

THE OXHILL NEWS

January 2021 No. 554



Santa and Elf (Paul and Ali Sayer) visited Wallace Santa and Gromit reindeer (created by Ed and Elaine Morgan) when delivering Christmas dinners to village seniors on 8 December 2020.

Vanessa Druce, editor & Grenville Moore, consulting editor
Email: oxhill@btinternet.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLE	PAGE
Friday 1 January	3
St Lawrence Church in January	4
From Russia with Gherkins	5
The Way We Were	8
Tysoe Tennis Club	10
Carers4Carers	10
Oxhill Village Hall, Seniors Christmas Lunch	11
Seniors Christmas Lunch Letters	13
Oxhill Cooks	14
Oxhill's Advent Windows	16
Oxhill Parish Council Meeting minutes	18
Photos	12
Shipston Health & Wellbeing Partnership Transport Buses	22
Reg Rouse's Bus Tickets	24
Mobile Library	25
In Erratum	25
Find the Differences	26

CLUB & GROUP CONTACT DETAILS

Carers4carers:	kcarers4carers@gmail.com or tel: 07947 893504
Oxhill Village Hall:	Jo Collings - Chairman - 01295 680215 Ali Sayer - Hall Hire - 01295 680451 Village Hall Committee: village-hall@oxhill.org.uk
The Peacock Pub	01295 688060
Tysoe Tennis Club:	Club Secretary: Carol Spencer: 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

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

FRIDAY 1 JANUARY

by Grenville Moore



New Year's Day falls on a Friday as we stumble into 2021. Friday is named after the Saxon goddess Frigga, the wife of Woden (also known as Odin). Frigga was also associated with Venus, the Roman goddess of love. But beware, Friday is generally considered to be one of the unluckiest days of the week. According to many old rhymes, it is bad for just about everything; getting married – Friday for losses (mind you, we got married on a Friday and that was 45 years ago), sneezing – ‘Sneeze on a Friday, sneeze for sorrow’, cutting nails – ‘Cut your nails on a Friday, cut them for woe’. Other superstitions warn against moving house, setting out on a journey, or embarking on any new venture or enterprise on a Friday. Some cultures thankfully hold the opposite viewpoint. The Romans classified days as good, bad, or neutral and Friday was one of the good days (another of the things that the Romans did for us!), considered auspicious for betrothals and sending children to school. Charles Dickens also considered it as a lucky day:

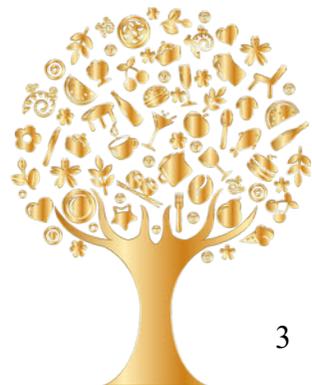
I was born on a Friday, and it is the most astonishing coincidence that I have never in my life – whatever projects I may have determined on otherwise – never begun a book or done anything of interest to me, but it was on a Friday.

Letter to Angela Burdett-Coutts, 1857

It wasn't until 1974 that 1 January was declared a public holiday throughout the UK, although in earlier times it was considered unlucky to do any sort of work on this day, even household chores. It was also considered unlucky to let your fire go out, or to remove or discard anything from the house without first bringing something in:

*Take out, then take in
Bad luck will begin
Take in, then take out
Good luck comes about*

Let's hope for a better 2021, and I wish you all good health and happiness.



ST. LAWRENCE IN JANUARY

We move into a New Year, knowing that the God of Christmas will continue to walk with us in these still strange times: so we are hopeful that this is what we are going to be able to do, as we celebrate the lovely Christmas-tide season that embraces Epiphany and Candlemas!

Sunday, January 3rd EPIPHANY
11.00 am Holy Communion (George Heighton)

Sunday, January 10th
9.30 am Morning Worship (George Heighton)

Sunday, January 17th
11.00 am Holy Communion (Jill Tucker)

Sunday, January 24th
11.00 am Holy Communion (George Heighton)

Sunday, January 31st CANDLEMAS
11.00 am Holy Communion (George Heighton)

Government dictat permitting, we look forward to welcoming you back into our churches. But we do, of course, recognise, that not everyone is feeling comfortable about coming into to our buildings, so every Sunday a service from one of our churches will be continue to be available on Zoom at 11.00 am. Additionally, we are Zooming a mid-week Morning Worship at 10.00 am every Wednesday, and St. Lawrence will remain open for prayer on Wednesday afternoons.

