

Upton News



Vol 4 No.25 January 2014

It's been an eventful month for both the village and myself, with biblical weather, the tragic death which led to the local police operation, Christmas celebrations and a wedding to attend...

I hope therefore you'll forgive the shorter edition this month and its delayed publication. The next issue will now appear at the beginning of March. Please send me your news, event details, comments, personal achievements, small ads to news@uptonvillage.co.uk

Remember to get your tickets for *howdenjones* on February 7— bring your friends and have a party! You might find me behind the bar...

Brian Rippon

Welcome

Welcome to Jennie, Steve, Lucy and Elsie Slatter who moved recently into Stream Road.

They haven't moved far — from Aston Tirrold — and Jennie and Steve were both brought up in Harwell (Steve for all of his childhood and Jennie for some of hers after returning from Tanzania) and so are fairly local!

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to news@uptonvillage.co.uk.
Deadline for the March edition is 28th February.

Charity Walk

Calling all walkers or would-be walkers. Do you fancy a challenge in 2014? If so, come and join us for **WalkWithMe 2014**.



Now in its fourth year, WalkWithMe is a fundraising 26 mile marathon walk being held on Sunday 11th May. We start and finish in the beautiful grounds of Moulford School, Moulford-on-Thames. The route winds through some stunning South Oxfordshire countryside, including the banks of the River Thames and a section of the historic Ridgeway. This year we are raising money for *Action Against Cancer*, a charity which supports pioneering cancer treatments and therapies which aim to make cancer a disease we die with and not from.

To find out more, including how you can get involved in our training walks, visit the web site at www.walkwithme2014.com. If you have any queries, contact us at team@walkwithme2014.com.

Come on, let's GET TOGETHER, GET FIT, MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Fiona Betts

[\[fiona.betts@btinternet.com\]](mailto:fiona.betts@btinternet.com)



From the PCSO

December 2013 brought tragic events to the village of Upton with the case of the missing teenager Jayden Parkinson.

As events unfolded, focus was quickly moved to Upton and it became necessary for the Police and its search teams to move into the village and set up an operations point near the church. This story has no happy ending, as we know that tragically Jayden's body was eventually discovered at a location in Didcot. During the time the Police were in Upton there were many officers present along with Police vehicles. I myself along with other PCSO's from Milton Park and other stations were placed on reassurance patrols in the village.

I have to say I was struck by the patience, understanding and compassion that was shown by villagers that we met on our patrols. During this sad time, the residents of Upton behaved impeccably and offered their help to the police on many occasions.

Thames Valley Police would like to thank all members of the public who offered to help or gave their support in the search for Jayden Parkinson.

Fallen Trees

This month we have seen some terrible weather and two days before Christmas I found myself on the A417 in Upton dealing with a fallen tree. This had blocked a lane

by the cider shed lay-by. It wasn't until three hours later that we finally had the tree removed courtesy of a very much in demand Highways division. Well done lads! While there, I was also assisted with traffic management by a new member of our team, PCSO Steve Thompson, who has recently completed his training at Sulhamstead. I'm sure you will all join me in welcoming Steve to the area.

If you should come across a fallen tree blocking a road, please do not try and move it yourself as you could be putting yourself in danger. Please call the Police on 101 and give the call handler the best description of the situation and location you possibly can.

Jessie West has kindly given me permission to use the Upton Village Hall meeting room for the next few months. This will begin with my 'Have your Say' meeting on the 15th February from 3pm to 4pm. If you have any issues you wish to discuss with me then please come along. My e mail address is at the bottom of the page.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year.

Mike Clayden
Police Community Support Officer
C9732

michael.clayden@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

VILLAGE PRODUCE ASSOCIATION

The VPA concluded 2013 with its annual Xmas Social on 6th December at Upton Village Hall with a supper and fun and games. Maggie Maytham outshone everyone in the yoyo game by declaring on 70 'up & downs'. Plans are now in full swing for the production of the 2014 VPA programme, which begins in February. I gather our Committee has booked some interesting speakers for the coming year. A copy of the programme will be available in *Upton News* in the New Year.

A date for your diary - 10th MAY 2014 - VPA COACH TRIP TO WISLEY.

Don't forget to register with our dedicated e-mail address:

VPA.in.Bl.Up@gmail.com. This will give us the opportunity to let you have up to date information and news concerning VPA activities. Don't worry - it won't be e-mails every day - just important information.

As you know, 2014 is the 100th anniversary of WW1 and I'm looking for old gardening tools from around that era to display at our Annual Show which is taking place in July. If you have any old and unusual tools, please call me on 01235 510095.

Our Annual Show is going to be a really special one this year - so keep an eye out for the Show Schedule which should be ready in a couple of months.

We've even found a recipe for a Victoria Sponge in the Cookery Section which is from the Home Cookery and Comforts Magazine 1915.

