

THE OXHILL NEWS

December 2024 No. 601



Ted the Schnauzer, see more on page 3.

Vanessa Druce, editor & Grenville Moore, consulting editor
Email: oxhill.news.editor@gmail.com Website: oxhillcommunity.co.uk

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CLUB & GROUP CONTACT DETAILS

St Lawrence Church,	Priest-in Charge Rev. George Heighton, 01295 680201 Associate Minister Rev. Heather Parbury, 01608 685575
Carers4carers:	kcarers4carers@gmail.com or tel: 07947 893504
Oxhill Village Hall:	Derek Harbour - Chair Ali Sayer - Hall Hire - 07970 922352 email: oxhillvh@gmail.com
The Peacock Pub	01295 675019
Tysoe Tennis Club:	Club Secretary: Carol Spencer email: carol.spencer234@hotmail.co.uk
Warwickshire Mobile Library:	01926 851031
WOT2Grow Community Orchard:	Liz Atkinson (680045), Paul Sayer (680451), Sue & Mike Sanderson (688080) www.wot2grow.co.uk
talkdementia.uk Carer Support Service	Paul & Heather Dowler Tysoe 688376 email: talkdementia@mail.com Website: talkdementia.uk Tysoe Village Hall every Friday from 10am

**If you would like to list your club or group in the Oxhill News
please send details to oxhill.news.editor@gmail.com**

Funny Pet Pictures



Bobbi

Do you have a funny pet or animal picture? If so, please send it to the Oxhill News, we are starting a new column called 'Funny Pet Pictures'. Email: oxhill.news.editor@gmail.com

Thank you, ed.

OXHILL ADVENT WINDOW DATES

Oxhill advent windows will be opening each evening from the 1st - 24th December, please see below for the locations on each date.

This is the list so far, there are still a few spaces let me know if you are interested, there may be some changes so keep Advice eye out on the notice boards and on Facebook.

Thanks

Lis

Lis.stuart@outlook.com 07538865789 or contact Adrian on Facebook



PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE FIRST ADVENT WINDOW ON 1ST DECEMBER 2024 AT 3 THE LEYS

We look forward to welcoming you with seasonal refreshments.

Mick & Barbara Shepard





Date	6.15 pm - Location
1 st Dec	Barbara and Mick 3 The Leys, Whatcote Road.
2 nd	Liz and Brian Blackford House, Main Street
3 rd	Pub Quiz night
4 th	Sue 1 Orchard Close
5 th	
6 th	Celia and Adrian Fern Cottage, Main Street
7 th	Clare & Will Box Wood, Green Lane
8 th	
9 th	Christingle at the Church
10 th	Julia Oddcot, Main Street
11 th	
12 th	Ali and Paul Briar Gate, Main Street
13 th	Morna and Tom Tehidy, Green Lane
14 th	Choir at the pub
15 th	
16 th	Rouse Lane Courtyard
17 th	Carol service at the Church
18 th	Sue and Tony The Orchard, Rouse Lane
19 th	Lucy and Sam 15 &16 Leys Field
20 th	Beer and Bubbles at the Village Hall
21 st	Leys Field Gang 7,8,9 Leys Field
22 nd	Michelle Old Field Cottage, Kineton Road
23 rd	Katy and Stuart, The Stables, Rouse Lane
24 th	Lis and Adrian Oak View, Green Lane

CHRISTMAS TREE FOR THE VILLAGE HALL GREEN

It has been a tradition over the last few years to have a Christmas tree on the grass outside the village hall. Mike Lee of **Warwickshire Christmas Tree Farm** has kindly provided our tree this year and is going to deliver it to us. Tricia and I went with Suzy to the Christmas Tree Farm to select our tree from the thousands that are there. It's a lovely spot! If you want to go and choose your tree with your family, there will be mulled wine and nibbles provided on Saturdays and Sundays to help you in your choice.

Members of the Village Hall Committee are going to erect and decorate the tree on Sunday 1st December for the village to enjoy over the festive season.

Ali Sayer





TRAVELLING NATIVITY

As we approach Christmas, would you like to host Mary, Joseph and Jesus, the Wise Men and the Shepherds as they journey around Oxhill?

The Travelling Nativity recreates the journey of Mary and Joseph as they made their way to Bethlehem for that first Christmas. It contains all that you need for it to be enjoyed for a few days. It will be set off on its journey at the Christingle Service on December 8th at 3.30 pm, and received back into church on Christmas morning.



