

Upton News



Vol 4 No.28 May 2014

Another edition and another twelve pages appear from somewhere.

This month there's news of two choral concerts in June featuring Uptonians, and the musical line-up at Uptonogood, which includes a 'New Orleans' style street band all the way from New York!

The Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report is included in its entirety for those unable to attend the Annual Parish Meeting (including the chairman himself!). [Sorry Bob, you did have a good excuse ☺].

We announce details of the Friends of St Mary's, a scheme to raise funds for the maintenance of the fabric of St Mary's Church, without which it may be forced to close.

Finally news of the death of an ex-resident who lived in the village over 50 years ago, and whose archives have come to light. It is always a pleasure to hear news of past residents, especially when they reveal so much about the history of our village and their views...

As we go to press, news of Greene King selling 275 pubs...

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to news@uptonvillage.co.uk.

Deadline for the June edition is **Friday 30th May**.

Village Hall Kitchen Project

We are pleased that we have been able to secure the first of the grants for which we applied in support of the 2014 Village Hall Kitchen Refurbishment Project.

There will be an exhibition showing the suggested plans for the new kitchen, on Friday 9 May at the George and Dragon between 7pm and 8pm, and on Saturday 10 May at the Jumble Sale at the Village Hall, 11am-2pm.

We welcome your views— we can't promise to take all of them on board, but we have already included many of the suggestions received.

Jacqui Reid

Jumble Sale—Final Call

Remember to dig out your jumble for the sale on Saturday 10th May, and bring it to the hall between 5pm and 9pm on Friday 9th.

The sale itself takes place from 11am-2pm; please pop along if only for a cup of coffee, cake and a chat!

UVHAT AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Upton Village Hall Amenities Trust (UVHAT) will take place on Tuesday 6th May at 7pm in the Village Hall. All parishioners are welcome.

Upton Wine Club

April saw eight members of the wine club present wine and cheese pairings – see panel for details. A varied evening was enjoyed by members and speakers alike.

In May we look forward to a tasting presented by James Fenton, manager of Majestic Abingdon.

Lucy Mason:
Camembert paired with
Freixenet Cordon Oro Semi-Seco
(Waitrose, £9.99)

Paul Batho:
Spewood paired with Les
Roches Blanches Macon Villages
2012 (Majestic, £9.99)

Colin Field:
Lyburn's Winchester paired with
Vouvray, Dom du Vieux Vauvert
(Waitrose, £9.99)

Susan Ryan:
Brie de Meaux paired with
Limoux Chardonnay 2012
(Sainsbury, £8.24)

Brian Rippon:
Comté paired with Pinot Noir
Domaine de Valmoissine
(Majestic, £9.99)

Rob Traynor:
Ribblesdale Blue paired with
Cote du Rhone Villages
(Sainsbury, £6.99)

Duncan Reid:
Oxford Isis paired with Western
Cape Porcupine Ridge Syrah
Viognier 2012 (Majestic, £6.99)

John Haworth:
Roquefort paired with Coteaux
du Layon Beaulieu La Soucherie
Chateau. Pierre-Bise (Bibendum,
£10.34)

Blewbury WI News

We have had some lovely sunny weather, and have been inspired to get out and about, and are planning lots of great outings and events, always nice with good company and good friends! We are planning some summer garden visits, and a monthly summer "Art" dabble in Joyce's garden!

- Tuesday 6th; Lyn's walk; meet at 9.30am at Blewbury Village Hall, stout boots and money for lunch, a walk from Nettlebed. Cars needed!
- Tuesday 6th at 6.30pm, Croquet evening at Croquet Ground
- Wednesday 7th; lunch at the Red Lion.
- Friday 9th; RAL lecture "Building Blocks of the Universe"
- Monday 12th; Scrabble at Judy's
- Wednesday 14th, coffee at Style Acre tearooms, with Susan, 10.30am
- Wednesday 28th, Resolutions debate, and short talk with Eileen & Karen called "I have one as good as that" or "How to win at the VPA show"! All welcome for this (approx. 8.15pm) Prize winning cakes provided!

The NFWI resolution this year calls on our members to support organ donation, as many patients sadly die waiting for an organ to become available.