Full details are always available in The Grapevine.

*Step softly into your weeping world,
incarnate God;
embrace it in your love.
Bring light into broken lives,
warmth into frozen hearts,
hope to those at war.
May your peace pervade every place.*

Carol Dixon, Hay and Stardust



FROM RUSSIA WITH GHERKINS

by Peter Taylor

Vanessa has asked me to write the occasional story from my working life in the motor industry. Following 29 happy years with Jaguar I took VR to start my own business, and the early days were a bit precarious. You never knew when the phone would ring, or where it might lead if it did. One day it rang, and it led to Moscow.....

The call was from someone I had known at Jaguar who was now working for a powertrain company in Switzerland. They had received an unusual request.

At the time – this was the late '90s - there were frequent summit meetings of world leaders being hosted in different countries, and large motorcades would deliver the delegates and their entourages to the appointed venues. These motorcades were made up mostly of large and powerful Mercedes limousines, which would sweep through cities at high speed accompanied by phalanxes of police outriders. An exception was the ghastly Russian-made Zil carrying Boris Yeltsin and his henchmen. Their technology was way behind the rest of the world and the poor old Zils couldn't keep up, causing great embarrassment and making Mr Yeltsin very angry. Could the Swiss company do an analysis of the vehicle and propose a programme of upgrades, so that they weren't outpaced?



Former ZIL presidential limousine of Yeltsin and Gorbachev.

Jean-Pierre – my ex colleague – quite rightly realised that if these huge vehicles were going to go faster, their chassis and brakes would also need upgrading to keep them safe. Would I be prepared to go to Moscow with him to look after that side of things, whilst he dealt with the powertrain? An easy decision for me, and not long afterwards I found myself on my first trip to Russia, at someone else's expense.

After an uneventful flight, we landed at Moscow airport and once through immigration, we took a cab into the city and the Moscow Aerostar hotel. As we drove through the suburbs on a busy three lane carriageway, I realised that the whole atmosphere was pervaded by exhaust smoke, and a blue-grey pall hung in the air. It brought home the success of the emission regulations in the west, where such pollution had become a thing of the past. It was a graphic illustration of just how far behind Russia really was. I had expected our accommodation to be basic, with hot (possibly) and cold brown water on tap, but was pleasantly surprised by the Aerostar – very upmarket, well up to 4/5



Russian-made ZIL limousine

star European standard, and boasting some very smart ladies hanging about reception. The following morning, we were expected at the Zil factory, and I was impressed to see a giant chauffeur-driven limousine appear in front of the hotel to collect us. From a distance it looked fantastic. Close up though, it was apparent that the front wings were peppered with large rust holes, and the interior, although plush and equipped with curtains, was dusty and faded. So was the chauffeur – his eyes were alarmingly bloodshot, and whilst one faced straight ahead, the other looked sharply off to one side. He looked like someone who had a predominance of methylated spirits in his diet. As we set off into the morning traffic, his asymmetric eyesight became quite useful – every time he applied the brakes the car would veer sharply to the right, and he would wrestle with the steering wheel to keep us on course. But surprisingly we arrived safely at the Zil factory for our work to begin.

It was immediately obvious that this was no ordinary car factory – in fact it wasn't a car factory at all, but a truck and bus factory. The limousines – made only for party dignitaries in very small numbers – used a just post-war bus chassis on which the vast and ugly bodies were grafted. Not much of a threat to a *grosser* Mercedes, for sure. All the factory workers were actually uniformed soldiers, work was spasmodic, and unfinished vehicles lay about at random.

Introductions made, we were led down long dark corridors lit sparsely by bare bulbs, to a dingy workshop. In one corner was a wooden box in which a cat was suckling a litter of kittens. A limo had been placed over an inspection pit for our assessment. This one was in no better condition than the one that had brought us from the hotel, and when I pointed out to our host that one of the rear springs was broken, he shrugged as though this was entirely normal. Later on, I had the opportunity to drive one on the factory roads, and it lurched and heaved about like an underpowered porpoise.



