

UPTON NEWS

March 2010

Vol 3 No. 37

Grand re-opening of Upton Village Hall *Saturday March 13th from 11am – 2.30pm*

You are invited to coffee and viewing from 11am – 12pm

The official opening, to which a number of dignitaries are also invited, will take place at **12.30pm** along with light refreshments.

It would be helpful to know how many are able to be there for the light refreshment. Please contact any of the following:

Jessie West 851206, Maggie Maytham 850126, Celia Davies 850684.

Oxfordshire theatre company
Coming to Upton Village Hall
Saturday March 27th

7,30pm ticket price £8 and £6 851206

Loving April

Adapted by Giles Croft from the novel
by Melvin Burgess
A moving story of love and intolerance

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The touring theatre has been coming to our village hall for many years. Audiences have enjoyed, and appreciated the level of expertise, colour and exuberance they have brought with them.

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The cost to our venue is £314 and the only reason they have been able to sustain this price is because of the subsidy they have received. Unfortunately, a large percentage of that subsidy is to be withdrawn. Sadly, this may be their last tour.

Another date for your diary

Friday April 16th
Upton village hall

7pm

Animal Crackers

a light hearted entertainment of words and music,
with **supper**
to celebrate the reopening
of the village hall.

Tickets £10
from Peter Gardiner 850449
and Geoff Summers 850801

ST MARY'S CHURCH

7 March – 09.00 - Sung Eucharist, followed by refreshments

14 March – 10.00 - MOTHERING SUNDAY - all age family service. Posies will be distributed at this service, followed by:

14 March – 11.00 – Fair Trade Little Big Brew - fair trade refreshments will be available in church - everyone welcome

21 March 09.00 - Sung Eucharist

28 March 09.00 - Sung Eucharist

Advanced Notice

The Annual Church Meeting will be held on Tuesday 6 April at 7.30 p.m. in Church, followed by light refreshments. Please come and hear about our activities during the past year and plans for the future.

SPRING LINE METHODIST CHURCH

Services for March

7th Local Arrangements 10.30 am
(Parish Eucharist)

14th Blewbury 10.30 am Brenda Boyer
Mothering Sunday

21st Upton 10.30 am Rev Martin Smithson

28th Blewbury 10.30 am Rev Helen White
Palm Sunday Holy Communion

Special Services: No special services to mention this month, as our services now alternate regularly between the Upton Centre and the Blewbury Centre.

OIL SYNDICATE

The next order is scheduled to be placed on Monday 15th March. To be included, I need to have your orders by Saturday 13th March at the latest.

My contact details are (preferably by e-mail) colin.batchelor@eggconnect.net or by telephone 01491 671253 (after 7.00pm).

Colin Batchelor

THE THEATRE CLUB

MOSCOW STATE CIRCUS

Wyvern Theatre, Swindon, 7 February 2010

The circus. What does that conjure up in your mind? Animals doing tricks; clowns throwing buckets of water; jugglers; acrobats. The Moscow State Circus, a modern day circus, has no animals but the most versatile circus performers. For two hours we sat enthralled and amazed as we watched the incredible, innovative performers.

Wrapped around the stories and legends of Rasputin and his dreamworld Legenda, the acts pushed the boundaries of physical ingenuity to their limits. We saw gymnastics worthy of the Olympics; jugglers weaving patterns with 15 skittles in one go; acrobats who could balance on each other in a myriad of ways; trapeze artistes who wrapped silk ropes around their bodies plunging to the ground from great heights; an archer who shot arrows simultaneously to burst balloons and hit targets. Throughout, the clowns brought continuity and laughter as they displayed their skills of balance on a wire and a ladder.

The climax of the whole show was the illusionist who was brilliantly supported by his assistant who could change costume in the blink of an eye. The finale was amazing as she was levitated and then disappeared into thin air only to return from the back of the auditorium leaving us all gasping.

We would thoroughly recommend a visit to the Moscow State Circus. It is suitable for the whole family and is a sensational show that combines contemporary and classical circus at their very best.

Ann and Nick Parham

DROP IN

All future meetings will be back in the Village Hall. The next two sessions will be held on: 18th March and the 1st April, 10.30 until 12.00 noon

Yvonne Collins

01235 850989

GEORGE AND DRAGON

I hope you're all well in spite of this inclement weather we are having of late. We are certainly ready for a bit of sun. Mind you, the days when the snow made the roads impassable to motorists resulting in the closing of schools and offices were the busiest days at the pub during this mostly wet and cold winter. Talk about extremes! A really nice sunny or a very snowy day will bring people into The George and Dragon but on any other day, we would be quiet, bordering on empty. The constant supply of inclement weather is certainly one of the reasons why busy days at the pub have become few and far in between.

