

The Oxhill News



March 2005

Editorial

All those of you who read last month's News from cover to cover will have noticed that the Parish Council has kindly agreed to take over the funding of the News completely. Previously, of course, it has for several years provided a valuable safety net service, paying up to cover the shortfall in subscriptions.

This change will ease considerably the burden on the gallant band who deliver the News round the village. No longer will they have to make several trips round their patch trying to catch everyone in. In particular it will help Jackie, who delivers to the outlying houses. Not that it will save her making repeated trips, of course, she goes to pretty much every house every weekday, but it will simplify collection of the monies.

It seems reasonable to me that I should aim at keeping the burden on the precept down as far as I can, and this is the reason I have reverted to using greyscale images instead of the colour ones that have been used for the last two years. The economics are simple enough. The monthly production cost of a monochrome News is about £20, and using a full colour image on the front cover increases the cost to about £35. The cost does vary from month to month because the number of pages in an issue alters. However, sticking to black and white will mean that the cost to the Council for next year will be only a little more than it was for last year.

I hope Oxhillians will accept my attempts to keep the steady rise in taxation under control. The full colour version of the News will continue to be available on the Oxhill website; point your browser at www.Oxhill.com.

Editor

April issue

Please could I have all copy for the April issue by Midnight on **Friday, 25th March**? 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

Continuing our European theme, this month we show a typical canal-side view from Belgium.

Editor

Walks Round Tysoe

From Sunday 13th February brochures on all five Tysoe Church Walks are available from St. Mary's Church.

The walks are: Lower Tysoe walk; Old Lodge walk; Tysoe Village walk; Epwell walk; and the Three Parishes walk.

Each full colour brochure contains detailed directions and photographs as well as a route map. Walks vary from an hour to the best part of a day! We are very grateful to Geoff Mean, our footpaths warden, and Kay Medlin for their work in producing this series. They are available free but we recommend a £1 donation per walk. Please put any donation in the wall safe in church.

David Knight

Oxhill Garden Club

Mr Cole speaking on the raising of herbaceous perennials from seeds was truly inspirational. His commonsense approach and advice left us all thinking we could do it. Besides bringing for sale some beautiful specimens he and his wife had grown at their nursery they also brought a wide range of seed collected by themselves – so the annual plant sale should be awash with bargains.

Our next meeting is Thursday March 17th. It will be the Annual General Meeting followed by cheese and wine.

Heather Brennan, Secretary

Village Hall News

The Casino night was 'sold out' for Saturday 26th February, showing fantastic support from the villagers. We will be publishing the outcome in April's edition, hopefully with some photos - if the editor will allow us to publish them!!

Linda Dagg

Church Services in March
Church of St. Lawrence, Oxhill

Sunday Services

6th March	4th Sunday in Lent	10.00 a.m. Family Service (Mothering Sunday)
13th March	5th Sunday in Lent	9.30 a.m. Holy Communion
20th March	PALM SUNDAY	6.30 p.m. Evensong with Choir
27th March	EASTER DAY	10.00 a.m. Holy Communion

Thursday evenings at 7.30 p.m.

Informal Midweek Worship

3rd March	Evening Worship for Lent
10th March	Holy Communion
17th March	Compline
24th March	Maundy Thursday Holy Communion
31st March	No service this evening

NB On Good Friday, March 25th, there will be a service at 10.00 a.m. at Tysoe Methodist Church, to be followed by Hot Cross Buns, tea and coffee.

Future Church Events for your Diary

Saturday, April 16th	Joy's Jumble, 2.00 p.m., Tysoe Village Hall
Saturday 18 June	Scarecrow Weekend - see separate entry
Sunday 19 June	– but please start collecting plants for a plant stall
Saturday 10th September	BBQ at The Old House
Saturday 1st October	Harvest Supper, 7.30 p.m., Oxhill Village Hall
Saturday 15th October	Talgarth Choir, 7.30 p.m. in Church, with supper

There will be other events, including a Car Boot Sale, so watch out for the dates.

Jill Tucker

Oxhill Festival Choir

We shall be singing again on PALM SUNDAY, which this year is Sunday, 20th March. The service is at 6.30pm, so we shall be singing Evensong. Anyone who would like to come along is very welcome to sing with us. Rehearsals will take place as follows:

Friday, March 4th, 7.30pm, at The Old House

Friday, March 11th, 7.30pm, at The Old House

Friday, March 18th, at 7.30pm in the Church.