For more detail of any of our events, or to join the Mah Jong or Scrabble group, or if you wish to join us, please ring Karen on 850219.

Love from Karen Brooks

Papagena

A cappella group PAPAGENA, featuring five female vocalists including Upton resident Sarah Tenant-Flowers, will sing a sparkling cocktail of pieces from Purcell to Katy Perry, Hildegard of Bingen to Birdy in Wallingford (St Mary le More Church) at 8pm on Sunday 8 June.

Hear new discoveries and familiar delights in this unique mix of contemporary, medieval, pop ballads, classical and folk music. Concert lasts one hour. Tickets £8 (£6 conc) from www.wegotickets.com or 01235 850488.

Blewbury Choir

Summer Concert

(in support of Blewbury Village Hall)

Saturday 14th June

8pm, Blewbury Village Hall

Doors and Bar open at 7.30pm

Please support the Bar

Tickets £8

On sale from May 1st

Available from Blewbury Post Office and Choir members

Christian Aid Week

The week begins with a 6 pm service at All Saints, Didcot on 11 May for anyone interested.

During the following week envelopes will be delivered and collected throughout the village. The special focus for the charity this year is Fear Less - focusing on people in, for example, South Sudan and Colombia who are in danger of their lives. Please give generously if you can and are so inclined; but please decline politely if you are not. If your collector misses you, and you want to contribute, do drop your envelope through our letter box at Karibu, High Street.

Elisabeth and Malcolm Wright

Village Clubs & Organisations

Blewbury WI

Judy 850381

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? Please let us have your details and we will add them to the list.

Upton Parish Council – Chairman's Report 2014

The year seems to have gone incredibly fast with both the new chair and clerk working hard to first learn and then fulfil the roles expected of them.

We have also been a little short handed with the vacancy left by John Dickens last year not filled until November by Robert Traynor (welcome Rob) and work commitments limiting another member's capacity. It is with regards to this that Ben Shaw has announced his intention to resign from the PC effective from today. I would like to take the opportunity to publicly thank Ben for his efforts over the years and wish him well for the future.

I would also like to thank the many individuals that together allow the village to function and be the great place to live, that it is. These included the many volunteer's active on the grass cutting and playground inspection rotas, the volunteer group and the members of UVHAT. I would also like to thank the individuals acting on behalf of, or for Upton Parish Council. These include:

John Lightfoot - *Neighbourhood Action Group*

Jessie West - *Transport Rep*

Derek Whitmell - *UKAEA Stakeholders Committee*

Simon Powell - *Internal Auditor*

Brian Rippon - *Upton News Editor*

Mike Brown & Graham de Wilde - *Parish Path Wardens*

Mike Brown - *Fence mender, goal post repairer, petrol purchaser and machinery tender*

So what have we been up to? We had 13 planning applications to deal with last year, although most were routine a couple proved contentious with one in particular still on-going. I refer of course to "Wattle Cottage Farm", the stable block behind the George and Dragon where there is to be an Appeal Hearing on the 13th May 2014 at Wantage Civic Hall.

I have also attended two meetings in Oxford regarding developments to the A417. The improvements under discussion are aimed to adapt the A417 and its feeder routes to better cope with the increase in traffic. This issue becomes more pressing in the light for the VWHDC Housing Delivery Update which sees a further 5750 houses within a 6km radius of Upton.

In relation to concerns over increased traffic, the PC has supported Chilton Road residents in their desire to see their road closed. OCC appear very supportive of the closure, principally because Hagbourne Hill will become a very busy road what with the new slips to the A34 and the proposed housing. This would make any junction with Chilton Road a real safety concern.

On the bright side Upton's classification as a small village has protected us from any direct housing development. I'm also very pleased to see that comments given at the first meeting regarding cycle provision have been taken on board. The current proposal for the A417 now includes a 3m wide dual Foot and Cycleway to run alongside the road from Wantage to Blewbury.

Rural Road Cross Section – Village Gateway Feature



Foot/Cycleway 3m wide

Carriageway 7.3m wide

This bodes well for the long held desire for a safe cycle route between Upton and Blewbury.

