

The Oxhill News



December 2004

December 1

Is the Feast Day of Saints Edmund Campion, Agericus (or Airy), Eligius (or Elroy), Alexander Briant, Anasanus, Tudwal, and Ralph Sherwin. I'm sure that at least three of these are really either actors or television producers, and my sources are just having me on.

It was the day in 1640 when the Spanish were driven out of Portugal and that country regained its independence, and in 1919 when US-born Lady Nancy Astor became the first woman to take her seat in the House of Commons, as MP for the Sutton division of Plymouth. In 1925 the Locarno Pact was signed in London, guaranteeing peace and frontiers in Europe. Never trust a politician! In 1939 the film *Gone with the Wind* premiered in New York, and in 1953 the first issue of *Playboy* magazine was published; the centre-spread nude featured Marilyn Monroe.

Madame Tussaud was born in 1761, Alicia Markova in 1910 and Woody Allen in 1935.

Henry I, King of England, died in 1135 and Lorenzo Ghiberti, Italian sculptor and goldsmith, in 1455. A French composer called Vincent d'Indy apparently died in 1931, but his work seems to have passed me by completely. Probably just as well: very little actual music was written in the twentieth century. Walt Disney died in 1966 and David Ben-Gurion in 1973.

Editor

January issue

Please could I have all copy for the January issue by Midnight on **Thursday, 23rd December**? If you normally prepare your material using a computer, it would make my life easier if you could submit your offering in electronic form, though paper is, of course, fine. If you do use electronic form, the best would be a Word file with the page size set to A5 and margins of 1.5 cm all round. The font size should in general be 10 point.

My 'official' e-mail address is **news-editor@oxhill.org.uk** if you wish to send me stuff that way.

George Adams, 680286

Cover Picture

The front of Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, supplied by Russen Thomas.

Local Burglaries

Warwickshire Police have notified us that a number of burglaries have taken place in this area over the last couple of weeks. Thefts have been investigated in Kineton, Lower Kineton, Tysoe and Honington and appear to have taken place mainly in the afternoon, sometimes at weekends. The police believe that the perpetrators are watching houses until they think everyone has left. Jewellery and cash have been stolen. The police assume that the people doing the jobs are watching from cars. Accordingly, we are asked to note the registration, colour and make of any unknown vehicle which is parked nearby or being driven 'suspiciously' - which presumably means when the occupants seem more interested in watching houses rather than the road. The police do, of course, add that all doors and windows should be checked before leaving home, or even when we are at home.

The point about reporting cars is vital: a few years ago, as an experiment, the police stationed an unmarked car with two plain-clothes officers in it in a prominent place for three hours (on and off) in Oxhill. Its presence went unreported.

David Hill

Alcester Male Voice Choir

On 30th October we had a wonderful evening in the Church with the Alcester Male Voice Choir, made very special by our own village youth playing for us.

The choir, some 65 strong and filling the back of the Church, fairly lifted the rafters. This is not a choir to be missed, and we will have them here again.

Many thanks to all those who prepared the food, and to Bill for getting all the chairs to and from the Church. Also to John for manning the bar as usual, not forgetting Janet for letting us take over her kitchen. More thanks are due to Eve for the loan of her table (which I forgot to take back – sorry, Eve).

I would also like to thank Eleanor, Joshua, Charlotte, Lucy and Alice. You all have a great talent. Thank you. I just asked, and you organised everything yourselves. You are brilliant.

We made £603 for Church funds. The Alcester choir did not charge (they normally do not charge for concerts for charities) so we were very lucky.

Thank you all, Lilian

FOR SALE

Grey Upholstered Typist Chair with adjustable positioning for back and height with wheeled castors and in very good condition.

Available for a small donation to the Village Hall

Call Linda on 680850

Church Services in December

Church of St. Lawrence, Oxhill

Sunday Services

5th December	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	
12th December	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion	
19th December	10.30 a.m.	Christingle Service.	
		The collection will be given to the TEAR fund.	
26th December	10.30 a.m.	UBS, HC	Whatcote
2nd January	10.30 a.m.	UBS, Matins	Oxhill

Christmas Services

Wednesday, 22nd December 7.30 p.m. Carols by Candlelight.

