

# THE OXHILL NEWS



NO. 434  
JANUARY 2011

## WEEKDAY WALKERS

We have the following walks in January:

### Friday 14th January

This is a circular 5.0 mile walk from Whatcote with 240 feet of ascent and lunch at "The Royal Oak" Whatcote. We will leave Oxhill at 9:45 a.m.

### Friday 28th January

This is a circular 5.5 mile walk from Brailes with 290 feet of ascent and lunch at "The George" in Brailes. We will leave Oxhill at 9:30 a.m.

Due to the numbers on the walk Jim Saxton now contacts regular members to get meal decisions by Wednesday evening. Those who wish to join us are most welcome, but please contact Jim Saxton on 01295 680613 or at saxton@tiscali.co.uk before the Tuesday evening prior to the walk.

## MOBILE LIBRARY

The library van will continue to visit Oxhill on Tuesdays, stopping at the Village Hall at 10 a.m. and staying there for 30 minutes.

In January the van will visit us on Tuesday 4th and Tuesday 25th.

You can renew books between van visits by calling 01926 851031, or online at [www.Warwickshire.gov.uk/wild](http://www.Warwickshire.gov.uk/wild).

*Editor*

## REFUSE COLLECTION

Recycling and green waste bins (blue and green bins) will be collected on **WEDNESDAY** 5th (note change of day) and Tuesday 18th.

The grey rubbish bins will be collected on Tuesday 11th and Tuesday 25th.

*Editor*

## FEBRUARY ISSUE

Please could I have all copy for the February issue by Midnight on **Tuesday, 25th 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](mailto:news-editor@oxhill.org.uk) if you wish to send me stuff that way.

*George Adams, 680286*

## COVER PICTURE

To remind you of the last few weeks Joyce McKail has kindly provided this fine image of Back Lane.

*Editor*

## WELCOME BACK

We are delighted to welcome Rachel Costa back home after her long stay in hospital and wish her the very best for the future.

*Editor*

## THANK YOU

May I once again offer my heartfelt thanks to the normally unseen 'staff' who make the News possible. I refer of course to all those who provide the copy, without which there would be nothing to publish, to the proof-reader, without whom there would be untold letters of complaint to the editor and, especially, to the small army who tramp round the village each month pushing copies through letterboxes.

No names, no packdrill, you know who you are; I am truly grateful.

*George*

## THE FUTURE OF THE NEWS

### EDITOR REQUIRED

As my reader will have noticed, each March I offer to stand down from the Editorship and allow someone else a turn. This year things will be different; I will not be making the standard offer in March.

However, I have calculated that the June 2011 issue will bring me up to my century, and that seems to me a really good time to stop. So the question is, who wants to take over from the July issue? Now is your chance to step forward and make your mark on the village!

*George*

## POPPY APPEAL 2010

Despite the recession, we have had another record year raising over £2435. Thank you all for your generosity and a big thank you to all my collectors.

*David Sewell, Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator*

## CONGRATULATIONS

We offer our heartiest congratulations to Tom and Ann Heritage on their recent Golden Wedding.

*Editor*

## KINETON OIL CONSORTIUM

The consortium will be ordering oil again in January. Please let me have your order by 6 p.m. on Wednesday 12th January.

*D. Harper*

## ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH, OXHILL

### SERVICES IN JANUARY

All are warmly welcome

Sunday 2nd	Christmas II	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (ML)
Sunday 9th	Epiphany I	3.30 p.m.	Evensong (ML)
Sunday 16th	Epiphany II	9.30 a.m.	Holy Communion (ML)
Sunday 23rd	Epiphany III	9.30 a.m.	Family Service
Sunday 30th	Epiphany IV	11.00 a.m.	United Benefice Communion here at Oxhill

For other benefice services see porch notice board

### DEANERY NEWS

I hope you have all had a wonderful and blessed Christmas.