This brings me to the 2004 Parish Plan in which the desire for a cycle route joining the two villages was so clearly expressed. This plan is now 10 years old and needs revisiting. I had hoped to have this process well underway but unfortunately that just has not happened. In the light of a vacancy on the PC, I would like to take the opportunity to invite anyone specifically interested in taking on the new Parish Plan to express their interest in joining us.

Having been "tipped off" on taking the chair, one of our first actions this year was to review the documentation on the website. Much was found to be either outdated or missing entirely. Most of this has now been put right, although (having just checked) there is still a little more to do and remains an on-going

task.

Our insurance has been modified to reflect the true costs of our assets and cover items such as the bus shelter. Items worth little more than the excess on our policy have been removed. The Risk Register has also been updated to accurately reflect the new insurance schedule.

We have also established an electronic document archive in the "cloud". This replaces the previous CD system and will allow us to store PC documentation both more efficiently and securely. This will also allow us to reduce the quantity of documentation stored in hardcopy format.

For the first time in a number of years the PC has acted to increase the Precept (money raised directly from the parish via Council Tax) by £250. This was felt necessary due to increases in our liabilities. These include:

- The wonderful new park facilities require additional insurance and maintenance;
- Additional equipment (strimmer/ hedge cutter) requiring insurance and maintenance;
- JD Mower to be insured for road use to ensure our legal obligations are met at all times;
- Funding the hardcopy circulation of the Upton News;
- Suggestions that payment will be required for the PC's continued use of the village hall.

Combined, these additional expenses will far exceed the increase in Precept. In addition to this we will also cease to receive payment from OCC for the maintenance of the village footpaths. This amounts to a loss of £338. So in short despite the

increase, we will still be operating with fewer funds than last year.

To sum up it's been an eventful year and the year ahead looks to have plenty for us to do too. I look forward to working with my fellow councillors to achieve our goals.

Bob Lott
Upton Parish Council

Casual Vacancy

A vacancy exists in the office of Parish Councillor for Upton Parish to last until elections take place in 2015.

The main focus of this appointment will be to review and redraft the Upton Parish Plan.

The full text of this advert can be found on the village web site.

Dates for your diary

Thu 1 May	Drop In, Village Hall
Fri 9 May	Deliver Jumble to the Village Hall
Sat 10 May	11am, Jumble Sale in aid of Village Hall kitchen
Sat 10 May	VPA visit to RHS Wisley
Sat 10 May	Blewbury Green May Fair
Sat 10 May	The Ridgeway Day
Sat 10 May	Hagbourne Bowling Club Open Day
Thu 15 May	Drop In, Village Hall
Tue 20 May	8pm, Parish Council Meeting
Wed 21 May	Wine Club, Village Hall
Tue 27 May	Tea Birds WI, Village Hall
Thu 29 May	Drop In, Village Hall
Sat 31 May	10am, Friends of St Mary's, Village Hall

Miss Elizabeth Braund

1921-2013

I recently received an email from Miss Sue Adams, who had been sorting the archive of Elizabeth Braund who died last year. Miss Braund and her parents (Sir Henry and Lady Braund) lived in The Old Forge in the 50s. Amongst her papers, which Sue has now sent on, are various deeds and wills relating to the property dated in the 1770s, together with photos taken when the Braunds lived there. From what Sue can recall, Elizabeth's Great Aunt (Lucy Linthwaite) had part of the cottage and this was bequeathed to her when she died.

Elizabeth spent her latter years on Dartmoor running a "city to farm" scheme for London children, and was awarded an MBE for her work. The farm was all paid for by her - she must have inherited a huge wealth from her parents as she moved to Dartmoor in the 60s. The plan is for her work to continue at the farm, of which Sue is a trustee.

Amongst the papers are the draft of a poem written by Elizabeth, which is transcribed here. We should point out to our friends in neighbouring parishes that her views do not necessarily reflect those of Upton News!

The many photographs included in the archive will be scanned and stored on the village website in due course.

Brian Rippon



Ups and Downs

When next you're feeling tired and low,
And haven't anywhere to go,
Just come to Upton for the day,
We'll drive those weary blues away.

