

THE OXHILL NEWS

January 2026 No. 614



Santa visits Oxhill

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The Village Contact List can now be found on the side back cover (page 31)



CHRISTMAS CHEER AT MICK & BARBARA'S

The Christmas season kicked off on December 1st at Mick & Barbara's where we had mulled wine, Christmas nibbles, great conversation and a warming fire. Thank you both for a lovely evening. ~ *Vanessa*



ST LAWRENCE CHURCH FOR JANUARY

Although it may seem like it, Christmas is not yet over. The first weekend in January is Epiphany, Wise Men from the East made the very long trek to find and visit the infant Jesus. They knew that a very special King had been born, and despite the long and arduous journey, they were determined to find him. Along the way they encountered Herod, who wanted to use them to destroy that King, but they kept following the star that had led them all that way, and so outflanked Herod.

God led them on a long journey, but they got there, and were able to sit in the presence of God's baby son and worship him. Sometimes we go on a very long journey to find Jesus, but in the end it is worth every moment. As we come into a New Year, keep searching, knowing that actually it is God who finds us, and will lead us into his presence!



Church services in January

Sunday, 4 th January	Epiphany	9.30 am	Holy Communion	SusanBowden-Pickstock
Sunday, 11 th January		9.30 am	Morning Prayer	Susan Bowden-Pickstock
Sunday, 18 th January		9.30 am	Holy Communion	George Heighton
Sunday, 25 th January		6.30 pm	Evensong	George Heighton

When those first visitors came to you, Lord,
they brought gifts to lay at your feet.
But it was they who left the richer for having seen you.

As we lay what we have
and what we are before you,
may our eyes look heavenward,
may our hearts rise in expectation
and ay we, together,
be instruments of change and bringers of light
in places of need.
From Those first visitors, Tina Kemp, in Winter.

Travelling with God is never dull,
but always filled with surprises.
Hand in hand with God
we step into a brave new future.
Roddy Hamilton in Winter.

Have a wonderful New Year! Jill



Christmas Caroling



JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE

I am weak but Thou art strong;
Jesus, keep me from all wrong;
I'll be satisfied as long
As I walk, let me walk close to Thee.

Refrain:

Just a closer walk with Thee,
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea,
Daily walking close to Thee,
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

Through this world of toil and snares,
If I falter, Lord, who cares?
Who with me my burden shares?
None but Thee, dear Lord, none but Thee.

When my feeble life is o'er,
Time for me will be no more;
Guide me gently, safely o'er
To Thy kingdom shore, to Thy shore.

Anonymous



SANTA, ELVES AND SLEIGH TOUR OXHILL





THANK YOU

Thank you to all who supported the Christmas windows, lights and decorations this year.

Either by displaying some Christmas cheer, walking round the village and viewing peoples efforts, coming along to sing some carols, or cheering on Father Christmas as he made his rounds.

Thank you also those who made everyone brave enough to face the December weather welcome.

Thank you also to the Christmas team with out whom the events would not be possible.

HAPPY NEW YEAR to all!

Best wishes for 2026!

Lis Stuart



The CCOTS choir singing carols outside the Village Hall.

ROOF THATCHING

Another traditional craft in Oxhill. Functional and attractive. Lovely to see a young person using the old skills. ~ *Barbara Shepherd*



THE PARISH COUNCIL – A BEGINNING

by Lis Stuart

On a wet Friday afternoon, I was tasked with looking through the minute books of the Parish Council to find reference to a historical planning issue. I found it fascinating to read the social history of the village encapsulated in the pages. So many things have changed but so many remain the same.

The first recorded meeting for the Parish of Oxhill was the Annual Assembly on Monday 30th March 1869. The elected Chairman was John H Summerton, proposed by Mr A.R.M, Spencer and seconded by H.P Haneore. Mr John Taylor was appointed as one of the overseers of the poor for the year. There continued to be a Parish meeting each year with one elected member being an overseer of the poor. Then on the 22nd October 1906 a special meeting was held to appoint two school managers and Mrs Carlen and William Spencer were appointed from that date until the 30th April 1910 (no further information is given as to what happened in 1910).

In 1915 there were not enough people to hold a meeting and the situation remained until 1924 (no reason given). Meetings resumed in 1924 when ARM Spencer was elected as chairman. The responsibility of the group continued to be to elect members to oversee the poor.