Season's Greetings to everyone from the VPA for 2014 and we look forward to seeing you at our forthcoming monthly meetings.

Eileen Bracken

Dates for your diary

Tue 21 Jan	2pm Didcot & District U3A, Didcot Civic Hall
Thu 23 Jan	Drop In, Village Hall
Tue 28 Jan	8pm Tea Birds WI, Village Hall
Thu 6 Feb	Drop In, Village Hall
Fri 7 Feb	Howden Jones in concert, Village Hall
Sat 15 Feb	3pm Have Your Say Village Hall
Wed 19 Feb	8pm Wine Appreciation Club, Village Hall

Help our village hall as you search the web...

Visit www.everyclick.com/village-hall and fundraise as you shop!

Tea Birds WI

On Tuesday 26 November the Tea Birds WI, Upton held their final meeting of the year. This meeting welcomed 'No Two Things' who are a Didcot based artisan outlet, the ladies (who were a mixture of members and guests) got into the festive spirit and enjoyed an evening of Christmas crafting.

The Tea Birds have gained a strong following since they set up in March 2013. Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of every month at Upton Village Hall and have gained popularity with ladies based locally and in the surrounding area. The Tea Bird WI have had a packed year of activities which have included a summer fete, card making, basic car mechanics course, a wine and cheese evening and a speaker from the Oxford gardening project.

The group are keen to welcome new members. The 2014 calendar has a selection of activities from traditional to modern. The New Year meeting kicks off with a sewing class by 'Shelbee Sewing' and the group will be making aprons; this will be held at 8pm on Tuesday 28th January 2014.

A full 2014 calendar can be found on www.tea-birdswi.co.uk. Tea Birds WI can also be reached on email at: tea-birds@hotmail.co.uk. Or please feel free to pop by and find out more on the 28th January.

Village Clubs & Organisations

Drop In Sessions

Yvonne Collins 850989

Short Mat Bowls Club

Tony Durbin 850035

Table Tennis Club

Bob Lott 851222

Tea Birds WI

Jo Christie tea-birdswi@hotmail.co.uk

Theatre Club

Malcolm Wright 850705

Upton Oil Syndicate

Colin Batchelor 01491 672444

Village Produce Association

Eileen Bracken 510095

Wine Appreciation Society

Kevin Jacklin 851404

Do you run a village club or organisation? Let us have your details and we will list them here.

howdenjones In Concert

'Beautiful Music in Beautiful Places' Tour

Upton Village Hall, 7.00 for 7.30
Friday 7th February 2014

Book your tickets **now** for an evening of supper and entertainment by *howdenjones*.

Tickets are £12 including supper, available either from the online **Box Office** at www.uptonvillagehall.co.uk or from Jessie West, 851206. We plan to have a licensed bar available.



Kate and Paul have been travelling all over the country, sharing their music and stories, often meeting friendly and fascinating people and visiting some wonderful, unusual venues in sometimes remote and always beautiful areas along the way. They write about life and their observations of it, often poignant, sometimes humorous, and gathering new material as they travel, they captivate an audience in a unique intimate atmosphere. With a variety of instruments including guitar, fiddle, mandolin, bodhran and banjo, superb harmonies and great musicianship, *howdenjones* will promise to give you a foot tapping and thought provoking evening with plenty of smiles!

Didcot & District

University of the Third Age

Didcot & District University of the Third Age meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at 2pm at Didcot Civic Hall. Visitors are welcome to come to a meeting as a taster before joining.

The January 2014 meeting will be held at 2pm on 21 January 2014 (the topic will be Working as a Met Man in the Falklands with Mike Palmer).

Email:

didcotdistrictU3A@virginmedia.com

Website: <http://u3asites.org.uk/didcot>

Village Hall Fundraising Event

I am planning on holding a "Pre-loved Sale" (i.e. Jumble!) on Saturday 10 May and would like to gauge roughly the volume of donations of clothing (children, women and men's), books, bric-a-brac, toys, anything really! Could you please drop me an email (giulia@rippon.net) to let me know if you'd be able to make a donation. I will also be looking for cake/biscuits donations as we plan to selling teas/coffees too. All profits to the new Village Hall Kitchen Fund. Look forward to hearing from you.

Giulia Rippon

NOTES FROM THE ALLOTMENT

Everything plant-wise has slowed down; true, the onion sets have sprouted, but are not looking very vigorous. No sign of the garlic, nor the broad beans - mind, I did plant them about half a mile down. The leeks are still spindly, I think I put them in far too late; however, they will still make good soup and stews. Other than that, it is brassicas all the way! I'm just waiting for a frost to sweeten up the sprouts, the calabrese is still soldiering but nearly finished now, and the half a dozen savoy cabbages are still growing on nicely, so that's a bonus. If your family can't abide sprouts, try cutting them in half and stir-frying them with some lardons of bacon - they are a different vegetable when still crunchy and don't have that sulphurous whiff that you get with prolonged boiling.