For, if you come down to Upton,
You'll find you are up on the Down,
And the dumps you were down in town in,
Will clear Up on the Upton Down.

Oh! There is no village anywhere,
That we with Upton can compare,
Though others try - We'll tell you why
They don't come Up to Upton.

The Harwell cherries are good it's true,
But they've had an atom bomb there too,
And no good bodes, if that explodes,
So do have a care: and don't go there!

Now Blewbury has tough Saxon walls,
But they can't stand up to the lit'rary squalls,
Which there do rage, in this new age;
So do have a care: and don't go there!

The Hagbournes soon will join Didcot.
They once were nice: but now they're not,
For Didcot harms, their old world charms;
So do have a care: and don't go there!

And as for Chilton - up-a-long,
Why it's all right: but its folk are all wrong -
So do have a care: and don't go there -
Don't go anywhere but Upton.

For if you come down to Upton,
You'll find you are up on the Down,
And the dumps you were down in town in,
Will clear Up on the Upton Down!

E. Braund

Village Produce Association

Our talk from Russell Cherry on *The Oldest Road - The Ridgeway Explored*, proved interesting with a huge variety of slides showing many parts of the Ridgeway.

We do not have a meeting in May but have the following event:

Tickets are selling very well, so hurry and book your ticket with Karen in Blewbury Post Office or give me a call on 01235 510095.

Coach trip to RHS GARDENS AT WISLEY IN SURREY on SATURDAY 10th MAY

Pick up points for the coach:

- 9.00am - Upton - Station Road bus stop by Village Hall
- 9.15am - Blewbury - Bus stop outside Barley Mow Pub

For those of you who are planning to put entries into the Summer Show and would like to pick up a few tips on how to 'show' your produce, Karen and myself are giving a light hearted presentation to the W.I. meeting on **Wednesday 28th May** at Blewbury School at 8.15pm. The W.I. have very kindly opened the talk to anyone who would like to come to the presentation (tea and cakes will be provided!). Don't forget if you want an electronic copy of the Schedule, please e-mail me on VPA.in.bl.up@gmail.com

The weather seems to be behaving itself, giving us a chance to get the garden and allotment back into a reasonable shape. Don't forget the VPA has a variety of tools available (for a donation) which might help some of you with the more strenuous jobs.

Don't forget, if you have any very old tools I could borrow for the Show, please use the VPA e-mail address to let me know or ring on 01235 510095.

DID YOU KNOW?

Black flowers were cherished by Victorians and Edwardians, especially by the Art Nouveau movement, but in truth there is no such thing. Black tulips are very dark purple and black roses are very dark red.

Happy gardening, *Eileen*

Post Office News

We have the new Buckingham Palace stamps on sale at the moment, while on May 13th, a set of stamps commemorating "Great British Films" go on sale.

We've been told there is disruption to mail going to the Crimea.

There are 2 bank holidays in May, on Monday 5th May and Monday 26th, we shall be closed for both of these, pensions and allowances normally paid on those days, will be paid into accounts on the Friday beforehand.

Royal Mail have re-structured their delivery times, you will all have received a letter from them, but our collection times have changed too! Our daily collection is now at 4.35, so all post needs to be in, (especially Special & Recorded delivery) by 4.20 at the latest, on Wednesday & Saturday, this has been changed to 9.30 am. Jerry will try to come later than that, on these days!

Ice cream is now in stock!

Love from Karen & Angela

Notes from the Allotment

My gamble seems to have paid off, as we don't seem to have had any damaging frosts since I unwrapped my greenhouse and young fruit trees; there is still time for a cold spell, though, British weather is notorious for playing dirty tricks on us gardeners.....

Finally a spell of dry weather, that has allowed the earth at the allotment to dry out somewhat, although under my covering of black mesh it is still quite damp. It is however, largely weed free, so that part of the plan worked! I've managed to dig a section of the legumes area and sown more broad beans, plus a trench for the runners that I have filled with half-rotted matter from the composter, to provide some nourishment for them when they are ready to go into the ground.

