

UPTON NEWS

May 2000

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

This was held on 11 April and attended by five people apart from parish councillors, the clerk, a district and a county councillor. The chairman reported that a comprehensive survey has been produced about the provision of better facilities for teenagers on the playing field. Substantial grants may be available and an open meeting will be arranged to discuss this. The PC are also involved in talks regarding the acquisition of land to extend the cemetery. The chair of the Village Hall Committee sent a memo on the possibility of building an extension for the storage of equipment, to increase facilities for a wider range of users.

County Councillor Colin Lamont reported that the new road signs at each end of the village are part of the 30mph speed limit project, coming into force for Upton in June. He also talked about the growth of Didcot, saying that the consultation process has to be repeated because the decision to expand to the north east of the town has been reversed in favour of development to the west.

District Councillor Richard Farrell outlined the proposed Local Government Act that will transform the organisation of local government into a mayoral system. Options will be: an elected mayor with a

Blewbury and Upton Village Produce Association

We now have the 2000/2001 programme/membership cards ready, so do remember to renew your membership (£3 per year per family, £1 for senior citizens).

Subscriptions can be paid and cards obtained at our meetings, or from Savages in Blewbury, Margaret Maytham at Upton Post Office (850364), Joyce Gilbert (850388), Graeme Gettings (851579) and Brenda Hopkins (850181). The show schedule will be available shortly.

On Wednesday, 17th May the VPA are visiting **Waterperry Gardens** — leaving Blewbury/Upton at 1.30pm, at a cost of £2 per person. Transport will be by car share — fill in the form provided with your membership card and return it to Brenda Hopkins, Joyce Gilbert or Margaret Maytham.

We can apply for tickets for the **Hampton Court Flower Show** on 6,7,8, 9 July (maximum 2 per day) at a discounted rate of £14 per adult ticket (usual price £19). These will be asked for on a first come first served basis by contacting the VPA Secretary, Malcolm Wright (850705) before the end of May.

COMPETITION Logo for Upton News
all designs welcome, on paper or floppy disk

deputy, an elected mayor with a cabinet of his choice, or a leader elected by the Council with an elected or appointed cabinet. The Vale of the White Horse is opting for the last, but the CC, DC and other rural authorities have misgivings about how this structure will work. Loss of a committee system may prove particularly difficult for councillors not in the majority political party.

During the open forum a question was raised about the steadily increasing precept over the last few years and large increase for 2000/2001. The reasons given were that in the past the precept had been set artificially low, resulting in finances veering very close to the red — in spite of some services being undertaken by volunteers and others being kept to a minimum. Lack of volunteers, adherence to the national minimum wage requirement, increased costs and a return to a healthy bank balanced have pushed the precept up. This year's also covers 'one-off' items such as audit fees (needed once every three years), millenium projects and play area safety regulations. Other people commented that PC expenditure should be considered frugal rather than extravagant.

It is with great sadness that the VPA mourns the death of its President, Percy Smith on 26 March 2000. Percy was an enthusiastic and knowledgeable gardener who greatly enjoyed the thrills and tussles of showing, with a special affection for his beloved Sweet Peas. Over the years he has given much support the VPA and his wealth of experience will be sorely missed.

WALKS

Continuing the village's lively millenium programme, the next event will be a choice of **Three Walks for the Bank Holiday** on Monday, May 29th. These will be followed by lunch at the **George and Dragon**.

Each walk will start outside the village hall and finish at the pub at approximately 1 pm. There is a choice of three routes of varying lengths: **A.** Over the downs to Blewbury, starting at 10.30 am. For the more energetic. **B.** A stroll along the railway embankment and back via East Hagbourne, starting at 11.15 am. For social walkers. **C.** To West Hagbourne starting at noon. For families with young children, and those who are young at heart but not so active.

