome.

All contributions must have a genuine name and contact details otherwise the article will not be considered for publication.

Please try to write your article as concisely as possible.

The Editor may have to change your layout etc. in order to fit the space onto the pages.

Deadline third Friday of the month, see page 8 for details. Please provide your articles sooner if possible please.

All emails will be acknowledged.

*Views expressed by contributors are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Editor or Parish Council. However, the Editor reserves the right to publish, shorten articles/letters or reduce the size of notices.*



## Rural Reflections: Dinosaurs are us?!

by Sue Gardner

I have never thought of myself as a dinosaur especially as I usually embrace such things as technology – I have an android phone (ha!) and I've used a computer since, well, forever; that's how I make a living after all. Without a computer producing the Stockbury Observer with pen and paper would take an age. But I like to keep one finger on the past, just in case.

This is why when after having had a recent clear-out of books a friend posed the question as to why on earth I would still hang on to The Boys Handbook 1981 and the World Almanac 1993. My friend didn't notice my English-Polish dictionary that I won at a Harrow pub quiz a few years back.

Had I the need to justify their existence alongside my "just-in-case" books, I could argue my case: if a (hopefully) Polish driver was found blocking the road after taking a short-cut via The Street I could give directions to him rather than give frantic gesticulations to reverse his stuck truck the hell away from my drive so I can get to work! Obviously, it

would be slow progress but more friendly, don't you think? And if there's any doubt over the driver's nationality, I can always look up the lorry's registration ID in The Boys' Handbook!

I also keep those leaflets I deem to be useful from local businesses and I still have the last Yellow Pages I ever received and I don't remember the last time I had a Telephone Directory left on my doorstep despite having a land-line. Apparently many people don't these days, especially youngsters with their mobile phones.

But why would I need any of these relics in this day of the internet? I could ditch the old books and directories and become less cluttered. I could Google what I needed to find out (other search engines are also available!) Besides, I rarely use my cordless landline choosing to use my "free" mobile phone minutes. And phone boxes! Who remembers them? Ah, well, if you live in Stockbury you couldn't really forget, as there's been one posing as a greenhouse for weeds outside the Village hall for years even when there hasn't been a working phone in it since, well, I moved here in 2007

(Continued on page 5)

# Roy Eric Town 1934 – 2014

Written by Ann Rich

After a comparatively short illness Roy sadly died in Maidstone hospital on January 7<sup>th</sup>.

Roy was a Stockbury man through and through; he started his life in Pett Cottages and then moved to his present house as a child. He was educated in Stockbury school and from there went to Rainham Secondary school. In those days the school leaving age was 15 and it was then that he started work at the Export Packing Firm in Sittingbourne. Employment was interrupted by National Service, part of which he served in Egypt. After that he apparently never touched rice again !

In 1957 he married his childhood sweetheart, Betty and in 1964 they started a family. Angela was their firstborn and in 1965 Julie followed. Meanwhile Roy continued in work first as a coalman for Filmer and Payne then he took up lorry driving for R.A Beck and finally in his working life he spent 28 years at Bowaters Paper Mill. During those years he had no time off for illness and was proud of that. He and his family became immersed in village life and eventually bought his childhood home.



You will probably remember Roy, even if you didn't know his name, because if he was tending his garden outside his house in The Street he would have talked to you. His garden was his passion and he loved to tell you about his plants and his method of cultivation. The results of his labours were always well ordered and colourful – a great asset to the Stockbury garden displays. Did you know also that it was he who made sure the rose trees at MB Farm were in good order and what a good display his nurturing made!

Gardening was not his only hobby. He played cricket for Stockbury in the 60s and in the 70s he was the Kent County Darts Champion and was proud to have beaten Eric Bristow in one of his matches! No matter what the sport, he loved to follow it either in the flesh or latterly on TV. In later years searching for antique farm machinery at farming events, with his son-in-law Robin, gave him great pleasure.

This even tempered, gentle man will be missed by many in Stockbury and we pass on our condolences to his family.