The patch destined for the potatoes, however, is still very solid and it finally dawned on me that it is because I didn't dig that section last year as I wanted to keep the ground firm for the Brussels sprouts, a strategy that worked well for them but has made life more difficult now! So I took a tip from Monty and just dug holes for the second early potatoes and popped them in. Their extensive root systems will help to break up the ground for next year. Hopefully by the time the main crop goes in I will have been able to beat the earth into submission, maybe by rotavating it.

I'm still harvesting leeks, cabbages (bolted but still edible) and the remaining purple sprouting, so those areas can be progressively cleared. The rhubarb is magnificent; both my

clumps are producing enormous stems that are a delight to eat. The autumn sown broad beans are in full flower and hopefully will be too tough for the black fly when they come around.

If anybody would like some kale seedlings I have a few hundred to get rid of! Not quite sure what I was thinking there. The leeks, beetroot and cabbage seedlings are looking good and the tomatoes are growing beautifully.

BBC 2s Allotment Challenge programme has started showing on Tuesdays; I did apply for the next series but although I did get a response and a telephone interview, I was not chosen to audition. Having watched the first episode I am rather relieved - not sure I could have coped with another allotment as well as the many challenges thrown at the competitors!

Angela Hoy (angela.hoy@sky.com)

Free Compost

Do you know anyone who would like some free compost? The Vale of White Horse District Council is offering free compost as part of Compost Awareness week, and to make the most of the gardening people tend to do at this time of year.

The giveaway day is on Saturday 10 May from 9.30am until 12.30pm at the council offices in Crowmarsh. While stocks last, you can bring your bag, box, container or wheelbarrow to fill with peat-free compost. You can also pick up half-price home compost bins for only £10 cash.

Rectors Reflections

A Meeting with the Absolute

You will not need me to tell you that later this summer we will be marking the 100th anniversary of the start of First World War. There has been a proliferation of books, programmes, and events. Packets of poppy seed have been distributed. Services and vigils have been planned.

It is hard, probably impossible, for anyone of us to imagine what the First World War must have been like for those who had to live through it, for those who fought and died in their millions, for the injured and the shell-shocked.

In the face of such suffering, it is only natural to ask: where was God? For some people, the First World War was a time of serious disillusionment with organised religion. For others, it was a time when they felt drawn closer to God. I wonder why it affected people in such different ways?

The Bible Society has produced an interesting website, exploring this theme: worldwar1bible.com. Between 1914 and 1918, the Bible Society distributed over 9 million copies of Scripture, in over 80 languages, to combatants and prisoners of war on all sides. Perhaps you have a copy of

a Bible or prayer book given to a family member who served in the First World War.

What was the effect of all those Bibles and Prayer Books on the soldiers, on prisoners of war, and on families back at home? Did they help men and women to cope with the horrors of war, or were they rejected as full of pious platitudes, pointers to a callous God who had somehow abandoned the world?

Human beings are, of course, wonderfully complicated, and so we might well expect a variety of responses from those who had to live through the First World War. A major French scientist of the 20th century, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), served as a stretcher bearer with the 8th Moroccan Rifles during the war. He was a brave man; he was also profoundly religious. He felt that part, at least, of his wartime experiences drew him closer to God. He wrote: "the war was a meeting...with the Absolute".

My prayer is that this Summer's commemorations will be for us, too, a meeting with the Absolute, and that we will allow this meeting to transform us for the better - not only as individuals, but as communities and as a world.

Fr Jason

Power Station Demolition Timetable

March 2014	Start of Main Demolition Works
Summer 2014	Blow down of Southern cooling towers
Mid 2015	Progressive Demolition of the main Power Station buildings
Early 2016	Demolition of Northern cooling towers
Mid 2016	Demolition of stack
Late 2016	Completion of Main Demolition Works

Become a Friend of St Mary's

Launch event 31 May

St Mary's Church has been at the centre of Upton village life for around 1000 years. To ensure it continues in this role for the next millennium a 'Friends of St Mary's' scheme is being launched this month.



FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S
UPTON

The scheme is designed to provide regular income for the upkeep of the building, its contents, churchyard, utilities and insurance.

The income which is received from regular giving by the congregation will continue to cover the annual costs which are incurred within the benefice and diocese.

