

UPTON NEWS

DECEMBER 2007

Vol 3 No. 10

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Once again we are approaching the feast of Christmas. When Jesus was born two thousand years ago his disciples saw him as God's message of love to the world. Those who followed him recognised him as "the human face of God", "God made visible", the one who shows us definitively what God is really like. But he was not the king or a prince we might have expected, but the child of a homeless mother born in an outhouse.

At Christmas time along with people throughout the world we will be celebrating this God who could find no better way of showing his love for all humanity than by laying aside his glory and entering our broken world of risk and uncertainty. In the end it would kill him but not before he had demonstrated in the very act of dying the extent of God's love for humankind. In doing so he released into the world a new "contagion of loving" which seeks to find a home in the hearts of men and women everywhere. We would like to invite you all to share in the celebrations of the birth of Jesus. You will be assured of a warm welcome at any of our services. The story is well-known and the carols will have been sung in our shops for weeks but that is not the same as coming yourself and joining in the celebration. After all Christmas is actually God's invitation to us all to open ourselves to receive him and his love and so to become ourselves part of God's message of love to the world.

Have a joyful and love-filled Christmas.

Fr Anthony.

ST MARY'S CHURCH

Services for December

You are warmly invited to the following services being held during December:

2 December 9.00 a.m. – Sung Eucharist
9 December 9.00 a.m. – Sung Eucharist
16 December 9.00 a.m. – Morning Worship
23 December 10.00 a.m. – Crib & Carol Service, followed by refreshments
CHRISTMAS DAY 9.00 a.m. – Sung Eucharist
30 December 9.00 a.m. – Sung Eucharist

Christmas Collection For The Gap

During December we will be collecting items for the GAP, a charity for homeless young people in Oxford. Items needed include: dried, tinned, bottled food and drink (no alcohol), biscuits, mince pies, sweets, cakes, cereals, toiletries, warm gloves, scarves, hats and underclothes, also dog food. There will be a box at the back of the church for your donations. If you find the church is closed please leave things at Thimbles, Newman's Close.

New Rector

The appointment of a new Rector for the Churn Churches has been announced. The Revd Jason St John Nicolle has accepted the living of the Churn Benefice and will take up his appointment in Spring 2008. Jason is currently Assistant Curate at Kidlington. We look forward to welcoming him to the Benefice.

METHODIST CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday at 10.30 am **Preacher**
2nd December (Upton) David Kershaw
9th December Christmas Service
and Communion (Upton) Rev Helen White
16th December Carol Service at
Blewbury Methodist Church 3pm Malcolm Newton
23rd December at St Mary's Church at 10.00
30th December (Upton) Helen Carter

Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

This year in Upton we raised our highest total ever of £307.

Thank you very much to all the collectors, who once again gave their time at this cold and dark time of the year to try and call on as many houses as possible to collect for this most worthwhile cause. Also thank you to the George and Dragon and Maggie at the Post Office for displaying static collection boxes.
Helen Weston

VILLAGE HALL

Upton 50s Club

September

£15	Mrs	Telling	47
£15	Mr	Napper	34
£10	Mr	Collins	138
£7	Mrs	Fitchet	79
£5	Mr	Bibby	113
£4	Mrs	Bunston	39

October

£10	Mrs	Gardner	111
£7	Mr	Savage	92
£5	Mrs	Fenn	87
£4	Mr	Rippon	65

Fortnightly Coffee Mornings In The Village Hall

New dates for your diary!

Everybody welcome at the Village Hall on alternate Thursday mornings when we will be serving tea, coffee and biscuits between 10.00 and 11.30 a.m. at a bargain price of 50p. Come along and meet up with old friends, make some new ones and get to know other people in the Village.

Dates for January and February: 10 January, 24 January, 7 February, 21 February.

We look forward to seeing you on 10 January.

Yvonne Collins

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

On Saturday 8 December from 4.00 to 6.00 Sheila and Vic Dawson are again holding their Christmas Lights show in aid of the Children's Playground at No 2 Fieldside. Tea and cakes will be served; donations of cakes will be gratefully received. For added entertainment a Raffle will be held and for the amusement of the kids and the dads a Train Set will be running.

