

THE OXHILL NEWS



January 2008

HAPPY NEW YEAR

The News is far from a one man show, and now is the right time for me to acknowledge and to thank all the team who contribute so much throughout the year. It's invidious to mention names, but then I do invidious, so here goes:

Thank you to that wonderful team of dedicated deliverers who actually trudge round the village pushing copies through letterboxes; to Dot, Shirley, Keith who took over when Shirley moved away, Jill, Pat, Joyce, Jackie, and Posey.

Thank you to the contributors, who save me having to actually write anything except once a year like this; to Grenville for his splendid and fascinating Nature Notes, Belinda for keeping us up to date with the W.I., to Nicholas for Church details, to Lilian for all the Church's social events, to Angela for reports on the Parish Council, to the Oracle (I expect we will be hearing a lot more from him in 2008), to Jill and Gaynor and Di, and the Heather & Anne combo for the Garden Club, and the Chairman of the Parish Council and Doug and all the others who quite simply make the News possible.

And, of course, to Gwyn, who each month puts up with a bear with a sore head for a couple of days.

George

[Only two days? Gwyn]

FEBRUARY ISSUE

Please could I have all copy for the February issue by Midnight on **Sunday, 27th January**? 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. My 'official' e-mail address is **news-editor@oxhill.org.uk** if you wish to send me stuff that way.

George Adams, 680286

COVER PICTURE

"The front of the cover shows somebody shot while the back of the cover will tell you the plot," as the poet wrote. Or, in this case, the front cover shows the Oxhill Senior Citizens enjoying their Christmas lunch, while the back cover shows (some of the) helpers relaxing after the event.

Editor

THE PEACOCK

January 3rd 2008 – the start of our new business! We have been looking forward to this day for quite a while now; at times it seemed like it might never happen. I write this after we have paid all the final monies to the solicitor and in between organising and cooking for many hectic Christmas Parties. The removal vans are booked, equipment ordered, new china, glasses, cutlery and other assorted paraphernalia safely stored in my parents' garage ready to be transported to the Peacock. It will take us a little time to get sorted and organised so we are planning to close for a few days, reopening on Tuesday January 8th with a limited food menu while we complete a kitchen refit.

As many of you have already found out my business has been based at Edgbaston Golf Club for the last five years and during January I have to finish my commitments to functions I have there. I know there have been a few of you eating at the Club over the Christmas time so you have had a sample of the type of food we offer – freshly cooked, local produce cooked simply and stylishly. Our menu will aim to give you good value for money served in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Our first coffee morning will be on Wednesday 9th January; menus will be available then for the village lunch. Our launch party will be the beginning of February and our first big occasion will be Valentines Day. In the meantime if you see a couple of hassled deranged women and a convoy of removal vans you will know we have arrived! Pop in and say hello. We are really looking forward to meeting you all. Happy New Year to you and yours.

Cheers!

Yvonne and Pam

ACCIDENTAL DAMAGE

Was excessive speed the cause of the incident where a car coming from Whatcote collided with a parked car on the Whatcote Road on a cold, dark night just before Christmas? Thankfully no one was injured but clearly things could have been a lot worse!

Mike Collins



ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, OXHILL

SERVICES IN JANUARY

All are warmly welcome

Sunday 6th	The Epiphany	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (ML)
Sunday 13th	Epiphany I	8.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (ML)
		3.30 p.m.	Evensong (ML) N.B. Afternoon time
Sunday 20th	Septuagesima	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (ML)
Sunday 27th	Sexagesima	9.30 a.m.	Family Service (NM)

VICARAGE NOTES

Special thanks

Thanks go to all who worked busily to decorate and prepare the church for the special service over Christmas – St. Lawrence's looked lovely. Thanks go to the Festival Choir for leading the singing at the Carol Service – you were splendid!

