

UPTON NEWS

February 2009

Vol 3 No. 24

ST MARY'S CHURCH

Services for February

1st February - 9.00 a.m. Sung Eucharist to celebrate our newly decorated church. Refreshments will be served after the service
8th February - 9.00 a.m. - Sung Eucharist
15th February - 10.00 a.m. - Christingle - all age family service, followed by refreshments
22nd February - 9.00 a.m. - Sung Eucharist
1st March - 9.00 a.m. - Sung Eucharist - followed by refreshments

UPTON METHODIST CHURCH

Services commence at 10:30am

1st February Paul Williams
8th. February Andrew Lockley.
15th. February Rev. Helen White
Holy Communion at Blewbury Methodist Church
22nd. February Brenda Boyer.

POLICE SURGERIES

Mike Claydon one of our local community police officers will be holding a police surgery at Upton village hall on the 23rd of February 2009 at 19.00-20.00 hrs.
The surgery will be on a one to one basis where villagers can talk in confidence with Mike about any issues they feel he may be able to help with in his capacity as a PCSO.

VILLAGE PRODUCE ASSOCIATION

At times during this winter, it has seemed as though spring is a long way off, but hiding in a border under the lilac are my "Blewbury Tart" snowdrops, the hyacinths are popping up, and the hazel tree is looking like its about to pop its tassels all over the place! I noticed the snowdrops in the churchyard are out too!

Our first talk of the New Year is on "National Parks", by Adrian Thornton, of the Council for National Parks, with illustrations. It is at the Methodist Chapel in Upton on Wednesday 4th February, 7.30pm. If need a lift from Blewbury then ring me, 850219, and I will arrange a car to pick you up!

Hopefully the new programme booklets will be ready to pick up then, the show schedules are going to take longer as I still haven't worked out how to put the new toner cartridge into the printer, I have no instructions and a screwdriver! I will call on my neighbour, Dawn, we shall giggle and drink coffee and we might find a way soon!

Happy gardening Karen Brooks

VILLAGE DROP-IN SESSIONS

Drop in sessions for February are on Thursdays 5th and the 19th at 10.30 in the village hall.

PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Transport Representative

The Parish Council is looking for a volunteer to take on the role of Parish Transport Representative or someone who is prepared to assist the P.C. in monitoring the bus service and supplying the council with figures on usage and performance.

If you think you can help us in this area please give me a call and I will go through what the job entails or agree with you the parts of the job where your input would be appreciated.

It is essential if we are to maintain our present level of bus service that we make ourselves heard in areas where decisions are made.

Parish Precept

For the year starting April 2009 the council has decided to keep its precept (the amount of your council tax that comes back to your parish) at £7250. This will be the fourth year at this level. The cost to the average household will be 85P per week.

Grass Cutting

I know it is not the time of year for thinking of grass cutting but it is only about 6 weeks away. As you will be aware, last year we had a team of 12 volunteers who did a superb job keeping the grass cut in the recreation ground and the children's play area. If you can spare 3 sessions of about 3 hours during the summer and would be prepared to join the team I will be delighted to hear from you.

Litter

The annual parish litter pick will take place on 28th March meeting at the village hall at 9.30 for a cup of tea and a biscuit before we set off. Grabs, gloves and florescent vests will be provided.

Did you know that 25 million tonnes of litter is dropped in the UK each year that costs local authorities half a billion pounds to clear up. Almost all of it is drink and food packaging; it weighs as much as 62,500 jumbo jets and kills or injures 69,000 animals.

Mike Brown 850135

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Blewbury WI next meet at 7.30pm on Wednesday 25th February in the Vale Room of the Blewbury Village Hall. The topic will be "The Trans-Siberian Railway" featuring Amanda Wood. Don't forget the WI has many other activities in addition to the monthly talks. Winter activities include weekly Mah Jong, monthly Scrabble, theatre visits, monthly walks and lunches at various hostelrys in the area. If you need a lift or other information please contact Rosemary Tilden on 850528.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

NAG Meeting

On Monday 19th January 2009 I attended the quarterly Police Neighbourhood Action Group meeting at Milton Park. The main topic of discussion was the SID machine frequently seen in operation in our surrounding villages.

Residents may be interested to know that in the last quarter it was used for a total of 8 hrs in Upton and out of 961 cars a total of 36 drivers were exceeding the 30 mph speed limit driving through our village.

Apart from Rowstock and Blewbury we had the highest number of "hits" on the machine. We are likely to see even more of this valuable machine on the A417 and Chilton Road during the coming weeks.