His funeral will be held at Stockbury Church on January 28<sup>th</sup> at 11.00am. You are welcome to send flowers or alternatively to send a donation to Save Stockbury Church fund, if you wish

## *Rural Reflections: Dinosaurs are us?! (cont. from page 4)*

and it's not been working since before then! If you've been keeping abreast of matters raised by the public at parish council meetings over the years you would know it can't be removed until its electricity supply has been removed...hold that thought...

At about 8.30 pm on 20th January the most recent major power-cut this winter hit Stockbury. In such an emergency I could have referred to the "Survival" section in my Boys' Handbook using candle power to work out how to light a fire in order to send an SOS smoke signal to the Power company. Luckily, I have a log-burner and already know how to light a fire but being dark I didn't think it was worth trashing an old blanket (if I had one).

My friend rang me on her mobile phone to inform me the engineers were on their way (so no need to send a smoke signal – why didn't I think of that?) but after 10 minutes of chatting my phone beeped at me to plug in my charger. Oh-oh...no internet, no land-line and soon there would be no mobile. Now where's that blanket...just in case...

After 3 hours of no power (unlike some lucky people who

were restored by 10 pm) I abandoned hopes of being able to make a hot drink and went to bed.

At around 3 am I was woken by male voices and clanking outside my house. I just had to look. Far too late for chucking-out time at the Harrow. There was enough emergency lighting to illuminate the cause: a van-sized generator was being installed in the village hall car park.

By morning, I had mixed feelings: the constant drone of what sounded like a helicopter hovering over my house versus the contents of my freezer being saved. If only I'd had the sense to search out my earplugs at 3 am!

At least I'd had the sense to turn off all my light switches before I went to bed, and plugged in my phone to recharge just in case, and thanks to the generator it was. I had a text message at 10 pm from a technology-reliant friend: "Don't suppose you have the number of a local taxi company?"

Actually, I do. Too late of course. I know exactly where it is and could probably find it blindfold in my collection of leaflets but I'm still not getting rid of The Boys' Handbook or the World Almanac as you never know when I might need to find out how a computer worked circa 1993 or the population of Turkmenistan!



# STOCKBURY COTTAGE GARDENERS

February 2014

*“It is now twenty weeks since the rains started; there is no truth in the rumour that Terry Brown is trialling a hybrid rice variety this year”!*

February should be the month to be planting in the greenhouse a number of seed types so as to arrive early with a healthy crop. It is too easy to leave it late and the daylight hours at the end of the year do not allow you to ripen the vegetable or fruits.

I have now sown tomatoes, onions, leeks, parsley and cucumbers. If you missed the autumn sowing window for broad beans then you can catch up by sowing seeds in an old piece of guttering in the greenhouse, transplanting these when large enough into the garden. In the garden I will sow spinach, and parsnip seeds. The downside of planting at this time of year is that you have to heat the greenhouse, but I think that is a small price to pay. I work on the theory that if you heat a greenhouse you may as well sow as many seeds as you can fit into the space as it is already heated.

This year for the first time the grow lights that I use for the competition onion and leeks have been supplemented by the use of LED grow lights, reputedly to reduce energy consumption by up to 90%. I will let you know how I get on. I also deny any rumours that the recent power cuts were caused by my greenhouse!

Any ground used for planting brassicas should really be allowed to settle down and NOT be dug over too late; brassicas love to have their roots in firm ground, so much so that when transplanting seedlings they need to be “levered” into place by a dibber. If this is not carried out correctly then there is always a good chance that the flower heads will “blow”: this means that cabbage heads will not grow hard and they tend to be loose headed. Similarly Brussels sprouts will blow as well, and there is nothing worse than a row of these not being worth eating, especially having nurtured them all through the

summer.

Please remember as soon as the garden centres display seeds, you should be advised to purchase them. I have noticed over the recent years that the “renaissance” of vegetable gardening has caused all of the popular varieties to sell out fast.

If you have a plot where you only require a small number of plants of one variety, why not purchase seedlings from a garden centre and let the nurseryman bear the costs of raising the seedlings? Better still wait until the spring fair in the village and purchase from the gardeners stall, as you can have the advice free of charge as well at the time of purchase!