Thought for the month

By 1751 London was 11 days ahead of Paris as the English had retained the Julian Calendar, refusing to accept the reforms made by Pope Gregory in 1582. Christmas Day was being celebrated here when Epiphany was celebrated over most of Europe. In 1752 the Calendar Act was put into action and 11 days were lost from September that year. Apparently there were riots and shouts of "give us back our 11 days!" Occasionally, January 6th is still referred to as Old Christmas Day.

We never have our days, or time itself, back. It is a gift that needs that needs using well. I suspect New Year resolutions are related to the opposite. The famous passage from Ecclesiastes 3 that begins "To everything there is a season" is often concluded with verse 12:

I know that there is nothing better for people than to rejoice and to do good so long as they live.

A simple message worth spreading!

May I wish everyone a very happy New Year.

Best wishes and God bless,

Nicholas Morgan 01608 685230



Some roadsigns are easier to follow than others.....

BENEFICE FELLOWSHIP

This year sees the start of a Benefice Fellowship meeting on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of most months around the parishes and providing an opportunity for discussion and prayer. Initially we plan that each evening will last no more than an hour and include a short Bible reflection, time for prayer and the service of compline. If you would like to host an evening or perhaps share in leading one, please have a word with me or Martin. The meetings this month are:

Wednesday 9th 7.30 p.m. Harbury Leys, Lower Tysoe

Wednesday 23rd 7.30 p.m. Medway, Oxhill

Nicholas Morgan

Shipston Deanery Lent Services 2008



As in previous years we will be holding a series of services during Lent followed by refreshments.

These services will be held at 7:45 p.m. on the following Tuesdays in Lent:

February 12th	Pillerton
February 19th	Whichford
February 26th	Ilmington
March 4th	Oxhill
March 11th	Honington
March 18th	Long Compton

The theme will be 'Calling', based on the lent book by Robert Warren and Kate Bruce.

(The book is published by Church House Publishing ISBN 978-071514137-3 if you want a copy)

DECEMBER COVER

Apparently many people have become confused after looking at the cover picture last month. I am directed to inform you all that the lady so conspicuous at the front of the shot is Kate Hardy from Tysoe and not, as many of you seem to have thought, Myrtle Knight.

Myrtle was on the other side of the camera at the time, pressing the shutter release.

Editor

OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

The Christmas Lunch early in December went down well, though this year with a surprisingly small number of lunchers. The committee hopes that it didn't do anything wrong! Many many thanks are due to all those who helped with preparations, serving or clearing up afterwards. Unlike 'Strictly' then, thanks, in alphabetical order, to Angela, Anne, Brian, Brian, Carol, David, Elizabeth, Gaynor, George, Gwyn, Hugh, John, Jules, Keith, Lilian for the crackers, Pat, Posey, Steve, Sue for the table decorations, Tracey and Una. And if I have missed anyone out, my humblest apologies.

Our next event (provided you get your News early!) will be the New Year's Eve Party. This is scheduled for New Year's Eve, starting about 10 p.m., and tickets have been selling well. If you would like to join us then contact Angela Emmerson on 680565 as soon as possible.

After that comes the Films in the Hall evening on Wednesday 23rd. Please see the separate article in this month's News for more details.

The Hall will be out of commission during the week commencing Monday 11th February whilst the remaining rotten windows are replaced. Plans are also afoot for general and much-needed renovation work to be done as soon as possible. Details of future events in the Hall will be given in the February News.

George Adams

KINETON OIL CONSORTIUM

The Consortium will be ordering oil again in January.

Last orders, please, by 6 p.m. on Wednesday 16th January. Don't miss out; it could be a long, hard and expensive winter.

Di Harper, 01295 680529

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

The answer to last month's Simple Puzzle was, as you all naturally know, 42.

There were 7 Swans A-swimming and 6 Geese A-laying, and multiplying these produces 42. Similarly 1 Partridge, 2 Doves, 3 French Hens, 4 Colley Birds, 6 Geese, 7 Swans, 9 Ladies and 10 Lords add up to 42 entities.