Looking forward to seeing you then.

Jill Tucker 680663

New Bishop of Warwick

The Queen has approved the nomination of The Reverend John Ronald Angus Stroyan for installation as Suffragan Bishop of Warwick in succession to the Right Reverend Anthony Martin Priddis, Bishop of Hereford.

Moving to North Oxfordshire in 1994, John became Vicar of three rural parishes (Bloxham, with Milcombe and S. Newington) and for the last three years has also been the Area Dean of Deddington which includes Banbury and surrounding villages.

John Stroyan will be consecrated in Southwark Cathedral on Thursday 21st April 2005 and installed as Bishop of Warwick in Coventry Cathedral on Sunday 1st May 2005 at 3 p.m.

David Knight

Church Flowers

Further to my notice last month, I have arranged for a flower arranger to come to the Church on May 11th at 7 p.m. to demonstrate how to arrange Altar Flowers.

I am hoping we can use greenery from our gardens and whatever flowers are out so we can learn how to make nice arrangements with them. Anyone and everyone will be welcome to come.

I shall be drafting the new Flower Rota soon, so please would anyone who would like to help and is not already on the Rota telephone me on 01295 680223.

Carol Fox

Nature Notes for March

Named after Mars; in Gaelic Mart – “the winter spring”.

Coming back from Stratford the other Saturday morning, I had just turned down the gated road to Oxhill when I had to brake for a buzzard that flew out of the spinney on the left very low across the road. To my surprise it was quickly followed by another one. I stopped the car and saw a third buzzard appear and I watched them fly quite low across the field towards Hutsby's hanging wood. To my amazement a fourth appeared and the four soared and dived above the wood. Could they be two pairs looking for a nesting site? I do hope so. Although buzzards are territorial, they seem quite tolerant of close neighbours and will certainly roost in groups. Some years ago in a very small oak wood in central Wales I saw seven buzzards and five red kites roosting all within sight of each other. Twenty years ago you would not have seen a buzzard outside Wales or the West Country, mainly due to the disappearance of rabbits through myxomatosis in the early fifties when buzzards nearly became extinct. But thankfully this large and beautiful bird of prey has made a remarkable recovery and is now seen all over the UK. Contrary to its reputation as a scavenger, the buzzard usually kills for itself, although I have on several occasions seen them at the site of a “road kill”. Rabbits and voles are probably the main part of its diet, but they are also partial to frogs and toads.

A couple of days ago we had a tree creeper in the garden. This little bird, wren sized, is extremely mouse-like in its movements, and the Somerset name for it is “tree mouse”. Scurrying up tree trunks and along branches it uses its small pointed curved bill to dig insects from between the tree bark and will often feed hanging upside down. When it moves to another trunk it always starts at the foot of the tree and works upwards, unlike the nuthatch that works down the trunk. Hard winters really affect this little bird and they will often accompany groups of tits in the search for insects, grain, or weed seeds. They nest in crevices, cracks and between planks. We rather suspect that our little tree creeper may be trying to nest in our bat box!

March 21st is the Spring Equinox and the first day of Spring, when the Sun enters the house of Aries:

“He that is born in Aries shall have good wit, and be neither rich nor poor. He shall be soon angry and soon pleased. He shall be a liar and unsteadfast of courage, and will take vengeance on his enemies. Unto thirty-four years he shall be a fornicator and wedded at thirty five: and if he be not, he shall not be chaste. He shall live seventy five years after nature.” – *Kalender of Shepheardes*, 1604.

Grenville Moore

Membership of the Parochial Church Council for 2005

At the recent meeting of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting the following were elected to serve on the P.C.C.:

John Baines	<i>(Treasurer, 680676)</i>
Rosemary Brown	<i>(Electoral Roll Officer, 680260)</i>
Andy Buchanan	<i>(Deputy Church Warden, 688112)</i>
Josh Collins	
Ann Heritage	<i>(Secretary, 680216)</i>
David Knight	<i>(Rector, Chairman, 680201)</i>
Charles McColl	
Graeme McDonald	
Belinda Roberts	
Gill Rodwell	
Jill Tucker	<i>(Reader, 680663)</i>
Lilian Welsby	<i>(Social Committee, 680468)</i>

Mark Gummer stood down as Church Warden following his move to Tysoe, and Joy Bloxham stood down after very many years of service to the council. We wish to place on record our grateful thanks for their many years of devoted service to God and the Church in this way. We do note, however, that Joy will still be helping in any way that she can (as ever!) and that Mark will be helping out in the Church in Tysoe, so neither of them have exactly finished!

