

The Oxhill News



October 2005

October 2

Is the Feast day of the Guardian Angels, St Leger (or Leodegarius), and St Eleutherius of Nicomedia. Bit short on saints then, compared with the usual.

It was the day in 1187 when Saladin captured Jerusalem and in 1608 when the first telescope was demonstrated by the Dutch lens maker, Hans Lipperschey. In 1836 Charles Darwin returned from his five-year survey of South American waters aboard the HMS *Beagle*, and in 1870 Rome became the capital of the newly unified Italy. In 1901 The Royal Navy's first submarine, built by Vickers, was launched at Barrow, and in 1909 the first rugby football match was played at Twickenham, between Harlequins and Richmond. In 1942 the cruiser *Curacao* sank with the loss of 338 lives, after colliding with the liner *Queen Mary* off the coast of Donegal. In 1983 Neil Kinnock became, fairly briefly, leader of the Labour Party. That was, of course, in the Bad Old Days when it actually was the Labour Party, and not the Conservative Party in disguise. In 1990 the German Democratic Republic ceased to exist at midnight. I had a friend once who believed that roundabouts also ceased to exist at midnight, so he used to drive straight across them. That was possible in Nottingham at the time, though it created havoc with the flower beds in the middle. He went to Oxford and became a doctor. I do not know his current views on roundabouts.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2nd in 1869, Graham Greene in 1904 and Sting in 1951. His name was not Sting at the time.

Samuel Adams died on October 2nd 1803. That is Samuel Adams the US statesman, not the Samuel Adams currently playing defensive tackle for the Buffalo Bills. He of course is not dead yet. Also dying on October 2nd were Marie Stopes (not to be confused with Marie Curie) in 1958, Rock Hudson in 1985, Peter Medawar in 1987 and Gene Autry in 1998. I had never heard of Peter Medawar either, but apparently he was an immunologist. And British too.

Editor

November issue

Please could I have all copy for the November issue by Midnight on Thursday, 27th October? 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

A courtyard in Sorrento.

OXHILL PARISH COUNCIL

Due to unforeseen circumstances and holidays, the required number of Councillors were unable to attend the meeting on Tuesday 13th September, therefore the meeting had to be cancelled.

Annual Audit

The Annual Audit had been completed for year ended 31st March 2005 and an unqualified audit opinion had been given.

Planning Matters

Listed building consent had been granted for demolition of single storey external toilet/store at the Methodist Church and felling of hawthorn tree.

Permission granted for new door opening to rear and new door kerb/macadam cross over at boundary entrance to main road at Methodist Church.

Permission granted for portal side extension at Springfield Farm.

No objection raised to fell conifer at Meadow Cottage.

Application to convert barn to a dwelling at Wixey Transport had been withdrawn.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 8th November 2005 at 8.00 p.m. in the Village Hall.

Angela Kean, Clerk.

JOHN HUGHES

We are sad to have to report the death of John Hughes, who was for many years the very fine organist at St. Lawrence Church. John had been ill for some time but, despite his failing health, continued to play for our services.

He showed his love of the Church by his very beautiful playing, which enriched our services. He will be missed very much.

We send our love to his wife Brenda and to his family.

Di Harper

St. Lawrence Church

Sunday Services

2nd October	10.45	United Service at Tysoe Church
9th October	9.30	Holy Communion
16th October	6.30	Evensong
23rd October	9.30	Holy Communion
30th October	10.45	United Service at Tysoe Church

DAVID KNIGHT

This month we say goodbye to David, who has given as Rector so much to the parish over the last eleven years. Very few homes will not have been touched by his kindness and support. He has unstintingly given of his time to all of us. Young and old have been encouraged, guided and supported in all the challenges of life.

The unsure, the sick and the bereaved have all benefited from his care and concern, so freely given. He will be sadly missed.

We wish all God's blessings on him wherever he may be in the future.

Di Harper

Harvest Festival Service

David Knight conducted his last service in Oxhill at the Harvest Festival Service on September 25th.

The Church was beautifully decorated, for which thanks must go to Carol Fox and Rosemary Brown together with their splendid band of willing helpers.

After the service Janet Gardner presented a silver tankard and cheque to the Rector as a leaving gift from the Church, commenting as she did so that there can be very few in the village who have not at some time been helped by David.

After the presentation wine was made available to help the sale of produce go with that much-needed swing. About £220 was raised from the collection and auction combined. It will be presented to the Farm Africa Appeal.