In 1926 it was recorded that: “Rate-Payers strongly protest against the closing of Oxhill County School, and the transference of the children to Tysoe School. The meeting heartily agrees with all the objections raised by the school manager, to the closing of the school. The parents object to their young children being away from home, and their care for the whole



Oxhill School 1914

day, and also at the extra expense incurred for meals. Little economy would be effected to the rates and taxes. But the closing of the school would prove most detrimental to the district and would tend to alienate children's interests in the village life of Oxhill. It is most probable that other houses will be built as the R.D.C. already owns a site in the village. Four or five families have young children which will shortly be ready for school."

The following were also carried by a large majority:

1. That the Brailes R. D.C be asked to build 4 houses. (R.D.C Rural District Council)
2. That handrails be put on foot bridge leading to the Manor and the road leading to the Manor and the Road by Mr. J. Haneer's house be repaired
3. That the chippings which are on the footpath in the village be tarred.
4. That the words "Gated Road" to be painted on the finger- post at the top of side-lands, on the Stratford Banbury turnpike, to correspond with the one at the bottom of White – Hill.

It was proposed and carried that Mr Robert Groves be the Parish Representative on the school managers and that Mr W. Wood be the Rural District Councillor and Guardian of the Parish. It is at this point that you can see the form of the Parish Council we know today emerging although there remained only one meeting a year this remains today as The Annual Parish Meeting held currently in May.

On the 21st March 1927 the group consisting of Mr Thomas B. Heritage, Mr T Harper and Mr J. H Simmonds as Chairman of the Parish Meetings that the District Council be asked to remove the chippings on the footpath, for concrete steps to the brook at the bottom of Mr Heritages homestead, that handrails be put on the bridge leading to the Manor and the road by Mr Gijlks house be repaired.

Also, this year on 23rd May it was proposed, seconded and carried that the Brailes Rural District Council be urged to build four houses on the ground already owned by them at Oxhill, it was also proposed and seconded and carried that in the case off the Council being unable to build four, that they be asked to build two, on the south side off the Village Street.

When writing this I have copied the language used and it is not an error on my part for example the use of 'off' rather than 'of'. I find it also interesting that Oxhill came under Brailes Rural District Council rather than Stratford on Avon, how much more local things were when we are now reaching the point of a devolved Council and the area it covers being so much bigger. You will also see some familiar names from the village e.g. Heritage, Simmonds, Spencer, Groves.



Heritage's Homestead – Church Farm



FRIENDS OF OXHILL CHURCH

MADE IN OXHILL

There was much to enjoy at the Made In Oxhill Arts and Crafts Pop-Up Shop, from the variety of arts, crafts and home produce to the delicious home-baked cakes, cheese scones, mulled wine and homemade soup. This year, we changed our weekend and opening times not only to avoid clashing with Kineton's and Shipston's Christmas evening events but also to fit in with a change to the village Advent Windows / Christmas Lights. Saturday was a long day with a trickle of visitors throughout the day. However, only two people visited in the evening, which was disappointing. Sunday morning was very busy for the whole two hours that we were open, visitors including 14 cyclists from Shipston Cycling Club who were very pleased to use us for their coffee stop as our coffee and cake is so much better (and cheaper) than their usual café stops! Thank you to everyone who supported the event. We raised over £800 from the sale of refreshments and donations from the Stallholders which goes towards the reordering of Oxhill Church.

Thank you to everyone who donated freshly baked cakes, mince pies and more to keep our visitors well-refreshed. We are well aware that many of our visitors come especially for the cake! This event (and others) just wouldn't happen without the commitment and hard work of the Friends of Oxhill Church and additional volunteers. Thank you to Sue Robbins, Barbara Shepard, Deborah Holroyd, Verena Rogers, Sue Robinson and Michelle Hardiman for help with serving refreshments: we couldn't manage without you. Special thanks to Gaida and Jerry Webb, Linda Synge, Carol Beasley, Lis Stuart, Carol Fox and Kay Hawtin for baking, soup making and wine mulling as well as working tirelessly during the weekend and giving so freely of your time and enthusiasm.



Next Event
Games Night

Saturday 7th February

Last year's Games Night proved fun and popular so please join us to play more games and eat a delicious supper! Early booking essential.

Ruth Mercer

ruthc.mercer@btinternet.com

07400 615999





I thought it high time i introduce myself to all you lovely neighbours.. My name is Kim Fowler and I'm a private chef, living here in the wonderful village of Oxhill. We moved here as a family nearly 4 years ago just in time for the fabulous Oxhill celebrations of the Queens Jubilee. After volunteering my services at this event, i have since in the village, had a 'take-out' Thai night, a pop-up Thai food stall at 'Music at the Manor' and headed up the cooking alongside Joanna Griffiths for the second year in a row of the Oxhill seniors Christmas lunch. I have an extensive repertoire and much experience working with many different types of cuisine and culinary tastes. Having worked with food for over 30 Years, my culinary journey began many moons ago at Banbury Technical College where i rubbed shoulders with the likes of Gordon Ramsey. I then headed south to London working as Chef de Partie for the Hilton Group before returning back to the Shires as head chef at the award winning 'Roebuck' in North Newington. Since having my (now grown up) children I have focused my passion on private events such as canapé parties, private dining and garden soirées as well as festivals (i did all the catering for the internal staff at Festival in 2023), Weddings and Funerals. I have even carried out private dining for tv chefs locally!