The collection will be given to the Church of England Children's Society.

Christmas Eve, Friday, 24th December 11.30 p.m. Midnight Mass in Tysoe

Christmas Day, Saturday, 25th December 10.00 a.m. Holy Communion

Thursday Services

The Promises of God. This can best be described as 'worship-plus', will last from 7.30 until about 8.30 p.m., and we will be serving coffee. The themes for the 3 weeks are:

2nd December	7.30 p.m.	Faith
9th December	7.30 p.m.	Joy
16th December	7.30 p.m.	Love

There will be no worship on either 23rd or 30th December. The informal worship will resume on January 6th.

And in Tysoe:

St. Mary's Church in Tysoe is host to a Christmas Tree Festival from Sunday December 12th until Sunday December 19th. Following the service on December 12th the Church will be open between 2 and 5pm each day, and teas will be served. (After the Village Carol Service on December 19th the church will be open all day as normal.) So please do come and visit the most extraordinary collection of Christmas Trees from the elegant to the quirky.

OXHILL FESTIVAL CHOIR

Carols by Candlelight will take place on Wednesday, December 22nd, at 7.30 p.m. in Church. Practices for that will be:

Friday, December 3rd	7.30 p.m.	The Old House
Friday, December 10th	7.30 p.m.	The Old House
Friday, December 17th	7.30 p.m.	in Church.

Anyone who would like to join with us to sing at Christmas is warmly welcomed. There will be the usual choir party after the service, to which all members and spouses etc. are invited.

Jill Tucker, 680663

Christmas in Church

We are planning to decorate the Church for Christmas on Tuesday 21 December in time for the Carol Service the following evening.

Anyone who would like to assist with this labour of love is very welcome to join us.

I am hoping to arrange for some informal instruction in flower arranging for those on the Flower Rota who are interested, and of course for anyone else in the village who would like to join in and maybe join the Flower Rota.

Carol Fox, 680223

Carol Singing Round the Village

After years of devoted efforts, Fr. Russen Thomas has finally called time on organising this annual activity. Strenuous efforts are even now being made to coerce a willing replacement, and we understand that information on the when and where of this year's carolling will be circulated in the very near future.

Editor

Season's Greetings

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our friends in Oxhill from myself, Joanie and James.

I hope to get over to Oxhill one weekend before Christmas (not sure which one yet), so I might bump into a few people then.

Best Wishes, Carol Clark

NOTES OF A MEETING OF OXHILL PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 9th NOVEMBER 2004 AT 8.00 P.M. IN THE VILLAGE HALL

Apologies received from Stephen Hackett. All other Councillors were present.

MATTERS DISCUSSED

Planning

Permission had been granted for new vehicular access at Oxhill House.

The Stratford District Local Plan is to be replaced by a Local Development Framework consisting of a set of documents which can be reviewed as situations change without the need to review the whole plan. This is to be in place by March 2007. The first phase of this is the "Statement of Community Involvement". A leaflet and questionnaire are available on the District Council website if you wish to have your say on the consultancy process.

Finance

The External Audit fee of £58.75 was paid.

5 year renewal for technology access to run the Oxhill website was agreed at £78.98.

Winter Maintenance

Gritting routes have been published for this winter. A copy is posted on the Notice Board and Councillors also have copies.

Tree Warden Scheme

A Tree Warden Scheme is being set up for Stratford District. This is a volunteer appointed by the Parish or Town Council to have an overview of tree related matters in the area. If you are interested in becoming a Tree Warden a meeting is to be held on Thursday 2nd December 2004 at 7.30 p.m. at Stratford District Council Offices, Elizabeth House, Church Street, Stratford. Register your interest by contacting Martin Peel, Environmental Maintenance Manager or obtain a registration form from myself.