If you would like to take part, please contact Carol Fox on 07966059596, or Jill Tucker on 07973 994800 or revjill.tucker@btinternet.com

SHIPSTON FLOWER CLUB

Presents

An upcycled Christmas Table Decoration workshop

On
Tuesday, 10th December, 2024
At
**Shipston Primary School,
Station Road, CV36 4BT**

Club members £12

Non-Members £15 (plus Guest Entry £6)

Fee includes: Base mechanics (either foam ring or rectangle on a tray), foliage, glass of wine, nibbles. Please bring your own decorations, flowers, ribbon, scissors/secateurs, apron, gloves.

There will be a Bring and Buy table available with decorations and sundry items to purchase and also a raffle.

Doors open 7.00pm for a 7.30 pm start

Please contact Julie on 07974 339830 to secure your place and for further information.



Ed & I have once again decided that we will not be sending out Christmas cards to our friends & neighbours in Oxhill. Instead, we are going to make a donation to a charity that is very close to our hearts, Ovarian Cancer Action. We would like to wish you all a very Happy & healthy Christmas and all the very best for 2025.

With lots of love & BIG HUGS, **Ed & Elaine** XXXX

GREETINGS FROM **ROGER AND GILL**

How fortunate we are to live in such a lovely village and to have so many wonderful friends to share good times with. Once again, we'll be donating to Air Ambulance instead of sending cards, but whatever you are doing over Christmas we'll be hoping you have a Very Happy Christmas and we send you our best wishes for 2025.

Mike and Heather Bridgman would like to wish all Oxhill residents a really lovely, happy and healthy Christmas .

We won't be sending any Christmas cards this year and instead making a donation to the Migraine Trust Charity.

Merry Christmas to you all. x

This year we will be making a donation to Great Ormond Street Hospital instead of sending Christmas cards. We wish our friends in the village a Happy Christmas and best wishes for 2025.

Anne, Jo, Milo and Felix



St Lawrence Church, Oxhill

Advent and Christmas

2024

Across the Village we celebrate, as the God of love and peace comes to make his home among us.

December 1st: Advent Sunday

9.30 am Holy Communion **Oxhill**

3.30 pm Advent Carols in **Whatcote**

We start to wait, with expectation, for the coming of God in human form, as a baby.



Advent Windows begin to open throughout the Village.....

.. and the Reverse Advent Calendar arrives in

Church – a bag a day for donations to the Shipston Food Bank



Sunday, December 8th

3.30 pm Christingle Service in Church, for old and young to mark the coming of Jesus, and to remember the work of the Children's Society. Lots of tea and cake!

Sunday, December 15th

9.30 am Holy Communion

Tuesday, December 17th

6.30 pm Carols by Candlelight in the Church, followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

Sunday, December 22nd

9.30 am Holy Communion

On Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24th

in both **Brailes and Tysoe** there will be:

3.00 pm Crib Service

11.30 pm Midnight Holy Communion.

Wednesday, December 25th Christmas Day

9.30 am Family Holy Communion for Christmas Day in Church

Jesus is born: God is with us, and we welcome him.

Sunday, December 29th

11.00 am United Service at **Sutton-under-Brailes**.



Have a wonderful Christmas!



TRIATHLON WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

by Paul Sayer

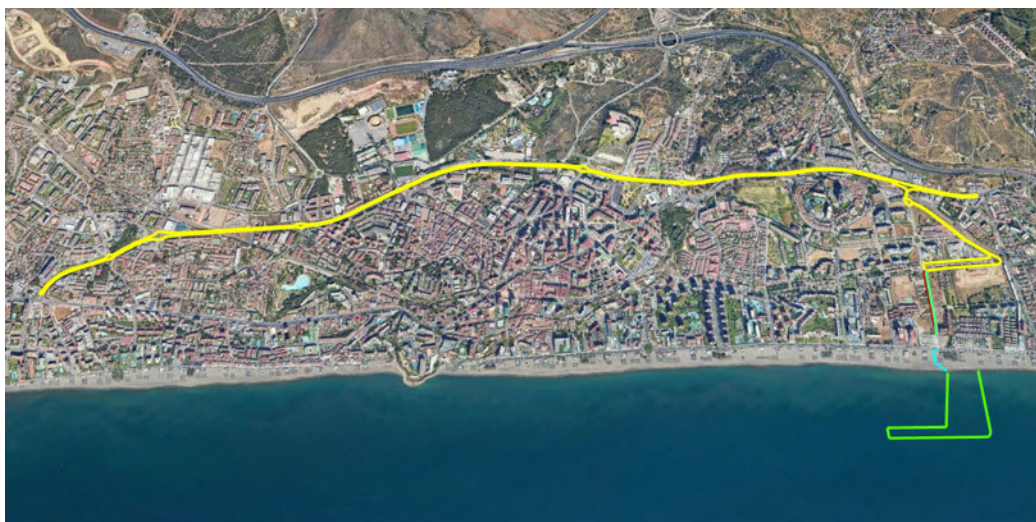
I managed to grab the cover photo (sorry Trish !) on the News last month after my Triathlon World Championship medal win but missed the deadline for a report on the event, so here's the story.