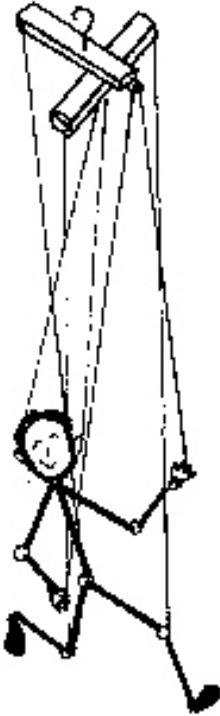
Jill Tucker

Thank You, Residents of Oxhill

I would just like to say a big thank you to all the residents who have sent their best wishes after my fall down the stairs on January 27th. I was amazed to come home from the hospital that afternoon to find my front door already had a new lock and the loose carpet nailed to the floor!!!! This is mainly due to the rallying round of George and Gwyn Adams, Hugh Rowse, and Robin Teall. Jonathan and I have lived here for just over a year and the community spirit in Oxhill has been second to none and you all have made us feel very welcome. So we would once again like to say thank you to you all!

Kirsty Cox

TYSOE MARIONETTE GROUP



Just because we have not appeared in the News for the past two months does not mean we have gone to sleep.

Far from it, for we are continuing to work up our new production of Paul Gallico's "Love of Seven Dolls". This has included researching the life of Paul Gallico himself, the better to interpret his work. And we had some surprises! Born in New York in 1897, the son of an immigrant Italian father and an Austrian mother, he started his writing career as a sports reporter, coming to the US public's attention following his 87 seconds in the ring before being knocked out cold by Jack Dempsey the then heavyweight World Champion! Gallico believed that personal experience heightens narrative.

He always had a desire to become a writer of fiction, so, despite fame and success in the US sports pages, moved in 1937 to Europe, and eventually made his home in Antibes until his death in 1975. This is the period during which he wrote the touching short stories best known to UK readers including: "The Snow Goose", "The Small Miracle", "Jenny, the Story of a Cat" and "Love of Seven Dolls".

Gallico was a master of concise English and went to endless pains to define his characters, which greatly facilitates our realisation of this tough and tender story on our scaled-down 'stage of life'.

Our premier is planned for June. Watch this space!

We still need one or two more volunteers to assist us with all aspects of this magnum opus. Please contact:

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

Shipston Home Nursing

The following events are already planned for 2005:

Saturday 2 April Concert in St. Edmund's Church, Shipston on Stour, organised by Shipston Rotary Club and starting at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets are £6.00 per person and can be obtained from Rebecca Mawle on 01608 674929.

Sunday 3 April Luncheon held in a marquee kindly offered by Mr. & Mrs. P Jackson at Sutton under Brailes. The event is in conjunction with the Lawrence Home Nursing Team, and there will be musical entertainment after lunch.

Tickets at £25.00 per person will include a champagne reception and a three course lunch with wine.

Further details to follow.

Saturday 21 May Plant sale in the Townsend Hall, Shipston on Stour.

Further details to follow.

Tuesday 24 May Champagne and Shop, by kind invitation of Mr. & Mrs. Robert Loades, Newbold Pacey.

Further details to follow.

Saturday 25 June Shipston Home Nursing Bi-annual Ball – "Mid-Summer Orient" – by kind invitation of Mr. & Mrs. Mark Davies at Admington Hall.

For Tickets telephone Rebecca Mawle on 01608 674929.

Further details to follow.

Sunday 26 June Shipston Home Nursing "Play in the Park", by kind invitation of Mr. & Mrs. Mark Davies at Admington Hall.

The play "The Emperor and the Nightingale" will be performed by The Play Box Theatre, Warwick.

For tickets at £5.00 per person please telephone Rebecca Mawle on 01608 674929.

Further details to follow.

Rebecca Mawle, Fund-raising Co-ordinator

Village History - Roadmaking

Now that we have a new road surface on the road to Whatcote, it is intriguing to find, in the Oxhill Vestry Minute Book, that in 1878 ratepayers weren't too keen on shelling out for roadmaking. The Vestry Meeting in September 1878 declared that the Bridleway from Oxhill to Whatcote and Fulready was as good as ever it has been for the last 20 years, and that it did not need to be stoned. Moreover if the Highways Board insisted on it, the ratepayers would appeal to Quarter Sessions. (The Rector however dissented. Mr Macy always comes across as a strictly Establishment man!).