Di Harper

TYSOE MARIONETTE GROUP

"LOVE OF SEVEN DOLLS"



Our dramatisation of Paul Gallico's short story is set amongst the fair grounds and vaudeville theatres of France. Mouche, a Bretonnaise waif, has come to Paris to make her living in the theatre. She fails miserably, and heading for the Seine, she is hailed by a jaunty doll in a shabby puppet booth. Thus begins an exquisitely written love story exploring the relationship between the girl, the seven dolls of the booth and their unkindly puppet master, Capitaine Coq.

Performances on

Friday 11th & Saturday 12th November
and

Friday 25th & Saturday 26th November
at 7.30 p.m.

in The Barn Theatre, Baldwins Lane, Upper Tysoe

Suitability: Adults and accompanied children over 8 yrs

Tickets: Adults £4 Children £2 (All proceeds to charity)

Contact: Jon & Ann Beeny (Tysoe) 01295 680431

Nature Notes for October

October: eighth month of the Roman calendar. In Gaelic *An Damhair* – the month of deer rutting.

October hath always one and twenty five days. If the October moon comes without frost, expect no frost till the full moon of November.

I have noticed this summer and autumn a greater than normal abundance of magpies. I say noticed, but in fact that should be “heard” for one is usually alerted by their shrill chattering. The word “pied” originally denoted a mixture of colours, but over the centuries it has narrowed its meaning to mean simply black and white (as in Pied wagtail). The first syllable of Magpie (so I read) is a diminutive form of Margaret. The magpie has a very loud chattering voice and in the late eighteenth century Mag or Meg was used for somebody who chattered a great deal and in fact some local names for the magpie include Chattermag, Chatterpie, and Chattermag. The magpie is a member of the crow family and is very aggressive and omnivorous. It has been heavily persecuted in the past, but its numbers have trebled in the last forty years and consequently in some areas its numbers have reached pest status. Many people theorise that the fall in the songbird population is due to the magpie, but I doubt this. Although it steals eggs and even small fledglings, I believe that modern farming methods, pesticides, climate change and cats do far more damage to songbirds than magpies. In common with other crows and second only to ravens, the magpie is associated with Pagan and devilish symbolism. It is said to be the only bird that refused to go into the Ark with Noah and all the other animals and preferred instead to perch on top of the roof of the Ark and swear and chatter as the world drowned!

In many rural areas it used to be the custom that if you saw a magpie you took off your hat, spat in the direction of the bird, and said “devil, devil I defy you”. In other areas, crossing oneself is thought to mitigate the evil effects of a magpie crossing your path – “I cross the magpie, The magpie crosses me, Bad luck to the magpie, Good luck to me”.

As autumn and winter sets in, most of us start to clear and tidy our gardens, but please provide some cover for hibernating wildlife, not just hedgehogs, but insects, mice, butterflies etc. Small piles of bricks or stones, stacks of logs, even piles of twigs or small sawn branches covered in dead leave provide good warm sheltered places for hibernation. Recently we cut two trees down in our garden but have left the stumps standing three to four feet high. In these I am going to drill various sized holes. The wider and deeper holes will be filled with fat for the birds (especially spotted

woodpeckers), smaller holes are to be left unfilled for insects to shelter or breed in. The holes will be horizontal so no water gathers in them.

During the winter months, and indeed all year round, many of us will be putting feed out for the wild birds, but make sure you buy only from a reputable source as many seeds and nuts may contain dangerous (to birds) pesticides, fungus or bacteria. Try Ernest Charles in Devon, Freephone 0800 731 6770 or www.ernest-charles.com. They sell all types of mixes in bags from 3kg to 50 kg, at very reasonably prices.

As I walked back into the village the other morning I counted approximately 80 swallows gathering on the telegraph lines preparing to migrate. They seem to have done well this year and this is a good number. Folklore had it that they hibernated at the bottom of ponds or lakes: *“in the northern waters, fishermen oftentimes by chance draw up their nets an abundance of swallows, hanging together like a conglomerated mass. In the beginning of Autumn they assemble themselves together among the reeds of ponds, where allowing themselves to sink into the water, they join bill to bill, wing to wing, and foot to foot”* – Olaus Magnus *History of the Northern Nations*, 1550.

An early plea: can we please have only **one** bonfire night this year. We have over 50 dogs (not to mention cats) living in the village, and many of these get very frightened and stressed on Bonfire Night, which recently seems to stretch over a fortnight. So how about only one this year – it is on a Saturday.

Grenville Moore

GOLDFISH

If you would like some free goldfish please ring 01295 680420 before October 19th to arrange collection. I think I look after them too well.

By the way - don't tell the heron.