I tried celery for the first time this year and obviously did it completely wrong; I dug the trench and put in the seedlings but then neglected to wrap them in newspaper or cardboard to blanch them and earth up. It would appear that I had more plants than I suspected, because when I dug up a vigorous looking clump there were about 6-8 plantlets in the bunch when there should have been one! And because it is not blanched, the stems are rather bitter which is a shame. However, they are still ok in small batches for flavouring the aforementioned soups and stews. I shall try again, because it is a vegetable that I buy on a regular basis, so worth persevering.

Angela Hoy [Angela.hoy@sky.com]

Village Hall Drains

For some time we have experienced problems with drain blockages at the Village Hall. Shortly before Christmas a CCTV survey revealed that the pipe, constructed using pitch-fibre and laid about 40 years ago, had deformed and been flattened (a known problem with this type of pipe). There was no alternative but to spend £1200 on replacement drains, which have now been installed.

Very many thanks are due to Mike Brown who not only oversaw the works but also kept the drains flowing in the intervening period! Mike has put on record that he never wants to put his head down that manhole again.



Do You Need a Dog Walker?

Can't walk your dog every day? Need someone to do it for you?

I'll be happy to walk your dog twice a week for £2 per week per dog. Contact me at 01235 851490 or email Rhiannon@sine-nomine.co.uk

Rhiannon Fletcher

Oil Theft Warning

Rural home-owners with oil-fired heating systems are being urged to be aware of oil thieves this winter.

In recent years oil thefts have increased due to exceptionally harsh winters and higher fuel prices.

The trend is expected to continue during the colder, darker months of January and February with the number of thefts increasing as home-owners replenish their tanks.

The Oil Firing Technical Association (OFTEC) - the body representing the oil heating and cooking industry - is urging home-owners to take precautions to protect their fuel oil.

The post-Christmas period, with people feeling the pinch after the festive season, made the early new year a popular time for thieves to strike.

Wine Appreciation

In January Mike Collins presented a insightful tasting of Californian wines, opening with the story of the infamous *Judgment of Paris* (google it!) blind tasting in which Californian wines trumped the best of the French.

For our February meeting we will be tasting wines from a small independent London wine shop, Park and Bridge; and the theme will be "Off the beaten track". Paola Tich who owns and runs Park and Bridge will be choosing the wines for us.

Park and Bridge specialise in wines you won't usually find in the supermarkets, and are great expressions of their particular style; from grower Champagnes and unusual grapes, to biodynamic and organic wines from artisan producers.

Free Bike

Boys' bicycle - good working order
Could do with a bit of TLC! If you're interested, please call to arrange collection.

Phone Brian/Giulia:
850158 or 07789 777381.



Brian and Giulia Rippon,
who married on 21 December

Have you thought of becoming a Parish Path Warden?

Do you like walking in your local area? If so you probably know your paths well, and know also when they are not quite as they should be.

Oxfordshire Ramblers, supported by OCC Countryside Access, are setting up a network of Parish Paths Wardens to monitor, look after, and to report any problems. Many Path Wardens work with their parish council and solve issues together. This is how one Path Warden sees the role:

'I like being a path warden because you can choose your days and times, you don't have to liaise with anyone, you've got the specific task of making sure the paths are clear and passable for everyone... what better on a sunny day than to wander down the country paths pruning here and there, and noting deteriorated stiles or fallen trees to report on later... all the while seeing and hearing the peace of the

English countryside around you.

You have to be able to follow a map - to know where the rights of way are and which are 'yours' - and you have to feed back occasional reports on your 'patch' so that this can be collated and sent on to Countryside Services of the County Council who have the statutory responsibility. You might take your responsibilities further and liaise with landowners and councils.

But most of the time you're on your own, or in my case, with my dog, going at your own pace and enjoying the beauty of nature while doing something essential for all users of paths.'

- John Case, path warden for Nuffield Parish in South Oxfordshire
Training and support will be provided.

Contact Jim Parke
jmh.parke@btinternet.com 01865 730664, for more information.

50's Club Prizes

October

£10	David Hartley	21
£7	Jane Smith	102
£5	H Bucknell	59
£4	Joan Durbin	66

November

£10	Jane Strange	80
£7	Mr Yates	15
£5	Alan Davies	106
£4	Daphne Simpson	84

Drop-in Dates

The dates for the next batch of Drop-in sessions are:

- 9 and 23 January
- 6 and 20 February
- 6 and 20 March
- 3 and 17 April
- 1, 15 and 29 May
- 12 and 26 June
- 10 and 24 July