As Douglas Adams explained in his treatise 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy', 42 is also the answer to that other simple question 'What is the meaning of life, the universe and everything?' So that's all right then.

George Nethercleft

[For anyone worried about the provenance of George Nethercleft, consider authors, editors and frequent contributors to the News.]

FILMS IN THE HALL

During 2007 the Village Hall Committee agreed to join the scheme organised by Stratford upon Avon District Council to show feature films in village halls throughout the district. The council bought sets of equipment – dvd players, projectors, large screens (width a little less than the village hall but not much) and speakers – and arranged the hire of dvd films and the system by which films and equipment are shared round the district.

We committed ourselves to using the system for three months, starting with Dream Girls in November and moving on to White Christmas in December. In January, on Wednesday 23rd, we will reach the end of this agreement by showing Atonement, a recent film release featuring James McAvoy and Keira Knightley which has met with critical acclaim.

Unfortunately attendances at the first two showings have been small, though those watching the films have said they enjoyed themselves. With a ticket price of £3 any attendance under twenty loses money for the hall, though the loss is small and sustainable – the film showing were never envisaged as a fund-raising exercise. However the work involved in collecting, installing and later dismantling the equipment is considerable and takes several hours for several committee members.

Because of this it is likely that, unless we get a considerable increase in the audience for Atonement on Wednesday 23rd, we will not take up the option of continuing showing films in February or March. After that it would become impossible to continue anyway because of the light evenings and the hall's lack of blackout facilities.

George Adams

Weekday Walkers

Why not walk off those Christmas excesses and join us for the following January walks:

Friday 11th January

Idlicote to Halford, a 5.5 mile walk with 150 feet of ascent – lunch at “The Halford Bridge”. We will leave Oxhill at 10:30 a.m.

Friday 25th January

Honington to Whatcote, a 7 mile walk with 500 feet of ascent – lunch at “Royal Oak ”. We will leave Oxhill at 10:30 a.m.

Please contact Jim Saxton 01295 680613 before Thursday prior to walk, so we can organize shared transport and reserve tables.

NATURE NOTES FOR JANUARY

January 6th is the twelfth day of Christmas and Christmas Day Old Style. It is the feast of the Epiphany.

Now Christmas is past; Twelfth Day is the last

To the Old Year adieu; Great joy to the new.

This was once the most festive day of the twelve. Its celebrations were ruled by the King of the Bean and the Queen of the pea – respectively the man and the woman who found the hidden bean and pea in their slice of Twelfth Cake. If the woman chanced of the bean, however, she could choose the King, while the man who got the pea could select the Queen. This custom continued, but in a different form. When I was a child a silver sixpence was hidden in the Christmas pudding and the recipient would have good luck for the year, made a wish, and also kept the sixpence. Of course it was always put into the child's pudding secretly in the kitchen – I suppose it would be a £1 coin today!

Please remember this is the most important time of the year to feed the birds, and also to put out water, especially on frosty days. In our garden we have several holly bushes and one of them this year was absolutely laden with large red berries, ideal we thought for Christmas decorations, but within one single day the Fieldfares completely stripped every berry, but we don't begrudge them their Christmas feast.

We also watched with amusement a Great Spotted woodpecker fathoming out, with great acrobatics, how to get seed out of one of our "small bird" feeders. It is due to large numbers of peanut feeders in gardens that the numbers of Great Spotted woodpeckers have dramatically increased over recent years. It is estimated that there are 27,000 pairs spread all over the country. Not only do they raid the bird tables, there are records of them foraging for mussels on the foreshore, eating grain, raiding peas, and stealing the cream from the top of milk bottles. One was also seen catching sticklebacks, just like a Kingfisher. They are not averse to raiding nests and nest boxes for young chicks or eggs. One pair was known to work systematically through a House Martin colony of 35 – 40 nests, hammering holes through the mud cups and seizing about 100 eggs and young to feed to their own chicks.

