

UPTON NEWS

JANUARY 2005

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MUGA Project Progress Report

Over the past twelve months the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) Project, long planned by the Parish Council as an important new facility for the Recreation Ground, had some disappointments with grant funding applications. This led to further discussions with various organisations and we modified the design to reduce the initial capital cost but retain all the robust low maintenance cost features. The only really significant change is the omission of the sports practice wall; however, the current design still allows this to be added at a later stage, albeit at an overall increase to the original total cost. Provision for playing tennis has also been deleted; although this only has a small impact on capital cost it does considerably reduce the managing of the MUGA.

As now designed, all the sports and games the hard surface will be marked-out for can be played without requiring additional furniture. For the more serious competitions, goal nets (soccer, hockey, basketball and netball) will/may be made available. Balls, hockey sticks, rounders bats, hopscotch slates, pucks will not be provided!

Currently some £23,000 has been pledged/donated including professional services for the design, surveying and managing of the project. A further £1,000 is expected from voluntary labour for preparation of the site (clearing back of scrub bushes and re-aligning of the soccer field) prior to the contract award.

The MUGA committee has received positive support from Nick Garnett, director of the Vale's Leisure Services. He recently allocated Mary Lambe, the department's landscape manager, to provide assistance, in particular with fund

raising. Mary has visited the site and is extremely enthusiastic for the project to be successfully realised.

The MUGA committee has submitted two further grant applications (one to the Vale District Council) to which responses are expected early in 2005. We are also working on two more applications which will be considered in April 2005. Further discussions are on-going with other organisations and local businesses. These, together with some village fund raising event, are to cover any small shortfall in anticipated funding by the end of April/early May.

Our schedule indicates completion at the end of September 2005. Encouragingly the Vale DC endorses this, given our present level of progress with funding. The schedule includes an eight week construction period, which was accepted by the contract bidders for the original design. All bid documentation will be ready to issue to selected contractors by early March, and this will be done as soon as funding is in place.

Tony Durbin, Project Manager

PARISH PLAN

The prize for return of the questionnaire was drawn by Richard Farrell and two bottles of champagne apiece went to Gill Bishop, Alun Jones and Lesley Shaw and DVD voucher to Anna Hardy.

It is very important that any outcomes of the Parish Plan fully reflect the views of the majority of Uptonians. Your views matter! So, as lots of you have yet to complete your forms, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE fill them in and return them to the Post Office, Mike Collins (850989), Manor Lawns, High Street, or Derek Whitmell, Pippins, Fieldside. If you prefer, just complete those questions that are of interest to you. Forms can be obtained from the P.O. or Mike Collins.

The Steering Committee are entering raw data onto spreadsheets which it will be analysed, checked and audited. Recommendations, conclusions and a proposed action plan will be included in a report for every village household.

VILLAGE HALL DIARY

Saturday, 26 March, 7.30pm

Another play from the Oxford Travelling Theatre Company

PEOPLE ARE LIVING THERE

by Athol Fugard, 'South Africa's greatest living playwright'. Tickets £6 (£4) from JESSIE WEST, 851206

Deacon's Jottings

Since my ordination in September, I'm gradually settling in to my varied ministry as OLM, which stands for Ordained Local Minister. I am certainly a 'local' in Blewbury; now it is my aim to pick up new networks in Upton and the Hagbournes.

I began to get to know Upton residents through the Short Tennis classes I ran. I'd hardly recognise those children now, as 15 years have elapsed! It was a pleasure to meet villagers at the Harvest Supper, and Upton mums with very young children have been attending the monthly pram service over the years.

The Benefice is striving to enable St. Mary's to become a stronger focal point. The aim is to keep the church open during daylight hours, allowing people to come in for private prayer. Every Tuesday, Morning Prayer is being said at 8.15am and Evening Prayer at 5.30pm. These services last for 20 minutes and the clergy welcome others to join them. The Eucharist will be celebrated on Thursdays at 11am. Pastoral visiting is by the clergy and lay people, and the church always welcomes requests for visits and prayer needs. Please contact the church office (850267).

A youth group has started meeting twice a month at the Duck House, Blewbury

and a **NEW YEAR PARTY is being held on Sunday 9 January in Upton Village Hall, 7 - 9pm, which all secondary school age children are very welcome to attend. No charge, but a plate for the buffet and favourite CD would be welcomed.**

The embroidery on my white stole, first worn at my ordination, depicts aspects of my Christian spirituality I'd like to share with you. The design is taken from the altar cross at the church where I grew up. The people who nurtured my faith have had a profound influence on my growth as a Christian. I want to acknowledge that in my ministry with young families and young people. The shapes of the nails that pierced our Lord's body are embroidered with material, threads and beads to portray running water, transformed to become the Water of Life. As springs bubble up along the foot of the Downs, so new life bubbles up as the Church serves the people here. The embroidered cross is a life-giving symbol, and one I shall try to follow as a pattern for my ministry.

Louise Butler

50 Club Winners

November: £10 Mr Maunsell, £7 Mr Field, £5 Mr Stewart, £4 Mrs McLaughlin. **December:** £20 Mrs Davis, £20 Mr Wright, £10 Mrs Shayler, £7 Mrs G. Smith, £5 Mrs Concannon, £4 Mrs Thomas.

THE LAST OF A LINE

Gwen Greenough came from an old Upton family. The first mention I can find in the parish register is in 1724 with 'Henry ye son of Henry and Elizabeth Greeniph baptiz.', followed in 1733 by: 'Will son of Henry and Eliz Grinif baptised April 8.' Gwen's mother was a Winter, and this family goes back even further to an entry in 1596. It reads, 'Thomas the sonne of Robert Winter baptiz 9 Sept'. This is followed in 1598 by a daughter, ffrancis, and in 1602 'Lewes Winter widow was buried 23 April.' Since parish registers only became a legal requirement in 1588 it is quite possible that Robert Winter was living in the village well before this date. From then on Greenoughs and Winters continued to live in Upton. It is always sad when the old names die out, and Gwen was the last Greenough to live here.

Juliet Gardiner

The respect held for Gwen in the community was reflected in the generous donations in memory of her life. The total amount of £660 will be divided equally between Didcot Hospital and Upton Methodist church.

We would like to thank everyone for their kind expressions of sympathy, be it through donations, flowers or kind words.

Helen and Mike Weston

The Christmas Raffle raised £425.80 for Village Hall funds. A big thank you to everyone for the generous support.

Jessie West

PUB NEWS

We would like to introduce ourselves as the 'hopefully' long-term tenants of the **George and Dragon**. This of course can only be achieved with the support of the village.

Our plan for 2005 is to have Dart, Pool and Aunt Sally teams. We have already organised an in-house dart challenge and would be interested to hear from anyone who is interested in playing for us. **Our opening times are Mon-Thurs 12-2.30 and 6-11pm. Fri, Sat and Sun 12 through to 11pm.** We serve food seven days a week including a Sunday Roast Lunch with dessert for £6.95.

Bryan and Carol

CHURCH SERVICES IN JANUARY

ST. MARY'S

Sunday 9am

- 2 Parish Eucharist
- 9 Parish Eucharist
- 16 Joint Methodist
Covenant Service at their church
- 23 Parish Eucharist
- 30 Parish Eucharist

METHODIST

10.30am — Preacher

- Brenda Boyer
- David Martin
- Rev. Tim Dibble
- Pearl Maunder
- Alan Fudge

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