

UPTON NEWS

MAY 2005

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Parish Council has changed little over the past two years. Ros Caffyn was co-opted in 2003 when a vacancy was left by the late Sheila Parker. In 2004 Yvonne Collins took over from Lynne Riordan as Clerk and Kathryn Fletcher replaced Margaret Abbot as Minor Authority Governor to Blewbury Primary School. Ros has recently decided to resign; we will be very sorry to lose her and are looking to fill the vacancy.

Recreation ground

The grass cutting for this season has been awarded to a new contractor. Through the Vale Amenity Tree Planting scheme three trees have replaced young trees which died, and four indigenous trees have been planted along the entrance to Upton from Harwell. In the children's playground the rubber swing seats have been replaced and numerous palisades in the surrounding fence: an ongoing problem.

The PC Recreation Ground Development Committee has experienced mixed fortunes; construction of the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) was due to commence in August 2003 but grants were not forthcoming. The project was downsized and another round of applications set in motion. In April 2004 the PC pledged 5% of the total cost of the project up to £2,500 provided the rest could be secured from other sources. This was not made available indefinitely. Last autumn the Committee were offered £15,000 by WREN (Waste Recycling credits) and they are waiting to hear from another source. The PC will then review the project, although this money can only be used for the given purpose and within a specific time-scale.

Parish Plan

Since 2003 the Steering Committee have been working tirelessly on the PC's behalf. Final questionnaires were delivered in November 2004 and collated answers were presented to the village in February; there is a great deal of support for a cycle track to Blewbury and for improved sports facilities on the recreation ground. Some clubs such as the Wine Tasting Group are already being set up. The Steering Group are currently producing a draft Plan for approval by the PC; once adopted, each household will receive a copy.

Reading Road improvements

The PC and Parish Transport Representatives, Juliet and Peter Gardiner, met Ralph Green of Oxfordshire Highways Division (OCC) to discuss ideas for reducing traffic speed on the main road. Gateways, altered roadmarkings and pedestrian footway are complete.

Bus Shelter

The artwork by Upton and Blewbury Guides was

VILLAGE DIARY
CAR BOOT SALE — Recreation Ground
Saturday 4 June
Gates open 8.30 for 9am start
Pitches £8, large vans £10
Save £2 by pre-booking. Phone
851206 or 850486
Refreshments in the Village Hall
Proceeds to Village Hall Fund

finished last September. It was a matter of days before offensive graffiti appeared. The PC is in the process of painting this out and coating the whole area with anti-graffiti laquer. We have also bought new seats from Upton Reclaim Timber.

Burial Ground

The purchase of land for the new burial ground was completed at last in July 2004.

Litter Picking

The litter pick in March organised by Mike Brown in conjunction with the VOWH was extremely successful. Thanks to numerous volunteers (some turning out on three separate occasions!) all roads, verges, ditches and banks within the parish were cleared of litter. My thanks also to Juliet and Peter Gardiner who are never without a carrier bag on their regular walks of the village footpaths.

Website

Upton's website (www.uptonvillage.co.uk) became live in July 2004. It carries articles from the *Upton News* along with items submitted by parishioners. Many thanks to Piran Fletcher for single-handedly designing and maintaining this.

Archives

Thanks to Carol Hall, the parish records were sifted, sorted and many were passed on permanent loan to the OCC Archive Office.

Finally, my thanks to my fellow Parish Councillors who are all volunteers and have been working very hard on your behalf. Thanks especially to Graham de Wilde and Mike Brown who have become the village handymen, can turn their hands to almost anything and in so doing have saved the parish a considerable amount of money! My thanks to the members of the Parish Council committees and the Parish Plan Steering Group and to all of you who have helped throughout the past year or who have offered help for the future. And last, but by no means least, my thanks to Yvonne Collins who has proved to be a very competent, efficient and hardworking Clerk.

Tracy Seelig, 19 April, 2005

Curate's Jottings

It's amazing how much we miss when we get used to our surroundings, isn't it? Our houses, our gardens, the streets we regularly walk or drive along, become so familiar that we hardly notice them. It can be wonderfully enlightening just really looking at everything.