I have recently heard the familiar "drumming" in the village, which usually doesn't happen until Spring. Did you know that woodpeckers make between 5 – 20 strikes per half second, and up until 1942 it was thought the drumming was actually a vocal performance. It has now been found that woodpeckers have a pad of shock-absorbent tissue between the base of the bill and the skull to neutralise the impact, and apparently research was carried out into this to see if the results could help improve the design of motor-bike crash helmets.

January 11 is Old Style New Year's Eve, with witches active again after Christmas:

A charm to find who hath bewitched your cattle. Put a pair of breeches upon the cow's head and beat her out of the pasture with a good cudgel upon a Friday and she will run right to the witches door and strike thereat with her horns.

The Discovery of Witchcraft 1584.

Grenville Moore

Oxhill Garden Club

For our first meeting of the New Year on 17th January Oxhill Garden Club welcomes Reg Moule who is a popular speaker, with a good sense of humour and is familiar to many members; other villagers may also have heard him speak on local radio about various gardening topics or met him at a garden centre in Leamington Spa. This time Reg is to speak on 'Houseplants' and for those who may have been given a cyclamen or poinsettia for Christmas and are not quite sure how best to keep it going, this would be the ideal opportunity to get some advice from the expert. The Club welcomes new members, or those who would just like to visit as guests. Our talks are mostly held in the winter months with a varied programme of both gardening and associated topics including places and gardens of interest, wildlife and flowers both in England and abroad. During the summer months there are several outdoor activities, which are our annual coach trip to a garden or combined place of interest which also has gardens, summer garden party and an exchange visit to another local Garden Club Members' gardens. For the last two years a long weekend trip has been arranged in France to see Monet's Gardens and Normandy. If you would like more information or details of the Club activities please check the Calendar of Events each month, at the end of the magazine or look on the village notice board where a Programme of Events will be posted. We hope we may have some event that will interest you enough to visit us on the third Thursday of the month when you will be most welcome.

Anne Netherclef, Programme Secretary

FOUND

A Yale-type key, without fob or any markings of any kind, has been found on the piano in the Village Hall. It currently resides in the kitchen at Karibu. Gwyn & I will keep it until the end of the month and then, if unclaimed, pop it into the metal recycling box.

Editor



Whereas other signs are straightforward and helpful.

WI REPORT

December 2007

We had lots of seasonal weather at our December meeting because Sue Price showed us an extremely professional DVD of her experiences in the Antarctic. A year ago, she travelled on the Explorer II, the more up to date sister ship to the one that sank early this winter. We had maps to follow the route from Argentina via Tierra del Fuego, the Falkland Islands and South Georgia to the Antarctic Peninsular. We 'ooh'd and 'ah'd at the penguins and Weddel seals, especially the babies, but weren't so enthralled watching the predatory skuas or the ugly male elephant seals, even though we knew that they have their place in Nature's scheme of things.

During the break the committee served delicious festive refreshments to our tables. Kath Silman and Sue Price had equal points so share the cup for 'Flower of the month.' Five lucky people went home with raffle prizes.

B. Keep

THE OLD FIRE STATION, TYSOE

The delivery of courses at the Old Fire Station has been taken over by Adult & Community Learning in Stratford. The programme of courses for the new term is:

Mondays	7.30-9.30 p.m.	Microsoft Office
Tuesdays	9.30-11.30 a.m.	Card Making
	7.00-9.00 p.m.	Body Confidence for Women
Thursdays	9.30-11.30 a.m.	New Year Booster
	7.30-9.30 p.m.	Introduction to Sign Language
Fridays	9.30-11.30 a.m.	Introduction to Indian Head Massage

All courses will start during the week beginning Monday 21st January.

Enrolment will be at the Old Fire Station on Saturday 12th January between 10.30 a.m. and 1.00 p.m.