The Likhachev (ZIL) Plant

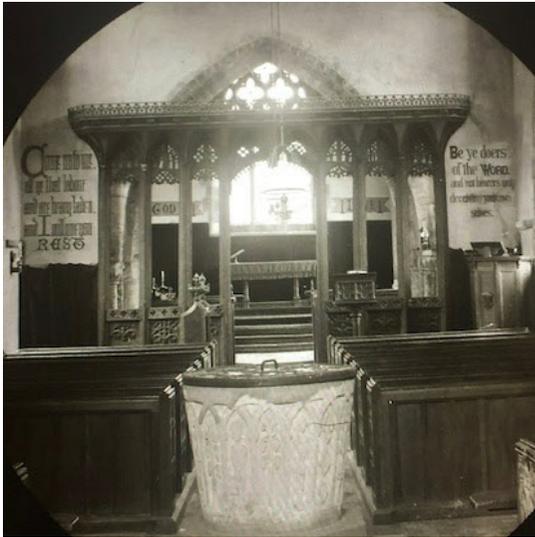
The advantage of the ‘cars’ being so awful was that improvement – at least to a limited degree – was not going to be difficult. Over the next couple of days, Jean-Pierre and I discussed what we thought was needed, and on the last day we presented our findings to Zil’s senior managers.

We sat around an enormous table in a large wood-panelled office, with several sombre and formidable looking Russians and an interpreter. Jean-Pierre outlined our proposals and they listened with interest – all seemed to be going quite well. After the technical stuff, we got on to the all-important commercial implications, and the ballpark figures proposed seemed to go down without demur. Except for one thing – they didn’t intend to pay us in money, they wanted to barter. This seemed quite routine to them, but was a bit of a surprise for us. What did they have in mind? asked J-P. Well, one of them replied, they had recently done a deal on some combine harvesters and had paid for them in pickled gherkins.....After the initial shock, I tried – unsuccessfully - to estimate the number of jars of gherkins that would buy even one combine, let alone several.

Jean-Pierre politely but firmly declined their offer, the meeting drew to a swift close, and the man with the asymmetric eyes delivered us erratically back to the Aerostar.

As the saying goes ‘ A refusal often offends’, so these days I steer well clear of Salisbury.....

The Way We Were



St. Lawrence Church interior: The ornate partition, called a rood screen, is between the chancel (where the choir would sing) and the nave (the body of the church where the people sit).

At some stage, probably in late Victorian times it was moved to the back of the church and placed at the entrance to the tower, where it still sits: that was probably done to remove any visual or actual barrier between the people and the altar: it is certainly the case that the altar is now very much more accessible to everyone than seems to be the case in the photo [above].

~ Jill Tucker



St. Lawrence Church interior December 2015



Church restoration Sept 2015 painted in time for Christmas in the photo above.

The Way We Were



St Lawrence Church 1905, the interesting thing here is that the point at which this photo was taken is now Green Lane, back then it was just a farm track and just 10 years prior to that the road to Whatcote was also just a farm track.

St Lawrence Church 2020

~ Grenville Moore

STAMPS FOR REDWINGS

I am still collecting stamps for Redwings. If you just pop any you have in my letterbox I will keep them till I am allowed to go there. For newcomers to the village I am at Karibu, Main Street and front straight onto the pavement. Reddish front door.

Thank you, Gwyn Adams





Tysoe Tennis Club

www.tysoetennisclub.co.uk

Very annoyingly, having rearranged matches yet again, we were locked down, but we have thankfully been playing amongst ourselves when the weather has allowed us to. Fingers crossed we will be able to resume matches after Christmas.

The courts have now been treated with moss killer and we are in the process of having water connected to the hut which will be so much more convenient than carrying our big containers from the main Pavilion.

Club Secretary: Carol Spencer: carol.spencer234@hotmail.co.uk

Junior tennis will hopefully be back to normal after Christmas too.

For more details contact Debbie at admin@tennisolutions.co.uk or Nicki Campbell on nicki@tysoe.net



Carers4Carers

Finding support through supporting each other

Carers4Carers is a self-help support group for carers living in Kinton and the surrounding villages and rural area. While the pandemic continues, we offer members a monthly newsletter, telephone befriending support and a virtual coffee morning.

Look out for joining instructions in our monthly email or contact the number below. New and existing members are always given a warm welcome. Do take a look at our website www.carers4carersonthefosse.org.uk

Email us at kcarers4carers@gmail.com or call 07947 893504.

OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

SENIORS CHRISTMAS LUNCH

We were delighted to be able to provide a Christmas Lunch for Oxhill residents. It was well received & a happy occasion. The Christmas tree on the green was a challenge but thanks to a little help from Western Power we got there in the end!





