

UPTON NEWS

APRIL 2007

Vol 3 No. 2

BLEWBURY & UPTON VPA NEWS.

For those of you who missed the talk on composting from the “expert from the council”, we have some leaflets and information. Our next meeting is on *2nd May at 7.30 pm* in the Upton Methodist Hall. A talk on Pleione Orchids will be given by Malcolm Brownsword. Thank you to all who have renewed their membership, if we missed you and you would like to join, pop into the Post Office or call Maggie on 850364 for details. Also call Austin on the same number to hire any of our garden tools, including the Mantis cultivator, lawn scarifier and aerator, and the garden gazebos, or call Joyce to hire the fertilizer distributor, the parrot billed secateurs or the long arm pruner. Please don't forget to take photos of “Gardens and Gardening” for our next year's calendar. The competition will be in the summer show to give us more time to get it out in time for Christmas, (I am very sorry to say the C word when Easter isn't here yet)!

Happy Gardening Karen Brooks

ST MARY'S CHURCH

Services During April

GOOD FRIDAY - 6TH APRIL
FAMILY SERVICE at 10.00 A.M.

A short service for all age groups - followed by Easter Egg hunt and refreshments

EASTER DAY – SUNDAY 8TH APRIL -
SUNG EUCHARIST at 9.00 A.M.

SUNDAY 15TH and 22ND APRIL –
SUNG EUCHARIST at 9.00 A.M.

SUNDAY 29TH APRIL – no service at St Mary's, everyone is invited to a combined benefice service at St Michael's, Aston Tirrold at 10.30 a.m.

Memory jog

Children's society house- to-house collection
This will be taking place *14 - 28 April*
Please look out for our volunteer collectors and give generously

UPTON WINE CLUB

18th April, 8pm, Village Hall – Chile
For our April meeting, our very own chairman, Mike Collins will be back at the helm taking us on a trip to Chile. We will taste and learn about a selection of wines from this 'New World' country – four whites and four reds will be presented.

16th May, 8pm, Village Hall - Modern France and the fight back against the New World Challenge

Also to let you know about the May meeting. We have booked Ian Hewson, from the Wineman Ltd in Streatley to come and talk to us about modern French wines and how the French are fighting back against the challenge from the New World.

The price of the April event is £5 per member and the price of the May event is £10. If you are interested in joining the club it's not too late, membership costs £2 per membership year, please contact fiona.betts@bopenworld.com.

The South And Vale Carers Centre

are looking to identify more carers in this area, if you feel you may be able to help please contact Kate Oliver on 01235 510212.

TENNIS CLUB

An amendment to the last date for the diary. The tournament will now be held on the first May bank holiday, *Monday 7th May*. It is a doubles tournament but no need to prearrange a partner just turn up on the day and play or bring a partner along but no more than one A or B team player per pair please. 11am start, bring your own picnic but there will be cakes to buy on the day.

UPTON VILLAGE THEATRE GROUP

Every time we try something different I worry until all the tickets are sold, but for our last two outings I've had to order extra. So, probably, we're flourishing!

Our next trip is to Stratford on the evening of Wednesday 12 September to see "Twelfth Night". The minibus is now almost full, but if we had some generous volunteer drivers as we usually do, we could see if there are still seats available.

We're also thinking of going to an open-air performance in June, but I've not found any details yet. Suggestions welcome.

Is all this news to you? If anyone wants to join our mailing list - or, indeed, leave it - please do let me know.

Malcolm Wright
850705 or mcw@ox119je.freeserve.co.uk

BLEWBURY SCHOOL

Blewbury Church of England Endowed School is celebrating the three hundredth anniversary of its foundation this year. Blewbury School is one of the oldest (free) primary schools in the country and was founded with an endowment from the Blewbury-born merchant Mr Malthus in 1707, to teach 50 poor children of Blewbury about God and to provide training in a trade. The school started teaching on Lady Day 1707, and moved into the old school house (opposite St Michael's Church) in 1709. Its history is told in Peter Northeast's book, "The Story of

Blewbury Charity School", which is in the process of being updated.

The school now has about 150 pupils and provides opportunity for all children with a varied curriculum and many exciting extra-curricular activities.

A range of events is being held in the school and village to mark the 300th anniversary. These start with a celebratory Lady Day service in St Michael's, Blewbury (Sunday 25 March). The whole school and communities of Blewbury and Upton and beyond are welcome. The events will culminate in a giant picnic and BBQ on the afternoon and evening of Friday 22 June, to which all present and past pupils and staff of Blewbury School are invited. More details in later News

We would welcome contact details for past pupils of whom you may know.

Commemorative china mugs with pictures of the old and new schools, and teatowels with pictures of the school and pupils work will be available from the school.

The school contact details are: Mrs M Mills (headteacher) Blewbury School, Westbrook St, Blewbury, OX11 9QB, head.3248@blewbury.oxon.sch.uk, 01235 850411.

On behalf of the school, I would like to thank the Upton Parish Council for their generous donation towards the cost of providing a commemorative china mug to each Upton school child presently attending Blewbury school.

Kathryn Fletcher, Community Governor

CHILTON VILLAGE

Fancy a day out?

Why not visit the Chilton Lunch Club

We provide homecooked meals, entertainment, transport and a fun, welcoming atmosphere for over 60s every Thursday from 11 until 2 at Chilton Village Hall.

For more information please contact Kate Astley-Cooper on 01235 835077 or 07712 669232

THE METHODIST CHURCH

Sunday 10.30	Preacher
1 April <i>Palm Sunday</i>	Malcolm Newton
8 April <i>Easter Day</i>	Ruth Price
15 April	David Kershaw
22 April	David Martin
29 April	At Blewbury

PARISHIONER NEWS

Diana Milford-Cottam

died on 20th March aged 92.

