

UPTON NEWS

November 2009

Vol 3 No. 33

ST MARY'S CHURCH

St Mary's Services for November
1st November 9.00 a.m. - All Saints Day -Eucharist followed by refreshments
1st November 3.30 p.m. - All Souls Day - St Andrew's Church, East Hagbourne
8th November 9.00 a.m. - Remembrance Day - laying of poppy wreath and Eucharist
15th November 10.00 a.m. - All Age Family Service, followed by refreshments
22nd November 9.00 a.m. - Eucharist
29th November 9.00 a.m. - Eucharist

UPTON METHODIST CHURCH

Services commence at 10:30am

1st. November	Barbara Sexton (at Upton)
8th. November	Elizabeth Wood (at Upton)
15th. November	Rev. Helen White (at Blewbury) (Holy Communion)
22nd. November	Brenda Boyer (at Upton)
29th. November	Alan Fudge (at Upton)

DROP-IN

Village Hall Drop-in Sessions

As you all know, the Village Hall is now closed so as to allow work to proceed on the new extension. However, we have very generously been offered the use of the Methodist Hall for the next few months, so please come along and join us there on:

12 and 26 November 10.30 until 12.00 noon

Yvonne Collins 01235 85098

VILLAGE HALL EXTENSION

It is underway!!!!!! After so many months/years of hoping, through which we have been through so many highs and lows, we have finally achieved sufficient funding to award a contract for the extension to be built. We are still looking to raise more funding to pay for a patio and to extend the car park. (See Parish Council notes)

We are greatly indebted to the persistence and enthusiasm shown by Brian Simpson and Jessie West who have put in hours and hours of work meeting with and talking to so many possible sources of funding as well as filling in application forms and the countless support documentation that has to go with each application. It has been a big mountain for the village to climb and I know that so many of you have contributed in so many ways, it has been the enthusiasm that has come from so many parishioners that has kept Brian, Jessie and the rest of us going at times when we thought the idea could become just a fading dream.

Two contracts have been issued to ABS Ltd, one from the Parish Council who is responsible for spending all the money received from grants and one from UVHAT for the balance of the total cost.

As you can see the builders are already busy on site with a target completion date of the end of February.

Mike Brown

UPTON LADIES COVEN

Just a wee reminder that the next Coven will be on Thursday 5th November in the George & Dragon at the usual time of 8pm.

Hope to see you there!

CHANGES AT THE METHODIST CHURCH

A New Beginning in the New Year?

There is going to be a big change for Upton and Blewbury Methodist Churches from January 1st. We are combining to become one church. Although plenty of people come to the churches for community events during the week, numbers have fallen at Sunday Services, so we agreed at the recent joint Church Council Meeting to start the process of becoming one church. This will be known as the Spring Line Methodist Church. It will have two places of worship, the Blewbury Centre and the Upton Centre, and services will alternate between the two centres.

Why Spring Line? Well, we wanted a name that would express where the two villages are, and how they are joined historically. The two villages evolved where they are because they are sited on the Spring Line, the line where the chalk of the Downs meets the sticky clays of the Thames Valley, the line where springs emerge from the ground. Some of the Blewbury springs emerge on the South edge of the Cleve, so Blewbury Church actually stands on a Spring Line. And Upton Methodist Church is close to the springs that rise in Stream Road.

January 1st is the official date for the new Church to come to life, and our minister Helen White will be writing more about it in the January edition of the Upton News, but do think of us and remember us in your prayers as we prepare for this new venture together.

Jo Lakeland
(for Blewbury and Upton Methodist Churches)

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council held a well attended extraordinary meeting on 16th October to allow the Council to discuss and agree several issues relating to the building of the village hall extension. It was agreed that the Council should place a contract to the value of just over £94,000 towards the cost of the work. This expenditure which is way in excess of the Councils normal annual spend is made up of all the grants that have been promised plus £9000 of the council's money. One of the grants will only be paid to the council after the council can produce a receipted bill from the builder, this will present a short term cash flow problem. To overcome this problem it was agreed that the council should seek

permission from the Secretary of State for permission to borrow up to £27,000.