But like most pubs in the country, the weather is not the only reason why we are struggling. The credit crunch has drawn people away from pubs and into the supermarket for cheap food and beer, not to mention the unending regulations the government seem to think up to burden pubs even more. In the meantime, unlike the number of people patronizing the pub, the cost of running a pub, are constantly on the rise. Sadly, we are now in the position where if we don't get out, we will be in serious trouble. It is for this reason that we've decided to give up our tenancy.

Greene King has started looking for new tenants. Some have been in to look around. We will have to wait until Greene King finds a replacement before we can announce a leaving date. All we know at the moment is that it will not happen in the next couple of months. In the meantime, we are still here soldiering on. Our regulars and staff have been brilliant. Rest assured that we have not compromised our food, beer and services. Bill is still freshly cooking your favourite dishes!

The day we leave will be a very sad day for us. We are happy here. We have met a lot of people who have become very good friends. In the three years that we've been here, each of us has changed for the better, both as a person as well as a family. We will have fond memories of the pub, our staff and our patrons.

We will definitely keep you informed of things as they progress but until then we will enjoy the time we have left.

See you at the pub!

UPTON WINE CLUB MEETING

The February Wine Club meeting was an energetic and very informative evening by Simon on the wines of California.

During the early part of 20th century America had a very healthy wine industry nearly all concentrated in California, and then **prohibition**. The wine industry was decimated and there was a 94% reduction in wine production. Moonshine however did very well, as did organised crime. But the story has a happy ending and from the 1930's through to the 1970's wine production revived, and in many peoples opinion America has become one of the great producers, and consumers of wine.

Simon devised the evening so the members could taste two wines of the same grape variety and compare. The first was a Carltidge and Brown Chardonnay from the wine society, and a Brown Ranch Chardonnay. The first was very smooth and buttery with a hint of oak, and the second a much fresher and fruity product. Both of these wines were liked by the group. Then we hit the reds, and did they pack a punch. The two Zinfandel's were both very palatable but the second, a Joseph Swann Stellwagen, was exceptionally powerful and should not be drunk near a naked flame, for fear of combustion - 15.5% proof!

The two Pinot Noir were good and the second of these, a Sainsbury Pinot Noir from Majestic, was favoured. The Cabernets were again considered to be very palatable, and strong on flavour with not too much tannin these were the wine society's Sonoma Cabernet Sauvignon and a Mondavia Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. The evening was well received and we would all like to thank Simon for his hard work in producing such an insight into Californian wine. Next month it is Derek and the wines of Portugal.

Chris Traynor

RECTORS REFLECTIONS



A Reality Check

Have you experienced a “reality check” recently?

By the time you read this, the season of Lent will have started. Lent is of course the period of 40 days immediately before Easter. Easter is always on a Sunday, and Lent always starts on a Wednesday, known as Ash Wednesday. It is called Ash Wednesday because for many centuries there has been a tradition for people to go to church on this day and have the sign of a cross traced in ash on their foreheads. The cross is a reminder that Christians are called to follow the life and example of Jesus Christ. Jesus’ whole life was a “yes” to love, and a “no” to selfishness; a “yes” to putting love of God and love of our neighbour at the centre of our lives. Christians try to do this throughout the year, but sometimes it is good to have a reminder – and this is what Lent is, it is a reminder of what the Christian faith is all about.

When Christians give things up in Lent, or take on additional challenges, it is done in order to be enabled to say a bigger “yes” to love, both love of God and love of our neighbour. For example, some Christians give up chocolate or alcohol, and give the money they would have spent on these luxuries to charity. Some Christians deliberately set additional time to pray, to read a spiritual book, or to study the Bible, either by themselves or in the company of a small group.

In short, Lent is all about a reality check. It is about taking the time to look honestly at our own lives, and asking ourselves: how can we live less selfishly? Whether we look at our relations with our families, our neighbours, or our communities, there is a distinct human tendency to put ourselves first, and to ignore the needs of others. Lent is a time when we have to own up to our selfishness – and this is a hard and painful business.