If you cannot make that or want more information then you should contact Gudrun Berry on 01926 413608 or email at gudrunberry@Warwickshire.gov.uk.

Editor

FIRST RESPONSE UPDATE

Just in case there has been any misunderstanding arising from the First Response article last month, we were not suggesting that, in the event of your needing to summon an ambulance, you should not also try to get a First Responder to attend. In view of the time an ambulance is likely to take to get here getting help quicker is going to be a Good Thing. In this litigious age we offer no further advice other than to give as much information as possible to anyone helping at an emergency. This information should include whether or not a pacemaker is present and, if so, where it is situated.

Editor

SUDDENLY IT SEEMED LIKE CHRISTMAS

St. Edmund's Church, Shipston, was filled to capacity for the concert given by Stour Singers with 'Caliche', the South American Folk Group on 8th December 2007. The programme began with the 'Misa Criolla' written by the Argentinian composer Ariel Ramirez in 1963. It was one of the first Roman Catholic Masses to be set in Spanish following the Vatican ruling to allow celebration of the Mass in the vernacular. The 'Kirie' opened with gentle chords struck on solo mandolin, the choir humming beneath the tenor soloist, but in the 'Gloria' and 'Credo' the audience reacted to the unexpected energy of the rhythms and the singing. The work ended with a quietly beautiful plea: 'Danos la paz' – 'Give us peace'.

There followed a set of European carols from the choir, and traditional carols for audience accompanied by Rachel Bird at the piano. The second half opened with five carols from the Andes which Caliche sang with zest (simultaneously playing charangos, guitars, mandolins, panpipes flutes, ocarinas and a host of Andean percussion) to audience acclaim. Stour Singers maintained this mood joining Caliche in a lively performance in Spanish of Ramirez:Navidad Nuestra, a moving Folk Nativity composed as a companion piece to the Misa. The evening came to a joyous close with Peruvian favourites, a standing ovation for Caliche and the choir – and suddenly it seemed like Christmas.

Stour Singers next concert - a performance of Mozart's Requiem and Haydn's Mariaszeller Mass – will be on Saturday 10th May 2008 in St. Edmund's Church.

If you would like to sing in this concert: rehearsals start at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 10th January 2008 at Shipston Primary School. No auditions. Please contact Vic Twyman on 01608 664215 for further details. Visit the website at stoursingers.org.uk

'Signs of the Times'

by

'The Oracle'

A regular posting of confusing, misleading and wholly unnecessary signs and instructions.

Number 2

Official Post Office notice displayed in Ettington Stores & PO:

'Customers who need advice should ask a member of staff for help'.

The Oracle is grateful for this searing insight, having so often wondered what the correct procedure would be.

WHAT'S ON IN OXHILL

January

Thursday 3rd		Refuse Collection – Black Bags only
Monday 7th	7.30	Book Club
Tuesday 8th		The Peacock reopens
	8.0	Village Hall – Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 9th		The Peacock – Village Coffee Morning
		Refuse Collection – Black Bags, Green Bins & Recyclables
	2.30	Tysoe Village Hall – W.I. - Mrs A Hepworth; 'The Racing Game'
Friday 11th	10.30	Weekday Walkers
Saturday 12th	10.30-1.00	Old Fire Station, Tysoe - Course enrolment
Wednesday 16th		The Peacock – Village Lunch
Thursday 17th	7.30	Village Hall - Oxhill Garden Club - Houseplants by Reg Moule
Wednesday 23rd	7.30	Village Hall - Film Night - Atonement
Friday 25th	10.30	Weekday Walkers
Sunday 27th	23.59	Copy deadline for The News

February

Wednesday 6th	2.30	Tysoe Village Hall – W.I. – Penny Varley; 'Pottery'
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March

Wednesday 5th	7.30	Tysoe Village Hall – W.I. - Mr P Warrilow; 'The RNLI'
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