We are fortunate that the church is a manageable size and, thanks to the efforts of many over recent years, it is in very good condition overall. Nevertheless the annual running costs, including benefice and diocesan contributions and just looking after the building, amount to around £14,000, while income is about £11,000.

It's important to recognise that St Mary's, like most other churches, receives no grant or other income from the Church of England or indeed from anywhere else. The majority of the income comes from regular giving by parishioners, plus a significant contribution from the fete. The present shortfall, brought about by a combination of rising costs and a fall in giving as members of the congregation pass away or move from the village, cannot be sustained for long so there is a real possibility that, like many small rural churches, St Mary's could be forced to close.

To many, this would be a great shame. Apart from being the end of 1000 years of history, the church remains an important centre of community life, both as a place of worship and for weddings, baptisms, funerals and village events.

But we are determined this will not happen! And this is why the Friends scheme is being launched, specifically to raise regular contributions into a separately managed fund dedicated to maintaining and upgrading the building and its surrounding land for the benefit of the community of Upton.

During May, every house in Upton will be receiving a leaflet giving full details of the Friends scheme and everyone is invited to the grand launch on 31 May at 12.00 in the village hall. At this event we will be providing a more detailed explanation of the scheme itself and a (free!) buffet lunch.

We look forward to seeing as many Uptonians as possible at the launch - many thanks, in advance, for your support!

Friends of St Mary's Committee: Paul Batho, John Dickens, Jess Haworth, Austin Maytham, Lisa Morgan, Emma Rockall, Gloria Smith, Jessie West

Uptonogood rolls on

With just 45 days until Uptonogood, arrangements for this year's event are in full swing. As I write this we already have 450 riders registered and this is well ahead of previous years - at the end of April last year there were less than 100. So we are expecting another bumper year!

If you would like to do the ride there are 5, 12, 25 and 45 mile options, with routes that wind their way through the beautiful North Wessex Downs, a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty encompassing the Ridgeway and surrounding bridleways. To register please go to www.uptonogood.org.uk

Perhaps more importantly we are still in real need of marshals - a lot of our regulars seem to be away on the day of the event this year. In total we need 50+ marshals for the day to run smoothly. As last year, each volunteer is invited to nominate a charity to which we will make a £20 donation. If you can spare some time on the day, even if only a few hours, then please contact either Mike Tibbetts (851474) on Bob Lott (851222) on info@uptonogood.org.uk.

Mike Tibbetts

Green King sells 275 pubs...

A new pub company, Hawthorn Leisure, is buying 275 properties from Greene King for £75.6m. More than 190 of the pubs are in the Southeast, Midlands, East and West of England.

Hawthorn said most of the pubs are on "tied" arrangements, the controversial model which requires landlords to buy beer from their parent company rather than on the open market.

Pub companies have been turning their backs on the tenanted model in

Programme

8:00am Event registration opens
9:00am Blewbury Brass Band (lawn)
9:15am Event briefing for 45 mile ride
9:30am 45 mile ride start
9:45am Event briefing for 25 mile ride
10:00am 25 mile ride start
10:15am Event briefing for 12 mile ride
10:30am 12 mile ride start
12:30pm **Invisible Vegas** (Main Stage)
1:15pm Event briefing for 5 mile ride
1:15pm **Amy Ireson** (Beer Tent)
1:30pm 5 mile ride start
1:30pm **Tin Pan Band** (Main Stage)
2:15pm **Amy Ireson** (Beer Tent)
2:30pm **By The Rivers** (Main Stage)
3:30pm **Amy Ireson** (Beer Tent)
3:45pm **Dysfunktional** (Main Stage)
4:45pm **Amy Ireson** (Beer Tent)
5:00pm **Upton Jam** (Main Stage)
6:00pm Event Close
8:00pm Live Music at the George and Dragon

favour of managed bars and food-led pub/restaurants, which have generally performed better during the recession. However the new owners believe there is an opportunity to buy up and breathe new life into tenanted pubs. Hawthorn would revive unloved inns through investment and a closer relationship with landlords.

Greene King will continue to supply the pubs with beer for three years.

Watch this space...