It was also agreed that the council should work with the builder to attempt to use all the soil and sub-soil from the extension work to construct an adventure cycling facility on the west side of the recreation ground and that all but three of the existing mounds should be removed.

Other actions agreed at the meeting to be undertaken in the following order as soon as funding is available. A patio 32 feet x 20 feet will be constructed on the north side of the hall.

The present car park will be extended to take 13 cars and resurfaced.

An overflow car parking facility for a further 20 cars will be created just beyond the existing car park using a special form of plastic matting that will be laid across the existing surface giving a grass surface that will not be damaged by the cars.

Mike Brown 850135

VPA

By the time you are reading this, we will have been on our guided tour of Harcourt Arboretum, and I am sure we all had a great time. I do like autumn in the garden, a chance to have a good clear out of borders, to dig over the veg plot, and plant up winter and spring pots to give seasonal colour, I have also looked at the state of my greenhouse and I think its had its day, so will be planning a new summerhouse for next year!

Our best wishes to Vic Bowman and family, June was a regular visitor to our talks and shows; we will all miss her infectious smile.

The AGM will take place in the Vale room on Wednesday 4th November, 7.30pm, my wine glasses have been dug out of their cupboard, and put though the dishwasher and are all bright and sparkly, ready for wine or juice, and we will also have cheese and biscuits to celebrate another year. I am informed we have a "Garden Surprise" as an entertainment, I know nothing!!

We will also have on sale at the AGM, tickets for the VPA Christmas social evening, to be held on Friday 4th December. If you would like to leave apologies for the AGM, or to book tickets for the social evening, email me karencbrooks@googlemail.com or leave a message on the answer phone 850219.

Happy gardening Karen Brooks

THE THEATRE CLUB

That Old Feeling by Richard Harris at the Mill at Sonning. A Musical comedy.

“I’ll hold your programme while you’re driving!” She walked off with it- GGGrrrrrr. - With my notes - double GGGrrrrrr.

It was a modern day musical, with the feel good factor built in; about a modern day family trying to get rid of the old guy. Pushy wife of son, and accommodating daughter married to a “jack the lad”. There is a birthday (about a year after a bereavement) - and the first act sets the scene for what is to follow incredibly well.

There are 5 songs in act 1, and I think 9 in act 2 (no programme!!!). The songs move the action along at a goodly pace; that doesn’t mean you ‘lose the plot’ as the theme is threaded throughout - mainly through the songs. Children wanting to oust parent - parent doesn’t want to let go - goes to dance club with friend - cannot dance - friend shows how - is seen by siblings - think Dad is gay - all comes out afterwards - Dad seeing woman a year after bereavement - now that’s not permitted either. The comedy is in the spiralling confusion; and is actually everywhere - from the mild farce, to the mild pathos, to the mild bullying of “son” by pushy “wife”. Obviously it all comes good in the end. I do not know when it was written, but it is as applicable today; as it was in the 1950’s/60’s/70’s or when ever. Nothing new there then.... The characters are all perfectly cast. The daughter with the ‘jack the lad’ husband, trying to pretend it is natural for the husband to be off on ‘business’ every night. Mind you, she tells him to call when he’s on his way home, which also gives her the opportunity to get rid of anyone she is entertaining. Does that sound cynical? The ‘pushy’ wife wants son to improve; and be dynamic, father finding a direction for his life in his ‘September’ years.

The theatre is well laid out, and the acoustics are excellent. The cast all had very personable voices, clear and musically acceptable to my tone deaf ear.

In conclusion - I enjoyed it enormously, it was witty, amusing and fast enough to keep you enthralled throughout. It was great.....

Austin Maytham

BLEWBURY SCHOOL

Blewbury School receives Fourth International School Award

At Blewbury School we encourage the children to develop a strong global awareness. This last academic year was time once again to renew our International School Award, this is the tenth year since this award started and we are one of the few schools in the country to have worked consistently to include the International.