I can cater for intimate gatherings right through to large scale celebrations as i have my wonderful team that work alongside me who share my passion and commitment to delivering a truly memorable culinary experience.

So that's me in a nutshell, if you have any catering requirements big or small please do not hesitate to get in touch I would love the opportunity to work with you.

Kim x







OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

December is a busy month for the village hall as we have two events and a lot of planning for the coming year on top of the usual management of lettings and maintenance. At the time of writing, Beer & Bubbles is less than a week away and yours truly is putting ads together for our

first events of 2026, the first of which is *Burns' Night but not as you know it!* This should be great fun so please check Saturday 24th January in your diary and get in touch with Ali to book your tickets. You can give her a call on 07970 922352 or reach her on the usual email address: oxhillvh@gmail.com.

Other upcoming dates for your diary are our two talks in February, the first by Glenn Crouch who worked with the Rolling Stones for many years, and the second by Colin Hales in a follow up to his very popular 2025 talk about building his own plane and flying around the world. Glenn will be joining us on the 10th and Colin on the 24th. Tickets are £8. We are not always able to provide spaces on the door so please pre-book your seats with Ali.

It only remains to say that the trustees hope you had a marvellous Christmas and that New Year's Eve passed just as you hoped it would. Here's to a happy and healthy 2026!

Karen MacRae

Oxhill Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch – Tuesday 9 December, 2025

Forty-five lucky Seniors from the village sat down at half a dozen beautifully decorated tables to celebrate the upcoming Christmas with a feast fit for royalty. They were greeted with a drink of their choice and bottles of both red and white wine were placed on each table. Along with excellent bread rolls, there was a choice of starter: light, fruity melon balls or sumptuous prawn cocktail with a hint of paprika. Traditional turkey roast dinners followed, cooked by renowned chefs Joanna Pilgrim and Kim Fowler. Tasty slices of moist turkey and crispy, fluffy roast potatoes were accompanied by delicious parsnips, firm Brussels sprouts, peas and carrots with meaty sausages and pigs in blankets all glazed with heavenly gravy – Yummy!

Christmas pudding with brandy sauce, or fruit crumble with Madagascan vanilla custard or thick double cream were served along with super homemade mince pies to finish the feast.





Each table had a devilish quiz to solve to win chocolates and there was a raffle to win bottles of wine, boxes of chocolates, boxes of biscuits and a poinsettia plant.

To finish the lunch the guests were treated to an interactive musical accompaniment from Peter and Jeremy Rivers Fletcher on keyboard, double bass and guitars – well done guys!

Huge thanks to Joanna and Kim, the many Friends of the Village Hall for their many contributions of food, serving and clearing up help. Thanks also to the trustees for their ‘behind the scenes’ contributions to what was a great afternoon.

Derek Harbour





BURNS' NIGHT

BUT NO AS YOU KNOW IT!

7pm Saturday 24th January

Fun, forfeits, quizzing & a wee bitty singing and dancing

£10
per person

PIE & A PINT

For that, read a Scotch pie and a drink of your choice!

OXHILL VILLAGE HALL
for our community

Contact Ali for tickets on
07970 922352 or oxhillvh@gmail.com

Babysitting available

I am available on Friday and Saturday evenings and more during the school holidays for babysitting in Oxhill village. I've got lots of experience looking after little ones. Please contact if interested at jasminefawcus@gmail.com
Jasmine Fawcus-Age 14-Year 10

LATE ADDITION!

Vanessa, the editor, managed to sneak in some photos of Beer & Bubbles before the News went to print. Don't we Oxhillians scrub up well? It was such fun, and a truly fitting end to another successful year at the Village Hall. Thank you to all who made it possible.