Ruth Gibson

[If Ruth runs out of fish you could easily obtain many more, Koi as well as (or even instead of) goldfish by calling 01295 680286 and offering to help your Editor clear his pond of excess stock. Ed]

Travels of a Caravan

Those of you who know me and those who don't will recognise me as the largest, some might say fattest man in the village. I suffer from Sleep Apnoea, I stop breathing the I moment I fall asleep and without my CPAP machine, that pumps air into me at night, I wake on average every 60 seconds, all night, every night. I prowled the streets of the village in the early hours of the morning, the corridors at home and rarely spent more than an hour and a half in bed on any night. My body's metabolism wrecked by exhaustion ceased to work and my weight soared despite not eating huge quantities. I am now obese, disabled by my weight and arthritis, brought on by too much sport in my youth and middle age..

Now I have gained a new lease of life the CPAP machine, which travels everywhere with me, enables me to sleep and my brain has come back into full operation. No more falling asleep in meetings, in the chair when guests visit, or at the wheel, I can travel and do, or should I say did.

I was going to regale you all with tales of our trip to Brittany in the Hobby caravan, a rig, which when hitched to my pickup, is as long as an artic. The weather enjoyed at 104 degrees, the wine, the food, all imbibed at a soporific pace of life. The journey too was fun, travelling on the Chunnel train and driving down the fast Paeage manoeuvring through the tolls, with little over an inch either side of our huge van. Inside the caravan was specially reinforced under one seat and my side of the double bed to take my weight. The freedom to enjoy life once more and the flexibility of holidays for Sue and myself was wonderful.

We returned awash with wine, inside the van that is, stacked in the cases of Red, White, and Rose that had taken our fancy in Carrefour. I had even used the internet and bought masses of new clothes for the summer from the outsize clothiers available on the net. I felt less self conscious, hells teeth, I even stripped to a cossie and went swimming.

On our return after a few weeks at home it was up to Newcastle for the Tall Ships Race towing our monster behind us, off to Teesside, the north Yorkshire Moors and beautiful Seaburn where I was born. We watched the ships enter and days later leave the Tyne from the vantage point of a millionaire's penthouse overlooking the river mouth. We raced the pickup over the river and onto the cliff tops of South Shields and Marsden Rock and watched almost in awe as over 100 ships, many square riggers in full sail, tacked back and forth awaiting the start gun from the Royal Navy ships, more than a mile and a half apart, which formed the start line.

No sooner had we returned home than that dynamo known as Sue, had me wash the van as she transformed and cleaned and packed the interior ready for this Bank Holiday weekend when we were off to Worcester for a long lazy weekend with friends

to see a Yetis concert. Some of you may be old enough to remember them from Dorset.

Before we could leave however I had to return my disabled parents to their own home; they had been for a three week break with us. We worked like Trojans that weekend on their house and returned home in the early hours of Sunday morning. The gates were open, the wrong way, Sue was walking Fosseway and our new puppy Barnaby down the road before bed, so she did not realise the import as I came into the drive, but I knew. The caravan had gone. Those visits of strangers through the village touting for tree trimming work, that had filled me with unease, had confirmed my worst fears.

Locks and safety devices deter only the casual thief, this was pre-planned, pre-sold even and all they had to wait for was the night my neighbours were away and so were we. Cars and caravans disappear from our driveways whether the owners are at home or not, the law offers neither defence nor deterrent. The apology for protection that the police and the justice system now offer society, the constant worrying about criminal's rights instead of those of the victims, leaves us all exposed to danger. Vigilance over our own and the property of our neighbours, is our only real defence until under the law we may once again defend our homes as our castles, with impunity.

My insurance had expired, ours days will be less exciting for affordable holidays in the future as I cannot replace the van and will not be able to do so for some time. My disability in any event requires some privacy, which the caravan offered, providing me with a little self respect and even then if we replaced the van it would only be a matter of time before it was stolen again.

Take notice of strangers if you can, make a note of car registrations parked with their owners walking seemingly aimlessly around the village. You may not see them when they strike three months later but the police need any help that they can get.

Alan Hedley

Whatcote Christmas Puddings

Whatcote Christmas Puddings are available again this year from June Wreford, Church Cottage, Whatcote. Telephone 01295 680294.

Full details and an order form will be in next month's Oxhill News.