Postal Service

This service has deteriorated since new scheduling came into effect with mail only arriving at mid-day or mid afternoon, and sometimes not at all. Jackie Hatton is still continuing to give a good service but cannot be in two places at once. A letter would be sent to the Royal Mail expressing our dissatisfaction and their need to give a better service.

Office of Fair Trading – Doorstep Selling

An information campaign is running to highlight doorstep selling. The Office of Fair Trading give the following 3 things to remember:

Check the seller's identity.

Take control – you ask the questions

Don't sign on the spot – shop around, get advice

Organisations such as the Trading Standards and Citizens Advice Bureau are there to help you about your consumer rights.

Policing – Stratford District

A new policing structure for Stratford District has been introduced to make better use of the manpower available. A Reactive Team will primarily respond to immediate response calls. A Crime Team will be responsible for investigating serious crime and providing support to the newly formed Community Policing Teams who in turn are the local problem solving teams. The final team is a Beat Support Unit giving support across the district covering violence, burglary, drugs, as well as anti-social behaviour. Shipston Area Team: Manager – Police Sergeant Colin Hughes, Police Constables – Dale Packer, Nicki Smith and Derek Pope. All can be contacted on 01789 414111

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 11th January 2005 at 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

Angela Kean, Clerk

Toddlers Christmas Party

There will be a Christmas Party on Thursday 23rd December in Oxhill Village Hall between 10 a.m. and 12 noon. The suggested age group is six years and under.

There will be games and activities, light snacks and Father Christmas will be making an appearance. Please bring along a present for your child to be handed out by Santa. £1.00 donation on the day, please. If you are interested please call Jude on 680150, so that we can get an idea of numbers. Thank you.

Adult Learning at The Old Fire Station, Tysoe.

This term's courses have been a great success with many, such as the Basic Food Hygiene, Computers for Beginners and Computers Continued being over-subscribed. Christmas Door Wreaths was another one we could have filled several times over and we will be doing more crafts in the Spring Term.

New Year, new courses! Courses starting in the new year include Digital Cameras and Image Manipulation, Bobbin Lace Making and Calligraphy as well as Pottery and Rag Rug workshops.

Keep your eyes open for posters and flyers as the programme is constantly updated and book your place early as places can fill very quickly.

01295 688244

Nature Notes for December

The tenth month in the Roman Calendar and in Anglo-Saxon *Giuli* – the month of Yule.

It seems the sparrowhawk keeps rearing its beautiful head in the Oxhill News. I read with great interest Ann's piece on village history, especially the paragraph on the sparrowhawk given as a down payment for rent and her comment that it was presumably to be trained for use in crop protection or for sport. This sent me scurrying to my reference books on falconry. The English statutes of the Middle Ages stipulated the kinds of hawks and falcons which the different levels of society were allowed to possess. For instance a Duke would have a peregrine, a knight a goshawk, and priests and junior members of the clergy had sparrowhawks. The sparrowhawk was easily trained and in plentiful supply. Ann was correct in her assumption that they were used for crop protection, and indeed up until the beginning of the First World War they were used to frighten away or catch blackbirds and thrushes from fruit trees and bushes and in particular cherry orchards. Their ability to be released quickly from the wrist and fly low and fast, jinxing between obstacles, made them ideal for this purpose. They also hunted for the table, the chosen quarry being landrail (corn crake), quail and partridge. The Sparrowhawk is mentioned by Chaucer in his *Assembly of Birds* as being a favourite at that period for the purpose of taking quails. In 1815 a Captain John Verner caught 150 partridges in about three months with a sparrowhawk which he had trained himself.

It is interesting to note that in his book *Falconry* published in 1973, Humphrey ap Evans writes "Sparrowhawks have vanished altogether from many districts. The next ten years may be crucial for them, showing whether they are set on the slope to extinction like the beautiful and little known hobby, now fewer than 100 pairs strong in Britain, or whether they can hold on and recover". The numbers were declining because of the use of DDT as a pest control on crops. Small birds would eat seeds and fruit etc that had been treated and this would be transferred to the sparrowhawk. It didn't kill them, but it made the shell of their eggs very thin so they would break before hatching. However when the use of DDT was stopped and the killing of birds of prey made illegal, the sparrowhawk was able to make a strong comeback.