WALLABY IN OXHILL

Most villagers have now heard about the escaped wallaby in Oxhill. But if you haven't or you would like to read more about the wallaby adventure, have a look at the Gaurdian article in which a wildlife expert and newspaper reporter track down the elusive wallaby. Thank you to Tom Heritage for sending us the link:

theguardian.com/environment/2025/dec/04/one-man-search-wild-wallaby-uk?CMP=oth_b-aplnews_d-5

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'It moved ... it was hopping!' One man's search for a wild wallaby in the UK



Sam Wollaston

Thu 4 Dec 2025 05:00 GMT

Share

59



Sam Wollaston prepares to go wallaby hunting in Oxhill, Warwickshire. Photograph: Fabio De Paola/The Guardian

Reports of escaped wallabies are on the rise, especially in southern England. But how easy is it to spot these strange and charismatic marsupials – and why would a quintessentially Australian creature settle here?

It was about 9.30 or 10 on a dark, late November night; Molly Laird was driving her pink Mini home along country lanes to her Warwickshire cottage. Suddenly, the headlights' beam picked up an animal sitting in the road. "I thought it was a deer at first," Molly tells me. "But when it moved, its tail wasn't right, and it was hopping. It took me a while to realise, but I thought: that's a kangaroo!"

Molly's next thought was: "I'm going insane," closely followed by, "No one's going to believe me." So she got out her phone and filmed it. Later, she posted the video on social media, where she was told it was likely to be not a kangaroo, but its smaller cousin, the **red-necked wallaby**.

I have come to meet Molly, who is 10, and her mum, Becky, where the



by Ruth Mercer

I came across this recipe which had the bold claim of being the best chocolate fudge cake. I'll be the judge of that, I thought, but then it was time for Knit and Natter, so I put it to the group full of expert bakers with centuries of baking experience between them. The verdict was pretty unanimous that it was an excellent cake, moist and delicious. However, before it could be the recipe for one of our eldest daughter's wedding cake layers, it had to pass the ultimate taste test: our granddaughter. She thought it was too cocoa-y so I had to adapt it; the final version below is taste-approved by an eight year old. I can also vouch for it keeping well in a cake tin for up to 10 days (as long as you hide the tin) and freezing successfully. Cover the cake with whatever icing you like. Personally, I favour a chocolate fudge icing as seen on the birthday cake below, recipe given in April 2021 Oxhill News and repeated here.



PROBABLY THE BEST CHOCOLATE FUDGE CAKE... IN THE WORLD

(SEND ME YOUR RECIPE IF YOU DISAGREE)

Ingredients

2 large eggs
175 ml cooking oil
175 ml milk
260 g plain flour
40 g cocoa powder

2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
½ tsp fine sea salt
300g caster sugar
60 g dark chocolate, melted
150 ml water, just boiled

Tin required: traybake tin 34 cm x 22 cm, or two 20 cm round sandwich cake tins, or a 25 cm square tin, or equivalent

1. Set the oven to 180 C / 160 C fan.
2. Grease the tin/s with lining paste or line with baking parchment.
3. In a large mixing bowl, whisk the eggs and cooking oil together until combined and the whisk in the milk.
4. Add the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, salt, caster sugar and melted chocolate. Whisk until smooth, then carefully add the just-boiled water and mix until combined.
5. Pour the (very wet) batter into the prepared tin/sandwich tins. Bake for 25-30 minutes until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. (Depending on the time size, it might need up to 15 minutes longer.)
6. Allow to cool completely before removing from the tin.



For the Chocolate fudge icing:

2 oz butter
1 oz caster sugar
2 oz plain chocolate
2 - 4 tbsp milk
8 oz icing sugar

1. Place the butter, sugar, plain chocolate and 2 tbsp milk into a small saucepan and heat gently until melted. (I do this in a Pyrex bowl in a microwave for 1 minute, but it is your choice!)
2. Stir in the icing sugar and beat until smooth. The icing is probably at the correct consistency for the cake now: if not, add some/all of the additional milk to get the icing to your preferred consistency. The full 4 tbsp will give you a very smooth icing that will run off the cake unless you put a band of baking parchment tightly round the cake.





KNIT & NATTER RAISE FUNDS FOR DAISY GARLAND

Every year, Oxhill's Knit and Natter group run a stall at Made in Oxhill with every penny they raise going to charity. This year, the group were kind enough to pick The Daisy Garland, a charity that is incredibly important to our family.

Nearly four years ago, our grandson was diagnosed with a rare genetic mutation syndrome known only as KCNa2. One of the conditions this causes is a form of early onset epilepsy that doesn't respond well to medication. And so it was for our grandson — nothing worked, and Great Ormond Street Hospital prescribed the ketogenic diet, a medically supervised high fat diet that is low in carbohydrate and has enough protein for growth. The diet is something that we had hoped could be avoided because it meant a little boy who loved his food would have his diet massively restricted. It would also mean a significant increase in the cost of the weekly shop and hours of meticulous food preparation each day for his parents. But it was an easy decision for them - it might mean a reduction in seizures and the damage they cause.