I joined over 5000 other athletes from 70 countries at the Triathlon World Championships in Torremolinos. The GB team had 600 athletes competing, second only in size to the USA Team. The championships were spread over four days of racing with four event types (sprint triathlon, standard triathlon, standard aquabike, and relay sprint triathlon) and multiple categories (junior, youth, elite, age group, and para). I was competing in the standard aquabike, which is 1.5km swim and 40km ride. GB Triathlon has a really good age group structure, and for World and European championships you get a place on the team by winning at qualification races around the country in the preceding year. I decided two years ago to get back into triathlon after a 20 year gap when I heard about Aquabike racing – I had to stop running a few years back due to too many injury niggles so this seemed like a good event to try. After entering and winning a few races it was suggested that I should have a crack at GB qualification, which I achieved at the next event I entered. So here I was, dressed in GB kit on a World Championship start line.

I was up against 30 other athletes from around the globe in my age group and I knew from the world rankings that I should be able to get at least a top 5 finish so long as I avoided any

mishaps. The day had started rather cold and breezy, much against the forecast, but minutes before our start the sky cleared and the conditions turned perfect – calm and warm. I knew there were two faster swimmers in our event so as we hit the water I wasn't surprised to see them pull ahead but that was useful as it gave additional guidance around the markers on the course; one of the keys to open water racing is swimming the most efficient line between the buoys, which can be hard to see if there's any swell, while taking account of any tidal effects, which on this course was providing a bit of a sideways push on two legs. As expected I came out of the water in third place with a 2 minute deficit to the lead man, a South African, and 40 seconds behind a German in second place. I wasn't too worried about the leader as I expected to catch him on the bike, but the German was an unknown quantity as he hadn't posted any recent race results, and I also knew I had a fast GB rider behind me who was going to be about 2 minutes slower on the swim.

The transition for this race involved a 400 metre run from the beach to the bike area, and as fast you can do it get your wetsuit off, bike shoes and helmet on, run with bike to the start line and get pedalling. The phase took me about four and half minutes, 40 seconds faster than the South African so eating into his lead, but 50 seconds slower than the German who I lost sight of as we left transition into a rather crowded ride circuit.



Standard Aquabike Race Route Triathlon World Championships 2024

The ride was three laps around a traffic free 12km dual carriageway circuit, which was accessed by a short technical section involving sharp turns and climbs. The main circuit was a gentle uphill drag then flat, followed by a steep descent to the turn point and climb out, then fast run back into the technical section for the next lap. The course was quite busy with a couple of hundred riders out and avoiding drafting (riding close behind another rider which is not legal in these events) was a bit tricky at times, but the marshals were quite tolerant so long as it was clear you were doing your best to avoid any infringements. I settled into a good pace from the off and set out to hunt down the two in front of me, and every German and South African I passed was checked, but two laps in and still I hadn't caught them. The



race timing was being broadcast so my family could watch the progress but I had no idea that I was actually grinding them down. Half way around lap three the SA target came into view and I passed him just as the other GB rider came through from behind me...so back into third place as we dropped down to the turn point. Coming out of the turn into the climb I immediately overtook the other GB rider and realised I was climbing much faster than him and knew I had to spend the next five minutes putting in as much of a gap as possible on the climbing section and then throw everything at it in the flat and descent. All going well until he came back past me going into the technical section to the finish, which was the spark for some very hectic riding over the last kilometre but still no sight of the German in the lead who we were rapidly closing on. One of the oddities of Aquabike racing is that you have to dismount the bike before you cross the finish line (which for full triathletes would be the dismount line for transition into the run phase) which leads to some really sketchy moments as you are sprinting for the line and have to judge the point at which you slam on the brakes and climb off - you have to be feet on the ground before your front wheel breaks the finish line. Anyway we both held it together and finished second and third separated by 2 seconds in a time of 1:38:45. We needed a few more miles of road to catch the leader.