Listen out for robins singing their winter song which they will often sing at night, especially if there is street lighting (thankfully none in Oxhill). The Anglo-Saxons called the robin *rudduc* for the ruddiness of its breast, a usage that still survives today in some parts. Belief has it that the robin's red breast came about as he picked thorns from Christ's crown of thorns and was stained by Christ's blood. The first postmen, whose uniform included a bright vermillion waistcoat, were known as "Robins" and

this is one of the reasons why robins are not only featured on Christmas cards, but often shown with a letter in the beak, delivering the mail.

Remember on no account bring mistletoe into your house until Christmas Eve, "*Most powerful of all against evil is the rare oak mistletoe which should be gathered at New Moon without the use of iron, and never allowed to touch the ground: but mistletoe grown on apple trees or the sacred hawthorn is also especially worth having. Some women have worn mistletoe around their necks or arms, thinking it will help them conceive.*"

(William Coles: *Adam in Eden* 1657).

A very Merry Christmas to all Oxhill News readers, and while you feast on Christmas day, don't forget the birds (not the one on your plate!)

Grenville Moore

Christmas Candy

'Christmas Candy' is a play by Belinda Roberts that will be performed by Beetleheart Young People's Theatre Company in Oxhill Village Hall at 6.30 p.m. on Monday, 20th December. For tickets please 'phone 01926 640606.

The cast, aged approximately 8 – 16 are all local children, including Alana and Lauren Buchanan from Oxhill.

The play is very suitable for family audiences - it's lively and exciting with lots of music and plenty of opportunities for the audience to join in and, of course, throw away sweets!

Tickets are £5 per adult and £3 children.

There will be refreshments and a licensed bar.

Doors open 6.00 p.m. and the play starts at 6.30 p.m.

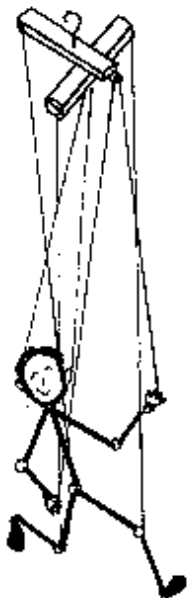
The play is about a very spoilt girl Candy Box (played by Lauren) who is woken by Zac, a shepherd boy from biblical times who is looking for his lamb, Stew. Along with Stew, the children are swept up Candy's chimney pot into the night sky where they are captured by the Bat Battalion, ride on Father Christmas's sleigh, travel on the Royal Star of Beauty Bright and at last touch down at the stable in Bethlehem where they discover the true joy of Christmas Day.

Beetleheart Theatre Company

Longbourn Farm, Pittern Hill, Kineton, Warwickshire CV35 0JF

01926 640606

TYSOE MARIONETTE GROUP



We newly-born Puppets have arrived in this world, just like everybody else, wearing only our birthday suits! We are freezing cold, and desperately need to find kind people to make our little costumes. "We have no feet. That's the first thing you have to learn" says Carrot Top (one of the Seven Dolls). Mouche has promised to make us mittens, but she is a wooden marionette and will definitely be needing assistance!

Calling all dress-makers and make-up artists for working parties on Tuesday afternoons.

Anybody interested please contact:

Ann Beeny on **Tysoe 680431**, or
Email: JonandAnn@annbeeny.f9.co.uk

Village Hall News

'Fanny Craddock' was well received and enjoyed by all.

Bingo was again cancelled due to lack of support and has now been abandoned for the foreseeable future.

Gangsters and Molls – The 'Speakeasy & Casino' night has been moved to Saturday 5th February 2005, due to personal commitments of members of the Committee. This will be a themed evening with good food, music and a charity casino. If you are interested in helping in anyway or becoming a 'croupier' for the night, please call Ray on 680850. Dress up and come and join us! Full details will be published in the January News.