I assume that although referred to as a bridleway, it is our road – then an unfenced cart road – that is meant. Whether or not the ratepayers of Oxhill ever took their case to Quarter Sessions I do not know, but if so it must have been a losing battle, as at this period there was a comprehensive programme of stoning the roads being undertaken. M.K. Ashby in her book on her father Joseph Ashby of Tysoe, describes how her father was employed as a road stone-breaker in the 1880s – seasonal work for autumn and early spring which fitted well with his work on his smallholding. Hartshill stone was used, a harder stone than Hornton, and difficult to work. Miss Ashby describes how the new roads would shine in February like long white ribbons, when the old brown ones would still have been ankle-deep in mud.

In our barn at Payn's House we inherited several stone-breakers' hammers, with small egg-shaped heads and slender, slightly flexible (though now much decayed) handles. I imagine that someone from Payn's House – (the house was sub-divided in the late 1880s) - also took part in this seasonal work, and, like Joseph Ashby, successfully combined this with work on the land.

Ann Hale

For Sale

3-seater settee and chair to match.

Wooden frame and light beige cushions.

In excellent condition.

£150 O.N.O.

D. Neale, 680405

Oxhill Scarecrow Festival

Saturday 18th June and Sunday 19th June

Could you make a scarecrow for your front garden?



Full training given if needed!

It can be elegant, bizarre - even a self portrait - whatever you want!

Open to any age group.



Would you like to be involved in this fun weekend in any way?
Funds raised will support the church and the Stratford Samaritans.

Ring Lilian on 680468.



(Photos taken at Walton Scarecrow Festival.)

The Rocky Road to Perdition

On the 24th February our dog Rocky, a Black Labrador, was shot by a local farmer. He is not the first dog to be shot in the village in recent times.

My wife is distraught, as he was her dog but knows that she has had enough warnings from me about his tendency to stray, not far admittedly, always to the same two farms to visit his lady friends. If we went on holiday the second he got back no matter how hard you watched him his first port of call was to visit the girls.

It is fair to say that once you have used a pedigree dog for breeding they can scent their primary source of interest from miles away and even a visit to the vet's sharp knife merely blunted his ambition. A bit like me he still felt compelled to make the journey but couldn't quite remember why when he got there.

The farmer and his son have been incredibly kind and polite considering the fact that they have lost nine lambs, perhaps because in the past they, as did I when I farmed, have had to put down one of their own dogs for a similar problem and understood the pain that Susan was feeling.

Perception is a difficult path to walk; to us Rocky was gentle to the point of being timid, loving and obedient. He protected his territory from other dogs but was, on my land, afraid of sheep. A great retriever of game, he could carry a dead full grown goose but would lay a live pickup gently at your feet completely unharmed. The dog was obedient to a fault and never had to be walked on a lead. He was rarely seen without something in his mouth around the house and we soon became a family of one shoe owners as he took his trophies up to Bill Fox's "girls" and they would be returned to us by Mrs Fox from time to time in a box

Sadly however it is now Rocky that could be returned in a box. He was seen by the farmer with a lamb in his mouth and was quite understandably shot. I would have shot him myself in the same circumstances.

It is here that perception comes in; for Susan it is impossible to believe that her beloved, gentle dog would do such a thing.

She freely accepts that if Rocky had found a dead or injured lamb he would have picked it up and equally can understand that act alone is enough to get him shot. What her mind wrestles with is how her old arthritic dog who had reached the stage of barely being able to jump into the pickup could leap a hurdle fence into a pen of lambs and jump back out with a dead lamb in his mouth. The pen must have been secure otherwise the smaller lambs could have escaped. Another aspect that is difficult to fathom is that although we are told a number of the kills took place at night, from 9 pm, with metronome regularity, he took himself to bed and would not get up unless his mistress chose to go for a walk. In any event the external door to his accommodation was dead-locked at night. It is harder still to understand why he would wish to kill as it was completely against the nature of the dog that enriched our lives.

Even as she stood in the rain, tears running down her face, caressing the blood covered head of her faithful pet, the kindness and understanding of the farmer's family shone

through. The son of the farmer reassured her that, even in the face of the apparently irrefutable evidence, if any more lambs were taken thereafter, for her peace of mind he would tell her, so the reputation of her Rocky might be cleared.