UPTON VILLAGE THEATRE GROUP

Dare I say that we seem to be flourishing? We have had five successful trips so far, and I usually find myself ordering extra tickets. In fact, since I don't yet have to pay for our reserved seats, I can still take orders for our sixth outing -

Grigorovich's
Nutcracker

at the New Theatre, Oxford
on Thursday 17 January 2008 at 7.30 pm.
Circle seats at £27.50 each

I've dispensed 29 already - there are 8 left, with the outside chance of minibus transport (an extra £4 or £5) if they are taken. Do let me know (850705) very soon if you are interested.

Nothing else is fixed for 2008, but there has been a request for the London Globe. I'm a bit apprehensive about the convenience and comfort for some of our regulars, so I would be very grateful to have up to date information from anyone who has been recently. Otherwise, suggestions will be gratefully received by the Committee.

If anyone wishes to be added to our mailing list - or removed from it - please ring, or e-mail
malcolmwright@f2s.com.

Malcolm Wright

THE UPTON 'COVEN'

Upton Ladies Coven meets at 8pm on the first Thursday of each month in the George & Dragon and we look forward to seeing everyone there for a drink and a chat.

On Thursday 6th December at the earlier time of 7pm we are meeting for a meal for all those who would like to forget about cooking for themselves for the evening. Hope you have booked by now!

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council held a meeting on Tuesday 13th Nov. The minutes can be seen on the Notice Board or the village website or at the Post Office.

Trim Trail

At last year's annual parish meeting it was agreed to accept the proposal for improving the Recreation Ground that included the construction of a Trim Trail (a running track with a series of exercise stations spaced around it). Provisional estimates suggest the average cost for the minimum of 3-4 exercise stations will be £900 each. The proposal is that it should be an all-weather running track probably surfaced with bark, which if it is to be laid by a contractor is likely to take the total cost up to about £8000.

Your council is having doubts about taking this idea forward for several reasons.

We are concerned that bark is not suitable, it will be picked up by the mower as well as being spread onto the grass by the birds and particularly by the many rabbits in the area. Alternatives are likely to add considerably to the cost.

We are concerned that the construction of a track and the stations will add to the problem of mowing and maintaining the area.

We are concerned that there will be insufficient demand for the facility from the village to justify the outlay of the cost, a significant part of which will have to come from council funds, or to back up an application for external funding.

If you are a potential user of the facility please would you spare a moment to make me aware of your thoughts, if it is just a running track that would be useful we will be happy to mark out and maintain a grass track with almost immediate effect.

Grass Cutting

We have had some issues with the quality of the mowing contract this year. The cost of contracting out is significant, currently at £1400. The council is considering purchasing a ride-on mower for the main ground and a self propelled mower for the play area and seeking volunteers to operate them. This should provide considerable future cost benefits as well as enabling us to cut the grass when it is required

but it does depend on us getting the assistance of a group of volunteers.

Please would you be prepared to give us just over 2 hours of your time 3 or 4 times a year to have the pleasure of driving around the ground, or, if you don't fancy the ride-on bit please would you be able to offer similar time helping maintain the play area using a smaller mower. All equipment will be provided, no strenuous effort required, both jobs equally suited to male and female residents. If you are prepared to help please let me know.

Business Directory

As mentioned in the October edition a Business Directory listing the businesses operating in this parish or operated by one of our residents will shortly be set up on our village website. A start has been made on collecting the data required and the first entries will be on the site in the next few weeks. If you would like details of your business, no matter how small, to be included in the directory please give me a call.

Mike Brown 850135

SNIPPETS FROM YOUR LOCAL SCHOOL

The school and governing body would like to reiterate our thanks to the parents and friends of the school who organized and supported the fundraising Quiz and Disco last month and made them such successful events. A total of about £2200 was raised for school funds.