Every race is a learning experience, especially your first one at this level. The main takeaway for me is the need to improve transition, I was nearly a minute slower than the winner – enough of a difference to get me into first place ! That said, standing on a World Champs podium with a GB flag in my hands and a medal around my neck was a pretty special moment.

So what next ? I have already secured a place for the World Champs next year over standard distance, and for European Champs middle distance (2km swim, 90km ride), and am awaiting confirmation of qualification for World Champs long distance (4km swim, 120km ride). Let's see if I can get a bit higher on the podium next time....

PICKLEBALL IN OXHILL

You may have heard that Pickleball is a new game which is surging in popularity all over the country. Its like a type of indoor tennis but played on a smaller court and with solid bats rather than rackets and a tennis sized plastic ball with holes in it. If you have a reasonable eye it is easy to play , and usually played with doubles. It originated in America and you can see lots of it on U-Tube. For those who would find tennis a bit too active , this is a great way to continue enjoying a similar type of ball game.

We are really fortunate that Mike and Karen Perry at Newborough House have a lovely court and facilities which they have generously offered to the village if we can raise enough interest. This would be a weekly session in the daytime,for Oxhill residents only.

If you would like to have a go, please email or text me so that we can potentially get together a group. We need at least 12 people. Age is not a barrier and it is usually great fun.

Peter Rivers Fletcher
0773 0800729
Rfn364@btinternet.com





100 CLUB LOTTERY

PLAY - SUPPORT - WIN

It's never too late to join! oxhillvh@gmail.com



OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

It's the last month of what's been an eventful year for the village hall so it seems timely that the committee give our sincere thanks to everyone who's supported us at events and with ongoing renovation work. The motto on the village hall logo is 'for our community' and this is precisely why we do what we do. We couldn't, however, do it without all those

who bake, cook, clean, serve, tidy, dig, paint, lay slab, etc, on our behalf so thank you, thank you, thank you.

If you'd like to be more involved in our community and possibly help at the hall, why not come along to one of our events to chat with one of the committee members or email us at oxhillvh@gmail.com to arrange to meet up.

Contact Ali: 07970 922352
or oxhillvh@gmail.com

Beer & Bubbles

Friday 20th December 7pm

includes canapés
£15
& two free drinks

UPCOMING EVENTS

Seniors' Christmas Lunch, Tuesday 10th December, 12:30pm: invitations to this exclusive event have been distributed, but it's perfectly possible that we've managed to miss one or two of you so please let us know as soon as possible if you or your partner has had your 65th birthday and you didn't get your invitation. The closing date for replies is Monday 2nd December.

Beer & Bubbles, Friday 20th December, 7pm: tickets for our annual festive party are now on sale! If you would like to join us, please contact Ali on 07970 922352 or email her at oxhillvh@gmail.com. Tickets are £15 and allow you to enjoy two drinks and canapés on us.

'100 Club' Christmas Draw: Instead of the usual £60/£30/£10 prizes, we're giving away three £100 prizes in December. If you'd like a chance to win but haven't yet signed up for the Club, please send an email to Sally Mannerings at oxhillvh@gmail.com. The December draw will take place at the Beer & Bubbles event.



'HIPPO MAN' TALK IN OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

by Shirley Cherry

As many of you will know, my husband Roland was attacked by a hippo on 25th June this year, whilst we were on an organised canoe safari on the Kafue River in Zambia. He and I gave an illustrated talk about this and our African adventures in a packed hall on Thursday 24th October.

The first part of our talk covered the safari highlights of the first two weeks of our trip from Johannesburg up through Botswana to Victoria Falls. After an interval to replenish drinks, the audience heard Roland and myself describe the hippo attack. The talk covered the attack itself and then the medical care that Roland had over the next three weeks in hospital: first in Chirundu in Zambia and then in Johannesburg. The audience were exposed to the graphic photos of Roland's injuries taken by the plastic surgeon in Johannesburg and, given the

extent of his wounds, it was amazing to discover that he miraculously suffered no broken bones or vital organ damage. Roland had eight operations under general anesthetic in three weeks before being fit enough to fly home to Warwickshire.