Anyone unable to join in the walks but wishing to come to the lunch will be warmly welcomed. Please obtain your tickets for the lunch — £4 adults, £2 children — by Monday, May 22nd from Jessie West (851206), Helen Weston (850031) or Suzanne Batchelor (851362)

(See over for more walks)

More walks...

In Blewbury Jackie Maguire (851191) is forming a walking group whose first expedition will be to Ardington on Sunday 14 May. This is an 8 mile round trip lasting around 4 hours, stopping at The Bell for lunch.

Also, the newly formed Didcot and District Ramblers Association invites anyone to take a 'gentle evening walk' from Upton church on Monday, May 15, starting 6.45 pm.

NEW BUS TIMETABLES

New bus timetables came into force in April. This has meant some changes: Thames Travel now running two early buses ten minutes before the previous time, and throughout the day coming back from Didcot station six minutes later. The Wednesday continuation to Oxford has been discontinued and there are other minor changes to Thames Travel times. All are shown in the timetables which have been delivered to many people and are available from the Post Office.

The Tappins service, on Wednesdays only, has extended its route to take in Didcot station and Tesco's. It returns from Broadway at 11.20am and 4.20pm.

Upton is now well served, with nine buses a day connecting in Didcot with trains and buses to other destinations. These services are always under review and if they are not well-used they will be taken away. Please consider using them whenever you can.

(Upton transport representatives 850449.)

FOUND

Long, handsome green and white umbrella left at the village hall on New Year's Eve. Contact 851206

Oxfordshire Arts Week

Saturday 20th to Sunday 28th May

There will be two studios open in Upton. Make sure to go and look at **Joan Durbin's** fine paintings at Warwick Lodge and pay a visit to **Sidney Hardwick's** long-established pottery at Cedarwood to see her latest work, which she showed in April at the Chelsea Crafts Fair.

Joan's Millenium Map, commissioned by the Parish Council,

will be on display at her private viewing on **Friday 19th May 11am—5pm** and on **Sunday 21st May**, when teas will be served in the garden.

Proceeds from the teas will go towards framing and possibly reproducing the map. There are even plans to put the design on a tea cloth, or table mats.

CHURCH SERVICES

St Mary's

Sunday 9 am

May 7 Parish Eucharist
14 Parish Eucharist
21 Sung Matins

mings

28 Parish Eucharist
28 3pm **Rogation Service.** Meet at church gate at

2.30 pm to walk to the 3-parish boundary

Thursday

June 1 Ascension Day Eucharist at 8pm

Methodist Church

10.30 am Preacher

May 7 Ruth Dams
14 Stephen Atkinson
21 Peter Hen-

28 Terence Adams

Recent 50's Club winners

December 1999

Mrs Bray (102) £10
Dr Rowbotham (12) 5
Mrs Buxton (9) 4
Mrs Potter (52) 3
Mrs Durbin (66) 20
Mrs Brown (18) 20

January 2000

Mr Wright (107) 10
Mrs J. Parker (116) 5
Mrs Hubbard (54) 4
Mrs Williams (23) 3

February 2000

Mr Williams (72) £10
Mr Stimpson (55) 5
George & Dragon (68) 4
Mrs Hinkley (152) 3

March 2000

Mrs M. Dawson (50) 10
Mrs Williams (72) 5
Mrs Hubbard (54) 4
Mr Grimshaw (1) 3
Mrs Hayes (7) 25

The 50s Club continues to be a major source of income for the village hall. Many thanks to everyone for their past and continuing support as we start off again with another year. If you have not yet been approached to join, and would like to do so, the cost is 50p per month, ie £6 a year, which is very helpful. Please contact Jessie West 851206.

June Churchman would also like to thank all who contributed to The Children's Society in April. £217 is the most we have ever collected.

UPTON NEWS is published monthly, the copy deadline being the 18th of the previous month. Please deliver or send contributions to The Old School, Church Street, either on paper, disk, fax (851779) or by e-mail to carol@uptonoxon.demon.co.uk

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