We were privileged to host the "Angels" Choir children from Nigeria last month; our year 3 and year 4 children then enjoyed a powerful singing and dancing workshop with the choir. All classes participated in an African Dance workshop later in the month, enhancing the international experience of our pupils.

The school has been participating in Operation Christmas Child, run by the Samaritan's Purse charity which distributes decorated shoe-boxes filled with small gifts to children overseas who would not otherwise receive a present. As Christmas approaches, The Key Stage 1 children are busy practising their nativity play.

Kathryn Fletcher, Governor, Blewbury C of E Endowed Primary School

GEORGE AND DRAGON

We are one month shy from being a year old at the George and Dragon. The year has gone by quickly and almost unnoticed. When we first moved in, a strong feeling of uncertainty towards the future lay upon us but like rain on wet grass, it slowly evaporated. New pub owners like ourselves need a lot of support from their locals and we have been very lucky to have that. We could not have chosen a better "first pub" if we tried!

It will soon be our family's first Christmas in our new home. How very exciting! It's always been a tradition in our family for George and Gavin to hang the tree ornaments but they won't have a lot to hang up this year as most of our decorations have been ruined while in storage and so, they are appealing to all their little friends in the village to donate an ornament for the pub's Christmas tree and help them start a new George and Dragon tradition!

Here are the dates for your diaries:

Christmas Eve 23rd & 24th, Christmas Dinner from 12-2.

Christmas Day 25th Open for drinks only 12-2.30. Closed in the evening.

Boxing Day 26th Open normal hours for drinks only.

New Year's Eve 31st Lunch available 12-2.

Evening opening at 7.30pm for the Party!

Finally, from our family to yours, have a very Happy Christmas and good luck for the coming year! God bless us all.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Message from Thames Valley Police

There have been incidents of criminal damage to a rear garden at a property in Church Street, Upton, where fence panels have been damaged. One fence panel was damaged during half term and the second was damaged on Sunday 11th November.

Four youths were seen on 11th November and are believed to be responsible.

A description given of one youth was tall, heavy build with short dark hair, wearing a blue top and dark jeans.

A description given of the second youth, is that he was younger looking, wearing a red hooded top and baggy jeans.

If anyone knows who these youths might be, please contact PC 4106 Boyce at Thames Valley Police on 08458 505505 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 if you wish to remain anonymous.

Printed at the Duck House, Blewbury.
Delivery organised by Jessie West

YOUNG UPTON

Upton Children's Christmas Party

Saturday 15th December

6.00 – 8.00pm in Upton Village Hall

For children of Upton aged 2 – 11 years

Disco, food and lots more....

Please reserve a place by 5th Dec by contacting:
Karen 851072, Andrea 850460 or Lindsay 851222

1st UPTON AND BLEWBURY BROWNIES

We have had another exciting term working on our Brownie skills badge. This involved Sending postcards, making packed lunches, holding a coffee evening (which raised £133 for our unit funds), skipping, sewing and lots more. We hosted a Halloween party with a pumpkin carving competition, lots of mess and of course loads of sweets. Our unit are looking forward to the Princess Ruby Slippers performance and our trip to Paultons Park on Saturday.

We meet every Wednesday from 6 pm- 7.30 pm for girls aged 7-11 at Upton village hall.
Danyelle Paton (01235 833226) Gill Birch, Sarah Pembroke and Julie Claridge

1st UPTON AND BLEWBURY GUIDES

This term we have completed the "One Thousand Years of Oxfordshire" Challenge. We have studied maps of the county, performed short plays based on Oxfordshire legends and history, baked Banbury cakes and learnt how to do Morris Dancing. In October we went ice-skating in Oxford and in November, fourteen Guides enjoyed a sleepover at East Hendred, hiking there from Upton along the Ridgeway. We currently have 30 guides in the unit with a long waiting list. If you are interested in joining us, as a Guide or as a leader please contact Lynn Nickerson (01235 835254)

lynn.nickerson@ntlworld.com

Items for inclusion in the January issue to be sent to kameki39@btinternet.com. or handed in to Cathy or Mike by 24th December.