Roland vowed to raise money to buy some equipment for the Mtendere Mission hospital in Chirundu – their early intervention, just 1.5 hours after the attack, involved cleaning up Roland’s wounds and roughly sewing him up, ready for air evacuation to Johannesburg. At no time did Mtendere ask for money so Roland was determined to repay the “kindness of strangers” by embarking on a fund-raising effort when he got home. Thanks to an extraordinary media frenzy, we have so far raised £32,853 towards a new ambulance for the hospital.

Roland is joining forces with Rotary International in Italy as well as other local organisations to buy the \$85,000 USD ambulance that will hopefully enable Mtendere to better serve their community and help save many lives during its working life.

The Oxhill evening was supported by a record attendance at the village hall and raised £566 towards the appeal.

If anyone missed the talk but would like to contribute, please go to [justgiving.com/crowdfunding/RolandCherry](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/RolandCherry) to give whatever you can.



Roland and Shirley are raising money to buy this much-needed ambulance for the Mtendere Mission Hospital in Chirundu, Zambia



In late October Douglas Nethercleft took me to visit his bee hives and spoke to me about bees. Our conversation was recorded, though I stopped the tape when I got on a bee suit and approached the hives. We're publishing extracts from the interview in two parts, over two issues in November and December. Below are the first extracts of our interview.

If you would like to know more about bees and beekeeping, get in touch with Shipston Beekeepers at sbka.org.uk

~ Vanessa, ed.

BEES AND BEEKEEPING

PART 2

I noticed that this summer we didn't see the number of honeybees that we usually do. There were fewer bees.

A lot of people have reported very few bees, butterflies, and insects in general. There are fewer wasps for certain this year which is good for me because wasps have killed more of my colonies than anything else.

Wasps get into the hive?

Yes, it takes six bees to kill a wasp. The wasps are a lot more powerful, but the bees will defend the very small entrance that you see. On my hives the entrance is a V-shape narrowing as it goes in. It's about two inches wide at the front but it narrows down to half an inch at the back and it's only six millimetres high. The guard bees have a better fighting chance when the wasps can only try to rob the honey one at a time

In the winter months another nuisance is mice who love to go in the hive in the warm. Unfortunately, mice don't have any sphincter muscles so they crap everywhere and the bees don't like it.

That's a small entrance for a mouse.

Yes, a mouse can't get in there either. If you have a larger entrance then you have to put a mouse guard on the front to keep the mice out.



Bees gather around the small entrance to their hive.

Is this hive design something that you've arrived at after 20 years of tinkering?

Yes, I'll say that. There are 20 plus different styles of beehive, but the one that I'm using here is the British National Beehive which is a particular size, shape and construction, though I have made my own floors and entrances. A normal National Hive will consist of a floor, a brood box and only have a smaller super box on it during the summer. During the winter it would just have the floor, brood box and a roof.

One of the tools that a beekeeper has is his smoker. I think that the bees are almost anaesthetised by the smoke. It slows them down and you'll see that later on that when we open the hive. If I puff a bit of smoke across the top of the frames they'll all disappear down because they don't like. But it calms them down. You can use a water spray instead of a smoker and that is my preference quite often. They think it's raining, and they just disappear down.

The only the only reason for you to go into the larger brood box at the bottom is to check the bees' well-being. Twice a year you do what is called a disease inspection. There are two diseases which you are by statute required to report if you suspect their presence. One is called European Foul Brood (EFB), and the other one is called American Foul Brood (AFB). And the names don't refer to where they originated; the names are accidental rather than

meaningful. Foul broods are contagious diseases that can spread to other colonies and kill them off. You have to notify the bee inspectors, and they will come and examine your bees. If EFB is confirmed, the inspector has the power to destroy your colony if he thinks the infestation is bad enough. because he doesn't want it to spread. With EFB, it's not always the case that they will kill off the hive, but with AFB, that is a definite no-no and they dig a pit, set light to everything and burn it all away and then fill in the pit. It's a bit like the plague!

Would you notice it on your bees by their behaviour?

Yes, or rather by the brood. Where the cells are wax capped, the wax capping can give you a good indication as to whether the larvae underneath is healthy. To check you open the cap and with AFB the larvae might have turned to something a bit like marmite. Uncapped larvae should always be pearly white, curled in a 'C' shape, with segmentation clearly visible.