Invites have been sent out for the Christmas lunch on the 13th December. We hope we have included everyone, however if we have missed you, please let Linda know on 680850.

The Village Hall Committee would like to take this opportunity in wishing everyone all good wishes for Christmas and Every Happiness in the Coming Year.

Linda

W I REPORT – NOVEMBER 2004

This month was our Annual General Meeting and Members' Night. Our Retiring President, Philippa Robinson, handed over the badge of office to the new incoming President, Ann Beeny. We all wish her well in her new appointment, as Philippa will be a hard act to follow.

After refreshments, one of our members, Miss Christine Chapman gave a most interesting talk about her favourite Charity, The Sick Children's Trust, which provides housing for parents of sick children. It was started in 1982 between Barts in London and Great Ormond Street. The first house provided by the Trust was at Barts in London and was attached to the side of the children's ward. Miss Chapman was the first housekeeper here. This was followed by Great Ormond Street.

Michael Crawford became President of the Charity, and used his influence and friends to sponsor and help raise funds. The next house to be opened was out of London, in Kent and also St James in Leeds.

The houses are totally free of the hospital, and the ethos is to have a relaxing atmosphere for the parents of sick children to be able to go to, to escape the problems in the hospital.

The Royal Victoria in Newcastle followed, then Sheffield and Addenbrookes in Cambridge. Over the years, two of the houses have had to close, one of which was the house at Barts when Barts and Great Ormond Street merged. Only one house was needed. The other was in Canterbury when the hospital was closed to children, so that also had to be closed down.

A house is now open close to the Royal London for up to 14 families, and no charge is made at any of the houses, which means that fund raising has a major input. Only 4% of any monies raised is spent on administration, the rest going to upkeep the houses.

We all thought this was a most worthwhile Charity and Miss Chapman gave an eloquent talk in its favour.

Don't forget that Keep Fit has recommenced in the Village Hall on Thursdays at 10.30 a.m. All welcome.

J Batchelor

Dates for Your Diary

Thursdays	Keep Fit	10.30 a.m. Tysoe Village Hall
December 1st	Christmas Entertainment	7.30 p.m. Tysoe Village Hall

A new programme for 2005 will be available shortly.

What's On in Oxhill

December

Wednesday 1st	7.30	Tysoe Village Hall - WI - Christmas Entertainment
Friday 3rd	7.30	The Old House - Choir Practice
Friday 10th	7.30	The Old House - Choir Practice
Monday 13th	1.00	Village Hall - Senior Citizens' Christmas Lunch
Friday 17th	7.30	St. Lawrence Church - Choir Practice
Monday 20th	6.30	Village Hall - "Christmas Candy"
Tuesday 21st		St. Lawrence - Church Decorating
Wednesday 22nd	7.30	Oxhill Church - Carol Service
Thursday 23rd	10.00	Village Hall - Toddlers' Christmas Party
	23.59	Copy Deadline for the News

January

Tuesday 11th	8.00	Village Hall - Parish Council Meeting
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February

Saturday 5th		Village Hall - Gangsters & Molls Casino Night
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Beetleheart Theatre Company

A real Christmas treat!

Christmas Candy

by Belinda Roberts

A magical Christmas tale of two children from very different backgrounds who fly through Christmas Eve across the night sky upon the brightest star and discover for themselves the true joy of Christmas Day

watch out for the throw-away sweets!

OXHILL VILLAGE HALL
MONDAY, DEC 20TH 6.30pm

LONGBOURN BARN, KINETON
TUESDAY, DEC 21ST 6.30pm

Play starts 6.30 Doors open at 6.00pm

LICENSED BAR and REFRESHMENTS

Tickets: Adults £5.00 Children £3.00, 2 & under FREE
from Beetleheart Theatre Co members
or Box Office (01926 640606) or on the door ...unless we're sold out
belinda.roberts@beetleheart.com

0-120 year olds welcome

Funny! Exciting!

TICKETS 01926 640606