Dashing round between the four villages of the benefice, I almost always drive. But within each village, I usually walk around. All too often I get lost in a dream world of my own—perhaps planning a sermon or a confirmation class. But this summer, it's my intention to spend a little more of my walking time with my eyes open. Some writers have spoken of 'the sacrament of the present moment', and enjoying the present moment is something I am singularly bad at. It is my besetting sin to be constantly thinking ahead, never enjoying the now. So I hope if I'm trying to keep my eyes open I will be able to enjoy a few more of the gifts constantly given to us.

Russell Dewhurst

50 Club Winners

March £25 Gill Churchman, £25 John Grimshaw, £10 Sydney Hardwick, £7 Unity Amos, £5 Jan Hammond, £4 Jill Potter.

Thank you for another year of support for the club that helps to maintain the Village Hall. Draw tickets still cost £6 per number for 12 months. If you haven't yet been approached for this year and wish to join please contact me on 851206. **Jessie West.**

LIVE MUSIC AT PUB

As summer approaches improvements at the George & Dragon continue apace — redecorating, new garden furniture, and a particularly fine repainting of the red dragon has been carried out by the 1st Upton & Blewbury Guide troop. On Thursdays from 9pm we have live entertainment, alternating jazz and blues bands: for 5 May it's **Jazz Gene** and the **Bok Band** will be here on the 12th. For Sunday lunch booking is advisable on 850723.

Carol West

OXFORDSHIRE ARTWEEKS

South Oxfordshire opens this year's festival of works by hundreds of artists and makers from Saturday 14–22 May, followed by North (21–29) and Oxford City (28-5 June).

There will be two Open Studios in Upton to visit (daily 12–6pm). **Joan Durbin** is exhibiting her latest paintings in watercolour, acrylic, collage and pastels and will have a range of cards and prints for sale. Her studio will also be open on Upton Open Gardens day, Sunday 26 June.

Sidney Hardwick has a display of her washbasins, mirrors and other stoneware pottery for sale. In Blewbury, Alison Jones is exhibiting ceramics and Clare Bassett printmaking.

New Dial-a-Ride

The Octabus is a new scheme in the Vale that provides a door-to-door service for those who are unable to use public transport, or find it difficult. Available on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, it will take you whatever your journey purpose, except to hospital appointments or County Council social centres, where other transport is available. Concessionary bus passes are valid, halving the local £2 single or £4 return fare. Leaflets available in the Post Office, or from us (850449).

Juliet and Peter Gardiner Parish Transport Representatives

Blewbury & Upton VPA News

VPA stands for Village Produce Association. I think it was set up during the Second World War to encourage people to grow fruit and veg and share it around. At one time a stall outside the Barley Mow, we now have two shows, a plant auction, an autumn plant and cake stall, and still a shared interest in gardens and gardening.

On **Wednesday 18 May** Ken Pottle will demonstrate our new Mantis cultivator (for hire) at the allotments off Bessels Way (from 7pm). On **Saturday 28 May** at Hall Barn, Westbrook Street, by permission of Deirdre Cochrane, Norma Bird will bring fabulous plants, cuttings and shrubs etc. to auction in aid of cancer research. Start 2pm but please look at website, posters, to confirm or ring Chris Jarvis (851896). **Wednesday 1 June:** talk by Brian Davis 'Clematis throughout the Year', Vale Room 7.30pm. **Saturday 2 July:** fancy a trip to Kew Gardens? We are going to book a coach. Ring **Karen Brooks** on 850219.

Upton's Songs of Praise
Sunday 15 May - 5 pm.
in the Garden of Prospect House
Enjoy your favourite hymns
accompanied by Blewbury Band.
Light refreshments.
If wet in village hall.

CHURCH SERVICES IN MAY

ST. MARY'S

Sunday 9am

- 1 Parish Eucharist
- 8 Parish Eucharist
- 15 Parish Eucharist
- 22 Parish Eucharist
- 29 Parish Eucharist

Mid-week services in St. Mary's

On **Tuesday** the Daily Office is said at 8.15am and 5.30pm.

On **Thursday** at 11am the Eucharist is celebrated.

METHODIST

10.30am — Preacher

- Peter Forsaith
- Malcolm Newton
- Libby Bolton
- Reverend Tim Dibble
- Ruth Dams

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Editor: **CAROL HALL** Printed at the Duck House, Blewbury. Delivery organised by **JESSIE WEST**