Fortunately, touch wood, I've never experienced these diseases, but several beekeepers locally have had EFB. Their apiaries were closed down until matters were resolved and they were not allowed to take stuff away. They had to wash their bee suits and wellington boots after every time they had visited, just like you would on a farm that had got foot and mouth.

The other reason to go into your brood box is to check whether the queen is laying well, and whether there are queen cells. If there are queen cells in the swarm season, you might not want half your bees to leave. I would prefer if they stayed with me, so I would start a second colony myself rather than let them do it themselves.

And how would you do that?

By taking one of the queen cells, put it in another box with a load of worker bees to populate it and away you go.

So, every year you have the opportunity to expand the number of colonies that you have, should you wish? You've got two colonies because there are two hives. So those are separate colonies.



Douglas holding a jar of pollen.

Early Spring	Early to Late Spring	Late Spring to Early Summer	Early Summer to Summer
 LAURUSTINUS <i>Viburnum tinus</i>	 BERBERIS <i>Mahonia aquifolia</i>	 BEECH <i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	 BROAD BEAN <i>Vicia faba</i>
 SNOWDROP <i>Galanthus nivalis</i>	 RED DEADNETTLE <i>Lamium purpureum</i>	 BLUEBELL <i>scilla nonscripta</i>	 RASPBERRY <i>Rubus idaeus</i>
 HAZEL <i>Corylus avellana</i>	 PLUM <i>Prunus domestica</i>	 BROOM <i>Sarothamnus scoparius</i>	 CRANESBILL <i>Geranium sanguineum</i>
 YELLOW CROCUS <i>Crocus aureus</i>	 FL. CURRANT <i>Ribes sanguineum</i>	 SYCAMORE <i>Acer pseudo-platanus</i>	 WHITE CLOVER <i>Trifolium repens</i>
 GORSE <i>Ulex europaeus</i>	 GOOSEBERRY <i>Ribes uva-crispa</i>	 HORSE CHESTNUT <i>Caesculus hippocastanum</i>	 BLACKBERRY <i>Rubus fruticosus</i>
 YEW <i>Taxus baccata</i>	 PEAR <i>Pyrus communis</i>	 HAWTHORN <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	 RED CLOVER <i>Trifolium pratense</i>
 WILLOW <i>Salix caprea</i>	 ROSEMARY <i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	 BUTTERCUP <i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>	 BIRDSFOOT TREFOIL <i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
 COLTSFOOT <i>Tussilago farfara</i>	 DANDELION <i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	 LILAC <i>Syringa vulgaris</i>	 FIELD POPPY <i>Papaver rhoeas</i>
 BLACKTHORN <i>Prunus spinosa</i>	 OILSEED RAPE <i>Brassica napus</i>	 DOG ROSE <i>Rosa canina</i>	 VIPERS BUGLOSS <i>Echium vulgare</i>
 L. CELANDINE <i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	 APPLE <i>Malus rumila</i>	 ELDER <i>Sambucus nigra</i>	 VERONICA <i>Veronica spicata</i>

Various types and colours of pollen.

Yes.

And do they argue with each other?

They live side by side quite happily. But if one of the queens died or one of the hives got a disease, then the other colony might decide, “Well, there's a whole load of free food next door, why bother to go out and get nectar from the flowers? We can just go and pinch their honey”. If there is a weak colony with fewer bees, another colony might take advantage, but it doesn't happen very often.

What's that you have there?

Here we have a jar of pollen which the bees get from the plant where they've taken the nectar. The pollen adheres to the hairs on their body and some is then transferred to the next flower that they visit and fertilises it.

So how does the pollen go into a little bead-like formations?

The bees brush the tiny grains of pollen off the hairs on their body and, with a little nectar to bind it together, put it into what is called a pollen basket on their back legs. They go back to the hive with two little balls, one on each back leg and they deposit the pollen in a cell.

I notice there are different colours of pollen?

You can often tell where the bees are bringing the nectar from because of the pollen colour. The pollen from chestnut trees, when they are in bloom, is bright red.

I've heard, that honey production is down across the world but honey consumption is up.

It is a fact that the quantity of honey produced from beehives is a lot less tonnage than is consumed in the world. The reason is that honey can be 'extended' using sugar syrup. Very often the honey you find in a major supermarket will have come from China and the content of that jar might have a little honey in it, but the rest of it isn't.

So, it's sugar syrup?

And other stuff.

So really to be sure you're getting pure honey is to buy local, I imagine?