Other jobs to do in February:

- Cuttings taken from carnations etc. earlier can be transplanted into their own pots now using good quality compost.
- Finish pruning apple, pears etc.
- Plant new bushes and fruit trees. Again a good tip is to buy from a good source to guarantee quality.
- Spray the first dose of Dythane or copper-based spray onto any peach or peach family plants (nectarines, apricots, almonds) to avoid peach leaf curl, a second dose or even a third dose in 2 week intervals. This is best carried out when the bark is dry with very little wind.
- Keep feeding the wild birds, remember that they do have different feeding habits and requirements so please feed the different varieties found in the shops.

*“to get the best results you must talk to your vegetables” :Prince Charles.*

Chris Spree—  
Chairman



## CALLING ALL ADVERTISERS

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Our annual rates for advertising are very reasonable and have remained unchanged for the third, consecutive year:

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Our advertising year started in June but if you would like to take out an ad for the remaining months you still can.

Adverts for less than 12 months duration and smaller sized ads will be charged on a pro-rata basis on application. Please email: [stockburyobserver@googlemail.com](mailto:stockburyobserver@googlemail.com) to express your intent. The editor will confirm receipt and an invoice will be sent along with details of how to pay.

If you are a new customer please also attach your ad, preferably in MS Word or Publisher. Please bear in mind when designing your ad that large solid blocks of colour may not look so good in black and white on the paper version, despite looking great on our website.

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Mote Hall, Maidstone Leisure Centre, Mote Park, Maidstone,  
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The programme consists of four works:

Mendelssohn - Overture, The Hebrides

Sibelius - Valse triste

Finzi—Clarinet Concerto

Beethoven - Symphony No. 3 "Eroica"

Tickets £10, £20 and £25, full time students with a student card £5  
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Cash or Cheque payment only.

Tickets can be collected on the concert evening at Mote Hall.

Bookings can also be taken on www.mso.org.uk using the booking  
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**Advance notice**

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**SATURDAY**

**NOVEMBER 15TH 2014**



We are looking for new, original, Stockbury talent to join us.  
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**STOCKBURY BOOK CLUB**  
**January MEETING**



It was a cold January night when book club met this month to  
discuss our current reading material. We were missing  
Brenda Mace who couldn't make the meeting but after a hot  
drink and a cheery hello to everyone we began, when  
suddenly we were plunged into darkness! Yes...the ever  
invasive power cut again. The lights flickered on and off for  
a few moments before torches were dragged out of ladies  
handbags and we sat there wondering what to do next!

Luckily, Ann and Keith's home had a generator and soon  
we were in full light again, able to proceed. Of course, our  
discussion of our book was delayed somewhat due to our  
deliberations over would we or wouldn't we get the power  
restored and just whose homes were affected? I, for one,  
intended to stay the night if necessary and snuggled down to  
claim my territory on Ann and Keith's cosy sofa! However,  
by the time our meeting concluded I decided to venture home,  
sure in the fact that power would be restored quite soon.  
Needless to say I went to bed in the dark and cold that night,  
but the memories of our lively book club discussion kept me  
warm!

The book this month was 'The Girl Who Fell From The  
Sky' by Simon Mawer. Marian Sutro, the daughter of a  
diplomat and half English, half French is recruited by 'Special  
Operations Executive' to go undercover in wartime France.  
She is trained in sabotage, parachute-drops, how to withstand  
interrogation and how to kill. The story is gripping and  
intriguing and tells of patriotism, betrayal and love. It has a  
sudden ending that was both surprising and sad. All our book  
club members at the meeting thoroughly enjoyed it and it  
would be on our 'recommended reading' list!