The next NAG meeting will be on 7th April 2009 and will be attended by Didcot police and the Vale of White Horse representatives. If you would like me to mention any police related matter on your behalf please contact me direct.

Stolen Car

A White Vauxhall Brava 4 x 4 was stolen from outside the owner's house in Fieldside, Upton on Sunday evening (18th January 2009) at around 8.30pm.

If anyone saw anything would they please contact the police on 0845 8505505.

Celia Davies 850684

YOUNG ACHIEVERS

Alex Murphy, aged 13, took up swimming to support his training for his black belt in Karate at age 11.

He and his brother joined a new swim club at the Wave in Didcot and it was the coach, Iryna Kobzar, who realised Alex had potential.

In his first season Alex made Counties and Regionals and was 1.9 seconds off a National qualifying time. Last summer the family holiday was skipped so Alex could train everyday and in the Autumn he was rightly rewarded with a National Qualifying time of 1.11.22 seconds for 100m breaststroke.

He has been selected for the County team (Oxford and North Bucks) on 3 occasions. Last October he attended the Inter County Nationals at Pond's Forge, Sheffield, where he won the only Gold for the team. He was selected for the English Schools Swimming Association (ESSA) Division 10 and represented King Alfred's in Enfield. He qualified for the Winter Championships held in Aldershot Garrison Pool and broke the record for 50m breaststroke in his age group (34.30 secs.). He was for a while ranked number one nationally for his 100 breaststroke. He swam breaststroke for the City of Oxford SC in the National (Speedo) League – they were promoted to the Premier Division. In January, this year, he competed in the Dragon Meet at the National Pool, Swansea over 3 days, having qualified for 6 events. He made 3 finals and gained 2 Golds, again in breaststroke, the 100m (new Pb – personal best, of 1.10.80) and 200m (2.41.86).

He has qualified for the Counties Championships in 13 events, this March. He has the Regionals at the end of May and the Nationals in July. He continues to train 4 mornings before school and 3 evenings a week totaling 10/12 hours. Weekends are often taken up with galas in various locations across the country.

The sleeping bag, for rest between races, and camping stove (soup and cups of tea!) are permanent features in the back of the car and then of course there is the very supportive Mum and Dad who make all those achievements possible.

Good luck Alex, keep us informed of your progress

BLEWBURY SCHOOL

Christmas and the 'Big Build'

During the run up to Christmas Blewbury Primary School was full of buzz and excitement. The younger students demonstrated their own understanding of Christmas through a highly successful production of Born in a Barn and all the classes were involved in singing carols and songs that were recorded for a whole school CD. I am sure that many a grandparent's Christmas stocking was filled with a copy of this.

As part of the Creative Partnership Project, children from Blewbury, Hagbourne and Harwell schools focused on architecture with reference to science and sustainability. Architects and artists were interviewed by the children and subsequently worked with them on a number of schemes that culminated in the 'Big Build'. This involved designing and producing class shelters from plastic plumbing poles and scrap plastic sheeting, velcro and tape with the help of the architects who taught skills of joining and structure creation, and the visual artist who held a workshop to study light, shadows, colour and space. The final structure created a space big enough to accommodate all of the students. This exciting project widened the horizons of the children and enhanced not only practical skills but also self-confidence and collaborative group work.

As a parent, as well as a governor, I am convinced that Blewbury School is an innovative environment for children. 2009 will, I am sure, be another successful year for the school.

Tom Laugharne

DIARY DATE

Saturday 14th March at 2.00 in the Village Hall
A Grand Jumble Sale in aid of the Village Hall Extension Fund.

UPTON LADIES COVEN

The next Coven will be held at 8pm on Thursday 5 February at the George & Dragonwe had a good turn out in January despite the inclement weather so hope that as many of you that can make it as possible will be able to join us.

Advance Notice that we will be holding one of our ever popular regular Coven Meals at the March Meeting which is on Thursday 5th March at the earlier time of 7pmplease let me know by email or Maggie Maytham in person/by phone 850126 if you would like to join us for the meal so we can let Bill & Ceilo know how many of us to expectI know that they really appreciate our support in the pub.

Lesley Shaw

Items for inclusion in the March issue to be sent to kameki39@btinternet.com. or handed in to Cathy or Mike by Monday 23rd February.

THEATRE GROUP

I'm pleased (and relieved) to announce that all tickets for the Alan Ayckbourn play on 18 March are now sold. Arrangements for travel and distribution of the tickets will be decided much nearer the date.

And what are we doing in June or July? Shall we risk another open-air performance? Does anyone have any details? Otherwise the Committee will find something!

Do let me know if you wish to be added to or removed from the mailing list.

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