Sue Price

UK YEAR of the VOLUNTEER 2005

Helpers are needed by these very worthy local groups:

- **Carers' Support Service (South Works)- SWCSS (Helping those who are carers)** - needs Befrienders to spend time talking with and listening to the carer. May occasionally sit with the cared for person.
- **Young Enterprise S/Avon Area (Business and Management)** - needs Business Advisors/Presenters for young Enterprise programmes in Primary and Secondary Education.
- **British Red Cross Society (Helping the sick)** - needs First Aiders, Wheelchair Pushers, Therapeutic Carers, Victim/Refugee Supporters, Fund Raisers.
- **Contact the Elderly (Taking elderly isolated people out for Sunday afternoon tea in small parties.)** - needs Sunday afternoon rota drivers (to take elderly people to tea parties) and semi-annual hosts for those parties (of up to 14 people twice a year).
- **Vitalise (Respite Care and holidays for the disabled)** - needs Enablers to stay in one of the holiday centres for a week at a time to help look after disabled guests.
- **WE URGENTLY NEED VOLUNTEER DRIVERS TO HELP US WITH OUR COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SCHEME, (40P PER MILE ALLOWANCE PAID).**

Call us if you are interested, or, if you can get on the web

(www.stratfordvbx.org.uk)

check out our web site for all the latest opportunities for volunteering.

Volunteer Centre Stratford-on-Avon District

Phone: 01789 262886

Minutes of the Oxhill Village Hall AGM

The meeting was held on 11th August 2005 in 2, The Sett, starting at 8 p.m.

Committee members present were:

Ray Dagg, Linda Dagg, Ian Brodderick, Julie Seabridge, Keith Seabridge, Marcus Robertson, Tracey Hackett, Tony Eastaugh

Apologies were received from:

Jill Tucker, Sarah Hobill, Rhiannon Hackett, Diana Cronin

Members of the general public attending:

Gwyn Adams, Sue Robbins

Minutes

The Minutes of the AGM held on 27th May 2004 were read and agreed.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Election of officers

It was proposed that all current officers be re-elected. The motion was seconded by Gwyn Adams.

Treasurers Report

A written report was provided. The finances remain stable. Auditing of the accounts is still to take place. The Chairman confirmed the sum of £800 was donated by the Parish Council for the year. The Parish Council will also continue to provide the finances for the grass cutting of the village green. The Chairman would like to thank Ian for all his continued vigilance of the finances.

AOB

The Committee would like to thank everyone who contributed to the events and the upkeep of the surrounds of the Village Hall. The AGM then closed and a Committee Meeting took place.

Linda Dagg, Secretary

OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

Committee List 2005

Ray Dagg	Chairman/Lettings	2 The Sett	680850
Linda Dagg	Secretary/Lettings	As above	
Ian Brodderick	Treasurer	Kisdon, Main Street	688167
Jill Tucker	Advisor	The Old House	680663
Marcus Robertson	Youth Advisor	Hawthorns, Whatcote Rd	680408
Keith Seabridge	Events	April Corner, Rouse Lane	680654
Julie Seabridge	Events	As above	
Sarah Hobill	Events	Hogwood Farm	01926 640345
Tracey Hackett	Events	The Malt House, Back Lane	680268
Tony Eastaugh	Events	Charity House, Whatcote Rd	680708
Diana Cronin	Events	Oxhill House, Main Street	680938

Village Hall Events

Saturday 12th November 2005 – PROGRESSIVE DINNER

For all of those who have not been able to attend in the past, or for the newer arrivals in the village, the Oxhill Progressive Dinner involves moving from one house to another between courses, changing dining companions as you do so. It promises to be, as always, a memorable occasion; what better way could there be of making new friends and renewing old acquaintances.

£15 per person for those not hosting a course.

Diana Cronin and Tracy Hackett will be organising this ever-popular event. Please call Diana to find out more, or to book your place, or confirm whether you will be able to provide a starter, main course or dessert.

Diana can be contacted on 680938.

Monday 12th December 2005 – SENIOR CITIZEN'S CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Invitations will be sent out in due course.

If you are willing to help on the day or provide food, please contact Ray on 680850.

Linda Dagg, Secretary

The Old Fire Station

Main Street, Tysoe CV35 0SR Adult Learning 01295 688244

Autumn 2005 Update

Welcome to our Autumn 2005 programme of courses and classes. Thanks to our continued support from the Learning and Skills Council, we are still able to offer courses at very competitive prices

Basic Food Hygiene Friday 21st October 0900 - 1700

This is a certificated one day course. £25 fee including exam fee.

Christmas Card Making Workshops

£10 fee per workshop includes cost of materials.

Monday 24th October 1930 - 2130 'Shaker Cards'

Wednesday 26th October 1930 - 2130 Snowy, Starry and Sparkly cards.

Thursday 27th October 1930 - 2130 Card Embellishments.