In the New Year we look forward to an Instant Choirs Evensong Workshop in Brailes Church, led by Julian Harris, on Sunday, January 30th. This will begin at 2.30pm (registration from 2.00pm), running until 6.00pm, with tea in the middle: Evensong will then begin at 6.30pm. All are welcome, either to sing with us or join us for Evensong. The cost for the workshop will be £6. Contact me on 01295 688193 or [revjill.tucker@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:revjill.tucker@tiscali.co.uk) for any further information.

The next Deanery Synod will be on Tuesday, February 1st in St. Edmund's Church, Shipston, at 7.30pm, when we are delighted to welcome Rev. Greg Bartlem, Diocesan Youth Officer, and Matt Brown, Shipston Deanery Youth Worker, to share their vision for reaching our young people with the Gospel.

Finally, a look ahead to March: on March 8th, just before Lent, we are delighted that Bishop Christopher will be visiting the Deanery. The day will end with an Open Evening with him to which everyone is invited - full details next month.

May God go with you as you journey into the New Year.

*Jill Tucker, Rural Dean*

### FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

Funerals: remembered with thanksgiving

December 16th David Grasby, aged 79

## VICARAGE NOTES

Dear friends,

Happy New Year to all.

We have just enjoyed a joyful Carol service with a full church. Special thanks go to all who decorate and do the flowers, our splendid Oxhill Festival Choir organised by Gaynor, and guest conductor Joyce Hall with organist Tony Withersford.

As we go into 2011, I am conscious that in my few years as priest in charge, there have been numerous changes in the village and St. Lawrence's, with a number of stalwart members less able to get to church, or, indeed, having passed away.

This year, the P.C.C. is going to appraise how the church should be serving the community, and how its worship and fellowship should reflect the needs of parishioners. There may be activities that the church should host, or special services that folk would enjoy and support. St. Lawrence's is your parish church and we will be asking you for your opinions over the next month or two.

With good wishes,

*Nicholas Morgan, 01608 685230*

## 5

### OXHILL FESTIVAL CHOIR

Thank you to all the members of the choir for a very special evening at the Carol Service. The frosting of snow only added to the magical atmosphere of the service which was, as usual, very well attended. Special thanks go to Pauline, Sue and Bill our soloists and to Joyce Hall who cajoled us through our rehearsals. Also thanks to Colin and Jill Tucker for kindly lending us the Chapel for our rehearsals on these bitter evenings. Well done everyone. See you again next year.

*Gaynor van Dijk*

### OXHILL CHOIR

I think all of us in choir were so pleased to have survived our anthems and in congratulating ourselves and in thanking everyone who had helped, that we forgot to thank the one person who makes all this possible - Gaynor. She has the difficult part of making sure that we come to rehearsals, have the right music and making it all happen. All we do is sing. So, Gaynor, many thanks from all of us in the choir.

*Peter Rivers Fletcher*

## NATURE NOTES FOR JANUARY

Old twelfth night is traditionally the night for “wassailing” your apple trees to encourage them to bear a good crop in the coming year:

*Old apple tree we wassail thee, hoping thou wilt bear  
For the Lord doth know, where we shall be, till apples come another year  
To bear well and bloom well, so merry let us be  
Let every may take off his hat and shout to the old apple tree  
Old apple tree, we wassail thee, and hoping thou wilt bear  
Hats full, caps full, three bushel bags full  
And a little heap under the stairs. Hip! Hip! Hurrah!*

This song is sung as the wassailing dance round an apple tree while drinking from earthenware or wooden cups and then tossing cider into the branches of the tree. Cider was also poured into the roots and the lower branches drawn down and dipped into a pail of cider. Toast or cake was soaked in cider then put into the branches for the robins - guardian spirits of the trees. Finally, to drive away evil spirits and wake up the sleeping trees, horns and whistles are blown, trays, cans and buckets beaten, culminating in the firing of shotguns into the upper branches. A wassail bowl went round from house to house in the evening during the Twelve Days of Christmas; this bowl was filled with a brew of ale, spices, sugar, and roasted apples, which was heated by plunging a hot poker into the mix. Sometimes eggs and cream were added and it was known as Lamb’s wool. A footnote here; when I lived at the pub as a young man (many years ago), I used to make this curious brew, and very good it was too!