We also had two lovely poetry readings this month from  
Moira: one moving poem 'Invictus' by W.E. Henley which  
tells of courage and comfort in times of adversity and another  
poem which was a humorous tale of love and marriage by  
Robert Graves called 'A Slice of Wedding Cake'. This  
scored highly with the women in book club as Moira read of  
well-behaved women and 'impossible' men! Or, as the poet  
says, have numbers of tolerable husbands decreased so much,  
or is it just that we 'over-value' women?! With that food for  
thought I leave you and look forward to another month of  
literary reading with our next book – J.K. Rowling's 'The  
Casual Vacancy'.... Stay warm!

Denise Summer

# Pet Portraits

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At Chestnut Plumbing we are always looking out for ways that we can help our customers, and make their heating systems better and more efficient

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We can fit an alarm to any tank but it does have limitations. Please keep an eye on the oil level of your tank and also look out for fuel caps or pipe work that has been tampered with. Please feel free to call us and we will be happy to talk to you about our service and any issues you might have with only friendly advice and no selling.

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|---|--|
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| Church Matters—St Mary Magdelene<br>Revd Liz Cox  | 01795 844241                                 |
| South Green Methodist<br>Church Steward—Freddie Davey   | 01795 842978                                 |
| Community Bus—Booking line  | 07551 454702                                 |
| Dancing Club—Sue Carey  | 01634 387478                                 |
| Dog Club—Mick Bingham   | 01795 842480                                 |
| Electricity Problems  | <b>0800 7838866</b>                          |
| Environment Agency—Incident hotline   | 0800 807060                                  |
| Fly Tipping & Waste Collection<br>Including bulky items   | 01622 602162<br>01795 842741                 |
| Gardeners—Lex Levermore<br><a href="mailto:stockburygardeners@live.com">stockburygardeners@live.com</a>       |  |
| Golf Society—Jeff Hall  | 01795 843296                                 |
| Hall Bookings—Sue Porter  | 01795 843715                                 |
| Maidstone BC Councillor Daphne Parvin   | 01622 673209<br>07967 224839<br>01795 842401 |
| MB Farms stores and Post Office   |  |
| Neighbourhood Watch—<br>Local co-ordinator—Tony Kerr  | 01795 844077                                 |
| Not So Young Club—Shirley Moss  | 01795 842691                                 |
| Kent Messenger correspondent Claire Adams<br><a href="mailto:foxgloveadams@aol.com">foxgloveadams@aol.com</a> | 01795 841140                                 |
| Parish Council - Sherrie Babington  | <b>01634 867173</b>                          |
| Pétanque Club—Mick Bingham  | 01795 842480                                 |
| Photographic Club—Tim Arnold<br><a href="mailto:timharnold@btinternet.com">timharnold@btinternet.com</a>      | 01795 843049                                 |

### Stockbury Observer Editor

Sue Gardner—[Stockburyobserver@googlemail.com](mailto:Stockburyobserver@googlemail.com)

### Police – Emergency only

**999**

**Non-emergency  
101**

### & ALL General enquiries

### Police Community Support Officer for Stockbury

PCSO Siobhan De Búrca 07772 226099

### Crimestoppers (confidential)

**0800 555111**

### Public Footpaths & bridleway (problems with)

[westprow@kent.gov.uk](mailto:westprow@kent.gov.uk) 0845 3450210

### Roads, potholes etc (manned 24 hours)

[Kent.highwayservices@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Kent.highwayservices@kent.gov.uk) 08458 247800

### RSPCA

0300 1234999

### Short Mat Bowls—Tony Russell

01795 842738

or Angela Russell 01795 842738

### South East Water emergency

0845 6032603

W.I.- Brenda Mace 01622 884746



## STOCKBURY OBSERVER DEADLINES

The following 2014 deadlines are generally the 3rd Friday of the month with the exception of January, May, August and October, when it will be the 4th Friday.

Please send your submission as soon as you can—no need to leave it to the last minute. Many thanks for your consideration:

|          |      |           |      |
|----------|------|-----------|------|
| February | 21st | August    | 22nd |
| March    | 21st | September | 19th |
| April    | 18th | October   | 24th |
| May      | 23rd | November  | 21st |
| June     | 20th | December  | 19th |
| July     | 18th |           |      |

The Editor