Parenting a child with developmental, behavioural, and movement conditions is hard. Add intractable epilepsy and the ketogenic diet and it feels almost impossible. For our family, the one shining light in the past few years has been The Daisy Garland. Not only does this tiny charity fund NHS dieticians around the UK, they supply as many night-time breathing monitors as they can afford to those most in need, offer specialist cooking lessons and recipes, fund training in epilepsy, send welcome packs and food samples, manage support groups, and regularly run free draws and giveaways. They care. And that matters.

The reason that The Daisy Garland cares is that it is a charity set up by Daisy's mum. The ketogenic diet had transformed Daisy's epilepsy until an unrelated medical error triggered



an escalation in seizures. She died from sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP) when she was six years old.

Has the diet helped our grandson? Yes, it has. It's not been easy and it's not going to cure his epilepsy, but he's having significantly fewer seizures than he had on medication alone. And The Daisy Garland has held our hand through it all. We will be eternally grateful to them.

And to Jane Smith and all the members of the Oxhill Knit and Natter group: thank you!

Karen & Steve MacRae

You can read Daisy's story and all about the work of The Daisy Garland charity at thedaisygarland.org.uk. Please note that the advert in this issue of the Oxhill News is not an official advert; we put it together ourselves.

Date <u>December 2025</u>	
Pay <u>The Daisy Garland Charity</u>	
<u>Five hundred and forty-nine pounds and seventy one pence</u>	£ 549.71
<u>Oxhill Knit & Natter</u>	



The Daisy Garland

*'A journey of hope...
for children with epilepsy'*

The Daisy Garland is a national charity working exclusively for children with drug-resistant epilepsy and their families.

For children with complex, drug-resistant epilepsy, every seizure can cause brain damage and, in some cases, sudden death. Night-time is particularly risky so it is essential to monitor them as closely as possible. For most parents, this means very little sleep and constant anxiety as the kit to properly monitor their child at night is unaffordable.

The Daisy Garland is a very small UK charity doing a huge job. Not only do they provide many levels of support to these families, they spend as much as they possibly can to provide night-time breathing monitors to those in greatest need.

Please consider supporting their work with a donation.

Karen & Steve MacRae (Green Lane)

**You learn how long
30 seconds really is
when you are watching
your child have a seizure**



www.thedaisygarland.org.uk

Charity no: 1106530

USEFUL VILLAGE CONTACT DETAILS

Oxhill Parish Councillors:

Malcolm Robertson: chair@oxhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Jon Mercer: cllr.jon.mercer@oxhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Peter Rivers Fletcher: cllr.peter.rivers-fletcher@oxhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Sarah Hobill: cllr.sarah.hobill@oxhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Barbara Shepherd: cllr.barbara.shepard@oxhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

Oxhill Village Hall:

Derek Harbour - Chair

Ali Sayer - Hall Hire - 07970 922352

email: oxhillvh@gmail.com

St Lawrence Church:

Priest-in Charge Rev. George Heighton, 01295 680201

Rev Canon Dr Jill Tucker 07973 994800

revjill.tucker@btinternet.com

Carers4carers:

kcarers4carers@gmail.com or tel: 07947 893504

Community Choir of Oxhill, Tysoe and Shenington (CCOTS):

Oxhill Village Hall 7.45- 9.15 pm every Wednesday term time only.

Website: www.ccots.org.uk

Email: membershipsecretary@ccots.org.uk

Oxhill Pickleball:

Peter Rivers Fletcher 07730 800729

rfn364@btinternet.com

talkdementia.uk:

Carer Support Service:

Paul & Heather Dowler Tysoe 688376

email: talkdementia@mail.com

Website: talkdementia.uk

Tysoe Village Hall every Friday from 10am

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

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

WHAT'S ON IN & AROUND OXHILL

JANUARY

Wed 14th	14:30-14:50	Mobile Library outside Village Hall
Sat 24th	19:00	Burns' Night, Village Hall
Every Thursday	12:00	Coffee Morning, Peacock Pub

FEBRUARY

Sat 7th	Games Night
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PC MEETINGS

The date of the Annual Parish Meeting at **Tuesday, 20th January 2026 at 6.30pm.** 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.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE OXHILL NEWS


The editors welcome any pictures, photographs, drawings, poems, puzzles, recipes, announcements or items of local news for possible inclusion in The Oxhill News. Submissions must be received by the 18th of each month for publication in the following month. Please email: oxhill.news.editor@gmail.com

JANUARY 2026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

BIN COLLECTION CALENDAR

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

 Food waste  Recycling

 General refuse  Garden waste