I have recently had some good news. A few weeks ago I had a report of two sightings of a Kingfisher along the brook. I was afraid after the very hard winter last year that these wonderful little birds may have perished in Oxhill. Apparently many Kingfishers, when brooks and rivers freeze over will move downstream towards estuaries in order to find flowing water, but of course hard winters will take their toll. Most wild birds lose a third of their body weight overnight in cold weather, so it becomes imperative they get food every day - keep those feeders topped up and put fresh water out.

A bird I have never seen and is top of my “must see” list is the Waxwing, a rare winter visitor usually only to Scotland and northern and eastern England, but now is apparently being seen all over the country - but not yet in Oxhill? This magnificent bird, with its pastel blue-grey plumage, black, white, yellow and red wing feathers, and longish crest-like head feathers, whose black bib and diagonal eye stripe give it a rather angry-looking expression, will land and feed on any berry-bearing bush or shrub, so keep a lookout, and I would appreciate a phone call if you see one (680664).

Now on these cold, dark nights there is nothing finer than a roaring log fire, standing warming oneself, first the front, then the back, but beware you gentlemen of spitting logs:

*"If any man have his privy parts burnt, take the ashes of a fine linen cloth in good quantity and put into the former oyle of eggs, and anoint the fore member therewith, and it will cure it". ('The English Housewife' – Gervase Markham, 1863).*

And a very Happy New Year to you all.

*Grenville Moore*

## A SONG OF THE WEATHER

January brings the snow  
Makes your feet and fingers glow

*Michael Flanders*

*(Please, not again! - Ed.)*

## LOCAL ACCOUNTANCY SERVICE

Michael Halderthay can deal with your Bookkeeping, Cash Flows, Budgeting, Management Accounts, Self Assessment Tax Returns and more; indeed anything in the accountancy line. He trades under the name Redhorse Accountancy Services and can be contacted on his mobile (07976836379) or home landline (01295680603). Or you could even pop round to Gilks Cottage and see him.

*Editor*

## AT THE PEACOCK

The village coffee morning will be on Wednesday 5th, starting at 10.30, with the charity quiz night following on Sunday 9th at 8 p.m. The village lunch will be on Wednesday 19th.

*Editor*

## FOR SALE

Large gas heater  
(may need some attention)  
with 2 gas cylinders  
(probably empty but might not be)  
Price negotiable  
Myrtle Knight, 680555

## VILLAGE HISTORY

### Christmas Treat at Oxhill

Mrs Evelyn Colyer, born Evelyn Gilks in Oxhill in 1908, spent the years of the First World War in Oxhill. Now 102, she is very frail, but her daughter has kindly given permission for me to use here her account, written years ago, of the Oxhill Christmas Treat. I have very slightly shortened this, and added footnotes based on other details gleaned from Evelyn during our discussions over the years. A.H.

“Our village school was very small, and as most of the pupils also attended Sunday School, the annual Christmas Treat included all the children. We spent several afternoons before the holidays making paper chains to hang around the schoolroom walls. On the last day of term a large Christmas tree was brought into the “big room”,<sup>1</sup> and the two teachers and the older children set about decorating it with paper chains, and small coloured candles secured to the tree with metal clips. This wasn't as dangerous as it sounded, because the candles were not lighted until the presents were actually distributed, and then a careful watch was kept. After lunch the children lined up and sang carols. (Some of them I have never heard since - “Carol, sweetly carol”, and “In the fields with their flocks abiding”) ..... The last carol to be sung was “We Three Kings of Orient are” to the entry of the Rector and his two grown-up sons<sup>2</sup>, dressed as the Three Kings, and bearing sacks containing presents for the children. When the carol ended everybody sat on the floor, and the Three Kings handed round the presents, which were received with tremendous excitement. Some of the families were very poor, especially those whose fathers worked on farms. Some families numbered seven, eight or more children, so they had few presents at Christmas; consequently the toys from the Sunday School treat were doubly treasured.