Databases Tuesdays 1000 - 1200 starting 1st November. 5 weeks

Put your address book on your pc, catalogue your collections etc. £10 fee

Portrait Painting Tuesdays 1930 - 2130 starting 1st November

7 weeks. £28 fee. You will need to provide your own materials.

File Management & Housekeeping Tues 1300 - 1500 starting 1st Nov

5 weeks. Tidy up your pc and find files more easily. £10 fee

Digital Cameras and Image Manipulation

Thursdays 1930 - 2130 starting 3rd November. 5 weeks

Fridays 1000 - 1200 starting 4th November. 5 weeks

£15 fee. Some prior knowledge of computers is essential for this course.

Computers for Beginners

Fridays 1300 -1500 starting 4th November. 5 weeks

Fridays 1730 - 2130 starting 4th November. 5 weeks

...or Computers for the Terrified! £10 fee.

Family History Research Wednesdays 1300 - 1500 starting 2nd Nov

5 weeks. Who knows what you might find! £20 fee

Computing Improvers Mondays 1000 - 1200 starting 7th November

5 weeks. Following on from the beginners' course. £10 fee

Christmas Table Decorations Friday 2nd December 1930 - 2130

£8 fee. You will be advised what you need to bring.

Quick & Easy Last Minute Cards and Tags

Saturday 3rd December 1000 - 1200

or Saturday 3rd December 1300 - 1500

£10 fee includes cost of materials.

Christmas Door Wreaths Wednesday 7th December 1930 - 2130

£8 fee. You will be advised what you need to bring.

Call 01295 688244 for more information and enrolments

Oxhill Garden Club

Sue Burn of the Batsford Arboretum started our autumn season of meetings in style. It is her mission to bring visitors to the gardens at all times of the year and not just for the autumnal colours. To this end she showed us slides of the gardens throughout the year and gave us a brief history of the house and how the gardens developed into a public arboretum.

Our next meeting will be Thursday October 20th and is a talk on bamboos and ornamental grasses by Christine Daken.

Heather Brennan, Secretary

Free Electric Blanket Tests for Warwickshire Over 60's

The following plea has arrived from our County Council:

We decided to provide electric blanket testing in Shipston for the first time this year but as yet have had few bookings. As people may have felt it rather early to book I would be very grateful if you could put a reminder note in your October issues. I am also enclosing details about Stratford which provides an alternative date.

Shipston Fire Station	Friday 14th October
Stratford Fire Station	Monday 10th October

By appointment only
Ring Freephone 0800 413332

Pat Whorton, Information Officer, Trading Standards Service, Warwickshire County Council. 01926 414004

25 Years Ago

Issue No. 89 of the Oxhill News reported that the sponsored bike ride raised over £100, with Rachel Costa the star performer, raising £41 from her own pedal power after persuading no fewer than 63 sponsors to support her.

Ann Hale deeply regretted the absence of a Harvest Supper (there being no available date) and the Parish Clerk asked for volunteers to clear footpaths round the village. Tree planting was also in the offing. The Village Hall announced a date for its 20s evening and Vic Walters asked if anyone wanted a Fete in 1981.

The Oxhill Golf Tournament was announced for October 10th, with ladies invited to dinner afterwards. Presumably the golfers of Oxhill then still went by that old acronym 'Gentlemen Only, Ladies Forbidden'. Would they get away with it today?

Editor

Poetry Corner

The Pig

It was an evening in November,
As I very well remember,
I was strolling down the street in drunken pride,
But my knees were all a-flutter,
And I landed in the gutter
And a pig came up and lay down by my side.
Yes, I lay there in the gutter
Thinking thoughts I could not utter,
When a colleen passing by did softly say
'You can tell a man who boozes
By the company he chooses' —
At that the pig got up and walked away.
(Anon.)

What's On in Oxhill

October

Saturday 1st	7.30	Village Hall - Harvest Supper
Wednesday 5th	7.30	Tysoe Village Hall – WI meeting "Mother of Pearl".
Saturday 15th	7.30	St. Lawrence Church - Talgarth Choir

November

Wednesday 2nd	7.30	Tysoe Village Hall – WI Members night and annual meeting
Wednesday 9th & Thursday 10th		Shipston Home Nursing Designer Sale at Darlingscote.
Friday 11th & Saturday 12th	7.30	Barn Theatre, Tysoe – Love of Seven Dolls
Saturday 12th		Progressive Dinner
Thursday 17th	10-7	Shipston Home Nursing Gift Fair at the Ettington Community Centre, Rogers Lane, Ettington.
Friday 25th & Saturday 26th	7.30	Barn Theatre, Tysoe – Love of Seven Dolls

December

Monday 12th		Village Hall - Senior Citizen's Christmas Lunch
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