But Lent is also a time when we try and actually do something about our selfishness, by deliberately taking a step or two towards living a more loving life. This is not an easy task, because we tend to have an image of ourselves as rather nice people who don’t really need to

change at all. We find it difficult to give things up, because we fear that if we do so, we will lose a bit of our security and our identity. This is true – when we give things up, we will lose a bit of our security and our identity. And deciding to do something to try and help somebody is not easy either – we can be rebuffed, and, despite our best intentions, we can make embarrassing and painful mistakes. But we have much to gain, as well. We have the chance to experience once again, and more profoundly, the transforming reality of love. And when we experience the transforming reality of love, we are experiencing the transforming reality of God Himself, for God is Love.

Almost two thousand years ago, an early Christian wrote the following words:

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only son into the world so that we might live through him.

Now, that’s what I call a reality check!

Fr Jason

PARISH COUNCIL

Litter Pick

This year’s Litter Pick is being arranged for Saturday 20th March. If you can spare us an hour or two please come along to the Village Hall at about 9.30 where there will be a cup of tea and biscuits awaiting you before setting out to help clean up our parish.

Grass Cutting.

We are looking for volunteers to join the grass cutting team. You will be required to use our mowers to cut the Recreation Ground and the Children’s Play Area three or possibly four times during the next 8 months. The job takes about 3 hours working in pairs. A schedule will be produced giving you the approximate date that it will be your turn but the actual time and day can be anytime agreed with your working partner.

Safety training and any other help you may need will be provided. If you can help us out please give me a call.

Mike Brown 850135

VPA

It was lovely to see some new faces at the February talk on growing vegetables' in containers; he grew his carrots in polythene bags! Huge!! The next talk is on Wednesday 3rd March, in the Vale room, Blewbury, at 7.30pm, when Jenny Smith will tell us all about East Hagbournes' recent success in the Britain in Bloom competition last year. Please ring if you need a lift, my phone is working again now, 850219.

The spring bulbs are making an appearance, snowdrop season is well under way and today I noticed some yellow crocus about to burst into bloom, I have seen mauve ones already out around the village, and I think I saw a bit of yellow on a miniature daffodil yesterday, in a pot!! I suppose I ought to show willing and go out and clear some of the frost blackened stalks of things I had left over from last year as today the sun is shining and the birds are nesting. I think the gardening year has just about started again, I will think about digging the veg plot, only thinking mind you!!! A friend has already planted his tomato seeds, because he will be too busy doing proper gardening soon, to get around to it!

Happy Gardening Karen Brooks

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

I have been informed of 2 burglaries that occurred in West Hagbourne last week in broad daylight.

This is very close to home and I would urge people NOT to open their doors to unfamiliar callers particularly if they are in the house alone. These are just the people that distraction burglars are targeting.

If in any doubt simply do not answer the door. Anyone calling from Water Board, Council, Southern Electricity etc etc should be wearing an obvious identity tag. If not, simply do not let them in!

Celia Davies 850684

DIARY DATES

Saturday 27th March at 7.00 pm

Kenny Ball and His Jazzmen in Concert at 7.00 p.m. on Saturday 27th March at Radley College Theatre near Abingdon. There will be a bar and tickets at £20-00 will include a light supper.

The above event is being organised by The Rotary Club of Oxford Isis to raise funds to support the immunisation campaign to eradicate polio

Tickets are available for both events and more information from Robert Fitchett at Upton Fruit Farm (01235 850808) or e-mail fitchettupton@ukonline.co.uk

Saturday March 27th 10.30 until 3.00

Didcot Twinning Association is holding a French Day at Ladygrove Park Primary School. Come along and learn/improve your French language skills.

More details in last months edition or from www.didcottwinning.org.uk

Or call Sue Totterdell 01235 850080

Sheralyn Hares 01491 837718

Sunday 20th June

Upton Mountain Bike Event is being organised in support of The Upton Village Hall Amenity Trust (UVHAT).

As well as participants, volunteers will be required to help with administration, catering and marshalling.

More details will appear nearer the time or contact Bob Lott on 851222 or email

bob.lott@ciinformatics.co.uk

Saturday 3rd July

Note the date and start to organise a table of 10 friends to attend a Picnic Barn Dance to be held at Prospect House in support of UVHAT funds. More details nearer the date of the event or contact Hilary on 850268

Items for inclusion in the April issue to be sent to kameki39@btinternet.com or handed in to Cathy or Mike by Wednesday March 26th

Printed at the Duck House, Blewbury.

Delivery organised by Jessie West