Dimension across our curriculum

At the beginning of the year we had to produce an action plan for the year and then collect evidence, including evaluations from pupils, parents, staff and visitors, to show what we had achieved. As we compiled this portfolio in July we proudly reflected on the year’s work – Our International Harvest festival, the Comenius visit to France for an Eco Meeting, the Angels Gum Boot Choir visit to school, the Didcot School’s Partnership International Day, our Ugandan Week following a visit to Uganda by seven teachers, World Water Day, International Sport’s Day at St. Birinus School and our final Comenius visit to Sweden.

All this and much more meant that we were awarded ‘The International School Award’ for the fourth time. At the award ceremony in London on 16th October there was an extra acclamation, Blewbury School is only **1 of 17** schools in the whole of the UK to have received this award four consecutive times.

Marion Mills – Headteacher

Blewbury School Governor Vacancy

Blewbury School is looking for a new Community Governor. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact the school on 01235 850411.

ST MARY'S CHURCH FETE

The total amount raised by the fete this year was £2900. This was significantly higher than in previous years and the PCC has resolved to donate £300 to the village hall extension fund.

WANTED – Musicians and Singers

Are you an accomplished musician? Can you sing or harmonise?

Do you spend most of your time playing or practicing on your own?

Ever wished to hear what your playing would sound like in a group? Then read on.

I would like to start an acoustic/folk group in Upton. The direction it takes would depend upon what players and instruments become available. There is no age requirement only an interest in contemporary/traditional folk sounds.

So if you can play any of the instruments listed or sing you may well like to give it a try.

Guitar, Mandolin, Flute/whistle, Accordion, Bodhran, Violin/fiddle. Any other instrument you think would 'fit in'

Please drop me a line at ronyart5@hotmail.com or telephone any evening on 01235 850032 and ask for Rob

Many thanks Rob Traynor

BLEWBURY WI

Blewbury WI next meet at 19.30 on Wednesday 25th November in the Vale room of the Blewbury Village Hall. The topic is very opportune - "Being a Santa" with Derek Parkes! That reminds me, how many days are there to Christmas - oh no!!!..... If you fancy an evening out please just come along and you'll be made very welcome as a visitor, no pressure to join. Blewbury WI has something for everyone - walks, theatre visits, pub lunches, Scrabble, Mah Jong and most of all good company!

NHW

I have been asked by the police to give every household in Upton a copy of a questionnaire asking for your comments on police matters.

I would be very grateful if all completed surveys be returned to me at Deveens Fir, Reading Road, Upton. The entrance is signposted at the top of Stream Road behind the brown gates and next door to The Cottage.

If anyone would like me to collect their survey then please do not hesitate to ring me on 850684. Results will be published in the New Year.

Thanks for your assistance. Celia Davies

RECTORS REFLECTIONS



Three Gifts for Remembrance

In a few weeks' time, we shall be observing Remembrance Sunday.

For many people, Remembrance Sunday is a particularly difficult

time. Years may have passed since

the death of a loved one in War, but the pain and the sadness remains. It may be hidden, but it is still there. And men and women are still being killed on active service. It is quite possible, even probable, that on the day you read these words, another member of our armed forces will have been killed or seriously wounded while serving in Iraq or Afghanistan.

What can we offer in times like this?

Perhaps a good beginning is simply the gift of compassion, compassion to all who suffer as a result of war. We can make our compassion real through practical help, and by giving money to charities such as the British Legion.

But there are other gifts we can give as well. We can give the gift of the desire for peace. We can be determined to work for lasting peace, in our own lives and in our communities. We can challenge and encourage our politicians in all that they do to make and keep peace between the nations of the world.

And we can give the gift of hope. As human beings, we all need the encouragement which comes from being able to hope for an end to current suffering and injustice, and from being able to look forward to the coming of a better world.

These gifts of compassion, peace and hope come together in two verses from the Bible. They come from the Gospel of St Luke, and are part of a song known as the Benedictus.

“in the tender compassion of our God

The dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and
the shadow of death,

And to guide our feet into the way of peace”.

May God indeed guide our feet into the way of peace, at this Remembrance Sunday and always.

Fr Jason

SORRY A report on the Fletcher Families 'Ride and Stride' adventure will appear in next month's issue

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

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