Exactly that.

I see that you have brought some samples for me to try!

This is runny honey, but if you leave it long enough it will crystallize into a solid lump. All honey will eventually crystallize, but the honey will not degrade. It is said that the honey in the pharaoh's tombs is still edible.

If the lid is left off, the honey will absorb moisture. Honey is hygroscopic and eventually it will absorb enough water for it to ferment, and it will then turn into alcohol. That is the basis of making mead.

Is mead a liqueur?

It's perhaps not as viscous as a liqueur. Mead is simply made from honey, water and yeast. You can buy a yeast to get the fermentation going. There are dry meads and sweet meads. If you use other ingredients during fermentation, it changes its name. Melamel is a fruit mead. This small bottle has got some red currant in it. If you use apples in your mix of fermentation, it's called cyser. If you use grapes, it's called pyment, and if you add herbs or spices it's called metheglin. Various names for various meads.



Beeswax products from Douglas' hives.

That sounds like old English.

It is, very much so. Don't forget that from Neolithic man right up to Saxon times, or even later, the only source of sweetness was fruit and honey.

To create mead, you have a container of honey to which you add water, a little bit of yeast, and then leave it – perhaps for several years. In fact, to make a natural mead, the yeast can come from the atmosphere. Somebody that's an aficionado of mead will say not to use champagne yeast or any other yeast, just let the natural yeast from the atmosphere set fermentation under way.

As I said earlier, all honey will crystallize in due course. And the crystals are likely to be coarse. So, when you put the honey on your tongue, it's very granular. Crystals can grow until the whole jar is solid. You will bend a spoon when you try to put it in.

But a beekeeper likes to promote soft set honey. Here is some - it is very smooth.

That's lovely. You must eat a lot of honey.

I'm diabetic, type two. So I don't go overboard, but I do eat a lot of honey. Yes.

How do you get soft set honey as opposed to coarse granular honey?

Next year when I have a lot of runny honey, I will add 10% of this soft set honey to the runny honey and mix it well. Then I will put it in jars and let it crystallize with a fine grain naturally. It's called seeding the honey. And the next year I'll do the same again - and so it goes on forever.

Interesting. And this jar will not go solid?

No, this soft set will stay the same forever. And, as you just tasted, it's the ultimate really in honey.

This wax comb I've brought can be melted down into liquid form and a wick dipped into it, left to cool and then dipped again. This candle has had about 20



Top to Bottom: Honey, Mead and a well consumed jar of Oxhill Honey.

dips. It is called a dipped, as opposed to a moulded, candle.

How long would this last once you light it?

About two hours. The criteria for judging a candle like this is that there should be no 'guttering' which means no dripping down the side of the candle. It burns with a nice flame and the wick is smoked away. You've got to have the right size wick. You buy different wicks depending on the diameter of the candle that you want to produce. This is a half inch wick, and my candle is only half an inch in diameter. If I want to make a bigger candle, I will buy a two-inch wick for a two-inch diameter candle. And so on.

You can use pure beeswax to lubricate thread when you're sewing, wax the string of your bow if you're an archer, revitalise your wax jacket or polish your shoes! It is used to make 'lost wax' moulds and to coat some medicinal pills.

This furniture polish is beeswax with turpentine. You can polish the doorframe of your front door so that when the visitors come to the front door ...

There is a lovely smell. Great idea!

Note: At this point we suited up and went into two of the colonies. Unfortunately, my recorder had run out of battery, and I can only leave the lazy buzz of the bees and the glorious smell of the opened hives to your imagination. Ed.



*Photo of Douglas selling his bee wares at the 2023 Made in Oxhill Pop Up Shop. **The 2024 Made in Oxhill Fair will be held on November 29-30.***

STOUR SINGERS

conducted by Richard Emms

present

VIVALDI - Beatus Vir & Magnificat

HANDEL - Messiah excerpts

plus carols for all

Soprano: Caroline Taylor

Alto: Cathy Bell

Tenor: Matthew Pochin

Musicians from
the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Saturday, 14 December 2024 at 7.30pm
St. Edmund's Church, Shipston on Stour

Tickets £16 (accompanied children free)
available from ticketsource.co.uk/stour-singers
or on the door



www.stoursingers.org.uk



Soloists appear by arrangement with
Ann Ferrier Artists - Concert Directory International



WOT2 GROW COMMUNITY ORCHARD

The autumn means that it gets very busy at the orchard! Lots of apples – both cooking and eating – have been picked and stored in a cold shed, and the soft fruit has been pruned.