For us the memories will be the total devotion with which Rocky loved his lady owner.

For others in the countryside it is a lesson that if your dog is inclined to stray, although against your natural instincts of kindness to an animal, it is better for all concerned to tether it rather than face the pain of it being shot.

Alan Hedley

Know Your Rights! Advice from Trading Standards

Don't fall foul of a scam

It is estimated that scams cost UK consumers £1 billion per year. Scams take many forms, frequently masquerading as lotteries, prize draws and sweepstakes. They often involve sending money or phoning a premium rate 090 number to claim a prize...which doesn't exist. Some schemes, often originating from Nigeria, ask for details of a person's bank account in order to permit the transfer of money and the perpetrators use the information to empty the victim's account.

Remember, if it sound too good to be true then it probably is – don't be caught out – put it in the bin! Trading Standards wants to know if you have received something which you think is a scam. You can send us information free of charge at:

Scams, Warwickshire County Council Trading Standards Service, FREEPOST,
Old Budbrooke Road, Warwick CV35 7BR

Tel:01926 414000 or report it online at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/reportascam

W I REPORT –FEBRUARY 2005

After the business of the meeting was completed, our Guest Speaker, Mrs J Morgan was introduced.

Her subject was Chinese Brush Painting, and from the very beginning she held our interest and we were spellbound. Whilst the demonstration was on, there was not a sound in the room except Mrs Morgan's voice. I have never heard WI so quiet.

With just a few strokes of her brush, magical pictures appeared, beautiful bamboo, exquisite flowers and fish. It was made to look so easy, but Mrs Morgan has been studying this form of painting for 20 years and has even had the honour to go to Beijing University in China (not once but three times) to study under their current masters.

Mrs Morgan told us a little about the beginning of Chinese Brush Painting which is an extension of Chinese Calligraphy. The ink block, brush, inkstone and paper are known as The Four Treasures, and artists treat them with great care so they can get the best use from their tools.

The paper that is used for painting on is all handmade and very thin, sometimes called rice paper (but not what would be used in cooking, not to be eaten) and made from varying materials, such as bamboo or wood bark. The brush is held in an upright position, which is very different from the Western style, and you grind the ink block against the inkstone to make your black colour (this can range from very black to the lightest of greys depending how much water is added).

This all seems very simple but believe me, it takes time and patience.

After the demonstration, which overran by more than half an hour, we were given the opportunity to try some painting for ourselves. Definitely not easy. Learning to hold the brush correctly was the first difficulty. This is a form of art that I would recommend to anyone of any age. It is so satisfying when you get a brush stroke right.

I must admit that this was one of the best demonstrations that we have had, and if any of you get a chance to go and see someone painting in this style, please do. It will be well worth your while.

The meeting was closed at 10 p.m. Our next meeting will be on 2nd March.

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

Jackie Batchelor

**TUBS AND POTS
OR
POTS AND TUBS**

Early days for this yet

BUT

Never too early to get yours started

FOR

Competition 2005

Oxhill Garden Club

What's On in Oxhill

March

Wednesday 2nd	7.30	Tysoe Village Hall – W.I. Kineton in the First World War
Thursday 17th	7.30	Village Hall - Garden Club AGM
Friday 25th	24.00	Deadline for material for the News

April

Saturday 2nd	7.30	Shipston Church - Concert for Shipston Home Nursing
Sunday 3rd		Shipston Home Nursing - Luncheon, Sutton under Brailes
Wednesday 6th	7.30	Tysoe Village Hall – W.I. Local Cheesemaking
Saturday 16th	2.00	Tysoe Village Hall - Joy's Jumble

May

Wednesday 4th	7.30	Tysoe Village Hall – W.I. Spring Show & Resolutions Meeting
Wednesday 11th	7.00	St. Lawrence Church - Flower Demonstration
Saturday 21st		Townsend Hall - Shipston Home Nursing Plant Sale
Tuesday 24th		Shipston Home Nursing - Champagne and Shop

June

Saturday 18th		Scarecrow
Sunday 19th		Weekend
Saturday 25th		Shipston Home Nursing Midsummer Ball
Sunday 26th		Shipston Home Nursing Play in the Park

September

Saturday 10th		The Old House - Barbeque
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October

Saturday 1st	7.30	Village Hall - Harvest Supper
Saturday 15th	7.30	St. Lawrence Church - Talgarth Choir