After all the parcels had been opened and the contents displayed, the candles on the tree were lighted, the children gathered round, and more carols were sung, whilst tea was prepared in the “little room”. Even now more than sixty years later, I can see in my mind's eye the little coloured candles flickering and the children singing in the dim light, and I can almost smell the melting wax and the pungent odour of the tree.

Tea was served by some of the mothers, supervised by Mrs Carter<sup>3</sup>, the Rector's wife. Then we played a few games before we left for home, carrying our precious presents.

<sup>1</sup> The school was divided into two classrooms, one for the older and one for the younger children.

<sup>2</sup> Rev James Carter had two sons, Reggie and Arthur, who with their sister Marjorie all were later to become missionaries in either India or China.

<sup>3</sup> During WW1 Mrs Carter ran working parties for women to make shirts and sweaters for soldiers. There was a separate children's class too, during which Mr Carter would read aloud the stories about Brer Fox.

Although I fared pretty well, having fond parents and two pairs of grandparents<sup>4</sup> all living in the village, who spoiled me terribly, my presents from the Christmas Treat were always very special. I remember a little grand piano (with one octave!), that really played, also a beautifully made doll's bed on rockers, with hand painted roses on the foot and the headboards.

Thank goodness, in those days there were no television advertisements to make us worry our parents for expensive toys which they could not afford!"

<sup>4</sup> William and Bertha Gilks, and John Henry and Esther Summerton. William Gilks was the blacksmith.

A hangover is the wrath of grapes.

## SHIPSTON HOME NURSING

### **Complementary Therapies Day**

Saturday 26th February 2011

Lower Farm Barn, Gt Wolford

10am-3pm

£20 to include 3 treatments, soup and refreshments

Call Rebecca on 01608 674929 to book a therapy session

### **Warwick Schools Foundation Orchestra**

An opportunity to hear two excellent young bands who have just qualified for the finals in Glasgow in March. Do not miss the opportunity to hear these two outstanding bands before they compete in Scotland !

Friday March 25th 2011

The Townsend Hall, Shipston on Stour

7.30pm

£10 to include wine and nibbles

Call Rebecca on 01608 674929 to book your seat

## AFTERNOON DELIGHTS

After our December meeting we went home with lavender bag hearts, as demonstrated by Julie, or a felt tree decoration, thanks to Joyce's instruction.

We meet again in January on Thursdays 13th and 27th at 2 p.m. in the Village Hall. On the thirteenth there will be another opportunity for people to improve their smocking skills courtesy of Barbara and on the twentyseventh Ann will show people how to make 3-D cards. For the cards you will need to take with you a pair of small sharp scissors and some paper printed with a repeated symbol, e.g. a sheet of wrapping paper, or you could print out the same symbol several times using a computer, perhaps using something from the Wingdings font. You will need six to eight of these shapes and they need to be large enough to cut out accurately.

If you don't fancy either of these then please come along anyway and bring your knitting, cross-stitch or whatever. Or even just come along for a cup of tea and a natter.

*Gwyn Adams*

Thank you to all the ladies who have knitted squares to make a knee blanket. We have now sent off our first blanket to Selly Oak Hospital for the young disabled soldiers who have been patients there. A second blanket is in production.

Thank you for all your work so far.

*Joyce McKail*

## FROM WARWICKSHIRE POLICE

### **DON'T ADVERTISE YOUR HOMES ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

Warwickshire Police have received intelligence from West Midlands Police suggesting that residential addresses have been targeted following entries made by burglary victims on their Facebook pages regarding holidays they were taking and the fact that their homes would be unoccupied. Please see BBC Coventry & Warwicks news page via link

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-12062331>.

The Shipston SNT recommend that you should not make any such entries on chat room websites and if you have already done so remove them as soon as possible. After all you can not be certain that these sites are 100% secure.

# OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

## Forthcoming Event

### **Saturday, 29th January at 7 p.m. Burns Night**

A super meal with tatties and neeps, traditional music, PLUS an enchanting tale from Rabbin Burns and, courtesy of Andy Mc Donald an entertaining after-dinner speech, will form the background to our popular Burns Night celebrations. This is indeed a special event and you should put the date in your diaries and, most importantly, reserve your tickets by calling Tricia now on 680676! Tickets cost £15.00 each and will include a wee dram.

## Past Events

### **Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch – Monday, 13th December**

The Christmas Lunch for the Senior Citizens from the village followed the usual successful format of previous years. We had 30 guests to lunch and in addition to the delicious 3 course meal with wine that was provided we also had some enjoyable entertainment.

We are grateful to the children from Tysoe School who played Carols on a variety of musical instruments to provide some light entertainment to the delight of our guests.

I would like to thank Sue Robins for the attractive table decorations, together with Gwyn & George Adams, who just turned up and helped out in their usual selfless way. I'd also like to thank Judy Badger for her overseeing the whole event and my other colleagues on the Village Hall Committee, who cooked, waited upon and generally worked tirelessly to make the day a success.

### **Cocktails & Canapés Evening – Friday, 17th December**

This evening was a new venture for the Village Hall and, based on the outstanding success of this event, one that we will repeat next year. The hall was cleverly decorated with a cocktail theme by Una Hill and her helpers and the cocktails mixed and served with a certain 'panache' by Marcus Robertson and his girlfriend, Katy. We had a great range of canapés, generously prepared by various committee members, which were circulated and consumed with great relish. Alan Thompson of Tysoe won the much coveted 'Best Bow Tie' prize: all in all, a very pleasant evening.

*Derek Harbour*

# STOUR SINGERS

The recent performance of Benjamin Britten's dramatic telling of the legends of Saint Nicolas in St. Edmund's, Shipston was a resounding success. If you would like to sing in Stour Singers next production, Mendelsohn's Elijah on Saturday 14th May please come along to rehearsals starting at 7 p.m. on Thursday 13th January in the Community Lounge, Shipston High School. No auditions! For further info, contact Vic Twyman, tel 01451 870361 or visit the website: [www.stoursingers.org.uk](http://www.stoursingers.org.uk)

## WHAT'S ON IN & AROUND OXHILL

### *January*

Tuesday 4th	10.00	Village Hall - Mobile Library
<b>Wednesday 5th</b>		<b>Blue &amp; green recycling bin collection</b>
	10.30	The Peacock - Village coffee morning
Sunday 9th	20.00	The Peacock - Charity quiz night
Tuesday 11th		Grey landfill bin collection
	20.00	Village Hall - Parish Council meeting
Wednesday 12th	18.00	Order deadline for Kineton Oil Consortium
Thursday 13th	14.00	Village Hall - Afternoon Delights, see inside
Friday 14th	9.45	Weekday Walkers - see inside
Tuesday 18th		Blue & green recycling bin collection
Wednesday 19th	12.30	The Peacock - Village lunch
Thursday 20th	19.30	Village Hall - Garden Club; Bugs, the Good, the Bad & the Ugly
Tuesday 25th		Grey landfill bin collection
	10.00	Village Hall - Mobile Library
	23.59	Copy deadline for the News
Thursday 27th	14.00	Village Hall - Afternoon Delights, see inside
Friday 28th	9.30	Weekday Walkers - see inside
Saturday 29th	19.00	Village Hall - Burns Night, see inside
Sunday 30th	14.00	St. George's, Brailes - Choirs workshop

### *February*

Tuesday 1st	19.30	St. Edmund's, Shipston - Deanery Synod
Saturday 26th	10 - 3	Shipston Home Nursing event - see inside

### *March*

Friday 25th	7.30	Townsend Hall, Shipston - SHN event - see inside
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A man's home is his castle, in a manor of speaking.

### **ACCIDENT and MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

**FIRST CALL 999**

**THEN CALL**

Ambulance Responders

**MICK & BARBARA SHEPARD**

**07977149317 Mobile / 01295680644 Home**

3, The Leys, Oxhill, Warwick, CV350QX