Diana was very interested in and knowledgeable about ballet, opera and the fine arts. In fact she and her husband George were largely instrumental in the formation and establishment of the Goring and District Fine Arts Society. Over the last twenty-five years this has gone from strength to strength – to the extent that over three hundred people now attend the monthly lectures. She was also a member of St Mary's Parochial Church Council.

She had lived a life full of interest, spending some time in South America, and finally retiring to Upton about 17 years ago.

The burial took place on the 29th following a service at St Mary's Church. She is survived by her husband.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Fiona and William Betts on the safe arrival of their daughter Emily who was born in Oxford on 13 March weighing 9lb 5½oz.

Congratulations also to Andrea Brown (High Street) and to Heather Saysell (Stream Road) on winning the Oxford Times Cup, a county wide event for improving Bridge players.

Note

More parishioner news would be very welcome particularly about achievements of any of our younger residents

GEORGE AND DRAGON

March was a very busy month at the George and Dragon. We had a "Mad Hatter's Party" theme night on the 3rd which was very well attended indeed and Mothering Sunday was equally successful. To our regulars and neighbours who have recommended us to their friends, thank you very much because more people are coming in saying they have heard good things about the pub. It has now come to the point where diners definitely need to book a table!

On our specials, we have included a new fresh fish dish every week. So far, we've done Tuna, Salmon, Barramundi and Swordfish. We've also introduced a vegetarian dish popular, even to non-vegetarians.

This month we have a couple of special days which, we hope, you will mark on your calendars. Our Grand Easter Egg Hunt will be on the 7th of April, from 4 'til 6pm. The finder of the golden egg will be greatly rewarded. Young ones and the young at heart are all welcome! We're also hosting a live band on the 20th of April from 9pm, in commemoration of St. George's slaying of the dragon, although we've become very fond of the beast as well! From all of us at your pub, Happy Easter and Happy St. George's Day!

PARISH COUNCIL

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Will be held on Tuesday 10th April at 8.00 p.m. in the village hall.

Nibbles and drinks will be available from 7.30 pm

Come along and hear what's going on in the village with reports from The Parish Council, The Village Hall Amenity Trust, The Parochial Church Council, Blewbury School and your local transport and footpaths representatives. There will be time for your questions. For further information please contact the Clerk on 850486.

Litter Pick

On a dry but cold Saturday morning 11 enthusiasts plus 3 junior parishioners met for the annual village litter pick. Unfortunately numbers

were way down this year with no less than 9 of our previous regulars sending apologies but we were delighted to see 5 new faces.

Fortunately the quantity of litter to be collected was much less, probably only about a third of previous years, and a good job was soon completed. Our thanks to all who took part and to Andy from the Vale's cleansing contractor who worked with us collecting up the sacks as we filled them and taking it all away that morning.

VILLAGE HALL

50 Club winners for

February 2007

£10 Mrs Blandford £7 Mrs S Napper

£5 Mr Lott £4 Mrs Smith

March 2007

£25 J Williams (Elmsgate)

£25 Mrs Schumacher

£10 Mr Kent £7 Mrs Fox

£5 Miss Spackman £4 Mr Morris

April is the start of another year for the 50s Club with monthly prizes as above and additional prizes of two £15 in September, two £20 in December and two £25 in March

The 50s Club has been for many years a good fund raiser for the village hall. We are indebted to everyone who has contributed and hope that many of you will be able to continue. We welcome any newcomers the cost is £6 for the year.

Please contact Jessie 851206 Thank you

Don't forget the "*Skittles and Supper Evening*"

7pm on Saturday April 28th in the hall

Tickets £7 from Jessie, Sheila 851205, Celia 850684, in aid of the village hall funds.

There will also be a raffle at the event to help towards funding the next children's party.

If you would like to support the raffle but are unable to be there please contact Lesley Shaw 850308 or any of the above

The **U.V.H.A.T. A.G.M.** will be held on Tuesday 1st May at 8pm in the hall. All are welcome.

A Bit of History *Just to fill the page*

Work began on the construction of the Didcot to Newbury railway in August 1879. The first sod was turned by the Countess of Carnarvon at a site just outside Newbury.

The estimated cost of building the line was £397,484. This cost was higher than it needed to be as the decision was made to build what was seen as branch line to main line standards, with gradients of no more than 1:106 (50ft per mile) and curve radii not less than 60 chains thus enabling the high speeds necessary to make the line competitive. The line was to be built single track with passing places at most stations but it was also decided that all bridges, cuttings and embankments were to be constructed such that a second line could be added as traffic increased. This decision was particularly significant in this area where approximately 414,000 cu. yards of chalk were excavated from Upton cutting and used to build the Hagbourne embankment. According to the Newbury Weekly News of 4th August 1881.

In the Upton cutting that is some 2 miles long and up to 40 feet deep a steam 'navvy' is being used to tear away at the chalk with its three steel teeth: the chalk is then scooped into a bucket capable of holding about a ton: when full, the bucket is swung round to dump its load into a waiting wagon. The wagons are then pulled back through the cutting to be emptied further down the line where the Hagbourne embankment is being constructed. About 400 wagons are moved every day but the embankment is of such heavy nature that progress is only 30 yards per week. After the 'navvy' has scooped out the cutting the walls stand almost perpendicular and have to be sloped by hand.

Up to 300 men worked on the construction of the line that took 2½ years to complete.

Items for inclusion in the May issue to be submitted by 30 April.

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Delivery organised by Jessie West