SENIORS CHRISTMAS LUNCH LETTERS

The village hall committee and helpers achieved a wonderful Michelin star lunch within lockdown law. Nothing was missing and the house bound were not forgotten having their meal delivered on the day that a world scientist produced the first vaccine given to a patient. Well done Oxhill.

I appreciate the hard work and planning involved over months to be so very successful.

Diane Harper



We heartily congratulate the team that put together the very welcome Christmas dinner we received from Santa and his elf last week! We expect nothing else but perfection from these hard working chefs but honestly it was not only delicious but presented beautifully and the contents were magnificent. Thoroughly enjoyed and not a scrap left for the dog.

It was a shame that we could not meet up together as per the norm, (but what is the norm today?) with a bit of entertainment thrown in. Well done everyone.

With many, many thanks from Alan & Sue Hedley





by Ruth Mercer

Christmas is approaching rapidly and maybe you have some mincemeat but haven't found time to make mince pies yet. I love this recipe as you can make a large number of portions very quickly and they taste delicious, even though they aren't strictly mince pies. If you are in a real rush, you could even use shop-bought pastry, but this is my favourite mince pie pastry recipe and, once you've tasted it, no other will do. I make my own mincemeat but a jar of shop-bought mincemeat can be improved immeasurably with the addition of brandy. The pastry recipe came from a very old Schwartz Herbs and Spices recipe book and the Streusel is a Mary Berry recipe.

MINCEMEAT STREUSEL

(Makes at least 16 portions, depending how you cut it)

Pastry:

8oz plain white flour

6oz butter or block margarine, cubed, plus extra for greasing

2oz caster sugar

1 egg

500g jar of mincemeat

Topping:

3oz butter

3oz self-raising white flour 40g/1 1/2oz semolina

1 1/2oz caster sugar

1. Start by making the topping. Melt the butter and stir in the the flour and sugar to form a dough. Chill until needed.
2. Next, make the pastry. Place the flour in a bowl and rub the butter into the flour until the mixture resembles coarse breadcrumbs. This can be done with a Kenwood Chef or a food processor. If using a food processor, be careful not to overdo it as you will end up with shortbread.

3. Stir in the sugar, then add the egg and about 1 tbsp cold water. Mix until the pastry starts to come together as a firm dough but don't overwork it.
4. Wrap in cling film or alternative and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes, or longer if you are busy doing something else.
5. Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6 (fan 180C) and grease a 9"x13" Swiss roll tin.
6. On a lightly floured work surface, roll out the pastry to a rectangle slightly larger than the prepared tin, then line the base and sides of the tin with pastry. It doesn't matter if it's a bit of a patchwork as no one will know once it's cooked. This pastry isn't the easiest to handle and I always need to patch it.
7. Trim the pastry level with the top edges of the tin and patch any gaps if necessary.
8. Spread the mincemeat evenly over the pastry base.
9. Using a coarse grater, grate the topping over the mincemeat and spread evenly.
10. Bake in the preheated oven for about 20-25 minutes, or until golden-brown.
11. Cut into slices, dust with icing sugar and serve warm with cream, custard or brandy butter, or eat it cold: it's good at any temperature!



OXHILL'S ADVENT WINDOWS

by Lis Stuart

It has been amazing to see all the advent windows and lights that have brightened up the village on the dark nights of tier 3 and over the Christmas period. It has been said several times that Oxhill has never had so many lights and how wonderful it is. There have probably never been so many people wandering the dark streets of the village - we often wondered what people passing through thought. We had a total of 36 advent windows around the village all with their own character and distinctive design. A group of committed window watchers turned up each night at the allotted time for the opening of the windows whatever the weather - and some nights when it was particularly cold or wet it was hard to move away from the comfort of the fire and the TV, but well worth it. There was a big following on Facebook with nightly pictures. Thank you to all those who took part in producing the windows and for those who also provided the warming socially distanced mulled wine and nibbles. Hopefully next year we can have another advent window display and who knows maybe we will have 2 each night - so get planning only 11 months to go!





Oxhill Parish Council
Parish Council meeting Held on 10.11.20
Draft precis of meeting

The meeting was held remotely due to Government restrictions. All Councillors attended the meeting with the Parish Clerk, Cllr John Feilding and nine villagers.

To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 9th September 2020

The minutes were approved and signed as a true record of the meeting.