Most of the apples keep well over the winter. There are many different varieties in the orchard which you cannot buy in the supermarket, and they have a much better flavour. Also, they have not been flown in from the other side of the world! Last year we had a crop of 555kg of apples alone.

A good number were sent for juicing and the bottles are available to buy at £2.50 each for non-members and £2 for members. Please contact Sue and Mike Sanderson to arrange for collection if you would like to stock up for Christmas.

Fruit was also distributed to two local care homes and Tyose and Shenington schools

The membership fee of £25 stands until March next year and includes apples for the rest of the year. This is fantastic value for local organic fruit.

The orchard is next to the allotments on the Shenington Road in Tyose.

Allie Aves

To find out more please look at our website: www.wot2grow.co.uk or [contact one of the members below.](#)

Miranda Forrester (680265), Paul Sayer (680451), Sue and Mike Sanderson (688080)





Tysoe Tennis Club
www.tysoetennisclub.co.uk

WINTER TENNIS

Our willing club volunteers have prepared the courts for winter use - completing the very exciting but necessary job of moss removal!!

We are ready to compete in the Stratford and District Ladies Winter League with two teams entered - one in Division 5 and one in Division 8. Both teams have played three matches and the season will involve contests against the likes of Alcester, Kenilworth, Aston Cantlow, Studley, Chipping Campden and Leamington.

The one mixed team entered the Banbury Winter League in a Division including Warwick, Priors Marston and Hook Norton.

There was no opportunity for a men's team to be entered in a league this year, but thanks to the creativity of our member Philip Marshall, we have devised our own "internal" mens winter league. 12 members will do battle over the next few months creating a fun but competitive environment for the men and the early feedback suggests the format is working very well, we can be flexible when we play, and everyone gets to play with and against everyone in the league format.

So hopefully plenty of competitive tennis to be viewed by the keen dog walkers of the village!

There is no doubt it is harder to drag oneself out to play on a cold damp winter's day but everyone always comments that it is worth the effort!

Remember, our 'club sessions' on a Sunday morning and Tuesday evening are available to all to come along and join in. Everyone is welcome and it's a good chance to try your hand before deciding if you want to join the club or not.

Colin Wilson



The Community Choir of
Tysoe, Oxhill & Shenington

Please join us for
Christmas Carols on
Saturday December 14th 2024

We will be singing outside of the
following village venues:

The Peacock, Oxhill 6-6.30p.m.

Tysoe Social Club 7-7.30p.m.

The Bell, Shenington 8-8.30p.m.

Charity Collection in aid of
Tysoe Dementia Café
and Cancer Research



CCOTS CHRISTMAS MEAL

We would love for you to join us for
our
CCOTS Christmas Meal and singing
to be held on
Wednesday 18th December
at
The Bell at Shenington
from 7 pm
RSVP by 26th November

Main course £15—options below.

Drinks and puddings
available to order on the night.



WHAT'S ON IN & AROUND OXHILL

DECEMBER

1st - 24th	18:15	Advent Window Displays throughout the village Check page 4 for details
Wed 4th	14:30-14:50	Mobile Library outside Village Hall
Tues 10th	12:30	Seniors' Christmas Lunch, Village Hall
Tues 10th	19:00	Shipston Flower Club
Sat 14th	18:00-18:30	CCOTS Christmas Carols outside Peacock Pub
Sat 14th	19:40	Stour Singers Concert, St Edmund's Church, Shipston
Wed 18th	19:00	CCOTS Christmas Meal, The Bell, Shenington
Fri 20th	19:00	Beer & Bubbles, Village Hall
Every Thursday	12:00	Coffee Morning, Peacock Pub

PC MEETINGS

The date of the next PC Meeting is **Tuesday, 14th January 2025 at 7.30pm**. This meeting will be held in the Village Hall. The minutes and agendas will be posted on the Parish Council part of the Welcome to Oxhill Notice board, not the one by the pub.

If you want any request to be included for consideration at the above meeting please send details to the Clerk (oxhillpc@btinternet.com) at least 10 days prior to the meeting to ensure that it is included on the publicly visible Agenda.

BIN COLLECTION CALENDAR

Check the date on the calendar to identify which bins go out for collection.

■ Food waste ■ Recycling

■ General refuse ■ Garden waste