Public Participation Session

The Parish Council have contributed to the grass cutting in the churchyard in the past but cannot now. If a church is open and functional it's the responsibility of the PCC to keep it running.

Matters Arising

Bus Shelter – There has been a delay due to the supply of wood.

To receive a report from the County and District Councillor

Cllr Chris Williams had circulated a report before the meeting. The main points included Free School Meals, School attendance, laptops for disadvantaged children and a Covid 19 update.

Cllr John Feilding noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be looking at waste bins and a Gypsy and Traveller Policy and identifying sites suitable for them. The offices at Stratford District Council will be leased off as part of cutbacks.

Whilst Cllr Feilding was at the meeting a long discussion took place about the planning application at Wixey Transport.

To receive an update on the waste bins

Two waste bins have been installed in the village and are both well used. The bin near the church was placed on a service strip. In consultation with Stratford District Council a villager has paid for the bin to be moved.

The idea of dog bins was explored but the cost is excessive. It was agreed to spend some money on signage.

To discuss noise in the village

There is noise in the village from motorbikes and garden machinery. Years ago a voluntary code was put in the Oxhill News asking people not to use loud machinery on a Sunday. It was noted that the village has a mixed population and some people work long hours so some tolerance is needed. This will be looked into again.

To discuss an equality and diversity policy

WALC had circulated an equality and diversity policy. It was agreed to adopt them with immediate effect.

To receive an update on speeding

The Parish Council have purchased a radar speed gun to use in the village. The gun will be used to check speeds coming in and out of the village at the Kinton Road end.

To discuss Leys Field, a wildlife buffer zone

The buffer zone, which is the ditch on land between Leys Field and other land owned by villagers, has been blocked by a fence. A letter will be sent to SDC Enforcement.

To discuss the website and adhering to the 2020 accessibility legislation

All websites have to be accessible to all. The current website is old and poor and there is a second village website which uses the same provider. Three quotes have been sought. Cllr Stuart to look at setting up one new website for the village.

To discuss blocked drainage pipes in the layby on Whatcote Road

There is a problem with the pipe under the road which is not letting water through. The Parish Clerk to report to Severn Trent.

To discuss the SDC Site Allocation Plan

The SDC Consultation runs until 18th December 2020. It is an additional plan which sits alongside the existing Core Strategy and will enable residents and communities to know where new developments may occur in the future. There are two proposals in land off Green Lane.

To receive an update on planning

The following applications had been received since the last meeting:

- 20/02356/FUL, *Proposed replacement single storey extension to rear and small infill to side of garage at Appletree cottage, Blackford Way.* Supported.
- 20/02631/TREE, *Tree work at Fern Cottage, Main Road.* Supported with comments.

- 20/02196/FUL, Demolition of existing detached garage and construction of replacement detached garage, to match original, on new piled foundation at 2 The Sett. Granted by SDC.
- 20/02224/OUT, Demolition of existing steel framed buildings and brick building and erection of up to 11 no open market dwellings and 7 no affordable dwellings at Wixey Transport.

Councillors gave their views on this application. It is a massive over development on agricultural land. It is the wrong place for social housing with no suitable access to the village. Natural habit will be destroyed. It was agreed to object to the application with clear reference to SDC Policies.

To receive an update on any enforcement issues

There is no further news on the enforcement issues at Heritage Farm. SDC are aware of the time limit.

Action: The Chair to send another follow up letter to SDC.

Financial Report

The following payments were approved:

- £278.66 to Cllr Rivers-Fletcher (speeding device)
- £19.76 to L Stuart (website)

To receive Councillors Reports

Green Lane is in a poor state of repair. It was due to be replaced two years but WCC were waiting for the building work to finish. The work is now complete. The Parish Clerk to contact Highways again.

An update was given on footpaths. A lot of work has been done by a team of people.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 12th January 2020 at 7.30pm.

In 2021 meetings will take place monthly excluding August and December and will start at the earlier time of 7.30pm.



Photo by Pat Crowther



Photo by Vanessa Druce

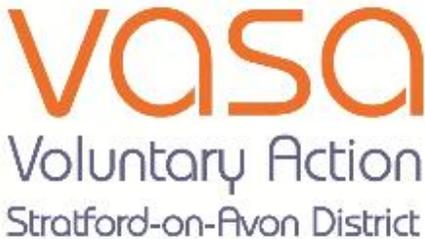
SHIPSTON HEALTH & WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP TRANSPORT STREAM

The SHWP is a partnership of many organisations throughout the Stour Valley and its purpose is the wellbeing of all residents in the area.

Part of the information the Partnership has produced is the availability of public transport in the area.

David Squires
Transport Lead SHWP
ds@stourvalley.life T: 0751 169 4733

Below and on the following page are details of three bus services which offer transport to residents in Oxhill.



VASA's volunteer community transport offers journeys to both medical and social destinations for anyone with a genuine need for transport. The service is for residents of the district but can take people to medical appointments outside the district. VASA need at least three days' notice to arrange a journey.

No 'groups' but multi passenger of 3 to 6 for same destination (such as Young Carers) in estate cars and 7 seaters.

Journeys take place weekdays and weekends, including early mornings and evenings. Later journeys if volunteers can be found.

Bookings for Saturday & Sunday journeys must be booked by the Friday and are subject to volunteer availability.

There is a £2 administration fee and passengers pay 45p per mile.

For more information or to book a journey, please call 01789 262889 between 09:30 and 13:00 Monday to Friday. Answer phone facility for out of hours contact.

Email (office and out of office hours) transport@vasa.org.uk

WRCC Back & 4th WRCC Back & 4th



Our subsidised Warwickshire community transport services like Shoppa-Hoppa provide lifelines to people desperately seeking more independence.

The service offers affordable transport for community and voluntary groups and school transport services for Warwickshire County Council.

The 15- and 16-seater minibuses are fully wheelchair accessible and can be hired by

community and voluntary organisations. Volunteer drivers take groups on outings including shopping trips, lunches and cultural visits.

For more information, please call 01789 471595.

UBUS is a community transport service that operates on a dial-a-ride basis. The service is for residents of Stratford-on-Avon district, who cannot access public transport because of mobility issues or live in an area with limited or no public transport.

Fares on the service are £4 single and £6 return.

NO GROUP TRAVEL OFFERED.

The Service operates on Week Days from 9.30 a. m - 19.00 p.m.
Booking available - Monday - Friday - 8.30 a. m. - 18.00 p.m.

Tel No: 01789 - 264491

UBUS



UBUS is supported by



The dial-a-ride service
for all ages in
Stratford District

☎ 01789 264491

📧 UBUS@stratford-dc.gov.uk

BUS TICKETS FROM REG ROUSE'S BUS

The Oxhill News has received 14 tickets from Reg Rouse's old bus service that we are giving away. If you would like a ticket(s) please contact us at oxhill@btinternet.com. If you would like to know more about the history Reg Rouse's bus and his carrier service in the village, please look at the September and October 2020 issues of the Oxhill News, available online at www.oxhill.org.uk



MOBILE LIBRARY

The mobile library has books with large print, ordinary print, picture books, children's books, paperbacks, non-fiction, novels, sagas, crime, mysteries, adventures, westerns and romance. The van has talking books, cassettes & Cds.

For further info please telephone: 01926 851031



People standing outside the W.C.C mobile library van in Tysoe. August 2nd 1950

IN ERRATUM

The cover of the December issue of the Oxhill News should have read:

While joining the village for coffee grandmother **Maria Robertson**, great-grandmother Joan Bartlam & grandmother Julie Smart received the wonderful news that Lizzie and Sam **Robertson** welcomed their baby William Murdo.

DIFFERENCES

Find 10 differences.



DIFFERENCES

FIND 3 DIFFERENCES.



WHAT'S ON IN & AROUND OXHILL

JANUARY

Thursday 7	11:30-ish	Awesome Coffee Van, outside Peacock pub
Thursday 14	11:30-ish	Awesome Coffee Van, outside Peacock pub
Thursday 21	11:30-ish	Awesome Coffee Van, outside Peacock pub
Thursday 28	11:30-ish	Awesome Coffee Van, outside Peacock pub
Friday 29	13:15 - 13:30	Mobile Library, outside Village Hall

PC MEETINGS

The date of the next PC Meeting is Tuesday, 12 January at 8.00pm. It is likely, at present, that this meeting will be held virtually by Zoom. More details will be in the Agenda for the meeting which will be shown on the PC Website or a physical copy will be displayed on the Notice Board by the Peacock a few days before the meeting.

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 15th of each month for publication in the following month.

Please email: oxhill@btinternet.com

BIN COLLECTION CALENDAR



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



January 2021						
M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su
				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